

Parenting Connection

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Two Parent/Child Literacy Workshops at GED/HSED & Adult Literacy Conference

One of the ways the Parenting Special Interest Group spreads the word about Parenting programs in corrections is to encourage its members to present workshops at professional conferences. Again this year, some parenting instructors will be presenting workshops at the 2009 Wisconsin GED/HSED & Adult Literacy Conference to be held at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel in Appleton, WI on November 10-12. These two workshops on parent/child literacy programs in Wisconsin correctional institutions are included in this year's program:

Fathers Sharing

Diane Birch, Stanley Correctional Institution

Fathers Sharing Books is offered at Stanley Correctional Institution. Fathers initially attend a class to learn how to select age appropriate books, where to find reading material, and how to make reading an enjoyable experience for their child/children. After completing the initial class, fathers have the opportunity to record a DVD each time the program is offered at SCI. This program allows fathers an additional opportunity to remain in touch with their children during their period of incarceration.

Making Literacy Fun!

Margaret Done, Robert E. Ellsworth Correctional Center

Kay George, Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility

These correctional educators will describe book sharing programs that they have implemented for both juveniles and adults including Mother Read, Book Club, and author visits. These programs can be successful in all types of settings. Come join the discussion and see how you can make these programs work for you

The Wisconsin Association for Career and Technical Education is serving as managing partner for the 2009 Wisconsin GED/HSED & Adult Literacy Conference. You will find more information, an online registration form, and an online housing form at their website: www.wacteonline.org

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The Parenting Connection is a publication of the Parenting Special Interest Group and the Wisconsin Chapter of the Correctional Education Association.

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Snowmen and Birthday Parties . . .

Part of a daylong visit for inmate mothers and their children at Taycheedah Correctional Institution

Located on the scenic grounds of Taycheedah (Wisconsin) Correctional Institution, the Homestead House is the oldest surviving structure in Fond du Lac County. The house was built in 1838 as a home for Governor James D. Doty. Presently, this house provides a homelike setting for day-long visits.

Extended visitation is offered once a month to inmates who have completed the Positive Parenting Class. Inmates complete an application and after a social worker's approval of the application, the offender signs up for a date. The inmates are responsible for contacting the caregiver to make arrangements for their children's arrival on the designated date. A small number of inmates and their children are present at one time.

The inmate is responsible for planning the activities for the day. The mothers prepare lunch for their children and plan activities to engage in with their children. One highlight for the mom is having the child around for his or her birthday. Mom and child make and bake a cake for the child's birthday. Everyone, staff and other families at the Homestead, join in the celebration. Other favorite activities are helping the children with their homework and jointly completing projects that can go home with the child.

Thanks to the donations from various organizations, the Homestead has a supply of games that children and their moms can play together. Sometimes, moms and the children sit and talk on the comfortable couches that are available throughout the house. Books, along with a comfortable chair, are available for all ages in the library room. The closets contain sleds, jump ropes, and sidewalk chalk for outdoor play as well as the Christmas tree. Interactive activities are encouraged. Offenders are responsible for supervising their children: however; two staff members are always present if help or intervention is needed.

It is not all fun and games. Inmates and their children also plant a garden and harvest the vegetables. They are also responsible for cleaning the facility before they leave.

Many staff members work together to make the program possible. Administrative, professional and correctional staff all support and contribute to the coordination of mother/child activities for the visit.

Extended visits help inmates maintain family connections and provide bonding opportunities between mothers and children. Mothers and children can share thoughts and feelings, listen to each other, and spend quality time together in a pleasant home-like setting. They can send their children home with both tangible memories and shared experiences.

by: Bonnie Ramaker
Taycheedah Correctional Institution



Communications in Parenting

The current climate we live in stresses communication skills in all areas of life. As parents, our students need to understand the importance of communication in their interactions with their children, their children's mothers/fathers, the school, other daily caregivers, and the extended family of the children. Both the parenting classes and father's reading program at Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution (Wisconsin) help our fathers become more fluent in the art of communication. We also stress language acquisition skills for the inmates' children.

Much of the material with which I supplement my lessons on communications comes from *Hear Our Cry: Boys in Crisis*, by Paul D. Slocumb, Ed.D. The book uses an example of two boys who are sent to the office on an errand by the teacher. The overworked teacher gives the student directions about what is needed from the office, but forgets to give him a hall pass. Student one is a student with a smart mouth, but few skills to back it up. He is stopped by the hall monitor. This child does not have the vocabulary skills necessary to state his case to the hall monitor. The monitor questions this student, who gives smart mouth responses. This student receives detention time.

The second example is the same situation, but the student who is sent to the office has good vocabulary skills. When stopped by the hall monitor, this student explains that his teacher needs supplies from the office, but was busy with a classroom situation and forgot to give him a hall pass. This student is sent to pick up the supplies and given a warning to be sure the teacher gives him a pass the next time.

My students usually relate to the first student who did not have the vocabulary to defend himself. This scenario assists them to see the value of helping their children learn vocabulary skills.

The book also has a chart that we use to compare vocabulary that children growing up in different socioeconomic climates experience. Our first discussion is about labeling of the categories. The category that most of my students fall into is labeled "welfare." We discuss the situations many people find themselves in that lead to lower income and working two jobs to provide for their families.

The children of welfare families hear 616 words per hour. Children of working class families hear 1,251, while children with parents who are professional-class hear 2,153 words an hour. The chart also discusses the total words of encouragement versus the quantity of words of discouragement that children in each of these categories hear per week. Welfare children hear 500 words of encouragement versus 1,100 words of discouragement per week while working class children hear 1,200 words of encouragement versus 700 words of discouragement and professional-class children hear 3,200 words of encouragement versus 500 words of discouragement. The chart is credited to Hart and Risley in their book, *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*. This data lends itself well to discussions of what individual parents want for their children and how they help their children achieve these goals.

When working with the FatherRead Program, I also use *A Child Becomes a Reader: Birth Through Preschool*. This is a booklet that is available through download from the internet at www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading. This booklet gives specific examples that our parents are able to use while working with their young children. The booklet covers holding conversations with a babbling baby through how to use open-ended questions to elicit longer verbal responses from an older child.

Check out the Parenting Special Interest Group Discussion Forum at www.ceanational.org



Looking for a Lesson on Discipline?

Looking for a lesson on discipline for a father in prison that always gets positive results and feedback? The following lesson plan from the National Fatherhood Initiative is one that Cheri Wontor uses in all of her parenting classes at the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility.

For more information on the lesson plan, contact Cheri at cherlyn.wontor@wisconsin.gov. More information on the National Fatherhood Initiative may be found at www.fatherhood.org

Inside Outside Dad: Fatherhood Initiative

Discipline and Styles of Discipline

"Disciplining children without first establishing a loving relationship leads to rebellion."

Anonymous

Chapter 9: Covers questions relating to how we remember being disciplined.

One Memory I have of being "disciplined" by my Dad or other father figure is _____

What I learned from that experience was _____

Discipline

Discipline comes from a Latin word "Discipulus" meaning "to teach or to guide."

The follower of a teacher is called a "disciple." A disciple believes in the morals, values and behaviors of the teacher. A disciple practices what was taught by his or her teacher.

A father is a teacher--one who guides his children. Children are the disciples of their father. The father is a teacher of morals and values.

There are different types of teachers with different styles of teaching discipline. It is vital to remember that children learn in two ways:

1. From the time they spend with the teacher
2. From watching their teacher's behavior

Use the list below and pick out your style of discipline.

- a. Authoritarian
- b. Strict
- c. Dictator
- d. Permissive
- e. Wishy-Washy
- f. Democratic
- g. King of the House
- h. Ruler



- i. Uninvolved
- j. Controlling
- k. Punitive
- l. Nurturing
- m. Easy
- n. Shaming
- o. Fair
- p. Other: _____

My style of teaching discipline to my children would be called _____

My father's style of teaching discipline to me was _____

One moral I teach my children today that they practice is _____

One moral in teaching my children that they don't practice is _____

Because _____

The "why's" to the morals that dads and children practice or don't practice are affected by values. (In other words, "why" you do something is related to what is important to you.)

One new thing I learned today was _____

This information will help me become a better dad because _____

One way I will be a better dad is _____

Signed: _____ Dated: _____



Two New Brain Development Seminars Scheduled

Deborah McNelis and MaryAdele Revoy of BrainInsights have scheduled new training workshops that may be of interest to correctional educators. The two workshops are scheduled in Milwaukee in October and November.

Deborah and MaryAdele are available to set something up in your location as well. You may find out more about these workshops at www.braininsightsonline.com.

Reach & Teach Adolescent Moms: A New, Exciting Seminar on Brain Development for People Who Work with Adolescent Moms

In this day and age, we need more information on healthy brain development in children and the important difference it can make. We need more information on how adolescent brain development may influence a teen mom's ability to parent. We need more resources for staff working with this unique population so their efforts are both effective and fun.

That is why we have developed a one day seminar for parent educators, social workers, case managers, and any adult who works with adolescent moms.

Learning Objectives

- To create a full understanding of brain development.
- To develop an awareness of the impact early experiences have on learning, behavior, and relationships throughout life.
- To gain insights on how to use knowledge of brain development to better understand and connect with teen parents.
- To gain insights to enhance current practices based on an understanding of how the brain works.

Each participant will receive an information packet that includes copies of the power point presentation, resources and references, plus brain development activity cards created by Brain Insights.

Space is limited to 30-40 participants per training in order to preserve the interactive format.

Saturday, October 3, 2009, 8:30am-3:30pm

Community Coordinated Child Care (4C)
320 West Vine Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Registration Fee - \$40

Watch Me Grow: Brain Development from Zero to 25

Watch Me Grow is a valuable and interactive training for anyone who cares about or works with our youngest generation.

This inspiring workshop provides participants with interesting and insightful information on the brains of children from birth through 25.



Learning about the brain in this presentation generates an increased understanding of how the brain develops in the early years, how the adolescent brain functions, and the differences between the male and female brain. You will also benefit from practical application ideas.

Training Objectives

- To obtain knowledge of how the brain develops from birth through the adolescent years.
- To understand the general differences between the male and female brain.
- To gain practical ideas on how to have a positive impact on children's brain development.

Early Brain Development

Brain development in the early years isn't complicated... but it is extremely important. The brain is an amazing and complex organ that allows each of us to think, feel, and act. The brain systems that regulate these activities are largely shaped by experience. This presentation provides participants with an easy to understand overview of brain basics including attachment, a focus on learning, the effects of stress, and gender differences. Through this interactive presentation participants gain a real understanding of how to have a positive and practical impact on children's brains everyday!

Adolescent Brains

Stay around to see how the early brain develops into the adolescent brain! During adolescence the brain continues to change with experience and age, but it also becomes more efficient in handling and processing information. This presentation builds on the morning's foundation of brain development with special attention to the prefrontal cortex. In addition, participants will learn how puberty plays into all of this and the effects of adolescent culture (i.e. peer pressure, risk taking, sex, drugs, and rock-n-roll). Find out why researchers describe adolescence as a time of vulnerability, but also of great opportunity. Today's teenagers can certainly be a mystery, but you may be able to understand them better when you know what is going on in their brains

Saturday, November 14, 2009, 8:30am-3:30pm

Community Coordinated Child Care (4C)

320 West Vine Street

Milwaukee, WI 53212

Registration Fee - \$40

Using Infant Simulators to Teach Infant Care Skills...with Lasting Impact

This workshop presented at the 64th Annual Correctional Education Association Conference in July received excellent reviews. The workshop was presented by Cindy Fremont, Curriculum Writer at Realityworks, and Diane Birch, Parent Educator, Stanley Correctional Institution, Stanley, WI. For those of you Parenting Special Interest Group members who may have missed the workshop, here is a summary of the information presented.

Four infant simulators were demonstrated and passed around for participants to hold and try out: The RealCare® Baby Infant Simulator, the Shaken Baby Syndrome Simulator, the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Manikin and the Drug-Affected Demonstrator. Each of these infant models are accompanied by a related curriculum that can stand alone or be incorporated into existing material.

RealCare® Baby Infant Simulator and Basic Infant Care curriculum



The curriculum covers a wide range of topics including:

- Care Giving - Roles and characteristics of good caregivers, self assessment, stages of infant and toddler development
- Basic Care – Soothing techniques for infants, holding and feeding, bathing and diapering, schedules, SIDS and SIDS prevention
- Health and Safety – Emergency procedures; breathing emergencies: causes, prevention, and follow-up; CPR steps; safety-related situations, prevention, and first aid; and common infant illnesses

This computerized simulator represents a healthy baby that requires realistic infant care such as feeding, burping, diaper changing, rocking and soothing, and requires proper head support.

Shaken Baby Syndrome Simulator and Understanding Shaken Baby Syndrome curriculum

The curriculum covers:

- Physiological effects of a shaking – detailed information about what happens inside a baby’s brain when he or she is shaken. Through illuminated LEDs the demonstrator shows the progression of damage to the brain as the instructor shakes it. The visual impact of this simulator along with the information really captivates and stays with the participants.
- What Shaken Baby Syndrome is and is not
- Soothing techniques – what to do, and what if the soothing techniques don’t work?
- Methods and personal plan to keep the baby safe when it can’t be soothed

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Manikin and Understanding Prenatal Alcohol Exposure curriculum, and Drug-Affected Demonstrator and Understanding Prenatal Drug Exposure curriculum

These infant models display the devastating effects of substance abuse on a newborn baby. Whether you work with females or males, these simulators and their accompanying curricula are excellent tools for explaining the long-term impact alcohol or drug use has on the infant, the family, and society at large.

As incarcerated men and women prepare for re-entry, the skills of parenting and infant care are important aspects of their success outside of prison. Many, if not most, of your students are parents. By using infant simulators, you equip them with realistic hands-on skills, provide a strong visual and kinesthetic learning experience, and incorporate the nurturing aspects of caring for infants and children who will be depending on them for care, parenting, and modeling the right behavior.

Diane Birch provided insight on how she uses these products at Stanley Correctional Institution. When she looks at her students, she doesn’t see prisoners, she sees fathers.

As a correctional educator, you can use all or part of these curricula to meet your individual program needs. For more information about these effective educational products, please visit www.realityworks.com

Children of Prisoners Library

More than one in forty children in the United States has a parent in prison. The loss of a parent to incarceration means a crisis for that child. Concerned people in all settings are dealing with children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers daily, but in most cases without benefit of training or specific information.

To help meet this need, Family and Corrections Network created a resource --- the Children of Prisoners Library (CPL), an Internet based resource. The CPL provides free information sheets designed for people serving children of prisoners and their caregivers. These resources may be accessed at www.fcnetwork.org.



Using interviews with caregivers, Ann Adalist-Estrin wrote the following article which is an example of information available from the Children of Prisoners Library.

What Do Children of Prisoners and their Caregivers Need?

Every child, family, and circumstance is different. Some children are used to parents who were not around much before their incarceration. Some children have parents who are unpredictable because of depression or drugs or alcohol. Other children's parents were actively involved with them before they went to jail or prison.

Some children may have been traumatized by witnessing a violent arrest or may have a history of traumatizing experiences. Some children of prisoners may have no contact with their parent; others talk to their incarcerated parent every day.

Some children move to a new city or state. Some change schools or go into day care so their caregivers can work. Children will need different things from caregivers depending on their age, temperament and personality, the family circumstances, the facts and details of the crime, and the availability of outside resources.

Most Caregivers Need

- Support and understanding from friends, family, clergy, and the community
- Emotional support, such as counseling or group activities
- Information about children of incarcerated parents as well as about services in the community
- Guidance about what is generally best for children and how to answer their questions
- Rules, boundaries, and space in the home: for the children, for the family and for the caregiver
- Opportunities for respite care and relief from the duties of care giving
- Help with managing the needs and services that are all too often fragmented, unavailable, or costly

Most Children of Prisoners Need

- Consistent caring adults who understand that, in general, children love their parents, even when they have committed a crime
- People who will not condemn the incarcerated parents as worthless
- People who will understand that children of prisoners feel angry, sad, confused, and worried
- A chance to express these feelings and learn to cope with them
- A chance to learn and practice skills and keep busy with activities
- Faith or affiliation with a community that can provide meaning for the child beyond their own crisis
- People who can help them to maintain contact with their incarcerated parent or parents or explain to them why they cannot maintain contact

Still Growing

As a result of participants signing-up for the Parenting Special Interest Group at the Parenting workshops presented at the 64th CEA International Conference held in Madison, Wisconsin, on July 19-22, 2009, the Parenting SIG has continued to grow. The Parenting SIG now has 143 members from 27 states.

If you know of any correctional educator who is involved with Parenting Classes, Parent Support Groups, Parent/Child Literacy Programs or Parent Fairs; have them contact jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com to join the Parenting SIG.



Editorial-Mary Pohlman

The 64th Annual CEA Conference held in Madison, Wisconsin during July was an educational experience with many parenting workshops. Each workshop that I was able to attend provided me with techniques and information to use in my classroom. Working with the Father's Reading Program, I teach parents how to have fun reading to their children.

At the conference I learned about teaching parents how to play with their children. The video clip I saw with an inmate explaining what he learned about playing with his children and how useful it was to him, helped me identify an area of need that I plan to research for my programs.

Mary Dahl from Green Bay Correctional Institution in Wisconsin gave some very useful resources to use in Parenting Programs. The Wisconsin Re-Entry Initiative uses a program on personal development that Mary incorporates in her fathering program. It is a terrific idea that seems to work well.

Each of the workshops on parenting was informative and incorporated useful information for instructors.

Mary P.

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