

FAMILY FORUM



Family Forum is the newsletter of the Minnesota Council on Family Relations, a State Affiliate of the National Council on Family Relations Summer 2005

PARENT EDUCATION INSTITUTE V - DID WE CHART THE FUTURE?

Rose Allen and Marty Rossmann, Co-chairs

Boldly, the name of the fifth Parent Education Institute sponsored by MCFR and Held May 20-21, 2005 at the Continuing Education and Conference Center on the St. Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota, proclaimed the goal for the conference, "Charting the Future." Nearly all participants were very positive and enthusiastic about what they gained from attending. However, one evaluation form said, "We never quite got to the point of charting the future of the field." We know that we should be congratulating ourselves on all the good comments, but we can't stop worrying about that one observation!

With 20-20 hindsight, a more accurate title for the Institute might have been, "Raising Questions to Guide the Practitioners in the Field to Chart the Future of Parent Education." While fully descriptive, that moniker might have scared away potential participants!

The planners of the Institute had ambitious goals. We successfully recruited an awesome group of national participants (over 20 of those attending came from other states). We thought the presentations by the equally awesome speakers and the interaction of the participants would get them to the point where they could be ready (individually and collectively) to move the field of parent education into the future. It was thought conference objectives could be achieved by talking among us about the following which were built into the program:

- Research about parent-child relationships;
- Ways that parents learn in parent education programs;
- Historical perspectives of parent



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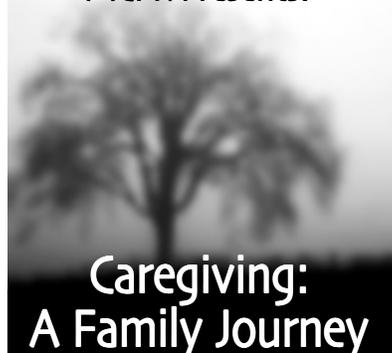
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(1) Participants experiencing the exhibits during a break. (2) Small group discussions allowed participants to learn from the other experts in the field-- colleagues from across the nation. (3) Conference Committee members from left to right: Ted Bowman, Marty Rossmann and Rose Allen.

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MCFR Presents:



Mark your calendar and plan to attend!

CAREGIVING: A FAMILY JOURNEY

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2ND, 2005

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND CONFERENCE CENTER

(Formerly Earle Brown Center) U of M St. Paul Campus, 1890 Buford Avenue, St. Paul, MN

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: WAYNE CARON, PHD

Senior Lecturer & Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota, Department of Family Social Science, and Director of the Family Caregiving Center

This conference will cover a wide array of topics surrounding the many facets of family caregiving. Nearly all professionals who work with families will at some point be faced with challenges surrounding family caregiving. This conference will offer a chance to better understand how we, as professionals, can better help the families involved in caregiving situations.

- Sandwich Generation Caregiving -Managing to Care for Both

Children and Aging Parents.

- Children with special needs – unique situations, joys, and challenges
- Caring for a Family Member with a Terminal Illness - Grief, Loss and Saying Goodbye
- Caring for the Caregiver

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President's Letter

GREETINGS, MCFR MEMBERS!

Madge Alberts
MCFR 2005 President



Madge Alberts

It's the heat of summer, and we are in the process of planning a retreat for the MCFR Board of Directors. Peg Lindlof, president-elect of MCFR, and I have been discussing where MCFR should be placing its focus over the next couple of years. The importance of family educators and other family professionals has never been greater as families face new and different challenges in the world around them.

As we've talked, these are some of the questions that have come to mind:

- What is the role of family professionals in helping families face the fears they may experience regarding terrorist attacks? London seems far away, but when children see it on a TV screen, it feels very close. Parents need skills to answer their children's questions.
- What is the role of family professionals in the political world? This is a question MCFR struggles with regularly. MCFR has a Policy Committee that is giving leadership to this issue. While it's important that MCFR be non-partisan and not take stances on specific bills, should MCFR be publicly advocating for a family perspective in all policy development? Should we be developing the capacity to do things like write family policy impact statements for both private (such as workplace) and public (legislature, schools etc.) policymakers? There is much work to be done in this field. Should MCFR be a more visible player?
- What is the role of MCFR in assisting those of you who might be interested in becoming Certified Family Life Educators? CFLE certification is becoming higher profile all the time, particularly as the field is expanding into areas such as marriage education. Some family education positions are even asking for CFLE certification as a required or preferred qualification for jobs. Dawn Cassidy gives great leadership to this work at NCFR. She is also a member of the MCFR board of directors.
- As your president, and as a board of directors, we are always thinking about what it means to be a member of MCFR. We provide two professional development conferences each year. Our recent two-day Parenting Education Institute was a tremendous professional development opportunity for parent educators, and over 150 attended. The fall conference in December will be focusing on caregiving across the lifespan. In addition to conferences, what do you, as members, expect or want when you join MCFR?
- Do MCFR members want a greater connection to research about family related issues? If so, what is the best way to provide that?

Stimulating discussion with other family professionals is one way that I grow myself as a family professional. Taking time to talk and think with other professionals about issues like those I raised above, and others issues related to families, helps us be good critical thinkers about the work we do, and the needs of families we work with.

MCFR has an e-mail listserv. All of you are members of it, if we have your e-mail addresses. This might be one way to have some discussion about things that are important for you in your work. In the next week or so, I'll put a couple of questions out on that list for your response. If you're interested in using that as a tool, jump in there and share your thoughts!

Have a great summer! Take some time to relax and regenerate!

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE CAN WE TALK?

Linda Rogers, Chair of the Membership Committee

Why did you join MCFR? Recently the MCFR membership committee asked each other that question and heard many different answers. To gain a larger perspective the committee will phone new members over the summer to hear their answers as well. Responses might be radically different from responses we would have heard in 1951 when MCFR was founded- and yet there may be striking similarities. For instance, we are hearing that members value sharing of information regarding best practices via our website and email. Sharing of best practices has always been important, but members exchange that information in very different ways than they did 50 years ago.

Committee members also look forward to talking with other MCFR members to identify current MCFR benefits that are valued, and to discover what benefits are desired in the future. This information will help MCFR to be relevant and responsive.

You are most welcome to join in the important work of the membership committee! Current members are Marcie Brooke, Dawn Cassidy, Tammy Dunrud, Christine Fehst, Kristin Schneider, Minnell Tralle and Vicki Thrasher-Cronin. Contact any of them or Linda Rodgers, Chair, at linda.rodgers@anoka.k12.mn.us for more information.

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE UPDATE REACHING MCFR MEMBERS

Rose Allen, Chair of the Communication Committee

One of the goals of the MCFR Board is to improve communication with and between its members. How do we intend to accomplish this?

Family Forum – our newsletter

We plan on publishing four issues annually – two will be printed and mailed and two will be electronic. This will provide you with updates about the organization and current issues and research in the family field.

The MCFR web site

Have you visited it? www.mcfr.net
This site will keep you updated on events,

board work and policy issues. It will also be a place for “members only” information.

The MCFR list serv

Our goal this year is to collect all our member’s current e-mail addresses so everyone will be connected. This will allow us to communicate quickly and in a timely manner with our members. The MCFR list serv is not just a one-way communication tool – you are invited to share information such as educational opportunities, job openings and events. It’s easy to use – just send your message to mcfr@lists.umn.edu

If you haven’t been receiving list serv information, send a message to the above address requesting to be added. This list is only available to MCFR members.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Communications Committee, contact Rose Allen at 651-480-7745 or allen027@umn.edu

MSCFR - STUDENT NEWS

Kristin Schneider, MSCFR Vice President

Here we are in summer, recovering from Spring semester and gearing up for the fall. MSCFR was active in the spring with many networking and social events. The semester started with a Welcome Week-end for potential incoming graduate students. During the weekend, we introduced students to the University of Minnesota and all of the exciting opportunities offered, including of course MSCFR. March and May’s events also consisted of networking and socializing with other students and faculty creating bridges and honoring successes. The highlight of the semester, though, was in April. We held a Brown Bag Colloquium in which five of our inspiring MCFR members, Mike Jerpbak, Sara Lassig, Susan Meyers, Linda Rodgers, and Vicki Thrasher Cronin, spoke to students and faculty. The presentation went so well, we are hoping to make it an annual event.

Now we are getting ready to organize a function in August to get returning students back into the swing and new students comfortable. We are also hoping to recruit more members to MSCFR. Our goal for the upcoming year is to strengthen our reflections of and interactions with MCFR and its message. I am speaking on behalf of MSCFR when I say that we are very excited about this mission.

MCFR ELECTIONS

Sara Lassig, Nominating Committee Chair

As usual, the Minnesota Council on Family Relations will hold its annual elections in the fall. Six new members will be elected, with three two-year term positions and three, one-year term positions. Interested members are encouraged to nominate themselves or other MCFR members for the at large positions. For more information, or to make a nomination, please contact Sara Lassig, Nominations Committee chair, at lass0044@umn.edu.

PARENT EDUCATION INSTITUTE V

Co-chairs Rose Allen and Marty Rossmann

The Parent Education Institute V was held on May 20-21, 2005 at the Continuing Education and Conference Center (formerly Earle Brown) on the University of Minnesota – St. Paul Campus. The Minnesota Council on Family Relations was the primary sponsor, with the following co-sponsors:

- Family Education Program – University of Minnesota
- National Parent Education Network
- University of Minnesota Extension Service
- Children Youth and Families Consortium – University of Minnesota.

The following is an overview of the Institute.

Attendance:

| | |
|----------------|----|
| MCFR Members – | 85 |
| Non Members – | 46 |
| Students – | 16 |
| Speakers – | 18 |

Total Institute attendance: 165

Pre-Institute workshops (Offered by the University of Minnesota Extension Service)

30 We Agree: Creating a Parenting Plan
19 How Does Divorce Affect Parents and Children?

18 What’s New with Teens and their Families?

67 Total Pre-Institute attendance

- Participants who requested CEU’s: 20
- Participants who registered for the graduate course: 10
- Participants who paid for MCFR membership when they registered: 28

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MARCIE BROOKE GOES TO WASHINGTON

Marcie Brooke CFLE Past President of MCFR
President Association of Councils National Council on Family Relations

Sixth Annual Public Policy and Education Conference, Families and Security: Preparedness for Emergencies and Financial Well-being held in Washington D.C. in April was an enlightening, informative experience.

The congressional briefing speakers were; Pauline Boss Ph.D., University of Minnesota author and founder of the Minnesota/New York Ambiguous Loss Project, Judith Landau M.B., CFLE expert in trauma and recovery, Judith Myers-Walls, Ph.D., Purdue University expert in preparing children for terrorism or war, and Tom Smith FEMA Department of Family Preparedness. Bonnie Braun, Ph.D., University of Maryland was the panel facilitator.

It was shocking to note that the FEMA Department did not have any plans in place for families after trauma and disaster. It was as if they had no idea what Family Education was about. Their concerns were immediate; firefighters, police officers, and medical personnel. The audience and panel discussed the need for grief counselors, family education experts, and family life specialists to help families after the immediate crisis. Mr. Smith from FEMA said he would take our suggestions forward.

Michael Benjamin, Executive Director of the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) and Nancy Gonzales, Public Policy liaison for NCFR and NCFR staff did a fabulous job of arranging visits on Capitol Hill with our legislators. They put together packets of information on families, *Family Lens*, questions, answers and concerns.

We all met for a briefing from Michael on protocol and expectations. It was a fascinating experience to meet Betty McCollum in her Washington D.C. office, to speak with Mark Dayton's staff and to visit Minnesota Representatives from around the state. The people we spoke with were genuinely pleased to receive information on how the *Family Lens* works.

Ted Halstead, President and CEO of New America Foundation and author of the *Radical Center and the Real State of the Union* was dynamic and engaging. He discussed new politics and a new social contract. He stated vouchers would not work when it costs and average \$8,000 per child, per school and the government only wanted to give \$1,500 per child. Poor families would still not be able to afford schools of choice. He talked of Federal level funding where every child receives

the same amount of dollars no matter where they lived. He sighted information on poor neighborhoods, high taxes, and accidents of geography. In Mississippi their schools receive \$6,000 per child whereas New Jersey schools receive \$12,000 per child.

Do you know what the highest tax United States citizens pay? Ted asked the audience this question. The majority stated income tax. He said, "No" it is the FICA payroll tax.

I urge you to check out www.newamerica.net. It is the think tank for generation next. The website says New American Foundation has the brightest American thinkers under forty.

Another high light of this incredible conference was going to dinner with the National Council on Family Relations Elections Council and having Sam Donaldson sit next to our table. Mr. Donaldson was the former ABC new correspondent and co-anchor of Prime Time Live, a regular panelist on This Week.

The NCFR Public Policy Conference was great. I hope each one of you will make plans to attend next year. Family Education is more necessary than ever before.

PARENT EDUCATION INSTITUTE V REPORT

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- education;
- Best practices of parent education;
- Cutting-edge ways to view parent education;
- Processes of parent education;
- Key issues in parent education;
- Reasons why parent education is needed; and
- Advocating for parent education.

All of this excellent material had the potential to set the stage for the future of parent education, but we were naïve to think that in one and a half days we could solve all the issues.

What are the remaining questions?
What's the work that needs to be done?

The statement on the evaluation was right. Big and little questions DO remain as the fairly new, as professions go, field of parent education goes into the future. What should be done about these perplexing issues??? Here are some actions we can collectively take based on the conversations we overheard, the evaluation feedback and the topics discussed at the Institute:

- Development of a national organization to set standards for the field
- Agreement on core competencies required for practitioners
- Need for research about the outcomes for parents' learning
- Creation of a theory or theories that guide practice and research
- An advocacy plan for the field

- Selection and development of curriculum and instructional strategies
- Definition of ethical practices for the field

How do we keep this conversation going? Much momentum was generated at the Institute. Where will the energy go? How can we get the word out beyond MCFR? Please e-mail your thoughts about next steps to rossm001@umn.edu or allen027@umn.edu. Keep the dialog going. YOUR ideas are needed to Chart the Future of Parent Education.

WWW.MCFR.NET

MCFR IN AN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Sue Meyers

Family trees are rich with references to influences on today. So it is with the history of MCFR - as seen through actions and conferences. It is startling to see how progressive were some of the topics addressed throughout the years.

For instance, Reuben Hill, exceptional researcher at the University of Minnesota, was the keynote presenter in 1958. His topic, "Can Marriage be Taught (Is Family Life Education Tomfoolery?)," is one very appropriate for the 21st Century. The value of research on understanding family behavior has been challenged across the years. The same research has enhanced greater understanding of the family of origin and the value of parent education in the development of children.

The NCFR Office moved to Minneapolis in 1955, taking up residence for many years in the third floor of a Baptist church on the East Bank of the U of MN. Ruth Jewson was named Executive Secretary in

1956. The title did not reflect that she was the executive director of the diverse organization.

The NCFR Annual Meeting was held in Minneapolis in 1966. The theme was "The Family in a Cybernetic Culture." Although computers were not widely used until the mid 1970s, the organization saw the significance of cybernetics early in its development. If you want to be entertained, ask a retired researcher about key-punched cards and the big main frame computers. It makes sense that the "gopher" language was developed at the U of MN that allowed colleagues to communicate to other universities through computers - and why .edu is so valued.

Themes of conferences reflect the questions in society - including "Teen-Age Marriages: a Marriage Counselor Looks at Teen-Age Marriage" with Dave Mace as keynoter in 1960; and "The Employed

Mother as a Factor in Family Life" with Robert Blood at keynoter in 1963. They may sound amusing today, but were controversial in their day.

MCFR affiliated with NCFR in 1953 - three years after MCFR was formed. The first applied bibliography was published and sold in 1954. The bibliography analyzed films and books for content so that family life educators could select appropriate supportive materials for teaching at the secondary school or college level. The Annotated Bibliography allowed MCFR to become financially secure and provided a valuable resource to family professionals across the United States. The first editor I remember was Ron Pitzer, one of the long-time leaders in MCFR and NCFR.

More reflections on our MCFR history in future issues. If you have suggestions or comments, feel free to contact me at: smeyers@umn.edu.

PARENT EDUCATION INSTITUTE V REPORT

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Speakers:

- Ada Alden, Director of Family Educational Services at the Family Center in Eden Prairie
- Marc Bornstein, Senior Investigator and Head, Child and Family Research, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- Ted Bowman, Facilitator, Trainer and Institute Navigator
- Jean Illsley Clarke, Internationally known parent educator, trainer and author
- William Doherty, Professor, Family Social Science, University of Minnesota
- Martha Farrell Erickson, Senior Fellow, Children, Youth and Family Consortium and internationally known researcher in the area of parent-child attachment
- H. Wallace Goddard, Extension Family Life Specialist, University of Arkansas
- Glen Palm, Professor of Child and Family Studies, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN

Workshops and Presenters:

- Evaluating Parent Education – Betty Cooke, Beth Yokom, Shannon Rader and Sue Stoner
- Using Theories to Guide Parent Education Practice – Marty Rossmann
- When Parents Differ: Dealing with Controversial Issues – Ted Bowman
- Defining Core Competencies for Parent Educators – Deb Campbell
- Selecting and Using Curriculum and Instructional Strategies – Dana
- Meeting Outside the School or Congregation: Parent Education in a Variety of Settings – Kristen Stuenkel and Practitioners Panel

CAREGIVING: A FAMILY JOURNEY

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- Family Response to a Cancer Diagnosis
- Also Featuring:**
Ted Bowman, PhD, Ted Bowman, Trainer and Educator, Special Instructor in Family Education, University of Minnesota, who, in addition to presenting a breakout

session, will close the day with a unique and important message of honoring the developmental differences in families.

- Information on the importance of family involvement in health care decision making and health care directives.
- A panel of parents of children with special needs, who have been through the unique situations with school systems, social support systems, familial interactions,
- Multiple breakout sessions, poster and video presentations, and roundtable sessions

Presentations:

Those individuals or groups interested in presenting at this conference should contact Sara Lassig, conference chair, at lass0044@umn.edu. Possible presentation formats include breakout sessions, poster sessions, roundtable discussions, video presentations, and workshops.

PARENTING STYLE AND CHILD BEHAVIOR

Ronald L. Pitzer, Family Sociologist, Professor Emeritus of Social Work; former **Positive Parenting** project leader, University of Minnesota Extension Service.

Positive parenting is the balance of three aspects of parents' behavior toward their children—nurturance, discipline, and respect. These are critical for effective parenting in all cultural and economic circumstances.

PARENTAL NURTURANCE

Nurturance is the extent to which parents respond to their children in an accepting, supportive manner. It is a very powerful force in the development of children and most children probably do not get enough. Nurturance helps children feel loved, secure, and cared about, and it fosters children's acceptance of discipline and parental demands. There are many ways to respond and nurture children, including listening attentively, spending time with children, being available, and giving more attention to that which pleases and less to that which does not ("catch them being good").

PARENTAL DISCIPLINE

*Discipline is the extent to which a parent identifies, expects, and reinforces appropriate behavior from children. This includes setting limits or rules, monitoring youngsters' behavior and whereabouts, and firmly but gently enforcing the limits. In order to be enforced, rules must be clear, reasonable, developmentally appropriate, fair and just, mutually agreed upon, flexible, and emphasize what **to** do rather just what **not** to do. Enforcement of rules is much more than just punishment. Indeed, punishment is probably the least effective of the alternatives available. Monitoring, understanding children's behavior, preventing misbehavior, rewarding good behavior, and guidance are more effective strategies.*

PARENTAL RESPECT (GRANTING OF "PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTONOMY")

This concept is increasingly being recognized as being as important as nurturance and discipline, particularly when children reach early adolescence (age 10 or 11 or so). It helps to clarify parental discipline, by distinguishing between **behavioral** and **psychological** control.

The child development literature indicates that children and adolescents are adversely affected by too much psychological control and by too little behavioral control. **Too little behavioral control** deprives the youngster of guidance and supervision, placing the child at risk for developmental difficulties. **Too much psychological control** interferes with youngsters' freedom of thought and expression and can limit opportunities for self-discovery, disrupt the establishment of identity, undermine self-esteem and confidence, and result in inadequate understanding and expression of emotions. Psychological autonomy is important throughout childhood but becomes critical when children reach early adolescence, around age 10 or 11, and begin to establish an independent psychological identity and want increasing amounts of freedom and privacy.

How parents balance these three dimensions varies. Some parents are warm and accepting while others are unresponsive or even rejecting. Some parents are demanding and expect a

great deal of their child, while others are permissive and demand very little. Some parents not only limit their youngsters' behavior but allow little or no freedom of thought and expression. At least four **parenting styles** can be created by the interplay of high and low parental *nurturance, discipline, and respect*.

- Parents who *nurture, discipline, and respect* their children are **positive**.
- Parents who *nurture and respect* their children but do not *discipline* much or well are **permissive**.
- Parents who *discipline* their children but are not very *nurturant* or *respectful* are **dominating**.
- Parents who neither *nurture, discipline, nor respect* their children are **unengaged**.

Research by Steinberg, Barber, and others indicates that children and teens raised by **positive** parents tend to do well on all the dimensions studied—they have self-esteem and confidence, have little anxiety or depression, are socially competent (empathy, emotional control, communication, and conflict management), are respectful and responsible, show good academic performance, and do not have much problem behavior. Children and teens raised by **permissive** parents tend to have good self-esteem, have little depression, are socially competent in most areas, but score low on respect and responsibility, underachieve academically, and have a lot of problem behavior. Children raised by **dominating** parents are somewhat the opposite. They tend to have low self-esteem and confidence, have a lot of anxiety and depression, are not very socially competent, rate in the middle on respect and responsibility, have average academic performance, and have relatively little problem behavior. Children and teens raised by **unengaged** parents tend to do worst on all of these dimensions – low self-esteem and confidence, a lot of anxiety and depression, little social competence, are not respectful or responsible, poor academic performance, and show a lot of problem behavior.

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FAMILIES LIKE MINE: CHILDREN OF GAY PARENTS TELL IT LIKE IT IS

BY ABIGAIL GARNER (LOCAL AUTHOR, LECTURER, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZER)

HarperCollins. 2004. Hardcover. 272 pp. \$24.95

Submitted by Elizabeth Hoodecheck, MCFR Board-member at-large (from notes provided by the publisher).

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO GROW UP WITH GAY PARENTS?

Abigail Garner was five years old when her mother and father divorced and her dad came out as gay. Growing up immersed in gay culture, she now calls herself a “culturally queer” heterosexual woman. As a child, she often found herself in the middle of the political and moral debates surrounding lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) parenting. At the age of twenty-two, she began to speak publicly about her family and has since become a nationally recognized advocate for the estimated 10 million children growing up with LGBT parents. The creator of

FamiliesLikeMine.com, Garner has written a personal book about gay parenting, from the seldom-heard perspective of grown children raised in these families.

Based on eight years of activism, combined with interviews with more than fifty sons and daughters, *Families Like Mine* debunks the anti-gay myth that these children grow up damaged and confused. At the same time, Garner’s book refutes the popular pro-gay sentiment that these children turn out “just like everyone else.” In addition to the typical stresses of growing up, these

children face unique pressures resulting from homophobia and prejudice. Using a blend of journalism and memoir, Garner offers empathetic yet unapologetic opinions about the gifts and challenges of being raised in families that are often labeled “controversial.”

As more LGBT people are pursuing parenthood and as the visibility of gay parenting is rapidly increasing, many of the questions about these families focus on the “best interests” of their children. *Families Like Mine* addresses these questions, providing an insider’s perspective for LGBT parents, their families, and their allies.

MCFR AWARD NOMINATIONS ARE WELCOME!

Each year MCFR presents two awards to recognize individuals and organizations that do exceptional work with and for families in Minnesota. Any MCFR member is welcome to submit a nomination.

• The Ruth Hathaway Jewson Award

The **Ruth Hathaway Jewson Award** is given to a professional in the family field who has demonstrated outstanding service, research and/or education, and who has provided exceptional contributions to the field.

• The Friend of the Family Award

The **Friend of the Family Award** recognizes an organization or person whose work is outside the family field, but who has made significant contributions to the quality of family life in Minnesota.

Recognition of colleagues who work for families and other organizations whose work contributes is vital MCFR. Please consider nominating an individual or group for either of these awards. Submit names and a short statement of support to Peg Lindlof at plindlof@comcast.net.

CFLE? WHY IS IT RIGHT FOR ME?

Have you thought about the benefits of Licensure?

MCFR members with CFLEs are willing to mentor new CFLE applicants. Call 651-407-0950 or go to www.MCFR.net for more information.

Family Forum is published three times a year by the Minnesota Council on Family Relations and distributed to all association members.

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Managing Editor: Ron Pitzer

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

According to Webster, a *forum* is “a meeting place for discussion of matters of public interest or a means through which such discussion can be conducted”—such as a newspaper, newsletter, or chat room. Since our newsletter is titled *Family Forum*, it seems appropriate to provide more opportunity for MCFR members to discuss family matters. There currently are two ways that can be done in *Family Forum*—by preparing research articles reporting original family research or summaries of others’ research and by preparing reviews of family books. The MCFR Board has decided to try a third

way—a “Member’s Corner”, similar to “Letters to the Editor” in most newspapers. This will provide you a *forum* for sharing ideas, concerns, observations, and messages about family issues. Also appropriate would be news about yourself (or perhaps others) that you think might be of interest or relevance to persons working in the family field – a job change; a newly published/produced book, article, curriculum, video; recognition received. Items will be accepted only from MCFR members, items should be short (perhaps 300 words or less), and the items must be signed (no anonymous

items will be printed). Items will be screened by the Publications Committee and will be included in *Family Forum* on a space-available basis.

Please consider submitting an item for “Members’ Corner”. Also consider submitting a research article/brief or a book review. Items should be submitted to me as an e-mail or e-mail attachment.

Ron Pitzer
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