

MCFR

Minnesota Council on Family Relations

Family Forum

SUMMER 2011

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.



Spring 2011 Conference Review

by Heather Cline, Spring Conference Committee Chair

The spring 2011 Conference, "Parenting with the Brain in Mind," was held Friday, May 11 at the Como Park Visitor Center, in the Rainforest Auditorium. The afternoon conference highlighted Dr. David Walsh's expertise in brain science and children's development. In total, we enjoyed more than two hours of Dave's humor, warmth, scientific substance, and practical advice. The remaining 45 minutes were spent in stimulating small group discussions regarding policy implications and practical applications of this material. During Q&A, attendees had the opportunity to ask specific questions and request more information on new topics, such as the influence of nutrition and sleep on cognitive and social development.

In addition to the critically valuable information that was presented and shared, the delightful food and atmosphere provided by Como Zoo made for a uniquely special and enriching afternoon.

If you would like to learn more about the material presented by Dr. David Walsh, look for his new book, *Smart Parenting, Smarter Kids: The One Brain Book You Need to Help Your Child Grow Brighter, Healthier and Happier*, at a store near you (or, Oleanna books). The book covers all ages from birth through the teen years. It provides solid scientific information over a wide range of topics like, nutrition, exercise, play, sleep, differences between boys' and girls' brains, how to raise a child's IQ, attention and distraction, video games and Internet addiction, the right and wrong way to praise kids, special needs brains, and more. Each chapter contains practical tips and suggestions.

A signed copy of the book can be ordered at a special discount at <https://secure.dr.davewalsh.com/store/item/13>. In conjunction with the book release Dr Walsh is launching a free monthly "Mind Positive E-news". Sign up at http://eepurl.com/d_e-9.

A review of the book will appear in the Fall issue of *Family Forum*.

Friday, December 4, 2011 SAVE THE DATE! MCFR Annual Conference
Using Brain Science to Help Kids Grow Smarter, Healthier and Happier

Como Park Visitor Center, Rainforest Auditorium, St Paul, MN

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From the President *Leanne Sponsel*

“No matter what our attempts to inform, it is our ability to inspire that will turn the tides.” - Jan Phillips

How does this quote fit with MCFR? **Our mission is all about “informing”** professionals by providing professional conferences and other learning opportunities; **do we also inspire you?** Do the bright colors and creative layout of this newsletter lift your spirits when you first encounter the latest issue? Are you thinking about how your practice can be consistently ethical – even in times of true dilemmas? Perhaps recalling moments of past conferences or creating questions for the next stirs your commitment to our field.

I will suggest that MCFR does indeed inspire. We support professionals in the field. Our mission statement begins with “...strengthen families ...” and by recognizing the value of professionals in the family field we are **promoting a sense of community** among them. Family professionals often work hard and long for results that may go unseen until after the connection with a family is over – so we work on faith and trust. Hearing success stories can be a great inspiration and a reassurance that it is appropriate to trust that our work makes a difference in individuals’ lives. **Do you have a success story you are willing to share?** Do you have a story of a family’s success that benefited from a professional’s involvement? Please send your stories to the Forum so we can pass them on to your fellow members.

The last issue of the *Forum* tells about our award winners – who are inspirational colleagues. Perhaps you have a hope or a cause that you want to work on. (Notes of encouragement here: start small - not all worthy causes are huge - and remember that our award winners’ work took time to grow.) **Consider recruiting collaborators through MCFR – we are committed to being a working tool for our members.**

If you are a new professional or a student, be sure to connect with our **SNP Group** (Student/New Professional). It is a blossoming group that has provided innovative and inspirational services to members, and it is the perfect opportunity to build your own professional community.

If this letter or some other experience has inspired you to be more active in your field, **please consider MCFR as a stepping stone, support, or collaborator. We have specific “jobs” to fill and we are open to considering any new idea.** Although the board does not meet in July or August, many of the board members will be working on projects over the summer, so give us a call.

Wishing you a vibrant and balanced summer,

Leanne M. Sponsel



Stay in touch at
www.mcfr.net

Treasurer's Corner

Heather Cline, MCFR Treasurer

Our decision to return to conferences, albeit in a new way, appears to have revitalized our mission as well as our budget. MCFR has continued its efforts in responding to consistent requests for offering Ethical Thinking and Practice workshops throughout the state. Thanks to our dedicated volunteer trainers, this enterprise has contributed over \$2000 to our income.

Another successful venture for MCFR was hosting a half-day conference on May 11th at the Como Zoo and Conservatory. The afternoon event featured Dr. David Walsh, speaking on the topic of "Parenting with the Brain in Mind." With approximately 100 attendees, MCFR made approximately \$2,400 in revenue. Thank you to those who attended, for your support to our organization.

Due to the dedicated board and membership, MCFR approaches summer on a high note. Our balance, as of May 31, 2011 is \$13,725.06. As long as conference and workshop registrations, along with membership dues, continue on the current trend, 2011 looks to be a year that will strengthen our foundation so that we can continue our mission*.

**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.*

Communications Committee Report

Peg Lindlof, Communications Committee Chair

The MCFR Communications Committee is working to become more visible internally as a resource for members, and externally as a source of information and expertise about family issues throughout the lifespan. If you are a member of MCFR (or an NCFR member who lives in Minnesota) you are getting weekly MinneNews updates.

If you aren't a member, but enjoy reading this newsletter published three times a year, we'd like to invite you to become more involved. Let us know what kinds of professional development opportunities you need that are not currently available to you. Feedback from members is welcome and always carefully considered.

Members of the Membership and Communications committees are collaborating through a Marketing Task Force. During the rest of 2011 we will also collaborate with the Student Section to explore how social media might improve or enhance our communication and marketing efforts.

MCFR members are welcome to post events, news, questions or ideas on our listserv. Send your email message to MCFR@lists.umn.edu. Contact San Ha at haxx0039@umn.edu to post your organization's link or event on the website.

Save the date –

MCFR Annual Fall Conference

Friday, December 2, 2011

Como Park Visitor Center,
Rainforest Auditorium

The keynote speaker will be
nationally acclaimed, NCFR award-winning

Dr. H. Wallace Goddard

University of Arkansas.



Membership Committee Report

Why Are You An MCFR Member?

Nancy Melquist, Membership Committee Chair

How would you answer this question? Responses from current MCFR members:

- “Truly, the practitioners that lead the way in their work with families in this State are connected to MCFR, as is the FYC program at the U of M, the U of M Extension educators, and Concordia’s Child & Family Education program. These are the people that have helped me a lot in my career and have served as advisors and supports in my work with families and my own development as a father, educator, and advocate. It’s frankly a great organization to be connected to the leaders of family work here in Minnesota (which arguably sets the tone for family work nationwide).” - *Michael Jerpbak, Ph.D., CFLE, Associate Professor of Family, Youth, & Community, Crossroads College*
- “I’m a member in order to keep in touch with what is happening in our State and to hear about (and attend some) events for CEU’s.” - *Jeannie Buckner*
- “I’m a member of MCFR because I enjoy collaborating with others to make a positive difference for families and children in this world.” - *Monica Potter*
- “I have been a member of MCFR since 1984 when I first came to Minnesota. Before then I was a member of the WICFR. I am a member because I deeply believe in the mission of MCFR and its parent organization. In addition MCFR is just the greatest organization with the greatest people and the greatest conferences. I am always stimulated and energized when I attend their meetings and functions.” - *Mary Jo Czaplowski*
 - “I work at NCFR, the national headquarters. But I like networking and staying in touch with my local chapter.” – *Nancy Gonzalez, M.Ed., CLFE, Director of Public Affairs, National Council on Family Relations*

Why join MCFR or renew your membership? MCFR’s mission supports you and your work.

And...your membership saves you money because we offer substantially reduced fees for conferences and workshops to members.

Membership renewal time is September 1 (Membership term: September 1 – August 31).

Look for membership renewal information coming to you via email in the fall.

Call for 2011 MCFR Award Nominations

San Ha, MCFR President-Elect, Awards Committee Chair, and Website Manager

MCFR gives two awards in recognition of contributions to the family field each year, and award recipients are recognized at the MCFR Annual Conference in December.

- **Ruth Hathaway Jewson Distinguished Service to Families 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 MCFR and NCFR.
- **Friend of the Family 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 MCFR board of directors has begun the nomination process. If you have individuals or organizations you would like to nominate (including yourself), complete the nomination form on the MCFR web site at <http://www.mcfr.net/Awards/2011awardsnominationform.doc> and send it to San Ha, MCFR President-Elect at haxx0039@umn.edu.

Nominations are due no later than **October 10, 2011**. Past award winners are listed on the MCFR web site at <http://www.mcfr.net/awards.htm>.



.I'm writing this from the NCFR Board Retreat being held in Minneapolis. After a day of "regular board business" we are spending the next day and a half discussing policies that set forth the fundamental reason for our existence – what are our expected results for our membership? This process further hones the process that has been in place for a number of years and our task this year is to further clarify for board and staff what it is that we are all about and what we hope to accomplish. Exciting yet exhausting work. I'm sure you'll be hearing more about it. We also heard a report about the recent member survey. Thanks to those of you who took the time to complete it.

Have you checked out the new NCFR website? If you haven't, I suggest you do. There is information about the conference in Orlando in November. The theme for the 2011 NCFR Annual conference, "Families and the Shifting Economy," is represented in major presentations about economic stress and its effect on families, health care disparity, balancing the needs of the young and the old, military families, research on the needs of women and children, and much more. Those are just a few of the

great sessions set for the annual conference in Orlando, Florida, November 16-19.

Another very popular feature of the website is the Practitioner Resource Library where you'll find curricula, articles and presentations on a wide variety of family topics.

You'll also want to check out the Election Results and congratulate Rose Allen who was elected to the position of Affiliate Councils President Elect and will serve 2 years on the NCFR Board of Directors beginning in November. Other Minnesota members in leadership positions are Susan Walker, Education and Enrichment Section Chair, Jan McCulloch, Family and Health Section Chair, Cathy Solheim, International Section Past Chair, and Alisha Hardmann, Student/New Professional Representative to the Education and Enrichment Section. Want to find out how to get more involved in NCFR? Ask any of us.

Minnell Tralle
NCFR Board Member
Trall001@umn.edu

*Volunteering can be
an exciting, growing,
enjoyable experience.
It is truly gratifying
to serve a cause,
practice one's ideals,
work with people,
solve problems,
see benefits,
and know
one had a hand in them.
Harriet Naylor*

MCFR Board is seeking YOU!

We invite you to consider serving on the Minnesota Council on Family Relations Board of Directors in 2012 or to nominate someone else. Nominations are now open for the elective positions of President-Elect (one-year term, before becoming President in 2013), Secretary (one-year term), Treasurer (two-year term), Member-At-Large (two-year term), and Student/New Professional Section Chair (one-year term).

In addition, the appointed positions of Nominating Committee Chair, Membership Committee Chair, Communications Committee Chair, Policy Committee Chair, 2012 Spring Conference Chair, and 2012 Annual Conference Chair will be open after December's annual meeting. If you are interested in participation but are not quite willing to accept an officer or chairperson position, consider volunteering to serve on one of these committees. Other participation opportunities include preparing a book review or a research article/brief for the newsletter or by submitting an item for "Members' Corner" (our version of Letters to the Editor).

The MCFR Board meets monthly in St. Paul, on the second Tuesday of the month from 3:30-5:30 pm, January through June and September through November. If you would like more information about board service or other participation opportunities for yourself or someone you know, please contact Nicole Rice, MCFR Member-At-Large and Nominating Committee Chair at nrice.mcfr@gmail.com or by phone 612-799-2858. She can send you an MCFR Board Committee description and give you some background on current board initiatives. Nicole looks forward to hearing from you!

Student/New Professional Section

Alisha Hardman, CFLE, Student Section Chair

Student/New Professional Activities:

The Spring S/NP event “Establishing Yourself in the Family Field” was held on Friday, February 25, 2011. Attendees included both undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of local universities as well as one S/NP supporter. The topics of discussion included: finding your niche in the family field and transitioning from student to professional. Resources distributed at this event are currently posted on the S/NP webpage of the MCFR website.

The S/NP leadership team will be meeting sporadically throughout the summer to plan the Fall event as well as discuss marketing and recruitment. If you are interested in being involved in planning or taking on a leadership role within the S/NP section of MCFR or if you have ideas for topics or speakers you would like the S/NP section to consider for this or future events please contact Alisha Hardman (hardm016@umn.edu).



Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities:

MCFR's central mission is professional development and a vital component of professional development for students and new professionals includes sharing information and/or research findings with other professionals. The MCFR conferences provide a perfect opportunity for students and new professionals to gain experience presenting their work in a supportive environment.

We will be hosting a student poster session at the fall MCFR conference in December. Posters may cover research, practice, or pedagogy pertaining to families, individual members of families (children, youth, adults, grandparents, etc.) or those working with families. I realize that many students may feel as though they do not have anything to present but I encourage you to consider further developing past or current class assignments (ex. literature reviews) into posters.

Our website provides some information regarding preparing and presenting posters (<http://www.mcfr.net/Students/PreparingPresentingPostersHandout.pdf>) and/or you may contact Alisha with questions or for additional resources. A call for proposals providing more information and the deadline for submissions will be posted on the S/NP webpage this fall.

Check out the S/NP Website:

The S/NP webpage of the MCFR website will soon be updated with a list of all past student/new professional events including the topic, access to resources distributed (when available), and the names of speakers. This will provide a good overview of the kinds of topics addressed at student/new professional events and will also provide access to the resources distributed at past events!

Our website is the central source for disseminating information about upcoming student events and professional development opportunities for S/NPs. Visit our website at <http://www.mcfr.net/students.htm> for more information on the Student/New Professional section or contact the S/NP Chair (hardm016@umn.edu) at anytime.

MCFR History - A Reflection by Sue Meyers

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

More than a decade ago, we had a discussion about special membership rates or dining discounts for those 65 years of age and older. A colleague in the aging field was offended that others might assume that she could not afford paying the full rate, when she felt it was appropriate. I had argued that it is good for organizations to have members with years of experience to contribute to the ideas of the younger members. We both were well under that special age.

I did consider her idea appropriate because many of my professional organizations had very tight budgets and needed the full amount so that people could “pay their way” in the dues. But I still wanted to keep the historical perspective alive so that things learned do not have to be created again each decade.

When I retired, but just before I was 65, I found out that one of my gerontology professional organizations did not expect dues from ones who maintained their memberships for 25 years. That was a wonderful treat, and I eagerly signed up, paying extra for the journal that I have enjoyed. Another gerontology organization made no such provisions and was still quite expensive. I continued that membership as well, but dropped two of the three publications.

When retired rates were offered by my state professional organizations, I weighed how my contributions could be balanced fairly. I decided to take the benefits of the retired membership BUT to contribute the difference between full membership and the retired rate to the organization as an unrestricted gift. I felt, and still feel, that my allocation seems to be fair to these organizations and yet is fair to me. I wanted to be sure that my dues plus donations covered the total costs of maintaining my membership – and even more for those who couldn't.

I was raised with a simple understanding of money management – if you have it, you can spend it; if you don't, you can't buy it. One portion of that money management dealt with values – the things held most dear to you. I will admit that MCFR and NCFR reflect those values that I hold very dear. They are not the only ones, but I know I would rather contribute to these professional organizations more than the tear jerking letters from other non-profit 501c3 organizations. I know what they (MCFR/NCFR) stand for and I want to contribute in some small way to those values. It makes me feel good.

I don't have children in college, nor grandchildren, so I can do this. I will not have enough to leave a legacy for something, but have enough for a little extra to those I believe in. I expect to live a long life, and know that I need to plan for the future. I will monitor my expenses and needs, but I won't be ridiculous about it.

It took me many years to articulate my feelings about money, saving and spending. I feel grounded in my beliefs, and I'm not very gullible. Having clear values guide us on how we determine to live our lives.

*You make a living
by what you get.
You make a life
by what you give.*

Winston Churchill

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Save the date – MCFR Annual Fall Conference

Here is something important to put on your Fall calendar!

Planning has just begun for MCFR's Fall Annual Conference.

The date is

Friday, December 2, 2011

Como Park Visitor Center, Rainforest Auditorium

The keynote speaker will be
nationally acclaimed, NCFR award-winning

Dr. H. Wallace Goddard

of the University of Arkansas.

Keep attuned to MCFR communication sources for additional information.

Do plan to attend what promises to be a great conference

If you would be interested in helping with further planning of this important event, contact Linda Vukelich (l.vukelich@comcast.net) or President Leanne Sponsel (leanne.m.sponsel@gmail.com).

