MCFR
Minnesota Council on Family Relations

Family Forum

WINTER 2009

Family Forum is the newsletter of the Minnesota Council on Family Relations, a state affiliate of the National Family Council on Relations

The Minnesota Council on Family Relations strengthens all families by educating and supporting family professionals and promoting connections among those involved in research, policy and practice.

2008 Fall Conference Summary

Carolyn Carr Latady, Policy Committee Chair

The MCFR 2008 Fall Conference, *Contemporary Families – Formation, Function and the Future*, held on December 4, featured Stephanie Coontz, a historian, author and faculty member at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington where she teaches history and family studies. Afternoon break out sessions followed up on the many issues facing families in Minnesota including launching our children, the Fragile Family research, care giving, cultural competence, families and nature, family economics and the many ways we create family.

Stephanie's presentation brought a perspective to the discussion about family that is rarely heard – the fact that family structure, formation and behavior is continually undergoing change. She used historical data and the changing sociology of the family to help us understand the paths that lead to contemporary family life.

Key questions raised during her presentation include:

- How can looking at marriage, families and parent-child relationships from a historical perspective inform our work with families?

Continued on page 3

Friday, April 3

Families, Health, and Mental Health

Wilder Center, St. Paul , Minnesota

Minnesota Council on Family Relations

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From the President *Rose Allen*

Greetings MCFR Members,

What does the Minnesota Council on Family Relations do? What benefits do you receive as a member? Here is a short list of the activities we have planned for the coming year:

Professional Development

Two day long conferences in the Spring and Fall with a reduced registration fee for members

Communication

The Family Forum which is published three times a year and the MCFR list serv provides you with current opportunities for professional development, employment and other activities of interest.

You are welcome to use both these communication tools as a way to promote your programs, advertise for open positions, share research and provide resources to family professionals. To post on the listserv – simply send an e-mail message to mcfr@lists.umn.edu.

We also have an MCFR web site – www.mcfr.net that provides you with details from our conferences, on-line registration and information about your board of directors and the activities of the organization.

Supporting the next generation of family professionals

MCFR has a very active student section. Through the leadership of student members, we have established a student mentor project, student scholarships for our conferences and student posters at each conference.

Family Policy

Our policy committee will provide you with summary of policy issues related to the content of our Spring and Fall conferences. MCFR is not an advocacy organization, but we do want to provide our members with policy updates and encourage you to use this information with policy makers.

A connection with the National Council on Family Relations

MCFR is a state affiliate of NCFR – an international professional organization of family researchers and practitioners If you are interested in learning more about NCFR, check their web site www.ncfr.org. You can also sign up for the NCFR Zippy News, a weekly e-mail newsletter that brings you information about conferences, current research and job opportunities. Just subscribe to NCFR News and Events.

Staying current

In January MCFR members voted to update our Bylaws thanks to diligent leadership from committee chair Betty Cooke.

This is a brief sampling of some of our projects and activities for members. I invite you to get involved in any of these efforts – we are a volunteer organization and welcome your help and ideas. If you would like more information about opportunities to serve, contact me at allen027@umn.edu or 651-480-7745.

Friday, April 3

Families, Health and Mental Health
Register online at www.mcfr.net Wilder Center, St. Paul, Minnesota

2008 Fall Conference Summary (Continued from page 1)

- What are the changing social conditions that have thrown traditional family institutions and roles into question?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of different family formations? What are the trade offs?
- How can we move from what we wish for families to helping each family build on and/or discover their particular strengths and weaknesses?
- What does the research tell us about trends in contemporary family formation?
- How do we translate this research into action?
- How can we make this research easily accessible to parents, professionals and policy makers?

Peg Lindlof accepts the Ruth Hathaway Jewson Award from Rose Allen.

These issues and others are addressed in Stephanie's books, including: *Marriage, A History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage*. She has also written: *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap, The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with America's Changing Families* and *The Social Origins of Private Life: A History of American Families*. She also edited *American Families: a Multicultural Reader*. For more information about Stephanie Coontz and her work, visit: http://www.stephaniecoontz.com/

Stephanie Coontz is also the Director of Research and Public Education for the Council on Contemporary Families. Founded in 1996, The Council on Contemporary Families (CCF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the national conversation about what contemporary families need and how these needs can best be met. For more information, visit: The Council on Contemporary Families, http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org/index.php.

Networking!

Keynote presenter Stephanie Coontz joins committee chairs Rose Allen (l) and Minnell Tralle (r)

In order to provide members with information and tools to impact important family policy issues, MCFR provides a Policy Action Bulletin based on the theme of each MCFR conference. A Bulletin on the 2008 Fall Conference will be available on the MCFR website soon at www.mcfr.net.

The Student Poster Sessions were a plus enjoyed by students and practitioners alike.

Silent Auction Adds over $700 to the Student Scholarship Fund

Mary Jo Czaplewski, (Auction Chair)

Over 50 items were donated to the Silent Auction held during the MCFR Fall Conference in December. The variety of items initiated a few bidding battles, which raised the funds even higher. For example, a lovely bird house donated by Betty Cooke, brought in $45.00 alone. Many conference attendees did some Christmas shopping while supporting the Student members of MCFR with funds that enable them to attend the conferences and participate in the professional development activities that abound. We invite students to apply early for scholarships to attend the MCFR Spring Conference on April 3, 2009. Thanks to all who helped to make this event so successful.

A Note from the Editor:

Hope you have managed to stay warm during our recent wintry weeks and that you enjoy this issue of the newsletter. My thanks to the contributors to this issue. Again, I encourage each of you to consider contributing to *Family Forum*—by preparing a book review or a research article/brief or by submitting an item for "Members' Corner" (our version of Letters to the Editor). Thanks.

Ron Pitzer
Family Forum editor
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The Intersection of Families, Health, and Mental Health

MCFR's Spring Conference

Friday, April 3, 2009

Wilder Center, St Paul, Minnesota

by Sara Lassig and Kristin Dillon, Conference Co-Chairs

We hope you can join us on Friday April 3rd at the Wilder Center for our annual spring conference. This beautiful new venue in St. Paul will provide a wonderful environment for conference presenters and attendees alike.

This is the first MCFR conference to focus on health, mental health, and healthcare in families, and the timing couldn't be more perfect! We are living in a society with rising rates of chronic and terminal illnesses, increased diagnoses of depression, anxiety, and other mental health challenges, and escalating needs for family caregiving. At the same time, paying for healthcare has become a dire challenge for many families. Yet – the lived experience of families navigating these health and mental health challenges reminds us that family itself is such a strength. This conference will offer helpful information for family professionals of all types, and it will provide learning and tools that are so important at both personal and professional levels.

Dr. Anne Kelly, a pediatrician and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota will present a morning keynote addressing the need for teamwork and communication in healthcare. In caring for children and families who are facing health challenges, family professionals are key pieces of the needed team, in addition to direct health care providers.

The day will provide a chance to attend three breakout sessions, two in the morning and one in the afternoon. We are so pleased to have such excellent and knowledgeable speakers as a part of this conference.

Joan Patterson, Ph.D., will discuss chronic illness and disabilities in children and explain how care providers and family professionals can promote successful child and family adaptation. Dr. Allison Golnik will offer participants a brief overview of autism spectrum disorders, as well as address some of the key issues involved in primary medical care for children with autism spectrum disorders.

A breakout session on military families will offer participants a first-hand account of the health, mental health, and social issues facing families during deployment and reintegration, spoken from a presenter who was not only deployed but also works in the mental health field.

Toran and Ruth Ener, strong advocates for individuals that suffer from postpartum depression, will share their family's story of losing loved ones to the devastating effects of PPD. Sara Lassig, PhD, MSW and Donnis Lassig, BSN, Mayo Health System Administrator will speak to the issues of death, dying, grief, loss, and saying goodbye, in their presentation, "When there is no cure."

This conference will also address the issues of health care coverage and health care policies. We are pleased to present breakout sessions by both the Children's Defense Fund and Twin Cities Compass. Ryan Johnson, an outreach specialist from the CDF will share an excellent resource that can assist family professionals in working with families in need of public programs. Twin Cities Compass will provide attendees with valuable information on health trends and disparities in the Twin Cities as well as offer strategies for addressing these disparities.

Janet Grochowski, PhD will present a session exploring the "Five Determinants of Family Health," and help us understand why the United States spends more on health care than most other developed nations but yet enjoys less access, equity, quality, and efficiency. This conference will also address the topic of program development. Mary Kay Stranik, M.S., will present a workshop describing the values, methods, outcomes, and lessons learned from developing a pilot program for five communities of color in Minneapolis.

Lunch will offer attendees a chance to socialize, network and check out the exhibitors. After lunch, attendees will have the opportunity to view the Student Poster Session, and network with students from local colleges who are presenting their own research at this conference poster session.

Continued on page 5

2009 Spring Conference (Continued from page 4)

Finally, the closing session of this conference will provide attendees with an opportunity not to be missed. A panel comprised of children, adolescents, and young adults will give attendees the chance to hear about the lived experience of having a chronic illness, a potentially terminal illness, a physical or mental disability, or another health related condition. Each panel member will briefly share their own experiences, and there will also be time for attendees to ask questions. These experts will offer all family professionals helpful hints and tools for working with individuals and families facing health and mental health issues.

We have worked hard to keep the conference fees low, knowing that individuals, families, and places of employment are all needing to cut back on expenses right now. We hope that you will join us on April 3rd and look forward to seeing you there!

For full details – go to www.mcfr.net.

Register online today!

Simply go to mcfr.net and register. Early registrants will receive a $5 credit. Thank you for using your credit card to register online and helping us to keep administration expenses to a minimum.

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MCFR Election Results

The results of last fall's elections are as follows:

President-elect -- Beth Yokom, MA Beth is a licensed parent educator and Early Childhood Family Education/ School readiness supervisor for Anoka-Hennepin School District. She will take office as President at the conclusion of next fall's annual conference.

Secretary -- Mary Maher, MSW Mary has over 25 years experience working with families and family service agencies in various capacities as an educator and writer.

At-large Board members—

William D. Allen, PhD, LMFT Dr. Allen is a licensed marriage and family therapist and owner of Healing Bonds, a private practice in Minneapolis. He is also an adjunct professor in the Family Social Science Department at the University of Minnesota.

Michael P. Brown, EdD Dr. Brown is the coordinator of early Childhood Family Education, School Readiness, Early Childhood Screening, and Preschool Programs for Cambridge-Isanti School District 911.

Patricia Crumley Pat is an attorney at law and mediator in private practice.

Nancy Melquist Nancy is Early Childhood Family Education Coordinator for Mahtomedi Public Schools.

Monica Potter, EdD Dr. Potter is a licensed parent educator with the Chaska School District.

Leeann Sponsel Leeann is a parent educator with Moundsview Early Childhood Family Education and is a teacher educator. She is a doctoral candidate in Family Education at the University of Minnesota. Leeann is a former president of MCFR.

Congratulations and thanks to all of these professionals and welcome to MCFR's Board of Directors!

Others serving the organization as officers and leaders include:

President -- Rose Allen
Past-President – Betty Cooke
Treasurer -- Kristin Dillon
Communications Committee Chair – Peg Lindlof
Membership Committee Chair—Tammy Dunrud
Policy Committee Chair -- Carolyn Carr Latady
Spring 2009 Conference Co-Chairs -- Sara Lassig & Kristin Dillon
Fall 2009 Conference Co-Chairs – Marcie Brooke & Peg Lindlof

For a list of other Board members, see the masthead of this newsletter.

MCFR Committee Reports

Minnesota Council on Family Relations

Communications Committee Report

Peg Lindlof, Communications Committee Chair

The MCFR Board enthusiastically thanks Beth Yokom for her excellent leadership of the Communications Committee over the past year. We moved ahead dramatically and colorfully with our new brochure style and conference display board.

This year we have decided to concentrate on bringing the same graphic design energy to our website. We also hope to figure out better ways to communicate internally with our members, and to spread the word externally about MCFR's great work in professional development. If you know much about wikis, blogs, vlogs, websites or podcasts, we could use your help! In fact, we are hoping to find some student members who will hold an informal workshop for some of us Web 2.0 wanna-bes!

So far, the 2009 Communications Committee members are Ron Pitzer, Leanne Sponsel, Pa Nhia Yang, and Beth Yokom. There's lots of work to be done, and I'd love to have the largest Communications Committee in the history of MCFR! If you would like to join us, or have any suggestions, please contact me at plindlof@comcast.net.

Policy Committee Report

Carolyn Carr Latady, Acting Policy Committee Chair; Family Support Advocate, Forest Lake Area Schools

Looking ahead to the coming year, the MCFR Policy Committee will continue to connect MCFR conference work with policy work through the development of Policy Action Bulletins related to each conference theme. Watch for the Policy Action Bulletin based on MCFR's Winter Conference 2008, Contemporary Families – Formation, Function and the Future, on the MCFR website soon.

Another area of focus this year will be to work with the Children, Youth and Family Consortium (CYFC) at the University of Minnesota on facilitating a workshop for MCFR members on the Family Impact Checklist. The Family Impact Checklist is a tool that can be used by individuals or groups to assess the impact of a policy or program on family well-being. For more information on this Checklist of the CYFC Family Impact Policy Initiative, visit: http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/policy/

The MCFR Policy Committee welcomes additional members. If you have an interest in joining this group and/or would like additional information, please contact Carolyn Carr Latady at clatady@forestlake.k12.mn.us or 651-982-8350.

Membership Committee Report

Tammy Dunrud
Membership Committee Chair

Even in our tough economic times, MCFR membership continues to be stable. Thank you everyone! Our student membership is also flourishing which bodes well for the future of MCFR.

At our recent board retreat, we had the opportunity to plan for future membership services.

We decided an online membership directory would be a good next step particularly for networking purposes. Please watch for an email from us asking for your permission to be included in the directory. If you would rather telephone us, contact Linda Vukelich at 651-407-0950 or email her at l.vukelich@comcast.net.

Once complete, the directory would be posted on the MCFR website for your access.

Currently our membership includes:

102 Regular MCFR members
187 Affiliate members
21 Student members

New Benefit for Members!

As a networking service to our members, MCFR is compiling an online member directory. In the near future, someone will be contacting you by email or telephone for your professional contact information.

Student Section:
The Foundation is Laid and Now it's Time to Build...Build...Build!

Heather Cline
Student Section Chair

The Student Section of MCFR is really excited about what we accomplished in 2008 and where we are going next. Last year we launched two new programs to support students and new professionals as they prepare for entering their chosen career.

In September of 2008, we started a mentorship program that connects students and new professionals with professionals in a family-related field. Interested participants completed an online survey that provided information necessary to create mentorship relationships based on interest and location. We were able to initiate three mentorship connections through this process and an additional match-up at our fall student section social event. In 2009, we would like to increase mentorship relationships and include an option for undergraduate and graduate student connections. Look for an email to come your way soon, for a chance to participate in this opportunity to build connections and supportive structures. For more information on the mentorship program, visit our blog at http://blog.lib.umn.edu/cline048/mcfr/.

If you attended the December MCFR conference, you may have noticed a student poster session following the lunch hour. As professionals, we know how important it is to present our work at conferences. However, we also know how nerve-wracking that can be, especially when you are just starting out. The MCFR board recognized their fall and spring conferences as perfect opportunities for students and new professionals to present their work in a supportive and lower-stakes environment than perhaps the annual NCFR conference.

Participant feedback The students who presented posters reported that this was a convenient, low-pressure way to engage with family professionals and build their CVs. The students felt that they received great feedback on their work and this experience helped them find new approaches to the topic they presented. Although there was high traffic around the posters, many professionals reported that they did not get the opportunity to engage with the students as much as they would have liked given the time constraints. We listened to this feedback and we are partnering with the students who presented to offer the content of their posters on our website. Keep an eye out for this new section of the website showcasing student work.

All of the students who participated and offered feedback thought these poster sessions should continue to be offered at future MCFR conferences. In response to this feedback, the April 3rd MCFR conference at Wilder Center will host the second student and new professional poster session. These presentations can relate to practice, research, or teaching. Topics do not need to relate to the conference topic, but should relate to work with or for families. Professionals, please encourage students and new professionals to participate in this professional development opportunity. Students and new professionals, if you would like to gain more practice presenting your work, contact Heather Cline at cline048@umn.edu, or visit our blog at http://blog.lib.umn.edu/cline048/mcfr/.

In other student section news....

We hosted an enriching student section event at the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation Center on October 17th. Kristin Dillon and Sara Lassig spoke about their transitions from life as a graduate student to life as a professional. We hope you will join us on Friday, February 20th from 4:30 to 6:30 at the Caribou Coffee on Snelling Avenue in Roseville. Students, new professionals, and student supporters are all welcome. For more information on this event, visit our blog at http://blog.lib.umn.edu/cline048/mcfr/.

If you are interested in joining the Student Section listserv, to stay up-to-date with student-related events and information, new job postings, and to communicate with other students and new professionals, email Heather Cline at cline048@umn.edu.

Book Review

Purposeful Reading

By Ada Alden, EdD, CFLE

Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest To Change Harlem and America

Paul Tough

Spark: The Revolutionary New Science Of Exercise And The Brain

John J. Ratey, MD

We all should be worried when we read that Minnesota is one of the states that must strengthen policies to retain effective teachers and show ineffective ones the door. Minnesota got a D in overall performance. I am stressed when I hear that 50 % of our young children are not ready for kindergarten. A recent article suggested that the much-hyped Q Comp gets mixed grades for teacher merit pay. Education Minnesota's Tom Dooher thought it would be better to take the money used for Q Comp and place it in the general school funding. The challenges are many and the answers illusive.

Spark's premise is simple. Exercise not only makes us feel better but getting the blood pumping makes the brain function at its best. Exercise builds and conditions the brain. In Naperville, Illinois, there is strong evidence supporting the Ratey research. Not only has the exercise program implemented in the school district led to a student body with only 3% of the group overweight compared to national statistics of 30% obese children, but the kids are scoring better on state, national and international tests. Ratey takes into consideration the community, employment opportunities and the advantages in the district. However, the two factors of an unusual brand of physical education expected for all and the high-test scores should not be dismissed. Targeting low-income schools with purposeful physical education has also shown significant improvement. Children respond well to a consistent physical education component coupled with rigorous school expectations. In Minnesota, we are removing or reducing recess and or physical education. Read *Spark* and such a decision is ludicrous and too costly for everyone's future.

Geoffrey Canada's work in Harlem is transforming the schools, neighborhoods and homes of the students. He is changing every aspect of the environment in which poor children are growing up. Parent involvement and parent education are core to his efforts. "Changing the way parents deal with their children may be the single most important thing we can do to improve children's cognitive skills." Canada knows that a child's experience of language mattered more than socio-economic status, more than race, more than anything else they measured. Poor children heard a high number of prohibitions and discouragements, which had a negative effect on IQ. Canada states that the "neighborhood's poor, black parents are not adequately preparing their infants and children to be educated." He is doing something about that. He is taking on the "third rail." The third rail is used to power trains and carries hundreds of volts of electricity resulting in electrocution for anyone who touches it. Substantively involving parents is tackling the "third rail." For years, educators have paid lip service to parents. Involved parents is not about serving cookies at an assembly or running a school carnival. Too many are saying getting parents involved is too difficult. Canada finds such a statement unacceptable. Parents are powerful in the education of the lives of their children. Too few educators are willing to expect a partnership between home and school. Canada will settle for nothing less because he is succeeding no matter what.

Both books are well researched, clearly written and call readers to action. This is a time for clear expectations and purposeful partnership. Each adult needs to put his or her back to the educational wheel. Children need to perspire. Educators need to grapple with the "third rail." That's what it takes.

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Help MCFR go GREEN!

Did you know you can renew your MCFR membership online? Now MCFR offers a new tree-friendly alternative. Simply go to mcfr.net, click and renew. Renew online and you will also help us keep administration expenses down.

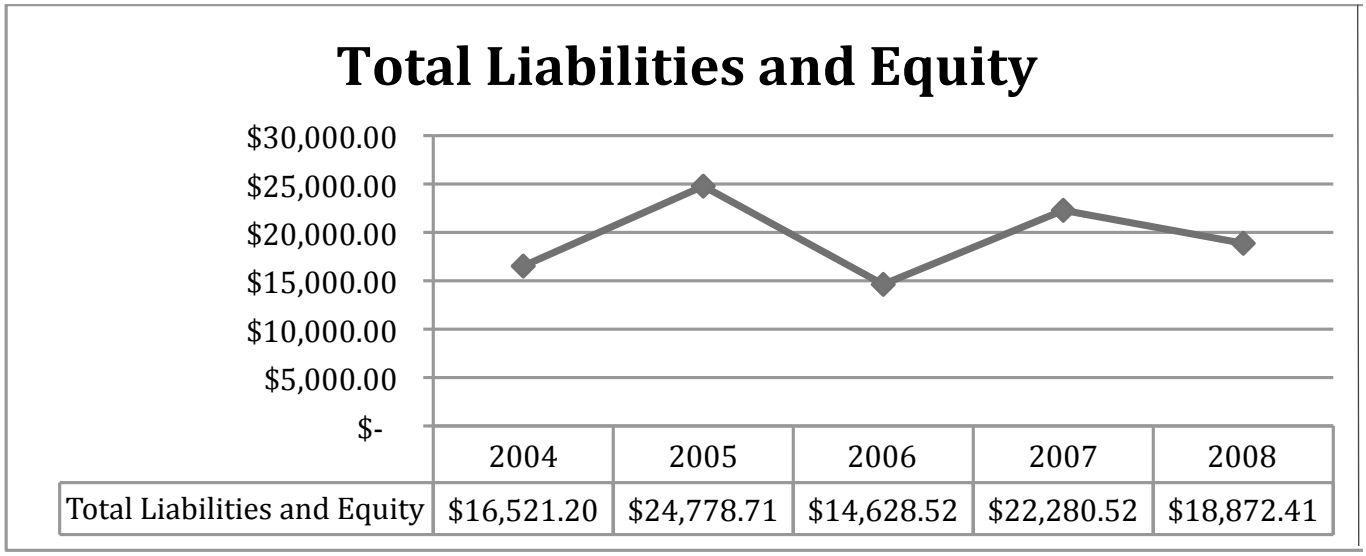
Treasurer's Corner

By Kristin Dillon

Welcome to the Treasurer's Corner. We have decided that in order to be as transparent and available to our members as possible, we would begin this new section of the forum to keep you posted on all things budget related. Your generous contributions through membership, conference attendance, donations, and other support are what keep this organization functioning financially. In return, we want to show you how we are dedicating this money to building our membership and serving family professionals.

Last year, we made a decision as a board to invest some of our hard-earned income to make our organization more accessible for family professionals. The one-time investments we made include: creating a new "brand" through design of our logo, brochures, and display board; redesigning our website; and creating a system for membership and conferences to be paid online via credit card. These investments added up to $3,400. We are proud of these products and we feel that these expenses will lead to the continued growth of MCFR. Because these costs were one-time expenses and each was decided on separately, they were not included under the recurring expenses that are built into our annual budget. As a non-profit organization, we build our annual budget to balance at close to zero each year. These out-of-budget expenses appear as a net loss on the budget, but in fact they were all systematically decided on and they did not lead to a significant loss in our checking account balance for 2008. In fact, our balance is right in line with the trends we have seen in our account balance over the last few years (see chart below).

Given the difficult economic times impacting our entire nation right now; we have agreed that in 2009, we will limit our out-of-budget expenses even for investments we would like to make. We feel that it is our responsibility to mirror what we know so many of you are experiencing in both your personal and professional lives by tightening your belts. We too will tighten our belts to ensure our ability to remain a support and resource for family professionals. We will continue to hold our engaging and exciting conferences and we will continue to provide you with our jam-packed *Family Forum*, our busy listserv, our website (which will be expanded), and all of our other valuable services. We will simply make more strategic decisions about how to spend money beyond these arenas to best support you, our valued members. If you have any questions or comments about the budget or this report, please feel free to contact me at kschneid@umn.edu.



	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total Liabilities and Equity	$16,521.20	$24,778.71	$14,628.52	$22,280.52	$18,872.41

history

Political and Economic Changes On the Family Professional

Sue Meyers, Professor Emeritus, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota; MCFR historian and Board member

When there are rapid shifts in the political climate or economic institutions, those in the family field feel the pull of emotions. Some are positive and some are negative. For those experienced in the field over a good number of years many reflect on how these changes resemble changes in the past.

To the family professional who experiences these changes for the first time, the excitement and scariness are strongly felt. S/he may be very concerned for those who are losing jobs and homes. To those families, it doesn't matter if this had occurred to others in the past. The only item of concern is that individual family. As professionals, we help them see what is ahead while supporting their need to express the fear while not weighing down children and elders. At the same time, our own jobs and homes and retirement plans may have changed drastically. Balancing professional needs with needs of others can help provide a perspective on how to adapt to these changes.

The basic tenets of the family field apply whether there is rapid growth or quick stagnation. Job pressures can hone the parts of the family field in which we have special skills and receive support from others. Families we work with may well receive the greatest support from family and loved ones who need their parental or adult child counsel. As we help others, we are better able to help ourselves.

This is a time for those uncomfortable with the changes to ask questions of those who have gone before. Many of us have seen exhilarating changes in the leadership of the country. And many of us have had close friends change professional directions during economic downturns. Ask those who have gone through rough times how this affected families they worked with. And ask how they managed their own professional position during those struggles. Our own parents have experiences that may shed light on what is happening now. This may well be the time to ask questions and listen to the answers from others. This may also mean that we appreciate the lessons on politics or finances we learned during our formative years listening to or observing the actions of our parents.

We have experienced changes, and like the Chinese symbol for crises, this brings fear and opportunities. May you experience both and take the best from each.

The Intersection of Families, Health, and Mental Health

MCFR's Spring Conference

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Wilder Center, St Paul, Minnesota

Register online at www.mcfr.net

Research

New Study Finds Overindulged Children Grow Up to Be Greedy Self-centered Adults

By Dr. David J. Bredehoft, Professor of Psychology and Family Studies at Concordia University, St. Paul

Conventional wisdom says that children who have everything become materialistic and selfish, but now there is empirical evidence to support this. A total of 369 adults from 37 states, Spain, France, Canada, Australia, Belgium, India, New Zealand, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom logged onto www.overindulgence.info and completed two questionnaires (Bredehoft & Ralston, 2008); one measured **External Aspirations** of wealth, fame, image and **Internal Aspirations** of meaningful relationships, personal growth, and giving to others (Kasser & Ryan, 1993). The second questionnaire measured childhood overindulgence (Bredehoft, Clarke & Dawson, 2002).

The study found that overindulged children were more likely to grow up to become "Externals" rather than "Internals".

Externals want:

- to become rich and super wealthy;
- to become famous;
- to achieve a "unique look"; and
- to have people comment about how attractive they are.

Internals want:

- to grow and learn new things;
- to be able to look back on their life as meaningful and complete;
- to share life with someone and have a committed, intimate relationship;
- to work to make the world a better place; and
- to help people in need.

The study also measured three types of childhood overindulgence:

- **Too Much** (too many clothes, privileges, toys, activities, entertainment etc.);
- **Over-nurture** (doing things for the child they should be doing for themselves, hovering, over-loving etc.); and
- **Soft structure** (no chores, too much freedom, allowed to dominate the family, not taught skills, no rules, rules were not enforced etc.).

Kasser & Ahuvia (2002) found that **Externals** who have strong materialistic values are more likely to suffer from anxiety, physical symptoms and report greater amounts of unhappiness compared to **Internals**. Further, a growing body of research (Kasser, 2002; Kasser & Ryan, 1993) indicates that individuals who aspire to greater wealth and material possessions experience greater personal unhappiness, anxiety, depression, and experience more problems in their personal relationships.

The analysis of this study shows that when parents overindulge children it leads to "External" rather than "Internal" life goals. Of the three types of overindulgence, **Too Much** was the major culprit. Younger participants (aged 14-22) were overindulged more than older ones (aged 23-81) as well as those who grew up in families with a lot of money.

The bottom line is that if parents want their children to grow up to be greedy, self-centered, and never satisfied ---- overindulge them! On the other hand, if they want their children to grow up to be caring adults who are focused on meaningful relationships, and want to work to make the world a better place --- it is plain and simple – don't overindulge them. It's not a surprise that some of our favorite TV shows are *American Idol* and *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*

References

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Recognizing the 2008 MCFR Award Winners

MCFR gives two awards annually recognizing distinguished support, service and accomplishments in the family field. The following awards were given on December 4, 2008:

Friend of the Family Award – The McKnight Foundation

This award is given to a professional or organization who may or may not be in the family field, but who has made significant contributions to the quality of family life in Minnesota.

The McKnight Foundation has provided funding for numerous organizations and projects that advance the work of family professionals. With a focus on critical issues including fatherhood, out of school time, and early care and education, the McKnight Foundation has made a difference in the quality of life for families.

Ruth Hathaway Jewson Distinguished Service to Families Award - Peg Lindlof

This award is given to a professional in the family field who is recognized for outstanding work on behalf of families. Preference is given to individuals who are members of NCFR and MCFR.

Peg has worked in Family Life Education since the early seventies. She worked at the Working Family Resource Center as a Worksite Coordinator and Parent Educator. Most recently she served as the Family Education Outreach Facilitator for the North St. Paul, Maplewood, Oakdale, school district. Peg retired from this position in June of 2008. Currently, she is a consultant at the Working Family Resource Center and taking courses at the University of Wisconsin Stout to complete her Master of Science degree and further establish her consulting business.

Peg's mission has always been to promote the well-being of parents and children through family education. Peg is truly a source of wisdom, reflection and thoughtfulness. She has a deep commitment to the Minnesota Council on Family Relations where she has served as President, Chair of the Annual Conference, Nominating Committee and a member of the National Council on Family Relations.

Peg Lindlof accepts the Ruth Hathaway Jewson Award from Rose Allen.

NCFR News

Marcie Brooke, NCFR Representative

At the National NCFR Conference AOC Board meeting in Little Rock, AOC President Elect Chloe Merrill of Weber State University, who sits on the NCFR Board, suggested the AOC Board meet for a two day retreat to work on a strategic plan.

Under the leadership of our present President of AOC, Richard Sale of Tarleton State U (Texas) and the staff of NCFR (Charles Cheesbrough, NCFR Director of Membership and Marketing and Lynda Bessey, AOC Staff Liaison), a retreat was held on January 12 and 13 at the Airport Hilton in Bloomington.

Present at the retreat were Marcie Brooke, Past President of AOC; Ada Alden, AOC Program Chair; Lynda Bessey; Stephen Brown, Secretary (Mansfield PA); Denise Donnelly, Section Liaison (Atlanta GA); Amanda Williams, Student/New Professional Representative (Illinois); along with Diane Cushman, NCFR Executive Director.

The AOC Board of Directors began questioning what exactly are AOC's all about? How do they function? Where are they located? How do we get new members? How do we start new affiliates? Are we the Association of Councils or the Affiliation of Councils? Questions….questions and more questions! Perhaps, as someone mentioned, we were like the "Emperor Who Had No Clothes".

Diane led the entire group in rich discussion, questions and exercises to answer these questions and more.

AOC is the **Association of Councils**—the **Affiliate Councils Board**. This term refers to all state, regional, student, and international councils affiliated with NCFR. **Affiliate Council Presidents** is the name used to refer to the group consisting

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of the presidents of all state, regional, student, and international councils. The Affiliate Councils Board Executive Committee includes the Affiliate Councils Board President, President-elect, Secretary and an ex-officio member appointed by a NCFR staff member.

The development of a strategic plan led to the following General Goals:

- Increase NCFR and Affiliate Council memberships
- Increase the number of Affiliate Councils
- Retain members (i.e. reduce turnover) of NCFR and Affiliate Councils
- Increase the long-term viability of Affiliate Councils
- Increase engagement of members (e.g. leadership positions, participation in activities, conference attendance)
- Clarify the benefits of membership and involvement in NCFR and Affiliate Councils

The NCFR staff will prepare a report of the work to date to be examined by committee members.

The Minnesota Council on Family Relations is an outstanding Affiliate primed to begin to model for Affiliate Councils going forward. This is a very important and exciting time for NCFR and Affiliate Councils. Our professional organization is needed more than ever. It is ready to serve us. Please visit the www.ncfr.org and start saving your "quarters" to be able to attend the National Conference in San Francisco in November.

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