



Parent Communication Network



Edina Parent Communication Network  
Quarterly Newsletter

**November 2005**

## PCN Calendar

**Advocacy vs.  
Interference**  
November 7, 2005

**Understanding  
Emotional  
Intelligence**  
January 23, 2006

### **NATIONAL SPEAKER FORUM**

***Boys and Girls  
Learn  
Differently***

*With Michael Gurian*

Colonial Church  
February 13, 2006

Tickets on sale now.

Available at  
[www.edinapcn.com](http://www.edinapcn.com)

**CORRECTED  
DATES**

**Having The  
Hard Talks**  
March 20, 2006

**Transition to  
Kindergarten**  
April 24, 2006

### **Advocacy vs. Interference: Raising Responsible Children**

With Jean Illsley Clarke

Monday, November 7, 2005 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Cornelia Elementary Free Admission

Where is the line between helping children make good choices and hindering them with too much intervention? How can parents use failures and mistakes as learning tools?

As parents we want the best for our children and to make sure that happens we have become very involved in their activities. This all sounds ideal but when are we crossing the line? Will our children be able to figure things out for themselves? As adults will they be able to manage their own schedules?

Jean Illsley Clarke will share with us the difference between advocating for your child and interfering. Jean is a noted parenting expert and author who will share her experience and insight on raising responsible children. She is the author of How Much is Enough?, and other parenting books.

### **Understanding Emotional Intelligence**

With Linda Crisman

Minnetonka Public School Principal

Monday, January 23, 2006 7:00-9:00 PM

Concord Elementary

Free Admission

Ms. Crisman will explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is important in your child's development. Understanding emotional intelligence can help your child deal more effectively with life changes. Emotional intelligence, or EQ, is now considered a greater predictor of success than I.Q.

This forum acts as a follow-up to Dr. Robert Brooks' 2005 PCN National Speaker presentation *The Power of Resilience: Building Strong Families*. In our 2005 forum, Dr. Brooks touched on the topic of emotional intelligence, and with this session, we are exploring the emotional intelligence concept in more detail.

Ms. Crisman will share with us how to increase your child's emotional intelligence through specific exercises, activities and modeling. High levels of emotional intelligence helps assure our children of happy, successful and responsible lives as adults.

Visit our website at [www.edinapcn.com](http://www.edinapcn.com)

## **Why Do They Act That Way? *A Survival Guide to the Adolescent Brain***

**With Dr. David Walsh**

**Held October 3, 2005**

Some of the mysteries of adolescence are beginning to unfold as the latest research on the brain's development is studied. Scientific research shows that the adolescent brain is really "under construction" and is undergoing tremendous growth spurts in the form of neural connections being made in the "wiring" of the brain. Knowledge of this can empower parents and teachers not only by understanding teen-age behaviors but also to guide us in the way we parent and teach our adolescent children.

First and foremost is to understand that the brain isn't fully developed until the early to mid 20s. And the very last part of the brain to develop is the pre-frontal cortex or as Dr. Walsh referred to it: the "Supervisor" of the brain. The pre-frontal cortex handles our capacity to think ahead, consider consequences, manage emotions, thoughts and impulses. This helps explain risk-taking behaviors and impulsivity associated with the teen years. Parents, teachers and other caring adults must act as a sort of "surrogate pre-frontal cortex." We can help them to think through their actions with dialogue, firm boundaries and clear consequences to those boundaries such as curfews, house rules, school rules etc.

The chemistry of the body and the brain is also changing during adolescence. In boys, the growth hormones and testosterone levels surge which in turn affect the amygdala or the "anger center" of the brain, leaving adolescent boys quick tempered and more aggressive. In girls, the growth hormones, estrogen and progesterone impact the serotonin levels. When serotonin levels change, moods and emotional reactions get amplified. So we have boys with beefed up anger centers and girls with amplified emotions.

**Communication:** Non-verbal cues, which are important for clear communication are often misinterpreted in teens. Instead, teens use their amygdala which can lead to increased aggression. It is important for adults to avoid power struggles with teens by having clear consequences and keeping teens accountable for their behavior.

**Sexuality:** Boys can experience several surges of testosterone surges each day. It is important to tell our teen boys that this is perfectly normal and learn how to manage this responsibly and respectfully. Girls can experience increased levels of oxytocin or the "cuddle" hormone which leads them to want to move closer to boys. This brain activation causes a powerful drive in girls to fall in love easily. Parents must be in conversation about sexuality with their kids otherwise, we delegate sex-ed to the media.

**Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco:** Alcohol and nicotine affects the pleasure/reward circuit center of the brain and elevates the dopamine which results in feeling happy. The adolescent brain is more easily addicted. The earlier kids start to use alcohol, drugs or tobacco, the greater risk of chronic addiction. The typical warning signals that go off in the adult brain to stop DO NOT go off in the teen brain as quickly. That is why binge drinking on college campuses is common and dangerous.

**Dr. Walsh's message to parents is to consider three things when dealing with adolescents:**  
**Connection-** This is not easy because teens are looking for independence, in sense, they are asking for a divorce! DO NOT grant the divorce. Use the pre-teen years to make deposits into their emotional bank account, spend time together, create memories. When they reach their teen years they may be making some hefty withdrawals from that emotional bank account.

**Guidance – Be a parent not a friend. Have clear limits with consequences and accountability delivered with a caring attitude. Remember, parenting is often a form of delayed gratification!**

**Love – Be an adult, don't take their words or actions personally. Understand the changes they are going through and love them all the way through.**



## *National Speaker Forum*

### **Michael Gurian Boys and Girls Learn Differently**

Monday, February 13, 2006

7:00p.m.—9:00 p.m.

**Colonial Church**

**\$12.00 in advance    \$15.00 at the door**

**Tickets on sale now!  
\$12 each**

You may purchase tickets to PCN's National Speaker Forum in one of four ways:

1. Log on to our website [www.edinapcn.com](http://www.edinapcn.com) and order tickets online.
2. Mail a ticket request to:  
Edina PCN Tickets  
5701 Normandale Road  
Edina, MN 55424-1530.  
Include:  
Name  
Address  
Phone number  
Email address  
Number of tickets required  
Check Payable to: Edina PCN for \$12 per ticket
3. Purchase tickets from a PCN member.
4. Purchase tickets for \$15 the evening of the event.

**Limited seating available!  
Order early!**

One of the Edina school district strategic goals has been to address gender learning. In support of this, Edina educators kicked off the new school year by attending a workshop with Michael Gurian this past August. PCN is excited to have Mr. Gurian return as this years national speaker to share with parents the same information plus more, bringing full circle community support the education of our children.

Mr. Gurian has been called "the people's philosopher" because of his ability to bring together people's ordinary lives and scientific ideas. Mr. Gurian is a pioneer in bringing neurobiology and brain research into schools and public policy. He has written over twenty books including the bestsellers *The Wonder of Girls* and *The Wonder of Boys*. His training DVD's for parents and volunteers are used by Big Brother and Big Sister agencies in the U.S. and Canada. Mr Gurian's work has been featured in various media, such as the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Time*, *Wall Street Journal*, *CNN*, *PBS* and *NPR*.

Mr. Gurian will discuss the differences and similarities between boys' and girls' brains and how they affect learning. In addition, he will explore how brain differences influence the way boys and girls process emotion and develop self esteem at school.

With years of research and practical application, Mr. Gurian's experience and knowledge helps parents, educators and school officials provide an optimal learning environment for both sexes.

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## *Community News*

### **School Age Parenting *Beyond ECFE***

The Edina Family Center has expanded its parenting education offerings to include classes that focus on reaching the entire spectrum of childhood, beginning with the early years of childhood and moving into the adolescent and teenage years.

The family center is offering monthly parenting classes broken down into different age groups. Parenting the 3-5 year olds, 1st-2nd graders, 3rd-5th graders, 6th-9th graders. Beyond ECFE will meet once a month. A licensed parent educator will guide the discussion and provide information based on research and knowledge of child development and family education.

**To register for a BEYOND ECFE class,  
call 952-848-3980**

### **Individual Parent Education Sessions**

Questions or concerns about your children's behavior, development, or relationship within the family? Call **952-848-3973** to schedule a 50 minute session with a licensed parent educator. Conversations are confidential. The cost is \$25.00 per session and scholarships are available.

## **MARCH FORUM DATE CHANGE! HAVING THE HARD TALKS**

*Is now March 20th*

In Support of Edina's **Unplugged Evening**, PCN is rescheduling the March 13th forum. You can spend the evening with your family on the 13th and still not miss this very informative forum on the 20th.

**Join us! March 20th 7:00-9:00pm  
Creek Valley Elementary  
Free Admission**

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## **PCN School Liaisons**

### **Concord Elementary**

Beth Weibert 929.4226  
Angela Lee 920.4001

### **Cornelia Elementary**

Nancy Miller 928.0482  
Cecily Johnson 938.0937

### **Countryside Elementary**

Jayne Tuttle 920.1329  
Susan Lundquist 996.9071

### **Creek Valley Elementary**

Cathy Groat 829.0099  
Cyri Prescott 944.2415

### **Highlands Elementary**

Teresa Luterbach 926.1991  
Amy Scott 926.6740

### **Normandale Elementary**

Kate Boyer 920.4466

### **Our Lady of Grace**

Liz Abt Ellenberger 927-0698  
Mary Buska 945.9429

### **South View Middle School**

Mary Peterson 929.0747  
Theresa Brunker 925.2685

### **Valley View Middle School**

Barb Hatch 944-1343  
Cindy Wood 946.8966

### **Edina High School**

Kari Fedje Rasmus 922.0163

For general questions or  
feedback, please contact:

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PCN President**

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