



Parent Communication Network

PCN Calendar

**Girls and the
Power of Cliques**
January 12, 2004

NATIONAL SPEAKER FORUM

***Overindulgence:
Too Much of a Good
Thing with Dan
Kindlon***

Edina High School
February 2, 2004

Tickets on sale now
Available at
www.edinapcn.org

**Sex: Preteens and
Teens**
March 1, 2004

**Transition to
Kindergarten**
April 12, 2004

Edina PCN Newsline



Edina Parent Communication Network
Quarterly Newsletter

January 2004

PCN National Speaker Forum Tickets for Sale

Tickets are for sale for our upcoming National Speaker Forum with best-selling author and Harvard professor Dr. Dan Kindlon. Tickets may be purchased on-line at www.edinapcn.org; from your school's liaison, listed on the back of this newsletter; or by mailing in the form at the bottom of the inserted flyer.

In his book, *Too Much of a Good Thing - Raising Children of Character in an Indulgent Age*, Dr. Kindlon sheds new light on how parents with the best intentions of making their children happy actually increase the chance that their children will be depressed. The book presents for the first time the results of an important new study, entitled *Parenting Practices at the Millennium (PPM)*, which shows that American children often lack the strong character that is essential for well-being because they are not getting enough TLC—time, limits and caring.

“What we want for our children is a perfect life devoid of hardship and pain,” Kindlon states. “But their happiness as adults is largely dependent on the tools we give them, tools that will allow them to develop emotional maturity—to be honest with themselves, to be empathetic, to take initiative, to delay gratification, to learn from failure and move on, to accept their flaws, and to face the consequences when they’ve done something wrong.”

Join us to hear more on this important topic.

Visit our website at www.edinapcn.org

Upcoming Forum

Sex Preteens and Teens
March 1, 2004
7:00- 9:00pm
Valley View Middle School

Join us for some straight talk about teen sexuality. Molly Snuggerud, BSN and Director of Health Education and Outreach of the West Suburban Teen Clinic, will be joined by a panel of Edina educators to talk about the sexual activity of our teens and pre-teens and how we, as parents, can educate our children and keep them safe.

Ms. Snuggerud will discuss risky sexual behavior and information about hazards including STDs, unwanted pregnancy and damaged self-esteem. Survey data will be presented about national, state and local trends in teenage sexual activity. Edina educators will offer anecdotal information from conversations with students in the Edina School System.

We will also hear about strategies for talking to teens and how to approach other parents to open the lines of communication. Speakers will discuss how internet use, chat rooms and e-mail relate to this topic.

Key Developmental Assets Covered

Family Support
Positive Family Communication
Safety
Family Boundaries
Restraint
Resistance Skills
Self Esteem

Forum Highlights

Putting Families First
with Bill Doherty
Held November 3

Nearly 300 people came to OLG in November to hear Bill Doherty's insightful and entertaining message about taking back family time.

When asked how our society reached this frenzied state, attendees responded that the media sends a powerful cultural message that our goal should be a perfect life and family. Parents can't accept anything less than an "A" for themselves or for their children. We also feel a great need to help our children fulfill their potential. A few parents offer their kids opportunities and, due to parental peer pressure, the rest of us get pulled along. Today's parents can afford to give their children more than their parents could and many feel they can't ask their children to sacrifice for the good of the family. We want our children to have strong self esteem, so we think they have to be good at everything.

What can we do? Parental vision and leadership are key. Dr. Doherty encourages us to live life according to our values, don't follow your children's lead. Start by examining priorities regarding family life. How much family time do you need to have the kind of family you want? How much time do your children need to just hang out? "Pay" the family first with time, then add outside activities. Lay out the costs to the family of new activities before making a decision.

Suggestions for change include reducing outside activities and adding family activities, especially family meals and rituals. Take a summer sabbatical with no activities and then decide what to reinsert. Organize and sponsor moderate intensity activities.

Book Review

Sex and Sensibility

By Deborah Roffman

Author Deborah Roffman, M.S., is a nationally certified Sexuality and Family Life Educator. She believes that parental and school involvement in sexual education is a moral responsibility because of risks including pregnancy, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, rape, date rape, violence against gay youth, and HIV and other STDs. Furthermore, children raised in families where sexuality is openly discussed grow up healthier and more responsible. In countries where there is an open, comprehensive approach to discussing sex, such as The Netherlands, Germany, and France, teens delay first sexual intercourse for two years longer than in the U.S.

Ms. Roffman believes that children should first hear information about sex and sexual activity from parents. However, there is a very short window of opportunity to have these discussions before children hear information, generally incorrect, from their peers. Children as young as four may begin asking basic questions which can be answered simply, setting the stage for future discussions which build on the first. For older children, parents must realize that sex is much broader than intercourse and that values education is the heart of sexuality education.

Ms. Roffman's book discusses five core needs of children and adolescents:

- ?? Affirmation of their particular stage of sexual development
- ?? Information giving
- ?? Values clarification
- ?? Limit setting
- ?? Anticipatory guidance

Sex and Sensibility offers a common sense, step-by-step approach designed to help parents discuss this important topic.

Did you know?

Research on Teenage Sexual Behavior

?? U.S. teenagers are more likely to become pregnant unintentionally than those in other developed countries according to a 2000 study by the Alan Guttmacher Institute.

?? U.S. teenagers are less likely to have abortions.

?? Teenage birthrates declined from about 70 per 1,000 to about 50 per 1,000 in the United States between 1970 and 2000. This decline was less than the decline in other developed countries.

?? Half of all young women began having intercourse between 17 and 18.

?? U.S. teenagers who have had sex in the past year are more likely than those in other developed countries to have had two or more partners.

?? Teens in the U.S. have higher STD rates.

?? According to a BBC news report, 40% of boys aged 10 to 15 have never heard of HIV.

?? Teenage males who agree with traditional cultural messages about masculinity are less likely than other young men to use condoms consistently, or at all, according to Pleck, Sonenstein and Leffert, 1993.

Community News

We'd like to recognize the following schools and organizations for their continuing efforts to help our students develop strong values and a positive sense of community.

On October 28th, **Connecting with Kids** held Volunteer Connections, a volunteer fair. Over 500 students and 200 adults came to learn about volunteer opportunities and to obtain information from more than 40 local non-profit organizations.

In September, **Valley View Middle School** held retreats for 9th graders at the Eden Wood Center in Eden Prairie. The objective for the day was to learn about respect through games, music and real life stories.

Edina Chemical Health has created "Parent Talk Baskets," ready to use kits designed to facilitate discussion among parents about difficult topics such as family rules concerning parties and curfew, drug use and sexual activity. The baskets are designed to be used in a casual setting, such as over coffee or lunch in someone's home. "Parent Talk Baskets" are especially designed for parents of middle schoolers and have everything you need to start the discussion with the parents of your child's friends, including a guide for hosting the get-together and some helpful handouts. You can check the baskets out from the media centers at South View and Valley View Middle Schools.

Keep 'em All Playing, an Edina non-profit association, is bringing former NBA player, author and speaker Bob Bigelow to town March 4th to speak at Naegle Auditorium in the Park Nicollet Medical Center, St. Louis Park. The event will be free and the time will be announced soon. Bigelow's talk, entitled *Adults and Children in Organized Youth Sports: Who Wins, Who Loses?*, will address how we can make Edina sports teams more fair and rewarding for our children. To learn more about Keep 'em all Playing, visit its website at www.keap.net.

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Edina PCN newsletter is published in September, November, January and March. This newsletter and more information about PCN can be found at www.edinapcn.org.