

NORTH CAROLINA Parenting Education Network

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The North Carolina Parenting Education Network (NCPEN) is working to build the field of parenting education in the state with a focus on partnership between parents and child care providers, teachers, and parent educators. Working together, we can help each child reach his or her potential. NCPEN is an unfunded collaboration of parenting education organizations and agencies. For more information about NCPEN, see our web site at www.ncpen.org.

Parent Educators Partner with Pediatricians by Karen DeBord, Ph.D., Cooperative Extension Specialist, NC State University

Pediatricians in North Carolina are beginning to seek more community-based assistance with parenting issues (NC Pediatric Society/AAP NC Chapter Mental/School Health meeting January 2006). Issues that relate less to physical growth and illness and more to social development and behavior absorb an inordinate amount of time during child check-ups. Forging partnerships with pediatricians and family practices so that medical professionals will begin to use and refer parents to Extension as a key resource in rural communities for families is the objective of this project.

Mental health referrals are on the rise. Researchers have found that infants do experience mental health issues and that their mental health status directly correlates with the quality of the parent-infant relationship (Huff, 2004). While there is definitely a role for mental health professionals in the area of intervention in infant mental health, family life educators play an even bigger role in the area of prevention and education.

The Surgeon General's report (Department of Health and Human Services, 1999) estimates that one in five children are suffering from social or emotional problems. In a survey of over 1000 early childhood education programs in Colorado, it was estimated that 15% of the young children in care had emotional behavioral problems enough to disrupt classrooms and distress teachers. Unfortunately many child care providers deal with disruptive behaviors by expelling them. According to this survey, children with emotional behavioral challenges were 20 times more likely to be expelled than typically developing children (Kraft-Tharp, 2004).

A significant factor in the social-emotional development of young children is the relationship between parent and child. It is through this relationship that children learn to develop trust, empathy, compassion, generosity, and conscience—the qualities necessary for healthy relationships in life, cognitive development and school readiness. Early relationships do matter. It is important that parents learn to read infants' cues so that they can meet their child's basic needs. Sometimes parents are not aware of how to do this and not aware of what may be expected from their growing child in the social-emotional realm. Parents who rely on their own experience with parents and other caregivers as the foundation for their parenting skills may have had inappropriate models. This may lead to poor relationships between parents and their infants or toddlers, which sometimes results in child abuse or neglect.



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Primary areas of parent concern were identified by a sample of 79 pediatricians in North Carolina. These included parent concerns with discipline, nutrition, sleep, toileting and school. Pediatricians also are seeking help in communities to support parents to understand typical social and emotional development. Through Cooperative Extension, three pilot counties are studying what approaches may work when Cooperative Extension Educators are paired with pediatricians. Results of the study will be available next Spring.

Linking Advocates to Resources

A comprehensive list of online resources are provided by Action for Children including grants, training material, lists of research programs, promising practices for child advocacy and links to other resource materials.

To view the information in any of the areas, please visit the websites listed below:

* Federal, State and Local grant information:

<http://www.ncchild.org/content/category/6/29/117/>

* Local and National conferences and training for those in the field of child advocacy:

<http://www.ncchild.org/content/category/6/33/117/>

* Programs that have been shown to have impact through evidence-based evaluations:

<http://www.ncchild.org/content/category/6/35/117/>

* Programs that have not yet been evaluated, but show encouraging results to-date:

<http://www.ncchild.org/content/category/6/36/117/>

Evidence-Based Practice in the Early Childhood Field

Evidence-Based Practice in the Early Childhood Field defines the evidence-based practice movement and empowers professionals to deliver the most effective interventions available.

<http://www.zerotothree.org/>

New! "Choosing A Quality Medical Home" Bookmark is Now Available

A new bilingual (English/Spanish) bookmark entitled "Choosing a Quality Medical Home" is now available from the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation. The bookmark defines what a medical home is, why it is important and suggests questions that can be asked when choosing a quality medical home.

Questions listed are based on the characteristics of a quality medical home as defined by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

To learn more about this free new bookmark and to order in bulk, use the following link to access an online news article and order form.

<http://www.nchealthystart.org/outreach/prognews/medicalhomebookmark.html>

If you maintain a list serve or know of others who should receive this information, please forward this information to them. Thank you in advance for sharing it with others!

Parent Forum Update

On December 12, NCPEN hosted a Parent Forum featuring a lively storyteller, experienced panelists discussing evidence-based practices and other emerging trends, and a useful carousel of resources. It was THE place to be if you are a parenting educator. The forum awarded 4 contact hours and a professional development certificate toward the NC Parenting Educator Credential in the areas of BUILD and GROW.

A few of the resources shared at the recent forum included:

- An informative overview of the Masters degree program in Family Life and Parent Education offered by NCSU and UNCG.
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/masters/index.php>

- The Purple Crying Campaign – The Period of PURPLE Crying
The word PURPLE is an acronym which breaks down to explain the most common and most frustrating patterns of infant crying. The letters break down as follows:

P - Peak Pattern
U - Unpredictable
R - Resistant to Soothing
P - Pain-like Face
L - Long Bouts
E - Evening Cry

- The new program involves educational materials that will be available nationwide, at national presentations, on public service announcements and a focused media campaign. See: <http://www.dontshake.com/>
- Overview of Evidence-based practices and programs
http://www.oregon.gov/OCCF/Documents/HealthyStart/MeetingNotes/Community_Mobilization/Appendix2.pdf

The North Carolina Parenting Education Network is sponsoring a second parenting educator forum. You will not want to miss it!

The next NCPEN sponsored forum will be held on April 24, 2007.

Support for printing of this newsletter was generously provided by the North Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office. You may find past copies of the newsletter on the NCPEN web site at: www.ncpen.org. Please feel free to make copies.

Handling New Year's Resolutions



As the new year quickly approaches, many of us start thinking about the many things we want to do differently to make our lives feel better to us.

It is a traditional time for making resolutions, and for many of us these include such things as losing weight, getting more exercise, eating healthier, being kinder to other people, and being easier on ourselves.

For most of us however, these well intentioned resolutions for the coming year are bound to fail for the simple reason that the goal is too big -- a whole year.

We live our lives only one day at a time. So this year, instead of telling yourself that you're going to do things differently for the next 365 days, try making New Year's commitments for just one day at a time?

For example:

Just for today, eat right.

Just for today, get some exercise.

Just for today, use your sense of humor.

Just for today, do something nice for someone else.

Just for today, find a few moments to relax and reflect.

If you can make a firm commitment to be good to yourself for the next 24 hours, and the 24 hours after that -- then 2007 will take care of itself, one day at a time.

(Source in part: Michigan State University Health Education Program and the Hope Heart Institute)

“As adults, we must ask more of our children than they know how to ask of themselves. What can we do to foster their open-hearted hopefulness, engage their need to collaborate, be an incentive to utilize their natural competency and compassion...show them ways they can connect, reach out, weave themselves into the web of relationships that is called community.”

-- Dawna Markova

NCPEN Annual Membership Application

Please Print:

Individual Membership (\$10.00) OR Organizational Membership (\$25.00)

Name/Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____

Employer: _____

Phone Number:(____) _____ EMAIL: _____

Number of parent educators in organization: _____

Organizational website if applicable: _____

Mail to:

NCPEN

c/o Catherine Anderson, Treasurer
DJJDP-CPSV 1801 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1801

Make check or money order to:
North Carolina Parenting Education Network
Federal EIN 56-2223885

NCPEN Newsletter Coordinator: Stephanie Moore. To share your comments,
please e-mail Stephanie at ncpennews@yahoo.com