

NATIONAL
EXTENSION
PARENT
EDUCATION
MODEL

Of Critical Parenting Practices

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Table of Contents

PREFACE.....	5
PART ONE: FOUNDATIONS.....	7
Introduction.....	7
The Social Context.....	7
Consequences for Children and Parents.....	8
The Cooperative Extension Service Response.....	9
Plan of Action.....	11
First Steps.....	12
Evaluating the Initial Model.....	12
The National Model.....	15
Assumptions of the Model.....	15
Underlying Guiding Principles.....	15
Implications for Extension Parent Education Programs.....	18
PART TWO: THE MODEL IN DEPTH.....	19
Care for Self.....	19
Descriptors.....	20
Critical <i>Care for Self</i> Practices.....	20
Examples of Specific Program Objectives for <i>Care for Self</i>	20
What We Know about <i>Care for Self</i>	21
Understand.....	24
Descriptors.....	24
Critical <i>Understand</i> Practices.....	24
Examples of Specific Program Objectives for <i>Understand</i>	24
What We Know about <i>Understand</i>	25
Guide.....	28
Descriptors.....	28
Critical <i>Guide</i> Practices.....	28
Examples of Specific Program Objectives for <i>Guide</i>	28
What We Know about <i>Guide</i>	29
Nurture.....	34
Descriptors.....	34
Critical <i>Nurture</i> Practices.....	34
Examples of Specific Program Objectives for <i>Nurture</i>	34
What We Know about <i>Nurture</i>	35
Motivate.....	37
Descriptors.....	37
Critical <i>Motivate</i> Practices.....	37
Examples of Specific Program Objectives for <i>Motivate</i>	37
What We Know about <i>Motivate</i>	38
Advocate.....	39
Descriptors.....	39
Critical Advocate Practices.....	40
Examples of Specific Program Objectives for <i>Advocate</i>	40
What We Know about <i>Advocate</i>	40



PART THREE: IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL/PROGRAM DELIVERY STRATEGIES..... 45

- Parent Education Groups..... 45
- Parent Education Resource Centers..... 46
- Newsletters..... 47
- Radio Programs..... 47
- Home Visits..... 48
- Mentor Mother/Godparent Programs..... 49
- Hospital Programs..... 49
- Newspaper Articles and Tabletop Messages..... 49
- Community Forums..... 50
- Interagency Support/Collaborations..... 50
- Support Groups..... 50
- Community Coalitions/Task Forces..... 51
- Learn-at-Home Programs..... 51
- Parent Advisory Groups..... 51
- Social Change Groups: Liberation Pedagogy..... 52

PART FOUR: CURRICULUM GUIDE..... 53

- Baby’s First Year Calender..... 53
- Baby Talk..... 54
- Building Communities of Support for Families..... 55
- A Child In Your Life..... 56
- Cooperative Communication between Home and School..... 57
- Discipline for Young Children..... 58
- Empowering Families: Home Visiting and Building Clusters..... 59
- Families Can Make a Difference: A Substance Abuse Prevention Guide..... 60
- Footsteps..... 61
- Guiding Young Children..... 62
- Let’s Talk Sense about Sex..... 63
- Little Lives: A Parent’s Guide to Development..... 64
- Parent-Caregiver Partnerships..... 66
- Parent Education Program..... 67
- Parent Express..... 68
- Parenting Renewal..... 69
- Parents Show You Care..... 70
- Parents University..... 71
- Principles of Parenting..... 72
- Responsive Discipline..... 73
- Supportive Connections: Rural Communities and Single-Parent Families..... 74
- Teens as Parents of Babies and Toddlers..... 75
- Working With Single Parent Families..... 76

REFERENCES..... 77

APPENDIX 1

- Transparencies..... 89

APPENDIX 2

- Artistic Version of Model..... 94

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Preface

“By coming together to agree on a common set of goals, we are more likely to harness the great power that exists within our system. By focusing on what we share, we can communicate more effectively to others at county, state, and federal levels what we hope to achieve with our resources.”

In this final report, we outline a model of parent education that provides common ground for extension professionals throughout the Cooperative Extension System. The National Extension Parent Education Model (NEPEM) is a dynamic approach to parent education constructed through consensus. We hope you find inspiration and direction for your parent education programming within the pages of this document.

Extension field faculty, specialists, and administrators do have differences in the nature and style of their parent education efforts. Some of these differences are dictated by personal philosophy and training, others by regional variances. The way you conceptualize your own approach to parent education may be different from the model described here. You also might differ with us in our design strategy for the model. What we share, however, is more profound than how we differ.

By coming together to agree on a common set of goals, we are more likely to harness the great power that exists within our system. By focusing on what we share, we can communicate more effectively to others at county, state, and federal levels what we hope to achieve with our resources. We hope extension field faculty, state specialists, and administrators will use NEPEM to better understand and communicate to others what we believe is important in parent education and to design balanced and comprehensive programs. It is only a beginning in what we hope is a continuing reexamination of our priorities.

This report is intended primarily for professionals or committed volunteers who deliver parent education programs and for decision makers and advocates. It is not meant to be given directly to parents. NEPEM is not a parent education program. It is a compilation of priority parent practices and supporting material to be used as a basis for parent education efforts. It also can be used to communicate our priorities to those outside of extension who might be unfamiliar with our goals and programs. Resources listed in the Curriculum Guide section are examples of more specific parent education programs that are consistent with the model. Please contact the authors of these resources if you want to learn more about them.

We hope NEPEM begins a dialogue within extension that continues into the future. NEPEM builds a foundation for creating materials at local levels and provides a basis for more effectively pooling evaluations to communicate the nationwide impacts of our programs. Let us know what you think.

We would like to thank Ron Daly for his vision in seeing a need for the model and his support in finding the resources to complete this project. Olivia Collins’s work in the early stages of the project was invaluable. Ron Pitzer provided much appreciated background



information on discipline. We also would like to thank those extension administrators, specialists, field faculty, and parent educators outside of extension who took the time to review the model and send us their opinions.

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Foundations

INTRODUCTION

“Parents today are often uncertain about what is the right thing to do in raising their children.”

Parents experience special pressures today not faced by previous generations. The National Commission on Children’s national survey titled *Speaking of Kids* (1991b) reports that a majority of American adults, regardless of age, race, marital, or parental status believe that it is harder to be a parent today than it used to be (88 percent) and that parents today often are uncertain about what is the right thing to do in raising their children (86 percent). Compared to ten years ago, respondents believed children today are worse off with respect to their moral and religious training (53 percent) and the supervision and discipline they receive from their parents (56 percent).

Children themselves wished that their parents were more diligent in setting and enforcing rules. Thirty-nine percent of children 10-17 said they “sometimes” wished their parents were stricter or kept a closer watch over them and their lives. Another 8 percent said they wish this a lot. Only about 1 percent said they “never” wanted their parents to be stricter or more attentive. Because of the rapid pace of change in our society and an increasing awareness of and respect for cultural and values diversity, parents will continue to be challenged to expand on traditional styles of childrearing.

The Social Context

Several social trends are now challenging parent-child relationships. *Single parent families* may be most at risk. Although there always have been single parents in the United States, the causes of solitary parenting have changed. Single parents of previous generations were primarily widows and widowers. Parents are now more likely to be single because of divorce or never being married. Single parents in today’s society may be more isolated and perhaps more disillusioned than the single parents of the past. Increasing gaps between the “haves” and the “have-nots” in the U.S. have aggravated the disadvantage of single mothers. Children of single parents are now the poorest age group in the United States. According to *Beyond Rhetoric* (1991a), the final report of the National Commission on Children, about 25 percent (more than sixteen million) children lived with only one parent in 1989, twice as many as in 1970. Single parent families often are poor and isolated from extended family and community support.

Families today are also more *mobile* as parents relocate to pursue educational and employment opportunities. This trend has placed an additional burden on families who are no longer living near extended family members who have traditionally provided informal support and assistance.

Parental employment places a great strain on parent-child

“No longer is it automatic that neighbors will even know each other, much less watch out for each other and serve as a support system.”

relationships. Parents may have to depend on other caregivers, for example, to set limits and provide guidance during their children’s formative years. Between 1970 and 1990, the proportion of mothers with children under age six who were working or looking for work outside their homes rose from 32 percent to 58 percent. Today, approximately 10.9 million children under six have mothers in the paid labor force (National Commission on Children, 1991a). Unlike generations prior to the Baby Boom, today’s mothers are likely to be employed some distance from the home and are less likely to have extended family close by to assume the responsibilities they are unable to handle on their own. About 95 percent of all fathers are employed.

Social trends as varied as school consolidation and desegregation, shopping mall construction, day care centers, and telephones have moved the primary social focus from the immediate neighborhood to the larger community or even the “global village.” No longer is it automatic that neighbors will even know each other, much less watch out for each other and serve as a support system. One result is that people without flexible transportation or telephones may become *isolated and alone*.

The challenges parents face in raising their children are indeed considerable. The cultural context for their struggle often fails to provide the support parents need. We live in a *culture that often emphasizes violence, materialism, and self-gratification*. Parents may feel obligated to accelerate the maturation of their children. Potential resources to support parents and the children often are underfunded. Children are the casualties.

Consequences for Children and Parents

The well-being of our nation’s children is clearly at risk. According to the National Commission on Children (1991b), one in four adolescents engages in social behaviors that can lead to serious long-term difficulty; many more are vulnerable for future problems.

Substance abuse. Although the proportion of adolescents who had used alcohol in the past month decreased from 72 percent in 1980 to 57 percent in 1990, the rate remains unacceptably high (National Commission on Children, 1991b). In an Associated Press report published in the January 31, 1994 issue of the Manhattan Mercury, an annual survey of 51,000 high school and eighth-grade youth in more than 400 schools found that fewer teenagers than in previous surveys now see the peril in experimenting with cocaine and other illicit drugs. The researchers who conducted the survey also found that both marijuana and cigarette smoking increased from the previous year.

Juvenile offenders. “Between 1977 and 1987, the number of young people held in correctional facilities on any given day jumped 25 percent, from just over 73,000 to 92,000. Participation in youth gangs is also escalating...gang membership is closely related to delinquency and violence” (National Commission on Children, 1991b, p. 227). In 1988 as many as 450,700 children were classified as runaways. An

“

Most parents need a mentor who is affable, infinitely patient, kind, unflappable, understanding, and wise!

Ken Barber,
Family Life Specialist,
Washington

”



estimated 127,000 children were “throwaways,” children abandoned or thrown out of the home by parents.

Teenage pregnancy. One million teenage girls become pregnant each year. Nearly half of them give birth. The proportion of teenage births that occur outside of marriage has increased steadily since the early 1970s (National Commission on Children, 1991a). The rate of births to single teens increased 16 percent nationally between 1985 and 1990 (American Humane Association, 1993). Children of teen-age mothers are more likely than other children to perform poorly in school and to exhibit behavioral problems (Luster and Mittelstaedt, 1993).

Adolescent suicide. During the 1960s and 1970s, the rate at which adolescents took their own lives doubled, from 3.6 to 7.2 deaths per 100,000. By 1986, it had increased another 30 percent, to 10.2 deaths per 100,000. Suicide is now the second leading cause of death among adolescents after accidents. Eight times as many young people attempt suicide unsuccessfully (National Commission on Children, 1991a).

Mental illness. An estimated 12 to 15 percent of all children suffer mental disorders; approximately 10 percent have received treatment in the past year (National Commission on Children, 1991a). Nearly 500,000 American children now live in hospitals, detention facilities, and foster homes. That number is expected to climb to more than 840,000 by 1995 (House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, 1989).

Child abuse. The United States Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect concluded in its 1990 *Executive Summary* that child abuse in the United States represents a national emergency. In 1974, 60,000 cases of child abuse and neglect were reported. By the late 1980s, this number had increased to 2.4 million per year. Reports of abuse and neglect in 1992 represent a one hundred and 32 percent increase in the last decade (American Humane Association, 1993). Much of the increase is due to growing public awareness of child abuse and the establishment of mandatory reporting laws, but the limited availability of prevention services is also a contributing factor. “This is especially true in rural counties where inaccessibility and lack of facilities perpetuates the level of isolation experienced by families” (National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research, 1990, p. 5). Children who have been abused or neglected are 53 percent more likely to be arrested as juveniles, 38 percent more likely to be arrested as adults, and 38 percent more likely to commit a violent crime (Widom, 1992).



The Cooperative Extension Service Response

The Cooperative Extension System has recognized the need for family support by identifying and implementing two national initiatives: *Youth at Risk* and *The Plight of Young Children*. The National Initiative Task Force on Youth at Risk identified *parental support* and *problem solving/decision-making skills* as two of the eight



A national model is important because it provides a common framework for all extension efforts...thus providing the opportunity for efforts to build on each other rather than duplicate each other.

Tom Lee, Human Development Specialist, Utah



critical educational priority needs. Parent education was one of three areas targeted for Youth at Risk programs (The National Initiative Task Force on Youth at Risk, 1990).

The Plight of Children: Prenatal to Five Task Force recommended that the "...Cooperative Extension System—by FY 1993—will allocate substantial resources—human and financial—to address the critical needs of the nation's at-risk families with young children" (The Plight of Children: Prenatal to Five Task Force, 1991, p. 7).

In *Reaching Limited Resource Audiences: Recommendations for Extension Action in the 1990s*, the Cooperative Extension System Limited Resources Committee recommended that the organization "...enhance or strengthen programs targeting pregnant and parenting teens, single-parent families, and the functionally illiterate" (The Limited Resource Audiences Committee, 1991, p. 2). Each of these three national initiatives acknowledged the importance of parent education for the extension system.

Parent education is an important component in Cooperative Extension System programs. In a 1991 report by the Cooperative Extension Strategic Planning Council titled *Patterns of Change*, one of the futuring panels indicated that "extension needs to help families deal with how to educate their children, how to stay away from drugs and gangs, and how to adjust socially to become productive citizens." (Strategic Planning Council, 1991, p. 15).

The Cooperative Extension System, with its experience in community-based parent education, access to research-based knowledge at land grant universities, and its national delivery network of specialists and field faculty is in an ideal position to create and implement a common, core approach to parent education. In addition, with its mandate to reach out to all families with children of all ages, the Cooperative Extension System can play a key role in facilitating networking and collaboration among organizations and agencies that serve families.

The National Extension Parent Education Model (NEPEM)

Unfortunately, CES has not had a national parent education plan. A system-wide model of parent education achieved through consensus-building would provide specialists and field faculty with a common set of terms, approaches, and materials. This core unifying conceptual framework would serve to guide local programs, increase collaboration across state lines, and provide a basis for synthesizing evaluations of common efforts. Furthermore, a unifying vision of parent education would be a powerful tool for teaching decision makers, state and federal organizations and agencies, and the public about a priority within the Cooperative Extension System.

The project to create such a model would have four objectives: (1) create a conceptual model based on the best available research data that identifies the critical parenting practices associated with the development of competence in children and youth, regardless of their socioeconomic status or cultural background; (2) design a curriculum



“A system-wide model of parent education achieved through consensus-building would provide specialists and field faculty with a common set of terms, approaches, and materials.”

guide of resources consistent with the conceptual model; (3) prepare a report describing the model and curriculum; and (4) distribute the report to professionals throughout the Cooperative Extension System and to federal agencies and organizations that might be interested in networking with extension. The national model could be used by professionals to create comprehensive parent education programs at the local level. Instead of a specific “canned” program, NEPEM would serve as a framework for stimulating and conceptualizing parent education programs developed at state and county levels.

This conceptual model and curriculum would be:

- Concerned primarily with the fundamental skills that comprise the very heart of quality parenting throughout childhood and adolescence;
- Responsive to the critical needs of at-risk children and their families;
- Sensitive to regional, cultural, and ethnic differences in childrearing;
- Based on the work of The National Commission on Children and the CES Plight of Young Children and Youth at Risk initiatives;
- Consistent with the latest research about child development and parent-child relationships;
- Easily communicated to decision makers, administrators and nonprofessionals to facilitate collaboration and networking;
- A catalyst for developing and delivering parent education programs throughout the Extension system.

NEPEM would provide a core conceptualization of fundamentals that could be adapted and expanded easily by state specialists and field faculty. The model and its recommended curriculum resources could be updated each year. Teams of specialists could be encouraged to prepare materials where gaps exist in the curriculum guide.

PLAN OF ACTION

A team of state human development specialists was selected in the spring of 1992 by Ron Daly, national program leader in human development at ES-USDA, to give leadership to the development of a national model of extension parent education. Charles A. Smith (Project Director, Kansas), Judith Myers-Walls (Indiana), Dorothea Cudaback (California), and Wallace Goddard (Alabama) were selected to begin the process. After submitting a proposal to Cooperative Extension Service, the team was awarded a \$60,000 ES-USDA grant to develop and distribute The National Extension Parent Education Model (NEPEM).

“NEPEM would provide a core conceptualization of fundamentals that could be adapted and expanded easily by state specialists and field faculty.”

First Steps

The task facing the team was to combine their professional and creative energies to design a model that would appeal to extension professionals across the system. Each team member brought to this challenging task a strong advocacy for his or her own perspective about what our priorities should be in parent education. The challenge immediately facing the group was to find common ground based on respect and affirmation of each team member’s individual approach. Team members were challenged to revise and compromise to achieve consensus. If four individuals with diverse opinions and values, but a shared commitment to the objectives listed above, could agree on a common model, their recommendations might be more readily accepted and used by other professionals within the system.

Each team member independently prepared a set of materials illustrating his or her own personal model of parent education. At this point each person worked in isolation from other team members. At their first meeting in August 1992, at Kansas State University, each team member presented his or her individual model to the group. These individual approaches were clearly divergent in both content and form. Considerable discussion, much of quite lively, took place over two days in an effort to fully understand the rationale for each of the four individual models.

The next step was to find the common elements that existed within the individual approaches. Instead of continuing to assert the merits of their own designs, team members began to collaborate on a fifth alternative model that would be the joint creation of their common thinking. Once this foundation was created, debate and compromise could be employed to integrate and expand on the initial effort.

After numerous conference calls and fax exchanges and a team meeting at the National Council on Family Relationships (NCFR) 1992 Annual Meeting, an initial model was created, one that differed significantly from each of the previous individual approaches. It consisted of six clusters or categories of parent skills, each composed of a list of priority parent practices related to that category.

This initial model was reviewed by a national advisory board established by Ron Daly. NEPEM also was presented at various regional and national conferences, including the 1993 NCFR meeting, to obtain additional input. Consensus had to be built across the system if NEPEM was to prove useful.

Evaluating the Initial Model

A survey designed to gain feedback about the value and specific content of the model was distributed to all human development and family life specialists throughout the system. Specialists were encouraged to make copies of the survey to give to field faculty and parent educators who work closely with extension. A total of eighty-nine surveys were returned. Approximately 10 percent of the returns were completed by full-time administrators, 48 percent by state specialists, 42 percent by field faculty, and 3 percent by indi-



viduals outside of extension. The results of the survey reported in Table 1 provided strong confirmation of the initial model.

Question	Yes	No	?
1. Are the words and phrases identified in the model free of cultural, racial, and sexual bias?	90%	8%	2%
2. Does the model, taken as a whole, feel right to you? Is the overall approach appealing?	79%	8%	13%
3. Is the model easy to understand?	82%	8%	13%
4. Would you change any of the key words in the model?	34%	49%	17%
5. Are these six sets of critical practices appropriate goals for Extension parent education?	94%	2%	4%
6. Do you think we have missed any parent skills that you think should be a priority?	22%	53%	25%

Table 1. Results of Survey: Percentage of Responses to Questions Evaluating the Proposed National Extension Parent Education Model (N=89).







“ I am looking forward to using this model with the Extension faculty throughout Tennessee. Eighty-six out of ninety-five counties identified parent education as a priority program.
Ron Daly, Leader/Home Economics/Family Life, Tennessee ”

Survey respondents provided many suggestions for improving the team’s first effort. This feedback, as well as additional comments from other professionals and advisory board members provided direction for making a variety of editorial changes. Some icons were changed, some titles and priority practices were modified, and numbering of the categories was eliminated.

The current model is summarized on page 14. For those who would like to introduce NEPEM to groups, a set of visuals suitable for use as handouts or transparencies can be found in Appendix 1. A more stylized version of the same information can be found in Appendix 2.

Some reviewers suggested greater emphasis in the model on the importance of community and social support as a context for parent education. These issues are indeed important if not critical for parent education. The purpose of NEPEM, though, is to focus exclusively on the *direct education of parents*. Such issues as social support and political reform are conceptualized in the model in terms of how parents can involve themselves and others in these issues. In *Care for Self*, for example, critical parenting skills include supporting and seeking support from other parents. In *Advocate*, the team suggested that we encourage parents to speak out on behalf of their children in the community and insist on effective social services and responsible public policy that supports families of all kinds. The importance of community support and availability of services is emphasized in the narrative discussion of the model but is not incorporated as a separate category in the model itself.

The National Extension Parent Education Model

<i>Icon</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Priority Practice</i>
	Care for Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manage personal stress. ■ Manage family resources. ■ Offer support to other parents. ■ Ask for and accept support from others when needed. ■ Recognize one's own personal and parenting strengths. ■ Have a sense of purpose in setting child-rearing goals. ■ Cooperate with one's child-rearing partners.
	Understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observe and understand one's children and their development. ■ Recognize how children influence and respond to what happens around them.
	Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model appropriate desired behavior. ■ Establish and maintain reasonable limits. ■ Provide children with developmentally appropriate opportunities to learn responsibility. ■ Convey fundamental values underlying basic human decency. ■ Teach problem-solving skills. ■ Monitor children's activities and facilitate their contact with peers and adults.
	Nurture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Express affection and compassion. ■ Foster children's self-respect and hope. ■ Listen and attend to children's feelings and ideas. ■ Teach kindness. ■ Provide for the nutrition, shelter, clothing, health, and safety needs of one's children. ■ Celebrate life with one's children. ■ Help children feel connected to family history and cultural heritage.
	Motivate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teach children about themselves, others, and the world around them. ■ Stimulate curiosity, imagination, and the search for knowledge. ■ Create beneficial learning conditions. ■ Help children process and manage information.
	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Find, use, and create community resources when needed to benefit one's children and the community of children. ■ Stimulate social change to create supportive environments for children and families. ■ Build relationships with family, neighborhood, and community groups.

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THE NATIONAL MODEL

“Parent education is more effective when parents are active participants in and contributors to their parent education programs.”

“
One thing I learned by doing parent education is that we all feel inadequate.
Judith A. Graham, Human Development Specialist, Maine
”

Assumptions of the Model

As they progressed toward consensus regarding the common priorities for extension parent education, the NEPEM team made nine key assumptions regarding parents and their relationships with children:

- Parents are primary socializers of their children.
- Parenting attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviors can be positively influenced by parent education efforts.
- Parenting is a learned skill that can be strengthened through study and experience.
- Parent education is more effective when parents are active participants in and contributors to their parent education programs.
- The parent-child relationship is nested within and influenced by multiple social and cultural systems.
- Programs should be responsive to diversity among parents.
- Effective parent education may be accomplished by a variety of methods.
- Both the parent and the child have needs that should be met.
- The goal of parent education is strengthening and educating the parent (or caregiver) so that he or she is better able to facilitate the development of caring, competent, and healthy children.

Underlying Guiding Principles

Team members were guided by eight underlying principles that shaped the model.

NEPEM focuses exclusively on what parents do to enhance the well-being of their children.

This principle is critical for understanding NEPEM. The authors decided to focus on parent action. Other variables in the lives of parents and children are also critical for their growth. The educational system, public policy that affects families, and community support for parents are all crucial for both children and parents. But these systems are not parent education unless parents are directly involved. The authors hope these broader issues are given the emphasis they deserve in our extension system. With its *Advocate* category, the NEPEM model emphasizes building parent skills to use or motivate these systems to be more supportive and accountable for their impact on families.

The model focuses on priority parent practices that are significant across the full range of childhood and adolescence.

None of the practices targets parents of any specific age group of children. More specific objectives could be created by parent educators to apply the model to parents of children of a specific age. How parents listen and attend to children’s feelings and ideas would

“By doing parent education I learned that parents will test all new information against their experiences.”

Dorothy James,
Family Life Specialist,
Texas

“The NEPEM model is basically what we believe is the “heart and soul” of our parent education programs. It is the foundation on which state and county extension programs can build.”

obviously be different if their children were infants or adolescents. The parent educator who develops a program based on NEPEM is challenged to convert the selected priority parent practice to more specific program objectives appropriate for the targeted parent group. Materials in the curriculum guide that accompanies the model often are targeted for parents of specific ages of children.

The model emphasizes core priorities.

The NEPEM model is basically what we believe is the “heart and soul” of our parent education programs. It is the foundation on which state and county extension programs can build. We hope extension parent educators will find it provides common ground where they can join others across the system regardless of individual or state differences in priorities. We did not attempt to define everything of importance for parent education, only what we believed to be of fundamental significance for all parent educators within the system.

Few individual specialists or even single state extension parent education programs will address all of the NEPEM priority practices at one time. By joining together and linking resources and expertise, we will be more effective in gradually building a comprehensive program in parent education. NEPEM’s real value is not in what it is but in the dialogue and collaboration it sets into motion.

Issues are more important than arrangement.

We decided early in the process of debate and negotiation that agreement on the arrangement of the parent practices would be difficult, if not impossible to achieve. Instead, we focused on achieving consensus on the basic or core skills and the categories that might provide a logical framework for the practices. We removed arrows, flowcharts, numbers, and other symbols of cause and effect and of sequence in the model.

Avoiding all visual or connective relationships between the parent practice categories is impossible once they are placed on paper. There may, in fact, be some subtle connection between them as they are presented in the current model. We leave that for the user to decide. In the team’s view, the actual skills and practices emphasized in the model are more important than their arrangement.

NEPEM categories of parent skills have fluid, not rigid boundaries.

Think of NEPEM as a model that is in motion. What we have created is a snapshot of parenting skills organized into six fluid categories. Most of the priority parent practices could be placed in more than one category. Categories are conveniences that allow us to communicate the overall emphasis of the model. Users should keep the entire picture in focus and not become distracted by the frame.

NEPEM is dynamic, not static.

NEPEM is our attempt to create a representation of the best thinking about what our system believes is important for parent education. We fully expect that NEPEM will change as our knowl-

Implications for Extension Parent Education Programs

Planning. NEPEM can be used to communicate parent education priorities to county planning groups or advisory boards. County extension home economists and 4-H agents can use the one-page summary as the basis for a brief overview of parent education for these groups. The curriculum guide can provide examples of resources available in the extension system. Additional programs based on NEPEM also can be created or located by state, area, and county extension professionals.

Collaboration. NEPEM can be used by county and area field faculty and state Extension specialists to inform other agencies and organizations of our common goals. Because collaboration depends on finding mutual goals, better understanding of our priorities will make more effective collaboration possible.

Programming. Specific educational programs can be developed to encourage specific parent practices identified in NEPEM. New materials can be created to fill gaps in current resources.

Organizing and filing. NEPEM categories can provide a convenient way to organize and file a variety of resources: research articles, leader guides, fact sheets, reports, and other types of information.

Common language. The parent practices described in NEPEM provide the basis for a common language extension professionals can use at county, state, and federal levels to describe their programs to each other. Common goals and the terms used to describe them can build a sense of shared community among extension professionals committed to parent education.

Evaluation. Programs implemented to reach common goals provide powerful evaluation opportunities for the system. Evaluations can be synthesized and organized more effectively when programs share priority goals. The NEPEM team hopes that common evaluation instruments and strategies will be created and distributed throughout the extension system.

Extension initiatives. Specific Cooperative Extension Service initiatives like Plight of Young Children and Youth at Risk can draw from NEPEM as a guide to focus their efforts on parent education. More specific parent education objectives could be created within each initiative consistent with its emphasis.

NEPEM could also have implications for professionals outside of the extension system. High school and college teachers might find the model and this report useful for students in their classes. Researchers might be encouraged to investigate areas of the model that could be investigated more thoroughly. Parent educators could find common ground with their extension colleagues and discover new resources for use in their work with parents.

The Model in Depth

“Caring for oneself means knowing and understanding oneself, managing life’s demands, and establishing clear direction.”

In this section, each of the categories of parent skills is examined in more detail. This overview includes a brief description of the category, a list of descriptors or keywords and critical priority parent practices identified in the model. Examples of more specific program objectives also are provided.

Examples of potential objectives are presented to illustrate the types of more specific skills that could flow from the broader, more general priority practices. They are essentially a “shopping list” to stimulate the creativity of a parent educator. Many more objectives could be created focusing on parents of children at different ages, and with different needs. Appreciation of and sensitivity to cultural practices is critical for designing specific objectives. Some of the examples of program objectives included here are specific in terms of changes in parental behavior. Others are more cognitive and less behavioral. It is up to the program developer to decide the types of program impacts they want to emphasize.

A review of the research also is provided for each priority practice category. Each category also includes a brief review of the research literature. Research was selected to give the reader a general sense of what we know about the critical practices identified in that category. The review is a starting point for those who would like to establish a thorough research base for their parent education efforts.

CARE FOR SELF



Caring for oneself means knowing and understanding oneself, managing life’s demands, and establishing clear direction.

Although not impacting children directly, *Care for Self* provides a backdrop of security, support, predictability, and purpose that indirectly influences the lives of everyone in the family. For example, a parent who has established a sense of purpose in parenting will be more comfortable establishing criteria for choos-

Descriptors

Stress

Support

Partnerships

Philosophy

Household management

Individual strengths

ing guidance strategies. A parent who is motivated in her or his own life will be more capable of motivating a child. And a parent who feels interpersonally connected and supported will find it natural to nurture a child.

While *Care for Self* does not necessarily precede other parenting practices, it is quite possible to begin developing these skills before an individual becomes a parent. In many cases, these self-care concerns must be addressed before a parent can begin to concentrate on the child and the behaviors more directly related to parenthood.

Care for Self is closely connected with *Advocate*, a cluster of skills that enable parents to reach out to other institutions and the community. *Care for Self* focuses on the parent's needs and well-being while *Advocate* focuses on the needs of the child. Caring for oneself is not only a critical parenting skill, but a skill for life.

Critical *Care for Self* Practices

- Manage personal stress.
- Manage family resources.
- Offer support to other parents.
- Ask for and accept support from others when needed.
- Recognize one's own personal and parenting strengths.
- Have a sense of purpose in setting child-rearing goals.
- Cooperate with one's child-rearing partners.

Examples of Specific Program Objectives for *Care For Self*

The following parent behaviors serve as examples of more specific outcome objectives based on the critical practices for *Care for Self*:

- Identify three personal signs and sources of stress.
- Describe four different methods for coping with stress and four methods for reducing stress.
- Set a specific goal for improved time management.
- Create and follow a household budget.
- Identify five formal and informal sources of personal parenting support.
- Establish a balance between support that is offered to others and support that is requested from others.
- Report an increased number of personal parenting strengths.
- Report increased parenting self-confidence.
- Define four goals for one's parenting "career."
- Identify six principles that guide their decisions in parenting.
- Discuss three parenting issues with the child's other parent(s) or parent figure(s) and set shared goals.
- Demonstrate effective communication strategies for dealing with value



We cannot give what we do not have. Self-care is the foundation for caring about others.

Judith A. Graham, Human Development Specialist
Maine





What We Know about *Care for Self*

Minor parenting hassles, not only major life events, appear to be important sources of stress. Experiencing many daily hassles is associ-

ated with more child behavior problems, lower social competence, and greater maternal stress. Daily parenting hassles include, for example, interruptions and disruptions due to parenting, the child's nagging or irritability, and the constant need to perform routine tasks. Hassles predicted less responsive and more controlling child behavior during interaction. Both friendship and community support consistently acted to moderate the relationship between daily hassles and the mother's interaction with the child. The data indicated that mothers need both instrumental and emotional support from husbands/partners (Crnic and Greenberg, 1990).

What We Know about CARE FOR SELF



1. **Minor parenting hassles, not only major life events, appear to be important sources of stress.**
2. **Isolation and limited contact with social support systems are factors in troubled families.**
3. **Close relationships lead to a secure base from which an individual can cope with stress.**
4. **Social support is especially critical for adolescent parents.**
5. **Many low-income families are able to maintain supportive networks, but large networks can be a liability. The source of support itself can be a stressor.**
6. **Mothers who are more satisfied with their personal networks and those with larger "maternal networks" show more parenting skill.**
7. **Parents living with adult relatives may not develop strong parenting skills.**
8. **There is a "norm of reciprocity" that may make it difficult for some parents to accept support from others.**
9. **Supportive social networks are important for African American family life, as well as other different ethnic groups.**
10. **Parents who provide mutual support will seek consensus in important decisions about childrearing.**

Isolation and limited contact with social support systems are factors in troubled families. High-risk, multi-problem families tend to have networks that are smaller than average. There is a dynamic relationship between individuals and their environment which is influenced by the richness of their support network (Saulnier and Rowland, 1985). Cochran and Henderson (1990) found that mothers' perceptions of their children became more positive as a function of how many kinfolk they included in their primary network. This relationship was strongest for mothers who had less than a high school education.

Close relationships lead to a secure base from which an individual can cope with stress. Support effectiveness may depend on the degree to which there is a match between the particular support function and individual needs. People expect exchange of support (reciprocity)

and have expectations regarding the provision of support (trust). Support needs and partners' abilities to meet needs change over time and situation. Under conditions of duress, a supportive person can provide a secure base for a distressed parent (Coffman et al., 1991).

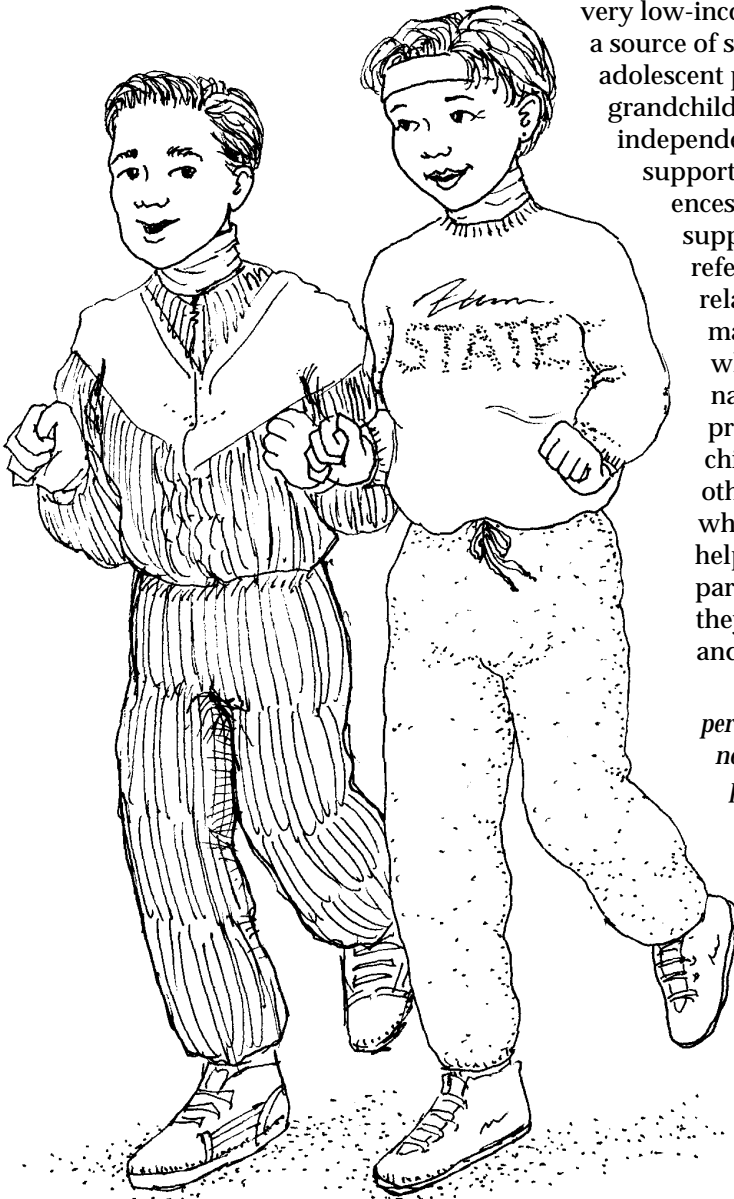
Supportive, close relationships serve as “buffers” to stress that might otherwise cause a breakdown in effective parenting (Quinton, Rutter, and Liddle, 1984).

Social support is especially critical for adolescent parents. There is substantial evidence that social support is positively related to the quality of care teen mothers provide for their children (Luster and Mittelstaedt, 1993). Support from the family of origin is often found to be more important than boyfriend or spouse support in influencing maternal attitudes and skills. Becoming a parent may place a teen out of synchrony with other life course transitions. Developmental tasks of adolescents as individuals and as parents are contradictory (Nath et al., 1991).

Many low-income families are able to maintain supportive networks, but large networks can be a liability. The source of support itself can be a stressor. Supportive networks are an essential element of survival in very low-income neighborhoods. Social support also can be a source of stress, however. For example, mothers of adolescent parents may provide essential child care of their grandchildren while undermining their daughters’ independence. It is important to consider the source of support; the frequency of contact; qualitative differences in types of support, such as emotional/supportive, instrumental/material, information/referral, as well as the extent of reciprocity in the relationship. The type of help that is needed most may be a function of a person’s situation, but what actually is available may depend on the nature of the network. The quality of the contacts predicted whether or not parents maltreated their children. Only those mothers who perceived others as willing and able to meet their needs and who saw themselves as competent to enlist their help were judged by others in the group to be parenting adequately. It also was important that they were able to establish reciprocal relationships and express empathy (Crittenden, 1985).

Mothers who are more satisfied with their personal networks and those with larger “maternal networks” (systems of support specifically for parenting) show more parenting skill, while those who view children as acting out and report low rates of supportive social contact have less frequent prosocial mother-child interaction.

Although personal and maternal networks overlap, mothers tend to have larger personal networks than maternal ones. Concerning their maternal networks, they tend to be more satisfied with the help offered directly to their children and less satisfied with the advice they receive. Those who are more satisfied with their networks report a greater sense of well-being and have





Parenting is a trial run for all parents. There are no written guidelines or instructions issued with children.

Sheila B. Jeffers, Youth/Adult Specialist, Florida



“Care for Self provides a backdrop of security, support, predictability, and purpose that indirectly influences the lives of everyone in a family.”

been observed to be more likely to praise their children and are less intrusive (Jennings et al., 1991; Szykula et al., 1991).

Parents living with adult relatives may not develop strong parenting skills. It is better if those other adults provide educative rather than exploitative support. Richardson et al., (1991) called this a “developmental double bind.” Support is important, and living with other adult relatives can help parents attain various types of crucial support, but it also may make it difficult for young parents to develop maturity and parenting competence. Furstenberg (1981) identified two patterns of support from families: educative and exploitative. In examining families with teen parents, it is possible to identify parents who help the teens to care for their children and gradually allow them to take over the jobs they can handle. In contrast, other families assume responsibility for all tasks and do not allow the teen autonomy or decision-making power. Clearly, educative support helps the teen mother to assume responsibility when she is ready (Barratt, et al., 1991).

There is a “norm of reciprocity” that may make it difficult for some parents to accept support from others. The norm of reciprocity assumes that someone who receives help from others will eventually return the favor. This means that people who believe they will not be able to return the favor may not seek help. Unfortunately, people with the fewest resources to help others may be the most in need of help from others. This norm appears to be less important with family and intimate relationships (Shumaker and Brownell, 1984).

Support social networks are important for African American family life as well as other different ethnic groups. Support from friends, church members, neighbors, and co-workers positively influence self-esteem and personal efficacy, parent-child relationships, and the ability to deal with social problems. Extrafamilial support is associated with socialization responsibility and child care for men regardless of ethnic group (Ahmeduzzaman and Roopnarine, 1992).

Parents who provide mutual support will seek consensus in important decisions about childrearing. When parents use incompatible approaches with their children, the children may show lower self-esteem, problems adapting to school, and lower school achievement. Mothers and fathers may respond differently to developmental changes and demands and display incongruent or disparate patterns of control and influence. Child-rearing disagreements between parents are correlated with behavior problems in three- to six-year-olds (Jouriles et al., 1991) as well as older children (Kandel, 1990). Adolescents are more likely than younger children to notice the difference between their parents (Johnson et al., 1991).

UNDERSTAND

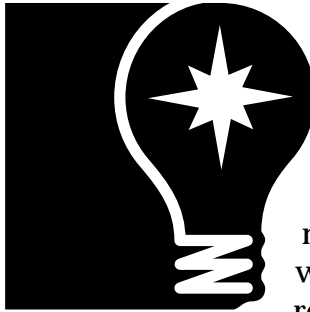
Descriptors

Awareness

Acceptance

Insight

Developmentally appropriate



To *Understand* children, their development, needs, and uniqueness is vital for parents. Each child is different, not only in abilities, but also in the extraordinary way that he or she sees the world. Understanding children can result in less conflict in relationships

with them. Understanding is also an important part of helping children become secure and healthy people. Children are not likely to become caring, loving people if they have not experienced understanding from people who are close to them.

Critical *Understand* Practices

- Observe and understand one's children and their development
- Recognize how children influence and respond to what happens around them.

Examples of Specific Program Objectives for *Understand*

The following parent behaviors serve as examples of more specific outcome objectives based on the critical practices for *Understand*:

- Describe the stages of physical, cognitive, and social development of childhood and adolescent development.
- Understand how parents and children influence each other in different ways throughout childhood and adolescence.
- Evaluate the reasonableness of their expectations in terms of a child's developmental level.
- Create a developmentally appropriate environment for children that allows for movement, play, and creativity.
- Know when children can be expected to be toilet trained, to stay at home alone, to prepare meals alone, to leave home for short periods, to go on dates, or to drive a car.
- Understand that infants and preschoolers are naturally curious and active and that sitting quietly for a long time is unreasonable.
- Match the difficulty of learning activities to the developmental levels of children.
- Understand the basic needs of children: physical needs (sleep, food), emotional needs (love, acceptance, security, guidance, control, independence, and respect for self and others), social needs (friendship, companionship), intellectual needs (intellectual stimulation, thinking new thoughts), spiritual needs (the need to know that we are part of something bigger than ourselves), and

“It seems wise to teach parents to avoid labeling, to allow for some failure as normal, and to have optimistic expectations for their children.”



Understand



Understanding sets the tone for openness in the relationship between parent and child.

Dorothy E. James, Human Development Specialist, Texas



creative needs (need to express self).

- Draw on one's own childhood experiences to respond with more compassion and understanding of children.
- Observe and interpret their children's behavior and use that information to make adjustments in parenting behavior.
- Understand that each child is different and unique from others.
- Observe their children and the purposes underlying their behavior (i.e., looking at their faces, watching their actions, listening to them, being attentive to their feelings, and identifying patterns of behavior).
- Listen to nonverbal indicators as well as verbal language of children.
- Consider external factors that affect their children's behavior.
- Evaluate their own parenting behavior and to use this insight to change their behavior.
- Identify consequences of substance use and abuse (including smoking, alcohol, and drugs) for a developing fetus.
- Identify the consequences of nutritional decisions for a developing fetus.

What We Know about UNDERSTAND



What We Know about *Understand*

1. **Different parents have different beliefs about the causes of their children's behavior.**
2. **Parents will be more effective if they are knowledgeable about their own child, child development, and childrearing.**
3. **Parents use observation and comparison to better understand their children.**
4. **A parents' knowledge of child development is affected by culture, family, and generation.**
5. **Children thrive when the environment suits their own personal style.**
6. **Difficult child temperament, especially during infancy, can undermine parental functioning.**
7. **Parental beliefs and expectations influence a child's experience and behavior.**

Different parents have different beliefs about the causes of their children's behavior. Mothers of only children are more likely to view their own childrearing as influential while parents of multiple children are more likely to see genetic causes as significant. Parents also are more likely to emphasize their own childrearing if the child is perceived as doing well and deny self-attribution when the child has problems. Attributing a child's behavior to environmental forces or genetics may be self-protective for a parent but could discourage direct action by the parent to help the child (Himelstein et al., 1991).

Parents will be more effective if they are knowledgeable about their own child, child development, and childrearing. What parents know about children's development is positively related to their skills in designing a supportive learning environment and to their ability to interact in ways that stimulate development. Providing parents with information about child develop-

Part 2 The Model in Depth

ment is a highly cost-effective human service that enhances the knowledge base of parents and others in the parent's personal social network who also interact with the child (Stevens, 1984; Schmitt, 1987). In addition, being perceptive about a child's individuality and the "fit" between a child's temperament and the environment are critical for enhancing a child's development and well-being (Lerner, 1993).

In a summary of the research, Belsky (1984) concluded that "sensitive" parenting, attuned to children's capabilities and to the developmental tasks they face, promotes emotional security, behavioral independence, social competence, and intellectual achievement.

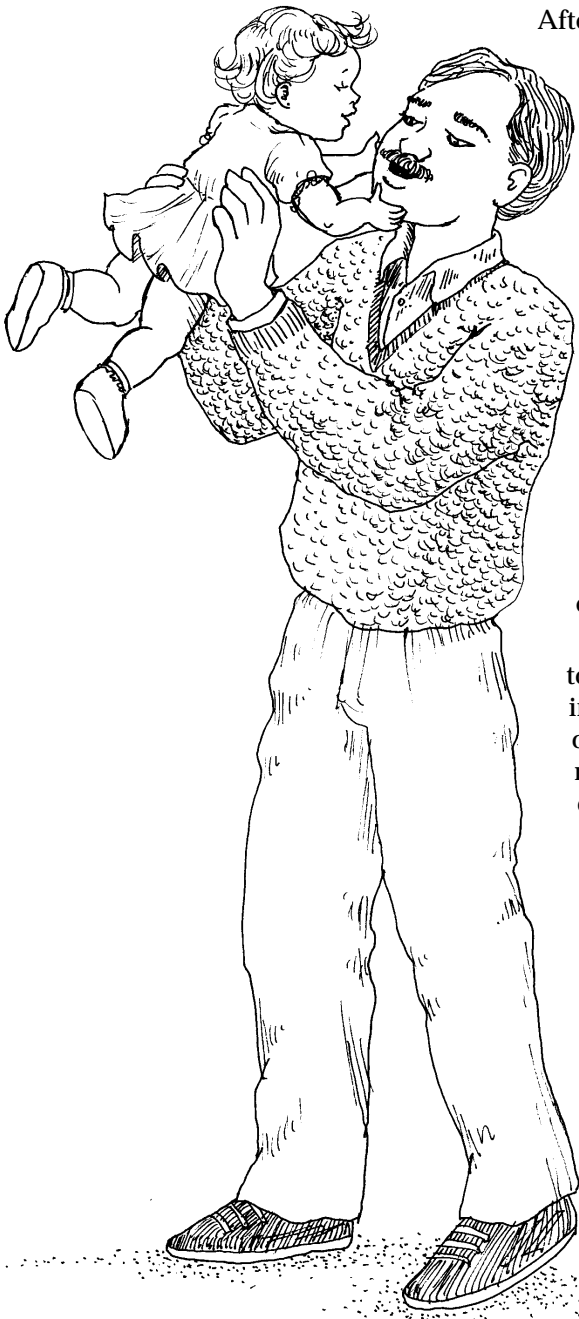
After his examination of the literature, Powell (1991) concluded that children's intellectual performance is better when mothers hold accurate judgments about their child's intellectual abilities. Parents' knowledge of difficult developmental phases can help them provide for their children's needs while preventing abuse. Schmitt (1987) identified seven developmental problems with children that are likely to cause problems for parents: colic, awakening at night, separation anxiety, normal exploratory behavior, normal negativism, normal poor appetite, and toilet training problems. A parent's knowledge of the range of normal child behavior and appropriate responses is very important.

Fulton et al., (1991) found that adolescent mothers gained significant knowledge of infant development as a result of their participation in a parent education program. By the conclusion of the program, the adolescent mothers also demonstrated lower scores on a test measuring inappropriate interactions with children. Researchers concluded that knowledge of child development could prevent potential child abuse.

Cook (1991) found four parental attributes that contributed to expertise with infants: awareness of the child's goals and needs in a problem situation; developmentally sensitive understanding of the child and developmentally appropriate childrearing responses; responsiveness to cues from the child; and providing opportunities for the child to be self-directive.

Parents use observation and comparison to understand their children. When asked about their sources of information about their children, parents will use comparisons to other children of the same age. Such comparisons may be favorable ("She's advanced compared to other kids," or "He's doing what his brothers did at that age") or unfavorable ("He can't do what other kids can do," or "My other kids could do that when they were her age"). These informal appraisals allow parents to conclude whether their child's development is typical or atypical (Glascoe and MacLean, 1990).

A parent's knowledge of child development is affected by culture, family, and generation. These systems are interdependent. A parent's knowledge is affected by culture, family, and generation which then influences his or her behavior. For example, a mother whose family has





“Each child is different, not only in abilities, but also in the extraordinary way that he or she sees the world.”



By doing parent education I learned that many parents don't think of parenting as a skill. They do to their kids what was done to them.

Mildred L. Holland, Family and Child Development Specialist, Mississippi



excessively high or low expectations of children may treat her child differently from the mother who receives more appropriate expectations from her family. A mother's knowledge is often based on her own mother's knowledge. Parents from different cultures will respond differently to information they receive about children (Sistler and Gottfried, 1990). Cultural context does influence the way parents think about their children, their parenting goals, and values (Okagaki and Divecha, 1993).

Children thrive when the environment suits their own personal style. Children choose the environments that are most comfortable for them. Being aware of different children's needs for stimulation may be very important for their development. One child may need a very active, stimulating environment while another (even within the same family) may thrive in a very orderly, peaceful environment. Much of the difference in styles between children is temperamental and not subject to outside change (Scarr and McCartney, 1983).

Parents who understand their children are likely to create an environment that challenges them, one that is neither boring because it expects too little nor distressing because it expects too much (Hunt and Paraskevopouls, 1980).

Difficult child temperament, especially during infancy, can undermine parental functioning. If they view their infant as having a "difficult" temperament, parents are likely to spend less time with them and be less responsive to their cries. Some parents may be better prepared because of their own temperament to manage children who cry frequently and react negatively to environmental stimuli (Belsky, 1984).

Parental beliefs and expectation influence a child's experience and behavior. Phillips (1987) identified parent appraisals of a child's academic performance as more influential in the child's academic self-perception than even objective indicators such as report cards. Judgments of children's performance made by parents are clearly very important to a child's developing self-perception. The practice of labeling problem behavior may be disabling, even self-fulfilling. Such labeling may be very common in family settings (Philips, 1987; Valins and Nisbett, 1987; Harter, 1982; Covell and Abramovitch, 1987).

Several researchers found that children were likely to see themselves as the cause of parental anger but not for parental happiness, sadness, or fear. Perhaps the stresses of family living may make parental anger prominent in the child's experience of the parent. Parents may, unfortunately, blame children more frequently for their anger than for other emotions. Children may over-react to messages of parental anger, generalizing it to broad disapproval. Such perceptions—and misperceptions—may maintain a damaging family cycle of misunderstanding and hurt (Harter, 1982; Covell and Abramovitch, 1987).

GUIDE

Descriptors

Authority

Power

Discipline

Control

Freedom

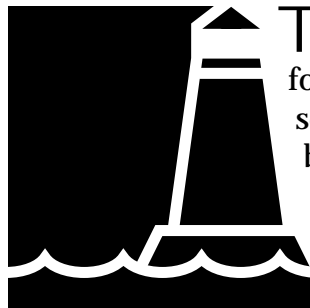
Responsibility

Problem solving

Conscience

Punishment

Regulation



The *Guide* component of the model focuses on the development of personal strength in children and the benevolent expression of authority by parents. Parents are faced with a difficult balancing act in establishing authority: to use their power to identify, introduce, and enforce

reasonable limits while gradually giving freedom to children by encouraging them to be appropriately responsible for themselves. Parents have the responsibility to use their superior knowledge and wisdom to set limits that protect their children and show concern for the welfare of others. They may want to teach their children to inhibit destructive behavior and engage in more prosocial or worthwhile action.

Children, on the other hand, seek freedom from such constraint even as they need guidance and structure. Their growth as individuals depends on making choices and facing the consequences of their own decisions.

Assistance with this difficult task of communicating values, nurturing self-control, and responding to misbehavior is a common request by parents. This clear desire for assistance provides the rationale for making *Guide* one of the components of the model.

The Critical *Guide* Practices

- Model appropriate desired behavior.
- Establish and maintain reasonable limits.
- Provide children with developmentally appropriate opportunities to learn responsibility.
- Convey fundamental values underlying basic human decency.
- Teach problem-solving skills.
- Monitor children’s activities and facilitate their contact with peers and adults.

Examples of Specific Program Objectives for *Guide*

The following parent behaviors serve as examples of more specific outcome objectives based on the critical practices for *Guide*:

- Make confident discipline decisions based on knowledge of options.
- Increase thoughtful or reflective responses to a child’s misbehavior while decreasing impulsive reactions.
- Increase the use of prevention and guidance and decrease the use



of punishment, especially spanking, in their use of discipline.

- Implement a four-step sequence for responding to misbehavior.
- Identify why limits are important.
- Understand that limits are based on values.
- Evaluate whether limits are based on values.
- Define misbehavior and learn to use three critical questions to determine whether misbehavior is taking place.
- Learn reasons why children misbehave.
- Learn how to use prevention as part of a discipline strategy.
- Differentiate between cruelty and reasonable consequences.
- Understand when consequences are necessary.
- Use reasonable consequences appropriate to the misbehavior.

What We Know about *Guide*

The most effective discipline style involves a delicate balance between parental warmth/acceptance and parental control/strictness. According to Diana Baumrind (Maccoby and Martin, 1983) this authoritative pattern of parenting includes the following elements:

What We Know about GUIDE



1. **The most effective discipline style involves a delicate balance between parental warmth/acceptance, and parental control/strictness.**
2. **An authoritative discipline style is associated with a variety of positive outcomes for children.**
3. **Consistency in guidance is important to children.**
4. **Guidance is part of a relationship in which each person influences and is influenced by the other.**
5. **Ineffective discipline choices are associated with a variety of personal and family stressors.**
6. **The ideology of physical punishment is currently in a stage of transition.**

1. Expectations for mature behavior from children and clear limits;
2. Firm enforcement of rules and standards, using commands and sanctions when necessary;
3. Encouragement of children's independence and individuality;
4. Open communication between parents and children, with parents listening to children's points of view, as well as expressing their own; encouragement of give-and-take;
5. Recognition of rights of both parents and children.

Effective parents make reasonable and firm demands that are accepted as legitimate by children. These parents encourage their children to make choices and regulate their own behavior.

A clear, reasonable structure provides security and stability. In ten years of working with distressed families in a treatment program, the Patterson group (Maccoby and Martin, 1983) found that the lack of

compliance by aggressive children is central to family dysfunction. In order to help parents reestablish their authority they instituted a program on child management with the following characteristics:

“Effective parents make reasonable and firm demands that are accepted as legitimate by children. These parents encourage their children to make choices and regulate their own behavior.”

1. Clear understandings of what would be considered acceptable and unacceptable behavior are established;
2. Children’s behavior would be closely monitored so that both compliance and noncompliance with the understood rules can be noted quickly and consistently;
3. Consistent reasonable responses to the misbehavior would be established;
4. Positive consequences for the child’s prosocial behavior would be emphasized.

Program developers believed that once parents established their influence in obtaining compliance from their children, they would be able to teach self-help and prosocial skills more effectively.

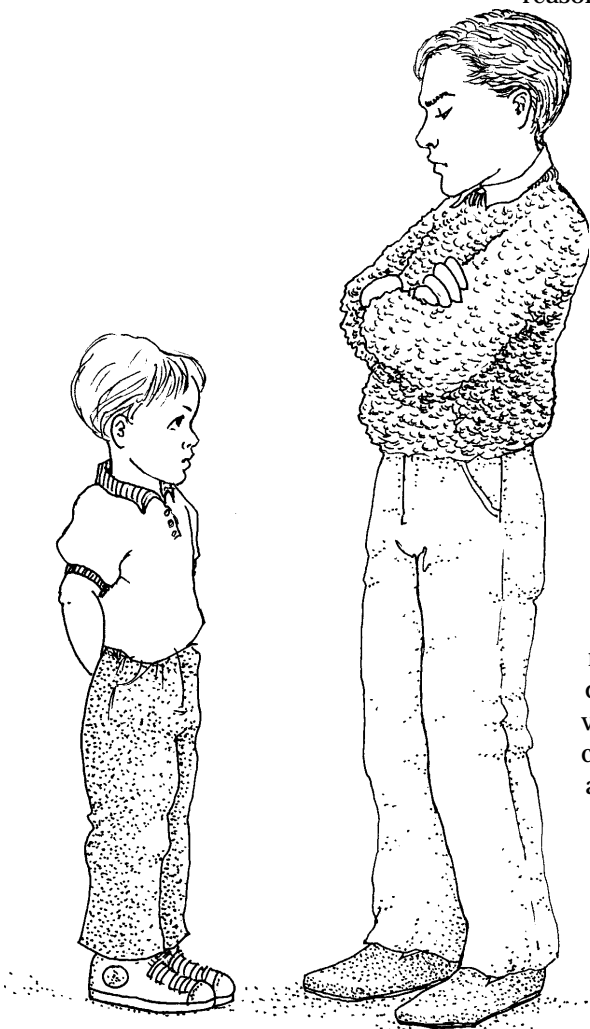
Hoffman (1975) advocates a “victim centered” discipline that encourages children to repair the damage they have done, apologize, and show concern for the victim’s feelings. Children who experience this form of discipline are viewed by their peers as being kind people. Victim-centered discipline uses person-oriented instead of position-oriented reasoning (Bearison and Cassel, 1975). Person-oriented reasoning draws attention to the experience of those involved—their feelings, thoughts, needs, and intentions (“Hitting hurts. See how much your sister is crying now. She is sad.”). Position-oriented reasoning makes an appeal based on rules (“You are not supposed to hit your sister.”) or status (“Because I said so.”).

An authoritative discipline style is associated with a variety of positive outcomes for children. Baumrind (1991) found that authoritative parents were more likely than parents who were authoritarian or permissive to have children who were socially responsible and independent.

Children’s moral development in grades 1-10 was best predicted by a parental discussion style that involved a give-and-take discussion and supportive interactions, combined with the presentation of higher-level moral reasoning (Walker et al., 1991). Authoritative parenting across ethnic groups also is associated with academic success by adolescents (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg, et al., 1989) and positive peer relationships (Dekovic and Janssens, 1991; Lamborn and Mounts et al., 1991).

Competent adolescents have parents who exercise reasonable control but who are flexible and encourage independence (Lamborn et al., 1991; Montemayor, 1986). Adolescents who abstain from using drugs have parents who maintain control by clarifying appropriate behavior, reinforce with praise and encouragement, and maintain warm, caring relationships (Baumrind, 1991; Coombs and Landsverk, 1988).

Dubow and his colleagues (1987) found that childrearing styles characterized by acceptance and a less dominating approach to punishment, and identification of the child with the parent are associated with higher levels of adult ego development twenty-two years later. Direct control techniques in both teaching and in response to a child’s misbehavior are





Guidance lays the foundation for establishing self-responsibility in children. Children learn by doing, not by having parents do for them. Guiding conveys walking along beside them, showing them the way.

Dorothy E. James, Family Life Specialist, Texas



negatively related to the child's academic success at four, five, six, and twelve years of age (Hess and McDevitt, 1984).

A nationally representative sample of 3,346 American parents with a child under eighteen living at home found that 63 percent of the parents reported instances of such verbal aggression as swearing and insulting the child. Children who experienced frequent verbal aggression from parents exhibited higher rates of verbal aggression, delinquency, and interpersonal problems than other children (Vissing et al., 1991). Children four to eleven years of age who received frequent and/or severe punishment committed more aggressive transgressions (toward siblings, peers, adults outside family) and were more likely to oppose parental interventions than children who received infrequent and/or mild punishment (Trickett and Kucynski, 1986). Larzelere (1986) found a direct positive relationship between spanking and child aggression against others. But when mild or moderate punishment was coupled with reasoning, child aggression did not increase.

In a study reported recently in the *Harvard Medical School Mental Health Letter*, adults who had been raised with harsh physical discipline were found to be almost three times as likely to develop depression or alcoholism as were those whose parents had brought them up in gentler ways (Mellinger, 1989).

McCord (1983) compared over a forty-year period abused, neglected, and rejected boys with boys who experienced love and nurturing. Children who were not actively nurtured had higher rates of juvenile delinquency. About half of the abused and neglected children who were convicted of serious crimes became alcoholics, or suffered from mental illness. They also died at a younger age than those who were nurtured as children.

Consistency in guidance is important for children. Montemayor (1986) found that ineffective parents punish more than they reward although use of punishment and reward is inconsistent. Maltreating parents have been found to use ineffective and inconsistent punishment and discipline (Reid et al., 1981; Kimball et al., 1980).

Guidance is part of a relationship in which each person influences and is influenced by the other. Minton et al., (1971) studied disciplinary encounters in the homes of ninety two-year-olds. Mothers' initial responses to physical or verbal aggression, temper tantrums, or harm to household objects were initially mild in tone. Pressure on the child was escalated to a more forceful level if the child did not comply to the initial effort. Mothers responded more firmly at the outset of a conflict if they had to use force to gain the child's compliance in a prior conflict.

A child's propensity to comply and avoid defiance may be affected by the extent to which the mother's control strategies allow the child a degree of autonomy. Children are more likely to comply if they perceive they are participating in a reciprocal relationship. Their mothers are clear about what they want while listening to their children's desires. They show respect for their children's autonomy and individuality. These mothers reason, persuade, suggest, and adapt their requests to what they think their children will accept (Crockenberg and Litman, 1990).

“Parents are faced with a difficult balancing act: use their power to identify, introduce, and enforce reasonable limits while gradually giving freedom to their children by encouraging them to be appropriately responsible for themselves.”

Competent and cooperative adolescents will elicit authoritativeness in parents while difficult-to-manage children can trigger parental aggression or neglect (Lamborn et al., 1991).

Ineffective discipline choices are associated with a variety of personal and family stressors. Adolescent mothers who had experienced rejection and physical punishment during childhood and little or no support from a partner after birth were more likely to exhibit angry and punitive parenting. Their children were more angry, more noncompliant, and more emotionally distanced from mothers than were children of nonpunitive mothers (Crockenberg, 1987).

Child misbehavior is associated with marital conflict (Reid and Crisafulli, 1990). Parental isolation also can contribute to parent-child conflict. A national survey of 6,000 households revealed that single parents are more likely to use abusive forms of violence toward their children than are parents in dual-caretaker households. Abusive violence appeared to be a function of poverty in mother- but not father-headed homes. In households where one parent does all the disciplining—whether it is the mother or the father—punishment is likely to be more severe (Mellinger, 1989).

Parents who are abusers are more likely than those who are not to have been abused as children (DePanfilis and Salus, 1992). Also, they are more likely to have experienced more stressful life events in the preceding twelve months (Smith and Adler, 1991). The more physical punishment a parent experienced as a child, the higher the proportion who engage in abusive violence toward their own children and spouses (Herzberger and Tennen, 1985; Straus, 1990).

Substance abuse also can contribute to a high-risk environment for children. Drug abusing mothers have experienced cycles of victimization themselves and have few job skills, poor self-esteem, and, often, many children. Drugs can interfere with the user’s ability to parent (DePanfilis and Salus, 1992).

Certain situations cause overload, frustration, and parental retribution. Parents of three- and four-year-olds were more likely to report probable spanking for physical aggression by the child than for any other area of misbehavior (Sims and Mason, 1991). Due to their size and immaturity, young children are particularly vulnerable to maltreatment. For children living in high risk families, innocent acts of colic, awakening at night, separation anxiety, normal exploratory behavior, normal negativism, normal poor appetite, and toilet training resistance can trigger dangerous or even deadly abuse. Difficult-to-manage children can be at risk for abuse if their parents are isolated and overloaded with stress.

Having a history of abuse as a child, being a single parent, or having a difficult-to-manage child, for example, does not necessarily mean that a parent will become an abuser. However, when these risk factors are combined with stress overload and social isolation, the result is a potentially explosive environment in the family.

The ideology of physical punishment is currently in a stage of transition. Carson (1989) found that 80 to 90 percent of the population considers parents to have not just the right, but the moral obligation

“Having a history of abuse as a child, being a single parent, or having a difficult-to-manage child, for example, does not necessarily mean that a parent will become an abuser.”

to spank or slap. Nonspanking parents tend to be the objects of social control efforts by friends and relatives in the form of polite but pointedly expressed doubts about consequences for the child. Parents have to develop socially acceptable accounts to justify their unwillingness to use physical punishment to themselves and others.

About 90 percent of the parents in a 1975 *National Family Violence Survey* expressed at least some degree of approval of physical punishment (Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz, 1980). Dibble and Straus (1980) found that 82 percent of parents expressed at least some degree of approval of slapping or spanking a twelve-year-old.

Wauchope and Straus (1990) found that more than 90 percent of parents of children three and four years of age used physical punishment; physical punishment is still being used with 33 percent of fifteen-year-olds. Enormous variation exists in how often children experience physical punishment.

This violent paradigm of the dominant culture may be changing, however. In their *New Hampshire Child Abuse Survey*, Moore and Straus (1987) found that almost half of the parents interviewed strongly disagreed with the statement, “Parents have a right to slap their teenage children who talk back to them.” According to a more recent National Public Opinion survey conducted by the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, 72 percent of the American public believes that physical discipline of a child can lead to injury (Cohn, 1990). Carson (1989) found that 40 percent of parents who regularly spanked their children thought that spanking was rarely, if ever, effective. One out of three felt guilty and blamed themselves after spanking a child. The more parents use physical punishment, the greater the percentage who worry that they might be carried away to the point of child abuse (Frude and Goss, 1979).

Advocates of physical punishment may, however, resist change and ignore alternatives. Cudaback (1992) found that those who believe in physical punishment express significantly less desire for information about discipline.

NURTURE

Descriptors

Encouragement

Support

Attachment

Love

Responsiveness

Affirmation

Affection



To *Nurture* children may be the most important contribution parents can offer their children. Nurturing by parents predicts that a child will develop into a competent and healthy adult. Nurturing can be challenging because a family's emotional resources

often are overextended. Children also have different needs and different preferences for nurturing behavior. By learning to attend to their children's needs, by building a positive relationship, and by sending consistent messages of love and support, parents can be effective nurturers.

Critical Nurture Practices

- Express affection and compassion.
- Foster children's self-respect and hope.
- Listen and attend to children's feelings and ideas.
- Teach kindness.
- Provide for the nutrition, shelter, clothing, health, and safety needs of one's children.
- Celebrate life with one's children.
- Help children feel connected to family history and cultural heritage.

Examples of Specific Program Objectives for Nurture

The following parent behaviors serve as examples of more specific outcome objectives based on the critical practices for *Nurture*:

- Plan and engage in activities that bring mutual enjoyment with their children.
- Express their feelings of affection in both word and action.
- Take the time to talk with children to help them feel significant as well as to develop their verbal, intellectual, and social skills.
- Understand and implement strategies for becoming involved with children, such as appropriate play with a child, moving to a child's level (on the floor to play), using a gentle tone of voice, and reading books with a child.
- Show respect for each member of the family, including children.
- Adjust the way they talk with children to show respect for the child's age and affirm the child's dignity and worth.
- Provide sincere praise.

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Children learn from their parents the qualities and values we envision as humane in our society.

Arlene M. Fulton, Child Development Specialist, Oklahoma

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“By learning to attend to their children’s needs, by building a positive relationship, and by sending consistent messages of love and support, parents can be effective nurturers.”

- Maintain a healthy balance between encouragement/nurturance and discipline/setting limits so that the overall feeling of the parent-child relationship is positive.
- Help children develop a sense of heritage based on experiences shared about ancestors.
- Help children develop a sense of spirituality by involving them in related activities in the home and/or community.
- Show sensitivity to how each child interprets parental love, including taking time to do things that the child enjoys and taking time to understand the child’s feelings.
- Listen more responsively to children.
- Give significance to children’s place within the family by discussing the circumstances surrounding their births and the selection of their names.

What We Know about “Nurture”


Effective parental nurturing may be the single best predictor of successful child outcomes. Nurture has been variously called support, love, acceptance, affection, and warmth. Rollins and Thomas (1979, p. 320) have defined this construct as “behavior manifested by a parent toward a child that makes the child feel comfortable in the presence of the parent and confirms in the child’s mind that he is basically accepted and approved as a person by the parent.” For decades, nurture has been identified as a key variable in childrearing (Symonds, 1939; Becker, 1964; Baumrind, 1967).

Research in parent-child attachment (Ainsworth, 1978) stresses the importance of prompt and sensitive responding by parents to children’s needs. Nurture becomes the basis for a continuing relationship. Maccoby and Martin (1983) suggested in their review of research that the combination of warm, nurturant parenting together with clear standards and reasonable control resulted in children who

are competent, responsible, independent, confident, achievement-oriented, and able to control aggression. Belsky (1984) found that attentive, warm, and nonrestrictive maternal behaviors contributed to the intellectual development of young children. High maternal warmth is a protective factor against risks associated with peer rejection and behavior problems among six-year-old children (Patterson, et al., 1989).

Parental encouragement of emotional expressiveness was positively associated with competence in preschool children as assessed by teacher ratings (Roberts and Strayer, 1987). Coombs and Landsverk (1988) found that warm feelings of closeness with parents, both mothers and

What We Know about NURTURE



1. **Effective parental nurturing may be the single best predictor of successful child outcomes.**
2. **Nurturing has both direct and indirect impacts on children.**
3. **Absence of parental nurturing can impair child competence.**
4. **Parental nurturing is clearly linked to prosocial behavior.**

“Nurturance has so consistently been found to be important in the raising of children that it has sometimes been called the super-variable in parenting.”

fathers, typified adolescent abstainers from drugs. Fathers who developed and maintained warm relationships, compared with those that did not, experienced greater success in inhibiting drug involvement. In his review of the research, Dix (1991) indicated that there was considerable evidence that the more positive the emotions parents experience and express, the more favorable is the caregiving environment for children. Nurturance has so consistently been found to be important in the raising of children that it has sometimes been called the super-variable in parenting.

Nurturing has both direct and indirect impacts on children. In addition to its primary effects, nurturance has been shown to impact how other parenting behaviors influence children (Darling and Steinberg, 1993; Pettit and Mize, 1993). For example, a child will respond more positively to the disciplinary efforts of a nurturing than a punitive parent. Parents who nurture their children are likely to be more powerful models for other behaviors they hope to encourage in their children (Eisenberg, 1992). Parents can engage in specific nurturing behaviors and establish a nurturing environment.

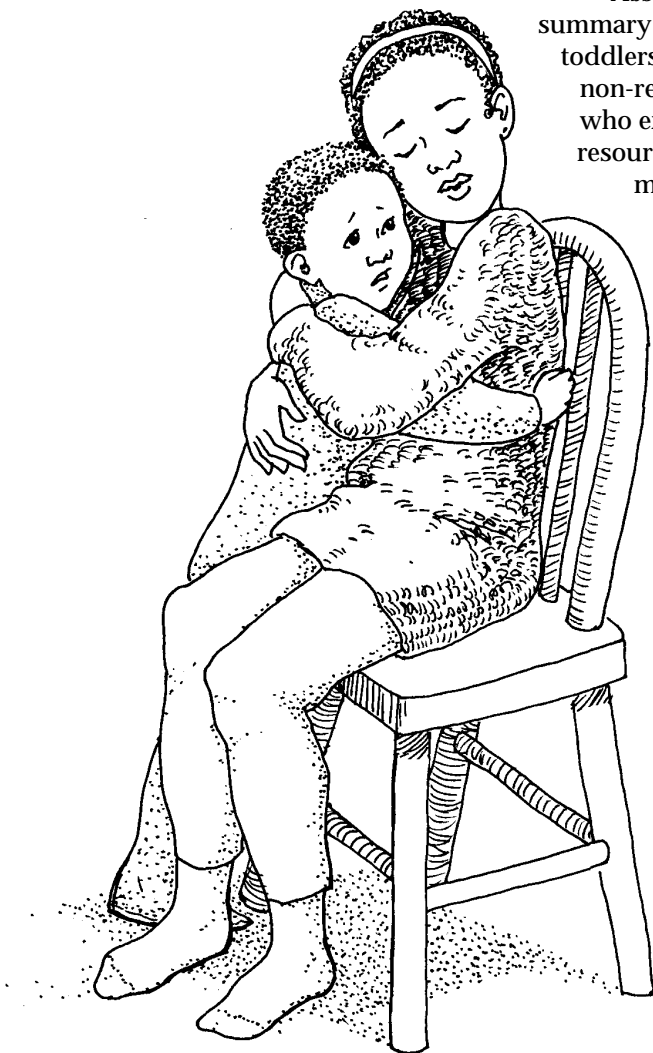
Absence of parental nurturing can impair child competence. In a summary of the research, Denham (1989) concluded that infants and toddlers cope poorly with stress when mothers are emotionally non-responsive or express mostly negative emotions. Mothers who express much positive affect and whose emotional style is resourceful, enthusiastic, and optimistic have infants who exhibit more positive affect and social behavior. Infants who grow up in this environment are less likely to be depressed as nine-year-olds.

Six-year-olds who are insecurely attached to their mothers are more likely to be reported by their teachers as having behavior problems in school (Cohn, 1990).

Bulimic behavior in adolescents was found to be positively correlated with inconsistent affection by parents (Scaf-McIver and Thompson, 1989). Adolescent mothers who believed that babies are likely to become spoiled if the mother is responsive and affectionate were less supportive than those who believed that infants should be talked to and given considerable leeway in exploring their surroundings (Luster and Rhoades, 1989).

Parental nurturing is clearly linked to prosocial behavior. Zahn-Waxler et al., (1979) found that parents who responded positively to their children's upset had children who responded positively to upset in others and were more often prosocial in their behavior. In contrast, Main and George (1985) reported that toddlers who were abused by their parents became emotionally distressed by their peers' emotional upset and attacked them physically and verbally.

Nurturance alone may be insufficient to promote generosity and helping. When used in combination with modeling, high standards for altruism and victim-centered reasoning, nurturance can be a powerful catalyst for prosocial behavior (Eisenberg, 1992).



MOTIVATE

Descriptors

Education

Instruction

Communication

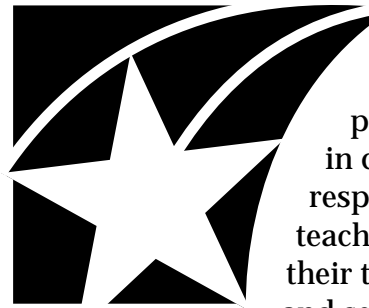
Support

Encouragement

Modeling

Explanations

“Parents who are the most successful motivators lovingly nurture and guide their children respectfully and sensitively.”



Motivate includes the parenting practices which promote intellectual development in children. Parents who take their responsibility as their children’s teacher seriously, and who perform their teaching functions effectively and sensitively throughout their

children’s lives, are more likely than other parents to have children who become confident and skilled learners and who attain high levels of educational achievement.

The *Motivate* cluster of skills is closely related to *Guide* and *Nurture*. Parents who are the most successful motivators lovingly nurture and guide their children respectfully and sensitively. The parenting practices promoted in the *Motivate* cluster may be especially responsive to parent education. Parents can learn how to facilitate learning effectively.

The Critical *Motivate* Practices

- Teach children about themselves, others, and the world around them.
- Stimulate curiosity, imagination, and the search for knowledge.
- Create beneficial learning conditions.
- Help children process and manage information.

Examples of Specific Program Objectives for *Motivate*

The following parent behaviors serve as examples of more specific outcome objectives based on the critical practices for *Motivate*:

- Identify why they are the first and potentially the most important teachers for their children.
- Establish a home environment conducive to learning.
- Help their children acquire knowledge and skills they need to become responsible, contributing young people and adults.
- Stimulate their children’s curiosity and desire to learn.
- Increase their children’s confidence as learners.
- Promote their children’s preparation for success in school.
- More accurately identify their children’s learning patterns and learning needs.
- Engage their children in more language-rich activities.
- Increase the number of appropriate learning experiences they provide for their children.
- Use more encouraging and supportive responses to their children’s learning efforts.

- Establish more realistic, achievable homework and study rules.
- Play more learning games with infants and preschoolers.
- Increase interest in, and knowledge of, their children's schools and school achievement.
- Interact more effectively with their children's schools and teachers.

What We Know about *Motivate*

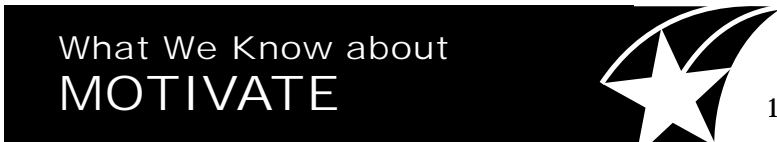
Children need opportunities to learn. Infants, preschoolers, and school-age children are more likely to become skilled and motivated learners if their parents provide them with opportunities for a variety of experiences which stimulate sensory, physical, and intellectual learning (Caldwell and Bradley, 1979; Honig, 1979).

In their summary of the research, Amato and Ochiltree (1986) found child competence to be associated with a variety of parental behaviors. Able parents encourage their children to explore and interact with the environment. They give their children responsive and realistic feedback. They are warm and supportive. They have high expectations for their children and assist with schoolwork. They also take an active problem-solving approach to resolving conflict and create an environment that is relatively free of overt conflict between family members.

Steinberg et al., (1989) found that the three aspects of authoritative parenting—acceptance, psychological autonomy, and behavioral control—may enhance an adolescent's work orientation and ultimately school success. In his review of the research, Powell (1991) pointed out that the most beneficial teaching strategies stimulate the child's own thinking and encourage active, verbal engagement of a task.

In a study of parent beliefs about their children's academic experience, Powell and Peet (1992b) found that a majority of parents are worried about their child's future, and approximately one-third do not expect their child will attain what the parent considers to be an ideal position for the child. They also found that a parent's contributions to children's learning are most effective when incorporated into daily family routines.

Learning is enhanced by responsiveness. Teaching is most effective if provided by parents/caregivers who are aware of and responsive to their children's specific learning patterns, needs, and capabilities. Controlling and restrictive parents undermine children's intellectual development by restricting children from freely exploring their environment (Clarke-Stewart, 1973; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Gottfried, 1983; Jennings and Connors, 1989; Ramey and Finkelstein, 1978;



1. **Children need opportunities to learn.**
2. **Learning is enhanced by responsiveness.**
3. **Language and literacy skills are probably the most important predictors of children's educational success.**
4. **Home-school collaboration is critical.**
5. **Reasonable and positive expectations build a foundation for success.**

“

We are all afraid of failing--of our children not being good enough and of not being good enough parents.

Judith A. Graham, Human Development Specialist, Maine

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Sparling, 1980).

Language and literacy skills are probably the most important predictors of children's educational success. Children whose parents have promoted their language and literacy throughout preschool and early school years are most likely to achieve in school and beyond (Becker, 1985; Clarke-Stewart, 1977; Greaney, 1986; Hess and Holloway, 1984; Honig, 1982; Laosa, 1982; Tizard and Hughes, 1984).

Children who have access to reading and writing materials, who have parents who read frequently to them and take them to the library have been found to be more skilled readers than children who do not experience these encouragements (Powell, 1991).

Home-school collaboration is critical. When parents collaborate with their children's teachers, these children are more likely to adjust to and succeed in school (Cotton and Savard, 1982; ERIC Clearinghouse, 1985; Hamilton and Cochran, 1988; Schmitt, 1986; Rodick and Henggeler, 1980).

Reasonable and positive expectations build a foundation for success. Children are more likely to be achieving learners if their parents have high but reasonable learning expectations for them (Coopersmith, 1967; Phillips, 1987; Steinberg, Elmen, and Mounts, 1989). "Hothousing," exerting inappropriate levels of achievement pressure on young children, creates an artificial environment and is likely to be counterproductive (Sigel, 1982).

Parents have a role as interpreters of objective confidence feedback for their children. Children incorporate their parents' impressions of their capabilities into their own self-appraisal of their academic competence. Parent's opinions are even more important than actual records of achievement (Philips, 1987).

ADVOCATE

Descriptors

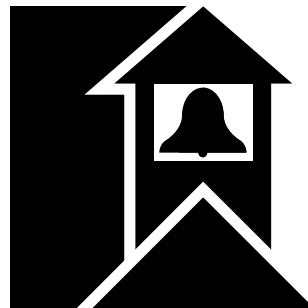
Community

Advocacy

Environment

Neighborhood

Social Change



In addition to skills for directly facilitating the growth and development of themselves and their children, effective parents connect with community resources and work to increase the probability that their children's and family's needs will be met. They seek out programs, institutions, and professionals that provide services important to their children and/or family. They represent their children's needs to those organizations or individuals to facilitate a linkage between that community service and the child. When policies and procedures in the community impede children's growth or make it difficult for families to function, advocate parents speak up and take action to change those policies.

Children whose parents *Advocate* for them are less likely than

“When policies and procedures in the community impede children’s growth or make it difficult for families to function, advocate parents speak up and take action to change those policies.”

“

We need people to be the voices of the “voteless” and to strengthen community resources.

Cynthia E. Johnson, Human Development Specialist, North Carolina

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other children to get lost between the cracks or to be offered services that simply do not fit. Parents who advocate establish a thread of connections between home and the community, building a harmonious and responsive environment for children. As the number of advocate parents increases, the quality of the community environment for children increases.

Critical Advocate Practices

- Find, use, and create community resources when needed to benefit one’s children and the community of children.
- Stimulate social change to create supportive environments for children and families.
- Build relationships with family, neighborhood, and community groups.

Examples of Specific Program Objectives for Advocate

The following parent behaviors serve as examples of more specific outcome objectives based on the critical practices for *Advocate*:

- List four characteristics of a high quality community service program or agency.
- Describe a process to follow to find high quality child care.
- List five family needs and the community services that could help meet those needs.
- Write a letter to a legislator concerning an issue important to children and/or families.
- Establish a Mother’s Day Out program.
- Establish a babysitting cooperative.
- Contact their children’s school and set up a parent-teacher conference.
- Join and contribute to a parent advisory group.
- Make a list of concerns and questions to take to a well-baby visit.
- Make a phone call to an agency to ask for information.
- Fill out a form for services.
- Communicate with a teacher about something that is going right and something that is going wrong.
- Improve parent-caregiver relations.
- Describe parent rights regarding the Freedom of Information Act.

What We Know about Advocate

A basic function and responsibility of parents is to advocate with the wider community on the behalf of one’s own and all children. Alvy (1987) describes five interrelated functions and responsibilities of parenting. In addition to such roles as establishing and maintaining a home and providing for the social-emotional and intellectual growth of children, he outlines the tasks of linking with the wider community and

What We Know about ADVOCATE



- 1. A basic function and responsibility of parents is to advocate with the wider community on the behalf of one's own and all children.**
- 2. Parents need to have certain attitudes, abilities, and knowledge to be effective advocates.**
- 3. Parents typically turn to agencies only after their informal networks have proven to be inadequate.**
- 4. Community services should be part of a system of supporting families in meeting the needs of the parents and children.**
- 5. Mothers with good expressive skills and strong support systems are more likely to enroll in and benefit from programs.**
- 6. Parents of special-needs children face many of the same stressors as other parents and many unique ones.**
- 7. Printed and learn-at-home materials can connect parents with an information network.**
- 8. Contact with professionals can significantly influence beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge of parents.**
- 9. Making good choices about community services requires information, resources, and ability to access the services.**
- 10. Effective education involves dialogue, critical literacy, a consideration of the learner's social context, and education for change.**
- 11. An empowerment approach may be initially uncomfortable for parents.**
- 12. Parents frequently view their children's participation in out-of-school activities as a way to complement their academic achievement.**

speaking up for the needs of one's own children in general.

Parents need to have certain attitudes, abilities, and knowledge to be effective advocates. If parents do not believe in themselves and their ability to effect change, they may not even try to get involved in formal social systems. Because that involvement requires communication and could lead to conflict, they should have skills in those areas. Their involvement is most likely to be effective if they understand how political, educational, legal, and medical systems operate (Small and Eastman, 1991).

Parents typically turn to agencies only after their informal networks have proven to be inadequate. Community services are related to greater life satisfaction for adult mothers, but support from family and friends appears to be more important for teen parents (Nath et al., 1991).

Teen parents may feel more insecure about their competence and are more likely to depend on their adult mothers to guide them through the services available to them. Isolated teen parents are likely to be especially at risk because they may lack the confidence to initiate contact with agencies that could provide critical support.

Community services should be part of a system of supporting families in meeting the needs of the parents and children, instead of stepping in only when they have failed. Nurturing children is the interdependent responsibility of the family, state, volunteer community agencies, and private economic sector. There is a need to rebalance responsibility for children among the multiple players, not just between the family and state. What can government and community do to enhance a family's capacity to help themselves and others?

Weiss (1990) examined the historical nature of the relationship

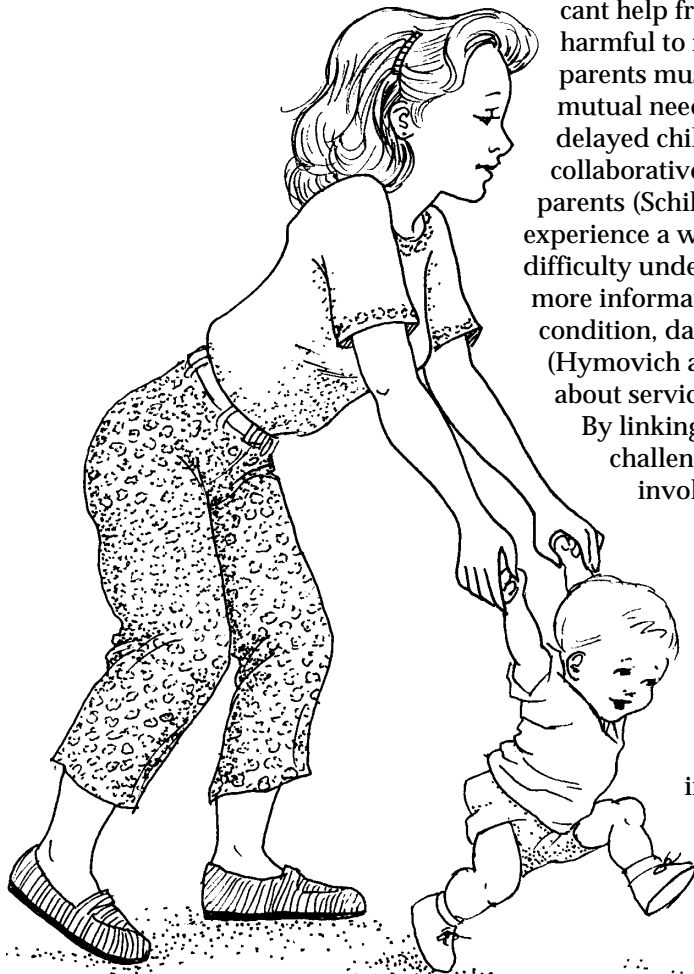
between families and institutions designed to provide support as well as numerous reports of recent commissions and study groups. She concluded that a coherent system of family-oriented, as opposed to child- or bureaucracy-oriented services and a broader public and institutional commitment to strengthening families is needed. Communities must assume a moral obligation for the well-being of all children.

Mothers with good expressive skills and strong support systems are more likely to enroll in and benefit from programs. Expressive mothers are more likely than others to contribute verbally and to form friendships with others in parent education programs. Mothers who feel confident about their ability to control events in their lives are more likely to enroll, experience less difficulty, and be more flexible in attitudes. Mothers with extensive networks are more responsive to home-based parent education and more likely to form friendships with others who are involved. Too many reality factors in the environment make it difficult to attract, retain, and positively influence parents in an educational setting (Powell, 1986).

Parents of special-needs children face many of the same stressors as other parents and many unique ones. They may receive the most significant help from each other. Isolation can be particularly harmful to families with developmentally-delayed children; parents must cultivate supportive relationships based on mutual need. The demands of caring for a developmentally-delayed child tax the resources of any parent. Building collaborative networks is especially important for these parents (Schilling et al., 1984). Seventy-five percent who experience a wide range of chronic conditions said they had difficulty understanding their children's diseases or wanted more information about them, such as the nature of the condition, daily management, and child development (Hymovich and Baker, 1985). Parents can inform each other about services available from various government agencies. By linking together with other parents with similar challenges, they can make their voices heard by those involved in public policy and program delivery.

Printed and learn-at-home materials can connect parents with an information network. Parents who receive newsletters or learn-at-home materials report interest in learning more about children and parenting. This allows parents to access the information network. The great majority of parents who received age-paced newsletters and who completed evaluation questionnaires indicated that newsletters were useful in promoting their self-confidence as parents, improving their knowledge of child development, and increasing their ability to be effective, nurturing parents (Cudaback et al., 1985).

Contact with professionals can significantly influence beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge of parents. Physicians



exchanged knowledge and information with Hispanic parents and influenced the beliefs of those parents regarding the abilities and rights of their physically handicapped children (Shapiro and Tittle, 1990). The value of such contact with physicians, nurses and other professionals is in changing parents' misconceptions about the nature of their children's disabilities and developing more positive beliefs about disabled people in general. Support from informal networks of relatives and friends is more important in meeting emotional needs.

Making good choices about community services requires information, resources, and ability to access the services. Those parents who are most likely to use low-quality child care are those who do not know how to identify quality, those who have few choices and limited access, and those with limited incomes to afford high-quality care. Therefore, families likely to use low-quality child care are those with low incomes (those with the lowest incomes may qualify for support and special programs, but the slots are limited); parents of infants; parents with nontypical working hours; and parents with children for whom there are limited settings, such as parents of school-age children, parents of sick children, and parents of special needs children (Adams, 1990).

Effective education involves dialogue, critical literacy, a consideration of the learner's social context, and education for change. Teachers and learners should learn from each other, should work at pulling apart and understanding materials rather than simply memorizing them, and should study the system and how it can be changed. It is not enough for parents to simply learn information; they need to gain skills for making a difference in the larger system (Shor, 1987).

An empowerment approach may be initially uncomfortable for parents. Structure and direction may be necessary during the early stages of introducing an empowerment approach. As parents become more comfortable with the approach, they will begin to ask each other questions, give helpful ideas, and develop their own models and conceptualizations (Shor, 1987).

Parents frequently view their children's participation in out-of-school activities as a way to complement their academic achievement. Community services are not only for parents. Parents may want their children to participate in community-based activities to improve their academic performance, to develop individual responsibility, to develop morally, and for pure enjoyment (Powell and Peet, 1992a).

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Implementing the Model

PROGRAM DELIVERY STRATEGIES

Extension professionals and other parent educators constantly are being challenged to find new strategies for reaching out to parents. Programs could be designed to incorporate one or more of the following strategies:

- a** Parent Education Groups
- b** Parent Education Resource Centers
- c** Newsletters
- d** Radio Programs
- e** Home Visits
- f** Mentor Mother/Godparent Programs
- g** Hospital Programs
- h** Newspaper Articles/Tabletop Messages
- i** Community Forums
- j** Interagency Support/Collaborations
- k** Support Groups
- l** Community Coalitions/Task Forces
- m** Learn-at-Home Programs
- n** Parent Advisory Groups
- o** Social Change Groups: Liberation Pedagogy

In this section, each delivery strategy is defined and illustrated with at least one component of the model. Descriptions of how the strategy might work are provided as examples for the parent educator. In most cases, each strategy could be used to promote priority parent practices in all areas of the model. In addition, the effectiveness of a parent education program may be enhanced by integrating two or more of these fifteen strategies.

a Parent Education Groups

County and state extension professionals could use many of resources listed in the curriculum guide to design a series of small group meetings in churches or schools that focus on parent education. This strategy can be especially effective if parents are encouraged to support and teach each other. Consider the following examples:



Parent education workshops could be labeled as parent education or as personal development experiences. They could deal with time management, stress management, budgeting, planning for parenthood, communication skills, and/or friendship and networking. In most cases, information is not the primary need in this area: skill-building and personal support are more central.

Part 3 Implementing the Model



Parent education can prepare parents to understand by teaching them developmental principles such as ages and stages. In addition, parent education can teach parent-specific skills of observation and interpretation.

One of the most important skills parents can learn is to observe and listen to their children and try to understand the significance of what they do and say. Since many parents have never felt understood themselves, they may find it difficult to understand their own children. Ginott (Orgel, 1980) suggested that parent education groups start by allowing parents to tell about their difficulties as parents. A sensitive teacher can respond to the parents' statements with interest, support, and empathy. After parents have had time to feel understood, the teacher may direct the group to understand what their children may be feeling in the interchanges they have described. If they feel understood and accepted and are more familiar with their children's feelings, parents then may be ready to learn new skills for teaching and guiding their children.



Parent education groups can be an ideal setting for parents to learn about child guidance. Parents in conflict with their children can benefit from hearing the opinions of other parents. Parents who feel isolated with their problems can benefit from the support and encouragement of other parents who face similar challenges. Because guidance needs are often associated with strong feelings, a group leader can help sort out conflicting emotions and facilitate discussion among group members.



Parent education groups can prepare parents to nurture by helping them to experience acceptance, empathy, support and appreciation as a contributing member of the parenting class. In addition, parent education groups can teach parents specific skills of noticing good behavior, expressing appreciation, sending messages of love, and taking time with each child.



The county extension professional could train volunteers and other leaders to offer kindergarten preparation groups for parents whose children are about to enter school. The groups could help participants understand the kindergarten structure and program, prepare their children for the social and intellectual expectations of kindergarten, and work cooperatively with the kindergarten teachers in promoting their children's kindergarten achievement and adjustment.



Some workshops may address choosing high quality child care. Others may focus on understanding how community agencies work. Communication with teachers and caregivers is another topic. The workshops may give information, teach skills, and provide exposure to programs and professionals.



Parent Education Resource Centers

Parents also might benefit from having a place to go where they can gather, talk, listen, and learn.



A Parent Education Resource Center can make general child development texts available to parents to learn about stages of development. Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care may also provide vital basic training for new parents.



A Parent Education Resource Center can make general child development texts available to parents to learn about ideas for nurturing.

C

Newsletters

Newsletters allow us to reach a large number of parents. They are most effective when the audience is clearly identified and interested in the topic. Printed materials are generally less effective in reaching parents of limited education and income, though evaluations of effectiveness of age-paced newsletters point to encouraging results (Powell, 1991).



Many excellent newsletters have been developed that are age-paced. For example, *Parent Express* (see Curriculum Guide), developed in California, provides a newsletter for parents at one-month intervals up to one year of age and then at two-month intervals up to three years of age.



Newsletters might provide tips on sending messages of love to children. Experiences of parents might be shared.

d

Radio Programs

Radio programs can be effective because important information can be disseminated quickly to a large number of listeners.



Television and radio can help to address the needs of parents to care for themselves. Although it is difficult to build skills via distance education, mass media could be effective in encouraging parents to consider how meeting their own needs is compatible with being an effective parent. In addition, specific hints for time, money, and stress management can be offered in these settings.



Radio programs could be developed that illustrate the challenge of understanding children. For example, the "terrible twos" are a common developmental experience that does not mean that the child is bad or rebellious. The child is just learning how to balance independence with dependence.



Radio programs could be developed that illustrate methods for nurturing. Guest parents might talk about their struggles to overcome past difficulties to nurture their children.



Extension staff could develop a series of public service announcements or brief radio programs on ways parents can teach and/or motivate their children to learn. Programs can be developed for English and non-English language radio stations. Handouts on the subjects covered could be available on request from listeners.



Mass media play an important role in the facilitation of advocacy. By advertising programs and services and notifying citizens of legislation and policy issues, the media can inform parents, introduce them to services that may meet their family's needs, and encourage their public policy involvement.



Home Visits

Personal contact can be a powerful teaching strategy, especially with parents who feel isolated and disenfranchised. Professionals, friends, relatives as human sources of child-rearing information are more useful than impersonal books, magazines, and television (Powell, 1991). This strategy requires a high level of resources to be effective. The Cooperative Extension System, with its emphasis on volunteerism, can be an important partner in programs that include home visits, especially in a time of budgetary strain.



When a professional or paraprofessional visits parents in their homes, the personal needs of the parents to care for themselves often become evident. By getting to know the parents and observing them in their own environment, a home visitor may be able to suggest resources and approaches for building important self-care skills. There also may be opportunities to model the skills that could be helpful.



A trained home visitor might build a trusting relationship with a parent and then observe the child(ren) with the parent. The visitor might ask the parent why he or she thinks the child does certain things. At times the home visitor might suggest other reasons for the child's behavior. In particular, the home visitor might help parents be aware of developmental, personality, and situational factors that influence children's actions. For example, a child may be irritable because she is tired or hungry, not because she has a difficult temperament.



Extension field faculty could conduct an in-service on guidance for home visitors in established programs. Home visitors could learn how to use the county extension offices' parenting materials with parents on their home visits. At the end of the year, county extension faculty could meet with the educators to get a count of the number of parents who participated in the program and the impressions of the educators about the effectiveness of the program.



A trained home visitor might build a trusting relationship with a parent and then observe the child(ren) with the parent. The visitor might ask the parent how each child seems to be reached with messages of love. Together they might observe what works best with a given child. Together they could make a plan for nurturing that child, whether it is reading together, making a special treat, taking a walk, or sitting and telling about feelings of caring.



Extension field faculty could train volunteers and other extenders to visit parents of at-risk children to help them learn how to teach their children at home.



One of the goals of the home visitors may be to help the clients find community services, complete applications, make phone calls, find transportation, and convey information to the service providers. Home visitors also may be able to connect parents with others who may have similar concerns and goals and, thereby, facilitate the development of new services by the parents.

f

Mentor Mother/Godparent Programs

These programs match parents who are at risk with more experienced, volunteer parents. The goal is to establish a friendship and allow the mentor to serve as a model, guide, and advocate for the target parent. Often there is a combination of informal contact and more formal educational sessions.



Although the benefits of these programs can reach into all areas of parenthood, they can be especially effective in helping a parent to “care for self.” Indiana’s Mentor Mother program is an example of this approach.



Mentor mothers and godparents may serve as role models who teach parents how to provide similar support for their children within the system. These programs often are linked closely with community services and agencies, facilitating the optimal use of the services by target parents.

g

Hospital Programs

Parents of newborns typically are more motivated to learn about parenting than those who have returned to the rhythm of a busy schedule. Hospitals typically provide a convenient location to reach these new parents.



Trained visitors might visit mothers of newborns to support them, make them aware of community resources (classes, libraries, agencies), and provide specific educational materials on child development. A resource packet of timely information about children could be given to parents of newborn children before they leave the hospital.



Trained visitors might visit mothers of newborns to help them understand the unique needs of newborns and help them plan how to deal with especially stressful situations (colic, sleepless nights, etc.). Visitors also might alert parents to other resources such as books, classes, and support groups.

h

Newspaper Articles and Tabletop Messages

Brief informational items in newspapers or set out on tables in restaurants can be another effective way to reach parents.



Field faculty could provide timely articles on child development for their local paper. In addition, interesting, lively suggestions for parents (child-proofing, meeting children's needs, using distraction to prevent conflict, etc.) may be provided as placemats or tabletop cards at local restaurants.



In collaboration with their local pizza chain, county extension professionals could prepare a series of tabletop messages about discipline for placement on tables. Messages could be replaced on a weekly basis. Each month a small evaluation card that invites parents to comment about the series could be left on each table.

i

Community Forums

Public meetings for the entire community can be effective when the topic is of widespread interest and there is a need for parents and others to voice their concerns and provide support to each other.



A county extension professional conducts a community forum on a topic similar to *Children Need Heros: Parents, Authority, and the Importance of Limits for Guiding our Children*. At the conclusion of the town meeting, she distributes a brief survey asking parents if they benefited from the session.



Community forums are excellent arenas for parents to learn about the process and benefits of advocacy. After parents have learned these skills, they may initiate and organize the forums themselves.

j

Agency Support/Collaborations

Finding ways to link with other agencies and organizations can be an effective teaching strategy. These other groups can contribute their resources to help in promotion and program delivery.



Extension field faculty could work with social workers and judges in the juvenile court system to offer a six-session workshop series on child guidance for parents of troubled adolescents.

k

Support Groups

Support groups can be powerful if they bring together parents who have learned to respond effectively to adversity with those struggling to manage a challenge. Parents can help parents.



One of the most effective ways to develop skills for self-care is to work with other parents. The critical practices of offering help to other parents and asking for help when needed are facilitated when parents meet in a setting that allows them the opportunity to practice these skills. Many of these groups are most effective when they are led by peers. A professional can facilitate the establishment of the group and can be available as a resource person if they want specific educational programming, but the parents themselves can develop leadership skills and gain greater control over their lives and their stress by leading the group process.



and establishing its agenda. The premise of these programs is that official “experts” are not the exclusive holders of knowledge. The Family Resource Coalition of Chicago has extensive information about how to establish and maintain family support programs.



Support groups such as Mother’s Day Out programs, babysitting cooperatives, or groups of parents with children with a particular disability often are organized and run by parents themselves. They give parents the role of interpreting and acting on felt needs. In most of these cases, the parents themselves know best what is needed and in what form. By taking leadership for the group formation and maintenance, they develop a number of skills and effectively reach out to others.



Community Coalitions and Task Forces

Motivating the public and private sectors to speak up for parents and children is critical for changing policies and providing more effective support.



Many of the difficulties parents have with money, time, and energy are due to public policies and practices that do not recognize parent needs or are not supportive of parents or families. Coalitions and task forces can advocate for parents in a community (local, county, state, and national) to describe and encourage family-friendly policies and procedures in the work place, in the delivery of social services, regarding child care, and in housing. Sometimes asking individual parents to cope with their challenges may not be enough; the environment may have to be changed.



Learn-at-Home Programs

Learn-at-Home Programs can be effective because they allow parents to learn at a convenient time, at their own pace, and in the privacy of their own homes.



Parents can receive background information and exercises to do at home through correspondence courses or learn-at-home packages. These programs are more effective if parents are asked to find “learning partners” when working with the material. They could discuss issues and activities with a spouse, friends, or neighbors.



Parent Advisory Groups

Providing opportunities for parents to contribute to public policies and programs affecting families is a critical part of parental empowerment.



Advisory groups that are associated with programs for parents allow the parents to become informed about the operation of the program and give a channel for them to contribute input. Many such groups also offer opportunities for leadership development and public policy involvement.



Social Change Groups: Liberation Pedagogy

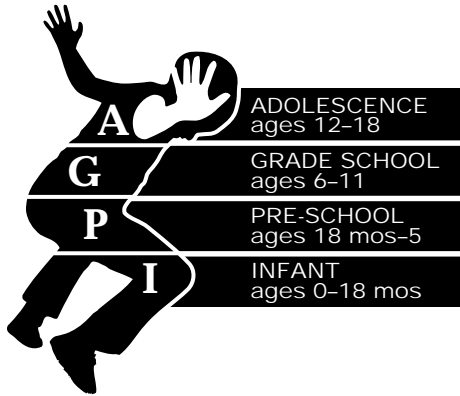
Leadership development is often needed when the target audience feels powerless to make a difference.



A more extreme and unique application of the training in the *Advocate* arena uses liberation pedagogy. This approach is designed especially for oppressed and disenfranchised populations. The group facilitator helps to guide and focus the group, interprets what the group shares, and seeks background information and materials as needed. The group itself determines the agenda and outcomes. The goal of the approach is social change, a key element in the area of advocacy.

The most effective strategy may be one that involves a combination of the above options. Programs that are intensive instead of superficial also are likely to be more effective. Successful interventions require a sufficient commitment of resources to make a real difference (Powell, 1991).

Curriculum Guide



Family relations and child development specialists throughout the Cooperative Extension System were invited to submit parent education resources developed in their state for review by the NEPEM team. Each submission was evaluated and selected in terms of seven variables:

- Accuracy of information
- Usefulness of information
- Integrity (The material reflect the educational standards of honesty, accuracy, and soundness; it is designed to teach; it has an educational purpose.)
- Readability
- Sensitivity (The material respects cultural, racial, and gender diversity.)
- Art and design
- Longevity

With the exception of one program (*Footsteps*), all the materials found in this curriculum guide were originally developed by extension parent education professionals. They are included in this report to illustrate the types of extension resources currently available to support parent education programs consistent with NEPEM.

Each resource is accompanied by two sets of icons, one indicating the age of children targeted by the program, the other highlighted components of the model emphasized in the material.



Baby's First Year Calendar

A calendar for the baby's first year of life that includes highlights and helpful hints for each month of the child's age. Developed 1991.

Authors

Glyn Brown, Steve Duncan, and Barb Struempler, Auburn University. Contact H. Wallace Goddard for information, 206 Spidle Hall, UA, Auburn, Alabama 36849-5604.

Program Objectives

To help parents provide sensible, nurturing care for child birth to one year and better understand nutrition and development information.

Intended Audience

Parents of newborns



Delivery Method

Group meetings or hospital visits

Evaluation

See author for results.

Cost

\$4.00

Available from

Aces Distribution, Duncan Hall, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama 36849-5632



Baby Talk

Baby Talk is a cooperative venture between South and North Carolina and is cosponsored by Kiwanis International. Rearing a baby is one of the greatest challenges families face. We want to make sure that parents know about babies. What do babies need? How do they grow? How can parents help them? How can we help parents? *Baby Talk* is series of brief publications designed to help new parents begin their responsibility the right way. Developed 1992.

Authors

Cynthia Johnson, Box 7605, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695-7605; Emily Wiggins, South Carolina. Phone: 919/515-2770

Program Objectives

Baby Talk is a parent education program designed to provide practical information to first-time parents during the first year of a baby's life. It can be used as a home study course or as a series of parenting classes. The program objectives are to help first-time parents learn: how babies grow and develop, about being good parents, how to feed and care for baby, and steps to making the house baby-proof.

Intended Audience

First-time parents, including single, limited resource, working mothers, adolescent parents, adoptive, and foster parents. Written at a sixth grade reading level.

Delivery Method

Baby Talk is a series of fourteen publications to be sent to parents, one each month (two months before the baby is born and then throughout the baby's first year). They also are shared with



health care practitioners and are given to parents-to-be at maternity clinics and at doctor offices. A few hospitals give them to new parents. The majority are mailed from Extension Centers.

Evaluation

This is the new, revised version of *Baby Talk*. Evaluation materials are filed from previous versions. Evaluations included in the *Agent Guide* are sent to the state office at the end of the reporting period.

Cost

Agent Guide (\$3.40), Publications 1-4 (.30 each), 5-16 (.20 each)

Available from

Agriculture Communications, Box 7603, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695-7603



Building Communities of Support for Families



The *Master Teacher in Family Life* program is a training model that teaches natural leaders within poor communities the information and skills they need to 1) create an effective internal communication system to educate fellow residents about important issues such as health, the family, education, and employability, and 2) create and sustain a network of support for those who want to use their new knowledge to make changes in family life, education, and employment. The program is unique in that it builds strengths within the targeted communities in order to support long-term change. Developed 1990.

Author

Margaret D. Slinski, Coordinator, Youth and Families at Risk Program, 203 Skinner Hall, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003

Program Objectives

Program participants will increase their understanding of themselves and their relationships with others as they plan to strengthen community youth and families; increase their knowledge of communication, problem-solving, child development, and discipline skills; develop their own resource manual focusing on community agencies that support families and develop skills to access these resources effectively; and increase their knowledge and understanding of high risk issues.

Intended Audience

Parents and other adults and older teens living in challenging (low income, high risk) environments in need of increased knowledge but also a support system to maintain and practice newly learned skills. Volunteers interested in creating supportive programming for youth and families living in their “neighborhood.”

Delivery Method

Twenty hours training followed by support of individual and group follow-up activities. Small group training emphasizing process in order to offer opportunities to integrate new knowledge into realities of environment.

Evaluation

Broad-based evaluation summary in the works. Abundance of anecdotal summaries regarding youth and adults indicating positive impact. Evaluations after each training. Currently developing a tool to measure increased resilience of youth.

Cost

\$25.00

Available from

University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension System, Bulletin Center, Cottage A: Thatcher Way, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003-0099



A Child in Your Life

A Child in Your Life is a set of parent education materials for adolescent or low-income parents designed with the needs and characteristics of teen parents in mind. The materials include six half-hour videotapes which use adolescent and adult actors and interviews with actual parents and which take into account the common life style of adolescent and low-income parents. Corresponding to the tapes are six booklets written at the second- and third-grade reading level which include numerous illustrations and photographs. The booklets and tapes can be used together or separately but are most effective when used together. Brief workshop outlines to be used with the materials are available from the author. Developed from 1984-1989.

Author

Judith A. Myers-Walls, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist, Purdue Cooperative Extension Service, Child Development and Family Studies, 1267 CDFS Building, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907-1267; Phone: 317/494-2936.



Program Objectives

Parents will: increase their knowledge concerning child development, child behavior management, and child nutrition; use more positive discipline techniques and fewer negative ones; provide a safer, more appropriately stimulating environment for their children; feed their children appropriate foods in a sensitive manner, and use formal and informal support systems as needed.

Intended Audience

Adolescent and low-income parents with young children (generally under the age of three years)

Delivery Method

Videos, easy-reading booklets, workshop outlines

Evaluation

Contact the author

Cost

Videos (\$15.00), booklets (\$.34 to \$.46 each)

Available from

Media Distribution Center, 301 South 2nd Street, Lafayette, IN 47905



Cooperative Communication between Home and School

Research in the past decade has shown the importance of parent's involvement in their children's education. The big question for school administrators, teachers, and school board members is "How do you encourage meaningful involvement for today's busy parents?" Cornell University's *Cooperative Communication Between Home and School* program, a part of Cornell's *Family Matters Project*, provides answers based on fifteen years of extensive research and field tests involving thousands of parents and teachers in nearly 100 elementary schools. Developed 1983.

Author

Christiann Dean, Senior Extension Associate, 6-28 MVR Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; Phone: 607/255-2531

Program Objectives

Parents will learn how to communicate effectively with their children's school; teachers will learn how to communicate effectively

with parents; schools will create policies that are responsive to parent involvement.

Intended Audience

Parents of elementary school children, elementary school teachers and administrators

Delivery Method

There are six workshops for parents that includes panel discussions. There are two in-service days for teachers that includes a joint session with administrators.

Evaluation

Contact the author for results.

Cost

\$30.00

Available from

Cornell University Resource Center, 7 Business and Technology Park, Ithaca, NY 14850



Discipline for Young Children

Discipline for Young Children is a five-part series designed to help parents of preschoolers ages two to six years develop a win-win approach to teaching responsible behavior. This series helps parents explore their individual parenting style; understand what to expect from their children at different ages and stages; develop effective discipline techniques; and raise the odds for responsible behavior. Developed 1989.

Author

Valya Telep, Extension Specialist, Child Development, P.O. Box 9081, Virginia State University, Petersburg, VA 23806; Phone: 804/524-5966

Program Objectives

Parents and other providers will acquire and use the knowledge and skills associated with effective parenting (use of age-appropriate discipline techniques and effective coping strategies).

Intended Audience

All parents and child care providers



Delivery Method

Group meetings and mail outs

Evaluation

Evaluation summary is available. Evaluation is built into the program material. Evaluation mail-out is available for others to review.

Cost

\$8.00

Available from

Joe Gray, Storekeeper Supervisor, Distribution Center,
Landsdowne Street, Blacksburg, VA 24061



Empowering Families: Home Visiting and Building Clusters

The *Family Matters* project includes three workshops for parents and those who work with families. *Empowering Families: Home Visiting and Building Clusters*, *The Employed Parent*, and *Cooperative Communication Between Home and School* are programs based on the empowerment approach to building upon family strengths. *Family Matters* workshops help parents, school teachers, home visitors, and leaders of parent groups develop insight, confidence, and skill in communicating with other adults who share their concern for children. This nine-session training program provides hands-on training and skills-development exercises to help family workers understand the empowerment process and to build family strengths through home visiting and support groups. Developed 1984.

Authors

Christiann Dean and Moncrieff Cochran, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, MVR Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; Phone: 607/255-2531 (Dean) or 607/255-2260 (Cochran)

Program Objectives

Home visitors and group facilitators learn to work with families in an empowering way.

Intended Audience

Paraprofessional and professional (paid and volunteer) home visitors and group facilitators (e.g., EFNEP teaching aides, Head Start home visitors)

Delivery Method

Workshop series; can be used as preservice or inservice training

Cost

\$30

Available from

Cornell University Resource Center, 7 Business and Technology Park, Ithaca, NY 14853



Families Can Make a Difference: A Substance Abuse Prevention Guide

The *Families Can Make a Difference* Program is designed to help parents develop a better understanding of how they can help their children avoid or stop substance abuse. The program is based on research which suggests that families in which children either did not abuse substances or stopped abusing substances used three parenting strategies: effective communication, setting limits, and closeness.

The main components of the program are a videotape, follow-up discussions, and related exercises. The videotape features families who have successfully prevented or stopped substance abuse by one of their family members. The *Facilitator's Guide* contains three presentation formats: one is designed to market the program to community groups; two are intended for delivery to parent groups. Developed 1992.

Authors

Vicki L. Spurlock, M.A., Maria Eugenia Fonseca, M.A., Lenoraann Ryan, M.A., Dena B. Targ, Ph.D, and Phame Camarena, Ph.D., Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907-1092; Phone: 317/494-2937.

Program Objectives

To increase knowledge about parenting strategies (effective communication, closeness, setting limits) which are associated with preventing or stopping substance abuse; to increase the use of parenting strategies which are associated with preventing or stopping substance abuse.

Intended Audience

Parents of pre-teens (eight- to twelve-year-olds). The video includes white and African-American participants.



Delivery Method

Group meetings that include discussion as well as activities and a videotape.

Evaluation

We are in the process of a “before and after” evaluation with a comparison group. No summary is available yet. Evaluation is not built into the material. Evaluation instruments are not currently available but may be created at a later date.

Cost

Families Can Make a Difference: Videotape and Facilitator’s Guide, boxed is \$30 (includes tax and shipping).

Available from

Agricultural Communication Service, Media Distribution Center, Purdue University, 301 South Second Street, Lafayette, IN 47905-1092. Contact Dena Targ for information about the program.



Footsteps

Footstep materials consist of thirty half-hour videos and thirty accompanying leaflets. Topics include: identity; individuality; early learning; prenatal preparation; learning through TV; death; attachment and independence; discipline; food habits; play and fantasy; valued and accepted; listening to children; parenting extremes; social skills; developmental tasks; childhood fears; societal support; teaching competence; creativity; handicaps; step-parenting; problem behavior; values; preparation for school; child abuse; understanding your child; sibling relationships; responsibilities; and peers. Developed during the 1980s and now managed by Maryland Cooperative Extension Service.

Videos begin with comments from video hosts, followed by twenty minute family drama, and end with comments from a child expert. Each drama focuses on one of eight different types of families.

Author

Billie H. Frazier (contact person), Human Development Specialist, 2039 Computer Science Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; Phone: 301/405-1019

Program Objectives

A wide variety of objectives depending on the video selected

Intended Audience

Parents preschoolers and expectant parents (sixth-grade reading level)

Delivery Method

Group meetings, classes, television, and consultation with individual parents

Evaluation

No extensive evaluation available

Cost

Videos (\$21 each), leaflets (\$.10 each)

Available from

Videos: Educational Technology Center, 0307 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; Phone: 301/405-3504

Leaflets: Steve Rothman, Mgr., Duplicating Services, 6200 Sheridan Street, Riverdale, MO 20737; Phone: 301/403-4264



Guiding Young Children

The information in the lessons is based on research and common sense relationships. The series is designed to help parents recognize their own strengths and select techniques which seem right to them. Developed 1991.

Author

Elaine Wilson, Parenting Specialist, 238 HES, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078-0337; Phone: 405/744-7186

Program Objectives

Parents will use more positive discipline techniques; guide their children calmly, firmly and kindly; establish a more friendly and cooperative environment at home that is less hostile and tense.

Intended Audience

Parents scoring "at-risk" on the adolescent adult parenting inventory (AAPI) will improve their score to the point that they are no longer at-risk at the end of the series; parents of young children ages two to six; series is especially effective with court-referred at-risk and low-literacy parents.

Delivery Method

Group meetings, home study, and home visitation.

Evaluation

The program impact has been measured on at risk parents. A



summary of the evaluation is available from the author. The adolescent-adult parenting inventory (AAPI) is administered prior to the first session and after the second session. It is not built into the material.

Checklists related to discipline techniques, parent reaction, and atmosphere in the home are included with each lesson and integrated into the series.

Cost

Five copies free; then \$.20 each.

Available from

Central Mailing Services, Oklahoma State University,
Stillwater, OK 74078-0550



Let's Talk Sense about Sex

Let's Talk about Sex consists of seven videotaped segments. The ten-minute introductory segment explains how to use the series and helps make parents more comfortable. Topics for parents and children to view together are contained in six twenty-minute segments. Content includes: conception, fetal development and birth; puberty; self-concept and goal setting; communication; decision making; assertiveness; friendships; the development of relationships and handling sexual feelings; the risks of early sexual activity; the influence of the media; and the importance of being capable, competent and in control. Developed 1991.

Author

Ruthellen Phillips, Ed.D., West Virginia University, 616 Knapp Hall, PO Box 6031, Morgantown, WV 26506-6031; Phone: 304/293-2694.

Program Objectives

This family-based program seeks to increase family communication about sexuality and to encourage the postponement of adolescent premarital sexual activity.

Intended Audience

This program is targeted to parents and preteens ten to thirteen years of age. African-Americans, Euro-Americans, Asian-Americans, and a few Hispanic Americans are depicted in the program. It is applicable to one-parent, two-parent, and adoptive parent families. With some adaptations and facilitation by professionals, the program can be used by foster parents, parents with children with developmental delays, and low literacy and limited resource parents. Only professional counselors can determine the program's use by parents

of children who have been sexually abused. Specific information on applicable audiences is available from the author.

Delivery Method

Let's Talk about Sex is a seven-part videotape series with accompanying printed program guide for in-home use by families. The program can be used in multi-session group meetings with parents and children.

Evaluation

The program has been evaluated in seven counties in West Virginia and in one county in Ohio. A pre-pre-post-test design with a control group was used in the pilot testing to measure factual information, communication, self-esteem, future goals, value of postponement, and delivery method. A summary of the evaluation is available from the author. Program evaluation instruments (pretests, post-tests and follow-up tests in booklet form for parents and children) are separate from the program materials and are available for use.

Cost

Program package includes video tape, guide, sample brochures, news releases, and promotional tips (\$79.95). Contact the author for quantity prices on program components.

Available from

West Virginia University Extension Service, 616 Knapp Hall, PO Box 6031, Morgantown, WV 26506-6031; Phone: 304/293-2694



Little Lives: A Parent's Guide to Development

Little Lives: A Parent's Guide to Development newsletters are similar to those mailed out elsewhere and cover normal child development, cueing parents in on what to expect from the time their baby is born up to thirty-six months of age. They include information on health, nutrition, and safety, as well as inexpensive games and activities to stimulate early development. In addition, articles suggest ways that parents can deal with issues that can be stressful, such as guidance problems, adjustment to parenthood, and couple relations. There are special articles for moms and dads. Newsletters are presently being revised to update immunization charts and other information. Revised 1993.

Author

Sally Kees Martin, State Extension Specialist, University of Nevada/ Reno, Reno, NV 89557; Phone: 702/784-6490



Program Objectives

To reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect among participants compared to the general population; to increase parental knowledge and skills during their child's first three years of life.

Intended Audience

Parents of infants to three-year-old children

Delivery Method

The primary delivery method is mailout. In addition, home visitor programs for new mothers have used the newsletters as handouts and background materials for the home visitors themselves. Home visitors have been employed by extension and other agencies.

Evaluation

The program was included in a five-state evaluation of age-paced parenting booklets and additional evaluation was carried out in Nevada. Pre- and post-tests are available from the five-state study. In Nevada, a system was developed to cross-check names of participants with a central registry for child abuse and neglect, which the author could describe to those interested. Evaluation included changes in knowledge and behavior (child abuse and neglect reports). Evaluation included low income and teen parents as well as the general population of new parents. Newsletters are written at a sixth-grade reading level

Cost

One set of the newsletters is free of charge from the author. Software for producing mailing labels which list name, address, and newsletter issue to be mailed is available free of charge from the author. At the present time no documentation or telephone support is available, although the software is largely self-explanatory. Contact the author for cost of PMTs. PMTs allow another state to put their own identification on newsletters. Newsletters may also be purchased (costs to be determined upon revision) .

Available from

Director, Printing Services, 236, University of Nevada/Reno,
Reno, NV 89557



Parent-Caregiver Partnerships



Relationships between parents and others who care for their children are not always easy. Jealousy, misunderstandings, and other problems are common. *Parent-Caregiver Partnerships* can help. The facilitator's packet includes a detailed manual for facilitators (with background material, bibliography, and handouts), booklets for people who have to miss sessions, and *Not Another Meeting!* (a fact sheet on providing child care at workshops). Developed 1992.

Author

Christiann Dean, Senior Extension Associate, G-28 MVR Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; Phone: 607/255-2531

Program Objectives

Parents and caregivers will learn to listen effectively; say what they mean clearly and effectively, handle conflict constructively, understand the role public policy plays in their relationships; become effectively involved in public policy regarding child care.

Intended Audience

Employed parents, child-care providers

Delivery Method

Five workshop series

Evaluation

Evaluation instruments are available.

Cost

\$25.50

Available from

Resource Center, Cornell University, 7 Business and Technology Park, Ithaca, NY 14850



Parent Education Program

The new *Parent Education Program* (PEP) is a major revision of the PEP (Parents Encouraging Parents) program Alabama developed several years ago. The focus of the new program is teaching basic skills to prevent child abuse. The latest findings in child abuse are the basis for fifteen parenting lessons that include positive discipline, alternatives to punitive measures, coping, controlling anger, and developing social support. Consistent with recommendations of recent studies, the revised program de-emphasizes the role of volunteers. Both a *Parent's Book* and *Leader's Manual* are available. The *Leader's Manual* outlines discussion methods, homework assignments, and media that can be used for presenting the lessons. Developed 1992.

Author

Jacqueline Mize. For information contact H. Wallace Goddard, Ph.D., Extension Family and Child Development Specialist, 206 Spidle Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849-5604.

Program Objectives

To help parents at risk of child abuse to parent more effectively.

Intended Audience

All parents

Delivery Method

Group meetings

Evaluation

Evaluation/field testing is currently underway.

Cost

Contact H. Wallace Goddard

Available from

ACES Distribution, Duncan Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849-5604



Parent Express



Parent Express is a series of twenty-seven, eight-page booklets of research-based information on infant development and care. The series is designed to ease the transition to parenthood and to help parents care for their babies and young children confidently, sensitively, and effectively. The booklets, keyed to a baby's birth month, are designed for monthly distribution the first year of a baby's life and bimonthly distribution during the second and third years. The program is appropriate for all parents but was designed for low income and teenage parents.

Parent Express was written between 1984 and 1988 by the Human Relations staff of the University of California Cooperative Extension with the help of medical professionals, nutritionists, and child development.

Author

Dorothea Cudaback, Human Relations Specialist, College of Natural Resources, 101 Giannini Hall, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720; Phone: 510/642-2608

Program Objectives

Playing with children in ways that promote development, providing children with more intellectual stimulation, improving children's language acquisition, providing more affectionate attention, responding more quickly to child's emotional needs.

Intended Audience

All new parents, especially low-income, low-literacy teen and Hispanic parents

Delivery Method

Monthly distribution of booklets by hand-out or mail from prenatal through baby's twelfth month. Bi-monthly distribution for parents of children thirteen months through thirty-six months old. Distribution keyed to baby's birth month.

Evaluation

Program has been extensively evaluated regarding use and impact. Evaluation is not built in currently. Evaluation instruments are available.

Cost

Infant Series of *Parent Express* (fifteen booklets for parents to be and parents of infants to thirteen-month-old children)(\$4.00)

Toddler Series of *Parent Express* (twelve booklets for parents of thirteen- to thirty-six-month-old children)(\$4.00)



Noticias Para Los Padres (Spanish adaptation and translation of Infant Series of Parent Express)(\$4.00)

Available from

Agriculture and Natural Resources Publications, University of California, 6701 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland, CA 94608-1239



Parenting Renewal

A comprehensive program designed to empower parents to become more effective with their children. Three notebooks are provided to the leader: infancy, preschool, and grade school. Developed 1989-1991.

Author

For information contact: Emily Wiggins, Family Life Specialist, 243 Doyle Agriculture Center, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634-0315; Phone: 803/856-5719

Program Objectives

Objectives are listed in notebooks

Intended Audience

All parents

Delivery Method

Group meetings preferred. Materials in Parenting Renewal, Birth to Four have been written in easy to read form. Radio spots are included.

Evaluation

Materials have been evaluated in a small sample. Results were favorable. Evaluation is being changed; the original design was too complicated for some parents.

Cost

Contact author.

Available from

Emily Wiggins, Family Life Specialist, 243 Doyle Agriculture Center, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634-0315



Parents Show You Care

Parents Show You Care is the first of a series of three leaflet programs. The main theme for *Parents: Show You Care* is, "Your children are extremely important; show that you care for them in words and in actions." Program goals are to empower parents to do things for and with their young children that will help the youngsters grow up to be healthy, confident, and skilled preteens. The program is designed to build in a systemic, irreplaceable support for young children at home. Caring, committed parents are the primary support system for children. Developed 1992-1993.

Author

Billie H. Frazier, Ph.D., Human Development Specialist, 2309 Computer and Space Science Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742-2451; Phone: 301/405-1019

Program Objectives

Parents will show love, have fun, build trust, raise "can-do" children, help their children like themselves, and teach their children to behave.

Intended Audience

Specially designed for parents of young children with second-fifth-grade reading levels.

Delivery Method

Extension home economists hook up with county adult education programs that teach English. As the parents of young children learn to read English, they also learn about their children. Extension Home Economists do not teach English, but they do teach parenting skills to low-reading-level parents as they are learning English.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation has been conducted, and no formal evaluation is built into the educational materials. Suggestions are made in the *Educator's Guide* concerning evaluation.

Cost

One set free; additional sets (\$1.00 each)

Available from

Steve Rothman, Manager, Duplicating Services, 6200 Sheridan Street, Riverdale, MD 20737; Phone: 301/403-4264



Parents University

Parents University is a community event designed to involve parents in brief educational workshops and introduce them to community services that support parents. *Parents University* includes a keynote speaker, brief educational workshops, a showcase of resources, and child care with an educational emphasis. Topics are selected by a local planning group composed of representatives from diverse human service agencies from the community. The 250-page *Parents University Notebook for Program Leaders* has all the materials a planning group would need to create and implement their own Parents University for their community. Developed 1992.

Authors

Charles A. Smith, Extension Specialist in Human Development, and Jackie Laue, Extension Assistant, Room 343 Justin Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506; Phone: 913/532-5773

Program Objectives

Provide an opportunity for parents to gain information about their children, provide support to each other, and learn about the resources available to them in their communities. Strengthen inter-agency networking between county extension offices and other human service organizations.

Intended Audience

Parents

Delivery Method

A community event

Evaluation

Evaluation strategies are included in materials.

Cost

\$55.00

Available from

Charles A. Smith, Room 343 Justin Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506



Principles of Parenting



Principles of Parenting is part of a total parenting program for all parents. The thirteen publications emphasize basic principles of understanding, guiding, and encouraging children. Each publication is four to six pages in length, uses simple statements of principles and many stories to communicate the principles. The publications are made interesting and accessible by the use of many customized illustrations. Teaching guides are currently being developed to accompany each unit. The three broad categories of the publications are Strengthening the Parent, Developing the Caring Child, and Developing the Strong Child. Developed 1992-1993.

Author

H. Wallace Goddard, Extension Family & Child Development Specialist, 206 Spidle Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849-5604; Phone: 205/844-3224.

Program Objectives

Help parents to understand and respect their children; provide skills for communicating, supporting, and guiding; help parents to respect their own needs.

Intended Audience

All parents, including those with low literacy

Delivery Method

Group meetings, pamphlet.

Evaluation

Not yet.

Cost

Ten cents per publication or \$1.50 for a full set of thirteen publications; shrink wrapped with cover

Available from

ACES Distribution, Duncan Hall, Auburn University, Auburn, AL 36849-5632



Responsive Discipline

The program involves the complimentary use of five different teaching strategies: a home study course (*Responsive Discipline: Effective Tools for Parents*), a set of “flash cards” (*The Discipline Toolbox*), a series of “easy-to-read” factsheets, a thirty-minute video, and a workshop series (*Responsive Discipline Leader’s Guide*). Materials can be used in one-to-one contact with parents, as part of a workshop series, or as a simple, take-home activity. Developed 1993.

Author

Charles A. Smith, Extension Specialist in Human Development, 343 Justin Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506; Phone: 913/532-5773.

Program Objectives

The goal of *Responsive Discipline* is to increase a parent’s ability to make more effective decisions about their discipline choices. The program focuses on forty-nine discipline alternatives or “tools” in the areas of prevention, guidance, and consequences.

Intended Audience

Parents of children of all ages

Delivery Method

Personal study course, workshops, video

Evaluation

Pretest and post-test evaluations of personal study and workshop participants is now being conducted and are available from the author.

Cost

Personal Study Course (\$2.00), *Toolbox* (\$3.00), *Video* (\$28.00), Camera-ready factsheets (free), *Leader’s Guide* (contact author)

Available from

Kansas State University Distribution Center, 16 Umberger Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506-3402



Supportive Connections: Rural Communities and Single Parent Families

Supportive Connections: Rural Communities and Single Parent Families is a comprehensive program to assist parents and children in coping with the adjustments associated with living in a divorced single parent family. Program components are directed to single parents, youth living in single parent families, and community groups and agencies in rural areas. The program consists of a 375-page, three-ring notebook containing teaching guides, handouts, transparency originals, a youth drama script with accompanying leader's guide, and three videos. The parent component provides materials for conducting a workshop series on the following topics: the emotional adjustment to divorce, financial management, stress management, and the development of support systems. Developed 1990-1991.

Author

Mary W. Temke, Extension Specialist, Human Development, 214 C Pettee Hall, 55 College Road, Durham, NH 03824; Phone: 603/862-2493.

Program Objectives

The program contains a five-session workshop series for parents. Each session contains various objectives which are evaluated at the end of the sessions. In addition, an end-of-series and follow-up evaluation are included.

Intended Audience

Single parents

Delivery Method

Group meetings and workshops

Evaluation

Extension educators who purchased the program were surveyed in the summer of 1992; evaluations are included with each section/session of the program.

Cost

\$85.00

Available from

University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Publication Office, 12B Forest Park, Durham, NH 03824



Teens as Parents of Babies and Toddlers: A Resource Guide for Educators

This *Resource Guide* presents thirty-five workshop outlines for educators who work with teen parents of babies and toddlers. Outlines are grouped under four major headings: The Social World of Teen Parents, Babies, Toddler and Two-Year-Olds, and Health and Safety. Developed 1990.

Authors

Jennifer Birckmayer (Senior Extension Associate), Katherine Goehring, Bonnie Westendorf, Judith Wilson, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, MVR Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 14853; Phone: 518/758-6190.

Program Objectives

To increase adolescent parents' skills in meeting physical, social and emotional needs of children; to increase parents' use of positive guidance techniques with infants and toddlers; to increase parents' self-understanding and ability to meet personal needs.

Intended Audience

Educators who work with adolescent parents of babies and toddlers in schools, community settings or in one-to-one counseling sessions or home visits.

Delivery Method

Group meetings with hand-outs, hands-on activities, video-tapes, and group discussions. Can be adapted by educators for uses with teens one-to-one.

Evaluation

No evaluation conducted.

Cost

Resource Guide (\$18.00)

Available from

Resource Center, Cornell University, 7 Business and Technology Park, Ithaca, NY 14850



Working With Single Parent Families

Working with Single-Parent Families is a series of workshops designed to give parents—male and female—an opportunity to discuss with other single parents some of the problems and issues they face on a day-to-day basis. During the workshop sessions, participants explore their opinions regarding work, children, and their personal lives. And, they usually find support and a sense of camaraderie with other single parents in the workshop.

The workshop series contains two parts: *Society Doesn't Make it Easy* and *Single Parents and Work*. Although the sessions are meant to be conducted in sequence, most can stand on their own and be done out of sequence to meet the special needs of the group. The series covers a range of topics including the Needs of Parents as Individuals, the Myth of the Single Parent, Time for Parenting, Children and Household Management, Children and Work, and Preparation for Work. The program was originally developed in 1984.

Author

Florence J. Cherry, Senior Extension Associate, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850; Phone: 607/255-2537

Program Objectives

To provide the single parent with a more positive self image; to address issues that the single parent faces on a daily basis, such as time management; communication with children and adolescents; child care for the working single parent, and managing stress.

Intended Audience

Adult single parents, adolescent parents, parents of preschoolers, young children and adolescents, low income parents, and low literacy parents.

Delivery Method

Group meeting

Evaluation

No

Cost

\$10.00

Available from

Media Services Distribution Center, 7 Research Park, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850

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Appendix 1 contains a set of seven visuals appropriate for use as transparencies for use in presentations describing the model. You may wish to use the “linear” version of the model on page fourteen as a handout. Appendix 2 is an artistic representation of the model for use as a small poster. Keep in mind that the key elements of the model are categories and priority practices, not in how they are visually presented.

**Appendices not included
in the PDF version of the document**