



Parent Communication Network



Edina Parent Communication Network
Quarterly Newsletter

January 2005

PCN Calendar

**Stressed Out Kids:
Helping Your
Family Find
Balance**

January 10, 2005

NATIONAL SPEAKER FORUM

***The Power of
Resilience:
Building Strong
Families
With Dr. Robert
Brooks***

Edina High School
February 7, 2005

Tickets on sale now
Available at
www.edinapcn.org

**Keeping Our
Children Safe**

March 14, 2005

**Transition to
Kindergarten**

April 25, 2005

PCN National Speaker Forum Tickets for Sale

Tickets are on sale now for PCN's upcoming National Speaker Forum with author Dr. Robert Brooks, Harvard faculty member. Tickets may be purchased on-line at www.edinapcn.org; from your school's liaison, listed on the back of this newsletter; or by sending in the enclosed mail in registration form.

PCN is honored to present Dr. Robert Brooks. Dr. Brooks is the author of numerous books on raising resilient children, and is one of today's leading speakers on resilience, self esteem, motivation, and family relationships. Dr. Brooks will discuss the importance of:

- Practicing Empathy
- Changing "negative scripts"
- Establishing realistic expectations and goals
- Becoming a charitable family
- Discipline that promotes self discipline
- Identifying the strengths of each family member

"We must find consistent ways of raising our children that will lead them to happiness, success in school, satisfaction in their lives, and solid strength to deal completely and successfully, day after day, with the challenges and demands they encounter."

-Dr. Robert Brooks, Ph.D.

Visit our website at www.edinapcn.org

Upcoming Forum

Stressed Out Kids: Helping Your Family Find Balance

January 10, 2005
7:00– 9:00 p.m.
Creek Valley Elementary

Are you familiar with the signs and symptoms of stress in your children as they grow? This presentation will help you identify both the physical and emotional behaviors of stress in children of all ages.

At this forum, by Sharon MacDonald, we will learn what Edina students report on the Minnesota Student Survey about stress in their lives. We will examine the underlying issue of brain development as we work to develop strategies to help our children cope with life, as they know it. You will learn techniques for working with your own children as well as ways to model relaxation, self-soothing and time-management.

Sharon MacDonald has been in the field of education for 36 years as a teacher, social worker, and chemical health specialist. She has recently retired from the Hopkins School District where she coordinated the award winning Reduce the Use Community Coalition.

Key Developmental Assets Covered

- Personal Power
- Resistance Skills

Upcoming Forum

Keeping Our Children Safe

March 14, 2005
7:00–9:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Grace
by
The Jacob Wetterling Foundation

Join us on March 14th for a presentation by The Jacob Wetterling Foundation on **Keeping Our Children Safe.**

The Jacob Wetterling Foundation delivers educational and prevention messages about personal safety for children of all ages and backgrounds.

This presentation is based on straightforward information empowering children, teens, parents and community members to know that there are things we can do to keep ourselves safe.

The Jacob Wetterling Foundation focuses on non-fear based education. One goal of the foundation is to teach children to walk around smart, not scared.

The speaker will address some safety topics including:

- Mall Safety
- Internet Safety
- Babysitter Issues
- Teens & Parties
- Guns /Home Safety
- Abduction/Sexual abuse
- The importance of an open child/parent relationship

Visit www.jwf.org
Jacob Wetterling Foundation

Forum Highlights

Money Messages and Kids: Nickel and Diming Our Values

Held November 8th, 2004

In his presentation on Money Messages and Kids, Nathan Dungan presented current and compelling information regarding the marketing and cultural pressures facing today's children and then suggested some constructive, proactive ideas to address these issues and teach our children about financial literacy.

Today's youth under age 25 spend and/or influence the spending of over a trillion dollars per year. Advertisers and marketers have responded to this by spending 15 billion dollars on advertising to young people last year. Today's average 21 year old has been the recipient of 23 million ad impressions (3000/day) during their lifetime. "Hello Kitty" credit cards and the new "hottest" game of the holiday season "Mall Madness" are examples of marketing a mentality to the very young. College students are the fastest growing age group filing bankruptcy. The average college student has 3 credit cards and \$3,000 of credit card debt. In fact, consumer debt is the leading cause for academic difficulty and plays a role in student depression. In order to neutralize the effects of advertising and counter these trends, parents must take an active role in teaching our kids healthy financial habits. Some ideas are listed below:

Implement an allowance and encourage teens to get a part-time job. Its better to learn about money with your own rather than someone else's (parents or credit cards).

Implement a Share, Save, Spend process. Parents can allocate a percentage of allowance to each of these three "accounts," and kids make decisions about how to use it.

Share: Teach children at a young age the habit of philanthropy. Bring them into the process of choosing an organization to help. Let them experience the "helper's high" which comes from endorphins released when acting charitably.

Save: Teach goal setting. Encourage "wish lists" and practice being patient. Learn about compounding interest over time.

Spend: Communicate clearly what the child is expected to pay for (clothing, gifts, entertainment etc.) and what will be paid for by the parents (food, vacations etc.) Be a partner in helping them learn to price compare. Allow them to make "money mistakes" and feel the consequences.

Keep a ledger and track "money-in/money-out" as a visual tool. Watch where the money goes.

Raise everybody's marketing IQ. Notice and discuss advertising and marketing messages. Teach kids to become savvy to marketing messages.

Engage extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles etc). Encourage financial gifts in the form of a "share check" in which a check is given to a child and the child gets to choose where the funds will be donated.

Model desired behavior. Take a look at the way you approach money matters. Encourage discussion and processes for sharing, saving and spending.

Helpful Web sites:

commercialalert.org (advocates policy to prevent exploiting kids)

italladdsup.org (National Council Economic Education – games for kids online)

youngmoney.com (online magazine)

charitynavigator.org (compares various non-profit organizations)

myfico.com (allows one to research credit score/rating)

whatsmyscore.org

Community News

Edina's kids revealed some exciting data in the latest Minnesota Student Health Survey, that was administered in the spring of 2004.*

Overall our kids reported a decrease in the use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana and in sexual activity. When asked the reasons for not using substances or engaging in sexual activity, more of their choices included "my parents would object". Parents, pat yourselves on the back! Your kids are getting the message about making choices for better health.

One area of concern needs to be addressed now. Although our male students are not reporting any greater use of alcohol, they are reporting a huge increase in their response to the statement: "took it from home". In 2001, 17% of the 6th males who reported using alcohol in the past 30 days, said they "took it from home". Last spring, in response to the exact same question, the percentage jumped to 40%. For 9th grade males, their response in 2001 was, 11%, in 2004, they responded, that 24% of them "took it from home". Our kids have provided a significant warning to us.

The concern about experimentation, at this young age, is that when a youth begins using alcohol under the age of 15, he/she is four times more likely to become alcoholic. What are some of the strategies to reduce access to alcohol at home? Evaluate the sources of alcohol in your house. Beer, and those types of alcoholic beverages like "hard lemonade" and the fruit flavored malt liquors are especially appealing to kids. Have you heard that teens will refill the hard liquor bottles in their parent's cupboard with water? So, it's important to consider those too. Some parents have told us that they have gotten rid of all the alcohol when there are pre-teens and teens at home. Some parents have had a frank discussion with their kids about it, including warnings & consequences for any use of what's at home. Other parents have found a way to lock it up. Let us know if you have any other ideas. It's in the best interest of our kids and their future to "Lock It Up!"

*The MSHS survey is administered throughout the State of MN, to students in grades 6, 9 & 12. The youth have been surveyed every third year, since 1989.

Article submitted by Kathy Iverson, Chemical Health Coordinator for the City of Edina. Contact her at menze002@umn.edu

Additional data from the Minnesota Student Health Survey will be presented at the January PCN Forum by Sharon McDonald. See the second page of this newsletter for details.

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For general questions or feedback, please contact:

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This newsletter and more information about PCN can be found at www.edinapcn.org.