

FAMILY FORUM



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

10 REASONS TO ATTEND THE PARENT EDUCATION INSTITUTE V MAY 20-21, 2005

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND CONFERENCE CENTER, ST. PAUL CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF MN



Rose Allen and Marty Rossmann, Co-chairs

- 10) **Marc Bornstein**— Dr. Bornstein is Senior Investigator and Head, Child and Family Research, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and founding editor of *Parenting: Science and Practice*. He will talk about the latest research on parent child relationships.
- 9) **H. Wallace Goddard** - Wally serves as an Extension Family Life specialist for the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. Dr. Goddard helped Stephen Covey write *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families* and worked with Alice Ginott, widow of Haim Ginott, to update Ginott's book, *Between Parent and Child*. He will talk about the need for parent education.
- 8) **Martha Farrell Erickson, Bill Dougherty, Glen Palm, Jean Illsley Clarke, Ada Alden** – friends and members of MCFR who parent education field nationally and internationally. They will share new initiatives and reflections of how they have seen the practice of parent education evolve through their careers.
- 7) **Ted Bowman** who will “navigate” us through the conference with interactive exercises, discussions and journaling
- 6) Break out sessions led by **Betty Cooke, Marty Rossmann, Ted Bowman, Dana McDermott, Glen Palm and Kristen Stuenkel** focusing on a variety of issues that impact the profession.
- 5) Three pre-institute workshops on May 19 – offered by the **University of Minnesota Extension Service**
- 4) An **AUTHOR'S RECEPTION** at the end of the day on May 20, honoring the many local and nationally known authors who are attending the conference.
- 3) The **Opportunity** to earn 12 Clock Hours, 1.2 CEU's, 1.2 CFLE credits or 1 U of M Course Credit.
- 2) **Displays**, vendors and a place for conference participants to share literature about their programs.
- 1) All the **FOLKS** you will get to meet who are attending the conference – what a great group to spend two days with!

Check out the conference brochure included in this newsletter – or go to www.mcfr.net

The Experience of New Americans: Walking In Their Shoes

MCFR 2004 FALL CONFERENCE

“Becoming a refugee is like uprooting a tree. The tree will lose its leaves until you put it in good ground again. Then it takes time to grow new roots.” Dr. Akec Khoc, Sudanese refugee living in Minnesota.

Beth Mediger, Co-chair

The 2004 MCFR fall conference, *The Experience of New Americans: Walking in their Shoes*, received high marks from participants. This conference content was not only timely, but directly applicable to many professions and areas of expertise.

The goal of the conference was to deepen participants' understanding of the opportunities and challenges that New Americans encounter in a new homeland. It was hoped that participants would

leave the conference with a deeper understanding of the immigrant experience and enhanced skills to apply when working with individuals and families from immigrant populations.

The keynote was shared by Ilene Her, Executive Director for the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans and Martha Naegli, from the American Refugee Committee. Both speakers talked about the experiences of New Americans they

have worked with. Ms. Her talked in-depth about the human spirit and the sense of hope that new immigrants have and Ms. Naegli shared a very powerful pictorial presentation of the living conditions many New Americans have experienced in their original homeland. Personal stories were heard from two New Americans, which brought to life the reality of the immigrant experience.

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President's Letter

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Madge Alberts
MCFR 2005 President

Those of you receiving this letter are members of the Minnesota Council on Family Relations. Many of you have been actively involved in MCFR over the years. For those of you who have not been, I want to give you a brief overview of MCFR's work, and encourage you to become more involved.

As you know, MCFR is the Minnesota affiliate of the National Council on Family Relations, the only professional organization in the country that focuses solely on families. MCFR's role is to provide professional development resources and support to Minnesota family professionals. The NCFR state affiliates, including Minnesota, tend to focus more on family practitioners, while NCFR is more focused on research and academics, obviously with a nationwide audience. The work of the two balances and integrates with each other quite nicely.

So what is MCFR's work?

First, MCFR provides two professional development conferences each year – one in December, and one in the spring – usually April or May. The conferences focus on a topic of current interest to family professionals. (See the articles on page 1 about the past and upcoming conferences). The committees that plan conferences are made up of MCFR members with interest in the topic. You are invited to join a committee at any time. Contact me if you are interested. If have ideas for a conference theme, send them to me and we will consider them.

In addition to conferences, MCFR is developing new ways of communicating family relevant information to you, as members. Our website (www.mcfr.net) is



Madge Alberts

just a little over a year old, and we are adding to it all the time. If there are resources you think should be added or linked from MCFR's website, contact Rose Allen (allen027@umn.edu), our current web manager. She welcomes your suggestions and input! MCFR has also developed a list serv to use in providing resources to our members. If you have given us your e-mail address, you should be on the list and receiving messages. If you aren't on the list, see the box on page 3 to learn how to join.

Family policy has become quite a hot topic in recent years. MCFR and NCFR are natural organizations to be involved in family policy issues. A very active MCFR policy committee is currently considering ways for MCFR can impact policy development. If policy is an interest of yours, consider joining the committee! (See page 3 for more information).

As your president for 2005, one of my goals is to make sure all MCFR members know about the work of *your* organization, and have opportunities to participate. If you have comments or questions, please feel free to contact me. My phone number and email are in the column to the left!

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.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING MORE ACTIVE IN MCFR?

THERE ARE LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MINNESOTA COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS.

VOLUNTEER FOR A COMMITTEE

Three committees give shape to the ongoing work of MCFR. All of these committees are just beginning their work for 2005 and always have room for new thinkers, new ideas, and fresh perspectives.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The Communications Committee oversees the website, The Family Forum newsletter, media connections, and other communications issues. Chair Rose Allen (allen027@umn.edu) would be happy to have your involvement. Drop her an e-mail if you're interested.

MEMBERSHIP:

The membership committee is responsible for member recruitment, and even more, member retention. This includes reviewing member benefits, and member involvement. E-mail chair Linda Rodgers if this committee interests you. (linda.rodgers@anoka.k12.mn.us)

POLICY:

Family policy is a hot topic these days, and MCFR is very well positioned to have some role in the policy arena. How that role is shaped and carried out is the work of the Policy Committee, chaired by Vicki Thrasher-Cronin. Contact Vicki if you are interested. (vicki@ready4k.org)

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE:

A slate of candidates for MCFR officers and board members is prepared each year by the Nominations Committee. New perspectives are needed for expanding the scope of the board. If you are interested, contact Madge Alberts (malberts@umn.edu).

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES:

Each year MCFR sponsors conferences in the fall and spring. It takes the work of a committee to make them a success. If you are interested in helping to plan and carry out conferences, contact Madge Alberts (malberts@umn.edu) and she will put you in touch with the conference committee chair. The committees for the fall 2005 and spring 2006 conferences are just developing, so there's plenty of time to get involved.

MCFR 2004 FALL CONFERENCE

Continued from Page 1

Breakout sessions during the day covered three areas: *Points of Contact* including education, health care, law enforcement, and mental health; *Resources* represented by Neighborhood House, Center for Victims of Torture, Resettlement Agencies, and Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights; and *Navigating the System*, with representatives from Lifetrack Resources, Minnesota Early Literacy Training Project, and the faith community.

Lunch featured Vietnamese cuisine provided by Duc's of Maplewood.

Dr. Blong Xiong and Dr. Dan Detzner of the University of Minnesota received Ruth Hathaway Jewson award, which is given annually to family professionals in recognition of outstanding service, research and/or education in the family field and meritorious contributions to the field. The Minnesota School Readiness

Business Advisory Council represented by Al Stroucken and Chuck Slocum received the Friend of the Family Award. This award is given to people and/or an organization that has demonstrated a recent significant contribution to the quality of family life in Minnesota.

A reception and MCFR Business Meeting, sponsored in part by Kowalski's, was held directly following the conference. Linda Rodgers, MCFR 2004 President, shared the organization's annual report and handed the gavel over to Madge Alberts, MCFR 2005 President.

Thanks to the conference committee who put a lot of effort into planning a spectacular conference. The committee included Marcie Brooke, Mary Jo Cazplewski, Lue Her, Peg Lindlof, Luyi Lien, Shannon Rader, Vicki Thrasher-Cronin and co-chairs Linde Getahun and Beth Mediger.

MCFR E-MAIL LIST SERV

MCFR has developed a list serv as a new tool to communicate among members.

The purpose of the list is to provide professional related information to members. Any member can send a message to the list. Since the list is moderated, messages sent to it will go first the administrator, who will review them and send them on to the list. This prevents spam, viruses and other "junk" e-mail from going to the list.

What's appropriate to send to the list? Information about events, requests for information on professionally related topics, notices of job postings, interesting policy developments, anything informational that relates to our work.

How do you send messages to the list? Send an e-mail message to this address: mcfrextension@umn.edu

How do you get on or off the list? All members who have provided e-mail addresses should be on the list. If you are not receiving messages and would like to, e-mail your request to: l.vukelich@comcast.net If you are on the list and would prefer not to be, please send an email asking to be removed to l.vukelich@comcast.net.

2004 Award Winners

MCFR RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALS

Each year, MCFR gives two awards to recognize excellence in the family field. The first, the Ruth Hathaway Jewson Award, is given to a professional in the family field who has made exceptional contributions to the field. The 2004 award was given to a team who, individually and together, have made outstanding contributions through their work with immigrant families. The recipients are Dr. Zha Blong Xiong and Dr. Dan Detzner, both of the University of Minnesota. Among other things, they developed a video based, interactive parenting

curriculum for Southeast Asian Families - Bi-Cultural Parenting: Helping Youth Succeed.

The Friend of the Family Award goes to an organization or person who is not in the family field, but who has made contributions beyond their usual work to benefit families. This year, Al Stroucken, CEO of H.B. Fuller Corporation, and Chuck Slocum of The Williston Group received the Friend of the Family Award in recognition of their tremendous work as advocates for early childhood, and in

their leadership with the Minnesota School Readiness Business Advisory Council. The contributions of business leaders like Mr. Stroucken and Mr. Slocum has had a significant influence increasing the visibility and influence of the needs of early childhood.

Congratulations, and thank you, to these awesome award winners!

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MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

By Marty Rossmann, Professor Emeritus, Family Education, University of Minnesota

Parents worry a lot about outcomes for their children. Will they sleep through the night? Will they learn to read? One of the most widely shared questions is, "Will they be good?" Most parents want to do everything possible to foster their children's moral growth. William Damon (1988) says, "Parents want their child to be honest, kind, fair, responsible and respectful of social rules and authority." It's safe to say no parents want their child to cheat, steal, or be cruel to others! Why, then, do some children lie and refuse to accept responsibility?



Moral development is best understood by examples and stories such as the ones told by Robert Coles (1997) about seriously ill children who exhibited moral intelligence by being kind to other sick children (sharing their "blankie") or being thoughtful about the burden their situation put on their saddened parents. For a somewhat more precise definition, here are some components that may help parents to understand the concept of moral development:

- A personal force that guides behavior into acceptable standards of "right."
- A life-long process that begins in childhood.
- Involves both the intellect and emotions.
- Behaving with others is the primary way it is learned.
- Stages of development proceed from egocentric concerns toward appreciation of a larger sphere of social relations.
- Many factors contribute, but parental influence is most important.

What are some principles parents need to know to help their children learn to be a "good person," as opposed to a "not-so-good-person" or a "bad person?"

1. The chief way that moral education takes place is through the parent's own behavior. The most powerful and persuasive moral teaching parents can do is by example. Children learn from how their parents speak to and get along with others. According to Coles, the teaching goes on day in, day out, not in big moments or formal lectures or just when the child has done something wrong. Moral awareness comes from a child's normal social experiences, by taking to heart what's been seen and heard. Coles insists that it's a mistake to tell children any kind of lies, even little white ones! For some parents that may cause a "tooth fairy" dilemma!

2. The most positive results for a child's moral conduct come from democratic or authoritative parent-child relationships in which firm demands with clear explanations are given to the child, along with strongly conveyed feelings of love. In this style of interaction between parent and child, the child hears from the parent when the child does something wrong (i.e. hits sibling.) Even when the child protests, "It hurts my feelings when you say that!" the parent does the child no favor to let the child feel that anything goes.

3. There are stages of moral development, with most children grasping the fundamentals during their first five years. Roughly, between 8-18 months a child begins to understand their actions can hurt (pulling hair) or make others happy ("be gentle with the kitty.") By 2-3 years, the child can show empathy, (lend a toy to a sad child) understand fairness, ("It's not fair he gets to stay up later") and wait their turn when given a request. Four year olds can recognize selfish behavior is wrong (hoarding all the toys.) By five years and up, a child is capable of sharing, protecting, comforting, encouraging, and can plan in advance to do something nice for others, such as thinking of a gift someone would like. A five year old can grasp principles such as tolerance of people who look different.

Moral development is caught, more than taught. The best advice for parents is to look in the mirror and to focus on their own behavior, since the parent is a walking talking lesson for their child.

Sources

- Coles, R. (1997). *The moral intelligence of children: How to raise a moral child*. New York: Random House.
- Damon, W. (1988). *The moral child: Nurturing children's natural moral growth*. New York: The Free Press.
- Family Information Services. (1995). *Focus issue: Raising a moral child in the '90s*. Minneapolis, MN

Book Review

BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD

BY HAIM G. GINOTT

(Revised and Updated by Alice Ginott and H. Wallace Goddard). Three Rivers Press. New York. 2003. 231 pages. \$13.00. ISBN 0-609-80988-1

Reviewed by Sharon M. Ballard, Ph.D., CFLE, CFCS
Assistant Professor, Child Development & Family Relations
East Carolina University

Between Parent and Child written by Haim Ginott in 1956 was a classic in parenting literature. Dr. Ginott died in 1973, and his wife, Dr. Alice Ginott and Dr. H. Wallace Goddard have revised and updated this timeless book.

Ginott and Goddard have retained the bulk of Ginott's original work. The chapters in this revised edition parallel the 1956 version. However, Ginott and Goddard have elaborated on and updated the titles of the chapters as well as the information within the chapters. For example, Chapter 2 in the original version was entitled "New ways of praise and criticism" and Chapter 2 in the revised edition is entitled "The Power of Words: Better Ways to Encourage and Guide."

In addition to the basic principles of active listening, validating feelings, and positive communication, the book covers ideas such as waking up in the morning ("parents should not be the ones to wake up their school-age children every morning" p. 135), homework ("homework is strictly the responsibility of the child and teacher" p. 92), and allowance (the purpose of an allowance is "to provide experience in the use of money by exercising choices and assuming responsibilities" p. 97). Jealousy, anxiety, sexuality, and children and professional help are just a few of the other topics addressed in the book.

The first step in the success of a parenting book is getting parents to read it. This book is a fast and easy read which is a must for busy parents. The information presented makes so much sense, yet, is far removed from a lot of common parenting practices. Many of us have not been raised to share our feelings so it is difficult to help children with their emotional development. This book provides parents with practical advice to do just that. It can help parents take that first step of realizing the impact of their communication on their children and then move forward in trying to change their ineffective communication patterns. Parents are encouraged to not only acknowledge their child's feelings but to see the real question behind what the child is saying.

Parents can start to implement the suggestions and techniques with their children immediately. The specific examples generously sprinkled throughout the book can help parents feel confident in implementing the outlined communication techniques. However, sometimes the sample dialogue seems too neat. As is the case with any advice about guiding children, in the text, the problem is solved perfectly. Parents must realize that practice will help them effectively adopt these communication techniques on a regular basis. Additionally, use of these techniques may not solve all parenting problems. Nevertheless, the book does

This timeless classic in parenting literature has been updated by Dr. Ginott's wife, Alice, and Dr. H. Wallace Goddard, who will be one of the speakers at the Parent Education Institute V.

provide parents with many alternatives to yelling and spanking and can increase parents' guidance effectiveness.

Some parents may fear this approach to parenting is too weak and emphasizes talking about feelings but does not deal with misbehavior. However, this is not the case. The authors stress that children need limits and misbehavior should not be tolerated. The book is peppered with phrases like "Permissive with feelings but strict with behavior" (p. 196) or "Permit feelings but limit acts" (p. 118). They advocate that positive communication and acknowledgement of feelings is central to effective and positive guidance.

As the parent of an 18 month old, I enjoyed reading the book and would recommend it to other parents. The information is certainly relevant no matter what the child's age. However, the information often is more pertinent to older children and it is a book I will want to reread and refer to as my son gets older.

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