



Parent Communication Network



Edina Parent Communication Network  
Quarterly Newsletter

Spring Issue 2008



## PCN Calendar

### **Transition to Kindergarten**

March 13, 2008,  
6:30-8:30 PM  
Edina Community  
Center

### **Friendships 101: Seeking and Maintaining Healthy Friendships**

*Laurie Denn, MA and  
Jean Breitenbucher, LP*  
April 21, 2008, 7-9 PM  
Countryside

### **EDINA PCN NEEDS YOU:**

Edina PCN is recruiting volunteers for the 2008-2009 school year. We have opportunities to serve in a variety of capacities including PCN Liaisons, communications/marketing, operations, national speaker committee and more. If your passion is parenting education, we need you!

Please contact Leah Lindgren, President-Elect, at 952-924-4153 or lindgren\_l@msn.com



**Transition to Kindergarten**  
March 13, 2008, 6:30-8:30 PM  
Edina Community Center, Room 350

Learn how you can help your child get off to a great start in elementary school. We will have a panel of knowledgeable educators from Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), district kindergarten teachers and parents of current kindergartners to help you prepare your child for that big transition to "real" school.

Speakers will discuss the social and academic development of kindergartners, how they spend their time at school, offer tips for that first day to address potential fears and jitters and discuss end of the day rituals to help your children return to family life. Come listen, learn and ask all your questions.



## **Friendships 101: Seeking and Maintaining Healthy Friendships**

Laurie Denn, MA and  
Jean Breitenbucher, LP  
April 21, 2008, 7:00-9:00 PM  
Countryside Elementary School

If you wonder about questions such as: How do children's friendships develop and mature over time? What does a healthy friendship look like at different stages of development? What is emotional intelligence (EQ) and what does this have to do with friendship skills? How are male and female friendships different?

When do you listen and coach and when do you act? What really is peer pressure and can it be positive? How do cliques become so powerful and what's a parent to do?

Then, join us for a discussion about children's friendships from preschool to teens.

## March Forum Recap

### Tweens not Teens: Treasuring the Transition Molly Snuggerud

Over 100 parents attended the March Forum on Treasuring the Transition from Tweens to Teens. Molly Snuggerud, from the West Suburban Teen Clinic, shared some insights into this age group; both the joys and challenges. As they begin the change physically and emotionally to adolescents, their moods are unpredictable and their ability to read other people's emotion is usually limited to 'mad' or 'happy' (usually mad). In order to help them own emotions (frustrated, tired, annoyed or overwhelmed). Give them emotional vocabulary as well as some tools to manage emotions (time alone, sleep, snuggle time with you). It is also an important time to give them increasing responsibilities: make lunches, participate in household chores, babysit and take over responsibility for their school project management, instruments, and athletic equipment. Letting tweens fail and learn from their mistakes is an important developmental milestone at this age. Another challenge is "becoming my own person" and during this time tweens will test the family values. They may use inappropriate language, and try to watch shows and listen to music that you may not approve. When they try to reel us into a shouting match or a battle of wills, try not to engage. Be firm on your family values while still respecting their individuality. Be clear that respect, and safety are non-negotiable while other decisions may be (such as room

cleanliness, or sleepover bedtimes).

The joys during this time are that children during this age are creative, have empathy, love volunteering, thrive on increased responsibility and begin to have internal discipline and goals. Their job is play. It is so fun to watch 10 year old girls put on an impromptu play or boys devise a basketball game on a wooden ramp with their tricycle. Give them plenty of free time for unorganized activities and nurture healthy friendships.

Soon these tweens will become teens and the parent/child connectedness you have been nurturing since birth will be so important. Research at the University of Minnesota has shown that mutual connectedness will help your values stick to your child as they mature. So continue to build and maintain their trust, show affection, continue to do the activities together that you both enjoy, resolve conflicts with respect, and establish and maintain structure. Your job is to make the age appropriate rules and enforce them. If you get in the habit of bending on rules in the early years, they will learn that there really are no rules.

Make sure that you surround yourself with like minded parents to help you navigate these years. Call the Family Center for help if you find yourself overwhelmed.



*From the  
Edina Family Center*



### **Beyond ECFE Workshop: Boomers; Become Grandparents April 21, 2008, 7-9 PM**

This workshop is for all the "Nanas and Papas" who want to explore grandparenting today. Topics include: defining your role as a grandparent, understanding the latest trends in parenting and child care, maintaining a good relationship with your children and their spouses, legal issues regarding grandparenting and tips and ideas for both "in-town" and "long-distance" grandparenting.

### **Beyond ECFE: School Age Parenting Classes**

Once again for the 2008-2009 school year, the Edina Family Center will be offering K-12 parent education classes monthly during the day and several times a year in the evening. Daytime sections will be divided into sections for kindergarten, 1st-2nd grade, 3rd-5th grade, a middle school section at South View and Valley View, and a high school section. Evening sections will be for K-5th grade and middle school/high school. A Beyond ECFE catalog will be online May 2008 and can be viewed by going to [www.edina.k12.mn.us/community/familycenter](http://www.edina.k12.mn.us/community/familycenter). Registration will begin as soon as the catalog is online. An 'Early Bird Special' will be available for all who register by September 1, 2008. Fees will remain at the \$90 for Edina residents and \$120 for non-Edina residents. After September 1, 2008, fees will increase by \$10.

Beyond ECFE classes provide an opportunity for parents to share the joys and challenges of raising school age children and adolescents. The discussion is guided by a Licensed Parent Educator who provides information based on research, knowledge of child development and family education. Questions? Call Jean Breitenbucher L.P. at 952-848-3973.

## *National Speaker Forum Recap*

### **The Shelter of Each Other: Building Families for the New Millennium Dr. Mary Pipher, Ph.D.**

A snowy, cold evening in February with soft sounds of the Edina String Quartet was the perfect backdrop for the Edina PCN National Speaker, Dr. Mary Pipher, PhD. She began her talk comparing her grandparent's upbringing in Nebraska with a contemporary American family. Her grandparents had the stress of financial worries, health problems and weather/farming unpredictability. The contemporary family has the stress of so many demands on their time, corporate downsizing, parenting concerns and the influence of media. Today's families have to navigate technology which is a two-edged sword: it offers easy access to so much information but it also is another demand for our precious time and can have many unintended consequences. We need permission to say 'no' and opt out of some energy-draining activities. She told the story of a little girl who had an imaginary friend named Mr. Ravoli to whom she spoke only on the phone. Her parents eventually figured out that she was mimicking them as she spoke to Mr. Ravoli, "I'm so busy, maybe we can catch up next week. Sorry to have to cancel again." How are we modeling friendship?

The comparisons of these two families continued. Mary's grandparents had the support of a large extended family. Mary stressed the importance of the grandparent's role of providing the moral lessons and offering a different perspective to children. If grandparents are not able or willing to play this role she suggested that parents seek older neighbors, or church members to fill this void because intergenerational relationships are so important. This leads to the importance of the greater community and Mary suggested that we intentionally reach out to our community's kids, especially teens, to let them know that adults, other than their parents, are watching them and value them.

Mary then offered some suggestions for families wanting to grow closer and be a buffer from the media-centered broader culture. She praised the City of Edina as an "enlightened community" where there is beautiful green space, parks and even our "Unplugged Night." She suggested that parents be vigilant about media, movies, and internet. Viewing movies and television together with your kids offers excellent opportunities to point out good and bad choices. She also made the point that computers and cell phones are neutral items which can be helpful in their intended uses, but damaging with their unintended uses. Electronic games, TV, and the internet are not "bad" but evaluate which activities your children may be missing such as outdoor play, imaginative play or reading.

The very essence of Mary's talk suggested that she values calmness, nature, and the outdoors and many of her books point to the intrinsic value of providing these experiences to children. They reduce the stress of our fast-paced culture. These experiences give perspective and even if children do not feel they fit in at school; animals and nature provide self esteem and a quiet place to be yourself.

Finally Mary reminded parents that humans are social and we all need social interactions. She suggested that parenting groups, formal or informal, offer parents reassurance, advice and support against the "but everyone is doing it" phenomena. Family meals, vacations and outings will be the forever memories for both parents and children.



## THANK YOU!

To the Edina Education Fund. Without your generous co-sponsorship, this event would not have been possible.

Edina Education Fund

We would also like to thank the following donors for their generous donations to the National Speaker Forums:

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### Valley View Middle School

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### Edina High School

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Cathy Burley 926.9579

### ECFE Liaison

Jean Breitenbucher 848.3973

Save the Date!

Monday, June 2, 2008

## Edina Education Fund's

## Golf & Tennis Classic

Edina Country Club

Registration—noon

Dinner and Auction—5:30 PM

### PCN Board 2007-2008

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Secretary

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This newsletter, more information and resources can be found at [www.edinapcn.com](http://www.edinapcn.com)