

Parenting Education Network

The North Carolina Parenting Education Network (NCPEN) is working to build the field of parenting education in the state with a focus on partnerships 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.

The Hispanic/Latino population is among the fastest growing and youngest segments of North Carolina society. The availability of formal nonparental child care and schooling too often falls short of meeting the needs of Hispanic/Latino families. The cultural characteristics of Latino families and the unique challenges they face must be better understood by child care and parent education professionals in North Carolina in order to find ways of addressing the issues of quality and availability. Cultural differences in child-rearing beliefs and practices affect the choices that parents make. The role of language and how it affects the child care selection process also has implications for many non-English-speaking Hispanic/Latino families. This edition of NCPEN concentrates on programs and resources that have made a commitment to address the needs of children and parents in the growing Hispanic/Latino community of North Carolina. Please note that the terms Latino/Hispanic/Spanish-speaking are used interchangeably throughout this newsletter.

Fascinate-U Children's Museum Reaches Out to the Latino Community

by Marnie Flowers (Education Director, Fascinate-U Museum) and Aurora Crowell (Assistant Director/Spanish Coordinator, Fascinate-U Museum)

Fascinate-U Children's Museum in Fayetteville is an exciting place to be for children and their families. When you walk inside, you are surrounded by hanging murals, bright colors, and many other wonders that can keep your family occupied for a morning or afternoon excursion. The museum is located in the heart of downtown Fayetteville. Where there once was the county courthouse, now there is a miniature courthouse where the children can pretend to be judges and lawyers. Not only can a child blurt out a decisive guilty as the local judge, he or she also can pretend to be many other people in the community. From construction sites to fire stations,

post offices to grocery stores, news broadcast centers to banks, Fascinate-U offers a wide variety of hands-on learning through dramatic play that children cannot resist.

"Bilingual Babies" is a Smart Start funded program that began in September 1999. This program was started in collaboration with Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) and teaches English as a Second Language to both parents and children at the museum for no charge. Parents who stay at home with their babies can learn English from an FTCC instructor in one room, while their children are exposed to English in a fun-learning way in another room. The children also get important exposure to other adults and children which will help them adjust when it comes time for them to enroll in school. Natalia Cisneros and her daughter Daniela are students in the Bilingual Babies program. Natalia came to the United States from Columbia a year and a half ago after she married her husband, Jesse, a soldier at Ft. Bragg. Natalia enrolled in the program to increase her English vocabulary, and it was the only program offered she could bring her child with her to. "If I want to work some day," Natalia said, "I must improve my English. Also, it gives me a chance to meet and get to know other people in my same situation."

Fascinate-U Children's museum is offering a second Smart Start program called Nuestros Niños. This is an interactive program with parents and children that involves art activities, story telling, and music through the Spanish language. This program is designed for parents who want to expose their children to the Spanish language. Non-Spanish-speaking children will be able to learn basic Spanish words and sounds. Spanish children with limited vocabulary will be able to practice and improve their Spanish. This program is good for Spanish families, as well as other parents interested in the early immersion of their child in this language. Each session runs for one hour per week for six weeks on either Thursdays or Fridays. Children are placed in classes according to their age (between 17 months and 5 years).

The Museum is open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 9a.m. to 5p.m., Wednesdays from 9a.m. to 7p.m., and Saturdays from 10a.m. to 4p.m. Admission is \$3.00 per child and \$1.00 per adult. The museum is free on Wednesdays from 1p.m. to 7p.m. and closed to the public on Sundays and Mondays. For further information on the programs, please call Aurora Crowell at (910) 433-1573.

Child Care for Latino/Hispanic Families in North Carolina

by Virginia Lewis and Florence M. Simán-Zablah (Latino Program Coordinators, Child Care Networks)

Child care is one of the more fundamental needs of Latino/Hispanic parents in North Carolina and must be urgently addressed. As the need for child care grows for this highly employed population, a variety of informal child care has been arranged between friends and acquaintances. Looking to agencies or institutions to care for one's children is generally a foreign concept for these families. Most Spanish-speaking families in North Carolina come from rural Latin America where a traditional network of family, friends, and neighbors shares responsibility for child care. Upon arriving in the United States, Latino/Hispanic families leave this traditional network behind. Since Spanish-speaking parents usually do not have access to formal child care programs or to agencies that provide parents with information about these programs, they must create their own system of child care with few resources.

We are fortunate in North Carolina to have a network of Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, which already have designed services for English-speaking parents and child care providers. These service programs have the potential to improve child care for Latino/Hispanic children in North Carolina if made accessible and appropriate to the needs of Spanish-speaking families and child care providers.

Support for printing of this newsletter was generously provided by the North Carolina Children's Trust Fund. You can find past copies of the newsletter on the NCPEN web site at: www.ncpen.org. Please feel free to make copies.

At Child Care Networks in Chatham County, we have created a Latino Program that provides the same child care resource and referral services to our county's Spanish speakers as to our English speakers. According to the U.S. Census of 1990, Chatham County was one of the 21 North Carolina counties with the fastest-growing Latino/Hispanic populations and that trend is expected to continue in the 2000 census. In 1994, in response to this rapid growth, the N.C. Division of Child Development funded our proposal to hire a bilingual, bi-cultural consultant to develop a program meeting the child care needs of Latino/Hispanic families. Chatham County Smart Start funding began in January 1995, and it was agreed to continue our Latino program.

Our work has also taken on a statewide aspect to assist other Resource and Referral agencies in establishing similar programs. Since July 1996, with funding from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Chatham County has served as a pilot site for designing programs for North Carolina's Spanish-speaking families and child care providers. We are adapting our programs and curriculum for statewide implementation. As of July 1998, the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust assumed the funding for the health and safety program components.

- in-house training for human service providers;
- a conference entitled *Reaching Out to Latino Families*, in which we bring together speakers who already work with Latino/Hispanic communities in North Carolina;
- CPR courses in Spanish; and
- quality childcare workshops in Spanish informing parents of state regulations, health and safety standards, as well as preparing them to choose the best child care.

How can businesses and industries help their Spanish-speaking employees with child care issues? They can:

- **Form partnerships with local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to build up child care resources in their community and to help employees understand and locate quality child care.** Businesses and industries can increase worker stability and therefore increase productivity by ensuring their employees' accessibility to quality child care. When working parents have consistent and reliable child care, they are able to assume greater responsibilities at work, commit to a job for longer periods of time, and improve their job performance. This is equally true for Spanish-speaking employees as well as English-speaking employees.

- **Tell local Child Care Resource and Referral agency about the child care needs of their Spanish-speaking employees.**

Employers know how the needs of the workforce affect productivity and can communicate these needs to service agencies. For example, if an industry has difficulties in finding second- and third-shift workers due to a lack of child care

during these hours, it might help to ask the county Child Care Resource and Referral agency to help develop these resources.

- **Serve as a communication link between employees and service agencies that can help working parents find the support they need.**

Due to work schedules, it is often difficult for employees to come to an agency during office hours. Yet some Child Care Resource and Referral agencies have outreach programs and would be willing to have a staff member available on-site during break times to meet with working parents needing child care.

- **Collaborate with the local Child Care Resource and Referral agency by supporting and assisting in the hiring of bilingual, bicultural staff who can help develop programs that will meet the child care needs of Spanish-speaking parents.** Many corporations have contracts with Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to provide child care referral counseling specific to their employees' special circumstances such as longer shifts and relocation. One of the worst obstacles that Spanish-speaking working parents face in accessing services is the language difference. Businesses that depend on the labor of Latino/Hispanic parents need the support of their local resource and referral agency to provide culturally appropriate child care resource and referral services in Spanish to these parents.



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How can other Child Care Resource and Referral agencies help Spanish-speaking families with child care issues? They can:

- **Research the demographics of local Latino/Hispanic communities and find out what services, if any, are being provided to meet the needs of each community.**

Since the 1990 U.S. Census does not adequately reflect the number of Latino/Hispanic families living in North Carolina counties, conducting surveys with service providers, local churches, and businesses provides more accurate information about the community and how to better serve its needs. The fact that many Latino/Hispanic families are still uninformed about services provided by Child Care Resource and Referral agencies reflects that these services are not being provided in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. This does not indicate that Spanish-speaking families do not need these services.

- **Collaborate with other agencies that are interested in or already provide services to these communities.**

By collaborating, agencies working to meet the needs of the same communities can prevent duplication and coordinate services better.

- **Hire bilingual, bi-cultural staff to serve Latino/Hispanic families adequately.**

To successfully help families make informed decisions about choosing or providing quality child care, Child Care Resource and Referral staff need to understand and establish rapport with families seeking services. Cultural concepts directly affect the way families perceive and make decisions about child-rearing practices and child care environments. The hiring of bilingual and bi-cultural staff is the first step toward ensuring that services provided to Spanish-speaking families are parallel to services provided to English speaking families. In the absence of bilingual, bi-cultural staff, using interpreters often can improve communication between service providers and clients. However; this is not the most effective way to serve Spanish-speaking communities since developing rapport and on-going relationships are so crucial to the success of the counseling process. Our experience has proved that the consistent presence of bilingual, bi-cultural staff in the community is the single most powerful determinant of an agency's success in serving Latino/Hispanic families. 🌟

Helpful Resource List

■ Jovenes Lideres En Accion (El Centro Hispano)

Free organization of 14-20 year olds dedicated to helping and working with the Latino community. Develops leadership among Latino youth, informs community of their rights, and acts as examples of responsible, productive, honest, and united youth.

For more information call (919) 687-4635.

■ Migrant Even Start

Helps improve the literacy and educational opportunities of participating migrant families by integrating early childhood education. Includes ESL classes, parenting education, pre-kindergarten program and more.

For more information call Mary Sharpe at (919) 850-1660.

■ Hispanic/Latino Family Consultation Services

Assists families and community service organizations to understand cultural differences related to child development and early intervention issues.

For more information call (919) 956-5016.

■ Madres de Madres (Family Resource Center)

Provides single point of entry for families seeking services.

For more information call Maria Labetina at (919) 663-5867.

■ Program Aprendiendo con Mama

Provides help to Hispanic families with children ages 0-5. Including developmental classes and parenting skill classes.

For more information call Maria Lapetina at (919) 663-5867.

■ NC Family Health Resource Line

Provides basic information and referrals related to pregnancy and parenting skills via a statewide, toll free number. Also offers free written information in Spanish or English.

For more information call 1-800-367-2229.

■ Family Counseling Center (El Centro Hispano)

Provides free counseling services to members of the Latino community.

For more information call Ivan Parra at (919) 687-4635.

■ Comenzando Bien Program

Program designed to improve the health status of Latina women and their children, including teaching good prenatal and parenting skills.

For more information call (919) 781-2481.

■ Centro Hispano Net

Lists several resources for the Hispanic community of North Carolina.

www.CentroHispano.net

UPCOMING EVENTS

Behavior: Where to Begin

June 8, Coats, N.C.

For information call Alice Thomas 910-893-7597

Making IT Work: Supporting Child Welfare with Information Technology and Data, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau and the Child Welfare League of America

June 21-23, Arlington, VA

For information call 202-638-2952 or e-mail: nrcitcw@cwla.org

Leaders in Action for Worthy Wages: CCW Summer Institute 2000,

Center for the Child Care Workforce

June 25-28, Asheville, N.C.

For information call 202-737-7700, ext. 14;

E-mail: dmccall@ccw.org; Web: <http://www.ccw.org>

Supporting and Retaining Working Parents

July 12, 1:30 - 3 pm, Greensboro, N.C.

For information call 919-783-8088, ext. 23

Child Care Challenges and Resources

July 19, 1:30 - 3 pm, Greensboro, N.C.

For information call 919-783-8088, ext. 23

15th Annual Early Intervention and Early Childhood Summer Institute, Child Development Resources and the College of William and Mary School of Education

July 31-August 4, Williamsburg, VA

For information call Lisa McKean at 757-566-3300 or e-mail: lisam@cdr.org

Healthy Families America: Sharing Our Strengths, Prevent Child Abuse America

September 9-12, Atlanta, GA

For information call Stephanie Logan at 312-663-3520, ext. 109

Our Children in a Global World - Making the Connection, The National Black Child Development Institute

Oct. 10-13, Washington, DC

For information call 202-387-1281 or

1-800-556-2234 or e-mail:

moreinfo@nbcidi.org



DIALOGO: A Program Dedicated to Improving Human Relations Through Education

by Aura Camacho Maas (Executive Director, Latin American Resource Center)

DIALOGO™ is a compilation of the successful practices the Latin American Resource Center (LARC) has engaged in since the 1980s. Aura Camacho Maas initiated this process as a personal exercise trying to understand the nature of the conflict around racial issues she perceived when she arrived in the United States in 1981. By 1986, when she had learned English, she explored these issues through the arts and through studying about cultural identity and the influences of the Native, European, African, and Asian influences on the cultures of the Americas.

Between 1992 and now, LARC has engaged urban and rural communities to plan and implement DIALOGO programs on a county-wide basis in North Carolina. From the time Aura produced the first Latin American Festivals in North Carolina, LARC has been a catalyst for educators, local and international artists, and other program participants to work together and celebrate their shared cultures in ways that had never happened before. In 1994 LARC won the North Carolina Best Arts in Education Program Award.

DIALOGO focuses on the perceptions and attitudes children and adults have of people they perceive as different, and their impact in our relationships. DIALOGO components are a traveling exhibit, lesson plans and corresponding materials, and teacher training and staff development workshops for schools and corporations. Some DIALOGO pilot communities have been: Meredith College, Ravenscroft School, Washington Elementary School, and Daniels Middle School; Migrant Education Program, R.N. Harris Magnet School and Public Allies in Durham, Fuquay-Varina Hispanic Ministry; and the Wildacres Leadership Initiative.

DIALOGO offers the following tools: staff development workshops, cultural diversity training, multidisciplinary curricular units, a traveling exhibit called "Can We Move Beyond Stereotypes?", cultural artistic performances, and focus groups. The workshops encourage self-reflection and dialogue among people from different races, genders, and ages. They also foster learning about the Latin American cultures of Latin America and of the United States.

DIALOGO audiences are students, teachers and other school officials, parents, and other adults. DIALOGO's implementation, evaluation, and assessment are coordinated by LARC's staff with the participation of volunteer action groups from the communities.✻

If you would like to become involved in any of LARC's efforts, or to become a volunteer, call LARC in Raleigh at (919) 870-5272 or email larc@worldnet.att.net

PRO-Familia: Occupational Resources Program for Families

by Lisa Rowe (Program Coordinator, PRO-Familia)

In recognition of the rapidly growing Latino population in Wake County, Wake County Human Services/Vocational Services is about to launch a program called Pro-Familia, which will provide intensive case management and vocational services to Latino families in Wake County who are at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Wake County's Latino population was ranked second nationally in percentage growth of Latino residents, growing 162 percent between 1990 and 1998!

Funding for Pro-Familia comes from the N.C. Department of Social Services and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to implement the PRO-Familia program.

PRO-Familia staff will work to increase the ability of non-English speaking Latinos to support their families financially through stable, unsubsidized employment that pays a decent wage. Employment Counselors will work with program participants to ensure that their full range of needs are addressed-including housing, transportation, health care, mental health or substance abuse treatment, child care, legal problems, family and other support systems, domestic violence issues, education and language services, etc.

We hope to have two bilingual Employment Counselors/Case Managers and one bilingual Receptionist/Information and Referral Specialist on board by summer. PRO-Familia will be co-located with the Working for Kids program at its new location at 2815 Kidd Road in Raleigh. In-service trainings will be held soon to provide information about services provided, eligibility requirements, and the referral process. The number for the program will be (919) 212-9396.☀

For more information, please contact Lisa Rowe, Program Coordinator, at (919) 212-9346.

SafeChild's Spanish Nurturing Program

by Kristen Kelly (Program Coordinator, SafeChild Program)

The Spanish Nurturing Program offers parents a group environment to learn the skills and attitudes necessary to effectively nurture their children. Parents and children meet separately in small groups, once a week for two and a half hours, over a 15-week period. Parents and childrens groups are facilitated by professionally trained bilingual volunteers using The Nurturing Program curriculum, "Crianza Con Cariño," which translates to "raising children with love."

The 15-week Spanish Nurturing Program helps Spanish speaking families in many areas. Such areas include developing a positive self-esteem; gaining empathy for each other; learning alternatives to spanking; increasing awareness of their needs, strengths and weaknesses; increasing communication skills; promoting healthy emotional development; and building family support and cohesion.☀

For more information on the program please contact Kristen Kelly at (919) 743-6146.

For more information on how to become a member, please visit the North Carolina Parenting Education Network web site at: www.ncpen.org
NCPEN Newsletter Coordinator: Stephanie Moore. To share your comments, please e-mail Stephanie at: ncpennews@ivillage.com.

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