



@ a glance

Welcome to the fall issue of *early childhood @ a glance*. This newsletter will inform you about Comprehensive Health Education Foundation's (C.H.E.F.®) Early Childhood Initiative, current activities, and health resources. If you have any comments or suggestions, please e-mail Sue Anderson (suea@chef.org) or Julie Peterson (julie-p@chef.org).

"Building a Washington State Parent Education & Support Network" Workshops

We at C.H.E.F. have joined with nine other sponsors to host two Parent Education and Support workshops. At these events, leaders in the field of parent education and support will have the opportunity to:

- learn about key trends in the field of parent education and support
- explore strategies for building a Washington state parent education and support network

- network with other leaders
- have some fun!

While the specific focus of each of the supporting sponsors differs, we all share the goal of supporting parents to raise healthy children in a community setting.

Family Support Washington

envisions an America in which all children, youth, and families get the resources they need, right in their own neighborhoods, and human services and other systems act as an open door, not a barrier. Washington is one of eight states which receives funds and assistance from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Family Support America to build state and local systems that work toward this vision.

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on page 2*



Building a Washington State Parent Education & Support Network Workshops (continued)

The Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN) is committed to strengthening families and promoting healthy child development through funding 16 community-based, child abuse prevention and family support programs. WCPCAN also provides training and technical assistance to community programs and providers around effective approaches to child abuse and neglect prevention.

The Foundation for Early Learning has two primary goals, the first being to ensure that all the state's parents and caregivers have access to the information, resources and support they need to encourage learning in children ages birth to five. Secondly, they aim to increase public awareness of the value of early learning in order to create a warm, well-informed and supportive environment for all children. The Foundation funds programs that support these goals.

Washington State University Cooperative Extension (WSUCE) provides research-based information and quality training for educators, child care professionals, parents and caregivers. Their goal is to help colleagues share skill-building opportunities, information, and professional resources. Led by the efforts of the WSUCE Parenting Team, this group is committed to working collaboratively to support the workshop's goals.

The Washington State Department of Health partners with local health

jurisdictions in the state to provide leadership, training and collaboration of parent education in each county. The DOH values the role of parent education as it strengthens bridges between families and their child care settings in our community lives.

The Washington Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCRRN) is dedicated to the provision and development of licensed, high quality, affordable child care for all families in the state who need it. The Washington CCRRN supports continuity in meeting children's needs between home and child care settings. The Network supports families through community parent education and provides training and technical assistance to child care providers to enhance their communication with parents.



The Talaris Research Institute

combines the science of learning with the practice of learning to make a difference in children's lives. Talaris is dedicated to reaching parents, caregivers and child care providers with current and useful information about the developing child.



OPEP, Organization for Parent Education Programs in Washington State Community and Technical Colleges, promotes the development and application of knowledge and skills for strong and healthy families with children, primarily in the early childhood years.

Jan Faull, M.Ed., has taught parent education for more than 25 years. She is a recognized speaker to a wide variety of parenting organizations, conducts regular classes at Overlake and Evergreen Hospitals on Seattle's Eastside, and teaches at local community colleges.

Each of these sponsors is contributing to the development of a statewide network to promote high quality parent education and support.

"What happens during the first months and years of a life matters a lot, not because this period of development provides an indelible blueprint for adult well-being but because it sets either a sturdy or fragile stage for what follows."

—from "Neurons to Neighborhoods"

Social Beginnings™ – Setting the Tone for Early Social Skills

Starting October 2001, C.H.E.F.® begins piloting our new training program, *Social Beginnings™: Guiding Young Children's Prosocial Behavior*. C.H.E.F. surveyed childcare providers asking them what information, strategies, and resources C.H.E.F. could provide in a training format that would support and benefit them in their role as caregivers and teachers of preschool-aged children. Responses clearly indicated that those hurtful behaviors—hitting, biting, kicking, grabbing, disrespectful language, fighting, and explosive expressions of anger—challenged them most.

The goals of the *Social Beginnings* training enhance the ability of early childhood caregivers and teachers to reduce preschool-aged children's hurtful behavior. This, in turn, increases their positive interactions with peers, caregivers, and teachers, thereby promoting school readiness and minimizing later bullying behaviors.

Social Beginnings will provide strategies for reducing and preventing hurtful behavior with the understanding that these negative behaviors will be minimized when the physical environment is appropriate for young



children, the daily schedule suits their needs, and when materials and activities promote cooperation rather than competition.

The *Social Beginnings* training is highly interactive and participatory. It will challenge teachers and caregivers to find answers to questions like, "How do I intervene when a child is about to exhibit a challenging behavior?" and "How do I prevent a child from continuing to head towards trouble?" In addition, the training promotes partnerships with parents by increasing communication and cooperation through a series of topic-related brochures.

Most theorists and researchers concur hurtful behaviors occur for a variety of reasons. One theory comes from the work of William Glasser who claims these negative behaviors occur as children attempt to satisfy certain psychological or social goals (survival, belonging, power, freedom and fun.). John Gottman's research focuses on children's negative emotions (anger, fear and sadness) as the forerunner of negative behavior; manage the emotions through "Emotion Coaching," and self-controlled behavior will follow. Ronald Slaby's research focuses on early violence prevention—starting with the premise that violence is a learned behavior—and provides specific strategies to prevent violence and promote cooperative behaviors.

All these approaches will be considered in the context of the child's developing brain and the four aspects of the developing child: social, emotional, physical and intellectual.



Social Beginnings™: Pilot Trainings This Fall

October 24, 2001:

WAEYC's 25th Annual Conference, *Looking Through the Kaleidoscope*, Preconference Training presented by C.H.E.F.® and the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children, Bellevue, WA.

Cost: \$15.00

Contact: Missy Harrel

Phone: 253-854-2565, ext. 18

Email: missy@waeyc.org

November 6, 2001:

EPIC's Sharing Horizons Annual Conference, *Taking the Hand of a Child*, Yakima, WA

Cost: Preregistration \$80 for 2-day conference (November 5–6)

Contact: Stephani Kinney

Phone: 509-248-3950, ext. 136

Email: stephani@epicnet.org

Web site: www.sharinghorizons.org





A Great Report Card for Healthy Beginnings™

Healthy Beginnings™ is a teaching tool for parents, early childhood caregivers and teachers. It describes “what’s going on” and “what to do” to nurture early brain development (prenatal to age five). *Healthy Beginnings* addresses brain development and developmental assets as they relate to four main areas of growth: moving, sensing and exploring; seeing, remembering and imagining; listening, talking and understanding; and feeling and relating.

Feedback from Pilot Training Participants:

We received 180 participant evaluations from our five pilot trainings. The feedback was very useful. Overall, everyone rated the workshops as valuable!

Nearly all of the participants reported that they increased their knowledge and skills in all four key areas: (1) Early childhood brain development; (2) Practical strategies to use with young children; (3) Developmental assets for young children; and (4) How to share this information with others.

Almost all the participants rated the materials as useful: journal, charts, magnet, consultation flip book, and the facilitator’s guide.

2002 Healthy Beginnings Trainings:

November 5, 2001

EPIC’s Sharing Horizons Annual Conference, *Taking the Hand of a Child*, Yakima, WA

Cost: Preregistration \$80 for 2-day conference (November 5–6)

Contact: Stephani Kinney

Phone: 509-248-3950, ext. 136

Email: stephani@epicnet.org

Web site: www.sharinghorizons.org

C.H.E.F.® and BrainNet® will be offering a number of statewide Facilitators’ Trainings. Contact Sue Anderson at 1-800-323-2433, or e-mail her at suea@chef.org, if:

- You have a statewide conference coming up and would like to offer a one-day *Healthy Beginnings* pre-conference training.
- You are an educator of child-care providers, teachers and/or parents and are interested in attending a Facilitators’ Training.

This newsletter and information about our initiatives can be found on our Web site at www.chef.org.

Vision: Look Less, See More! (An Interview with Kama Hunter)

In many ways, we've become a very "focused world"—our children watch lots of television, play with Gameboys® and Nintendo®, and use computers during many hours of their young lives. In our technology-centered society, are we doing very young children a favor by teaching them computer skills and how to read? Many experts say "no."

Kama Hunter is a vision specialist at the Tacoma Learning Center where she works with children 0-3 with special needs. "Years ago," she explains, "children naturally played outside. Hopscotch and tree climbing increased the development of their coordination and vision." Technology has changed all that for millions of children. "Consequently, we are seeing an increase in myopia and children in glasses sooner," observes Hunter.

According to Hunter, children need to change their focus a lot and often, alternating between seeing close up and at a distance, or side to side. This enhances focusing and helps develop spelling and math ability. "Children need three-dimensional, hands-on experiences in the world—this feeling, touching and smelling facilitates learning and increases neural activity to the brain." But today, too many children have their bodies and eyes locked on the

techno wonders available to them. Eye muscles get stuck, hurting their vision and academic readiness. This sedentary activity is also responsible for an alarming increase in childhood obesity.

Hunter recommends some prudent guidelines: (1) Keep children off computers until they are five; (2) Limit computer use to 15 minutes at a time for children five to ten; (3) Limit television to one show at a time—then send them out to play; (4) When using a computer or reading (kids and adults), look across the room every page or less; and (5) Play some games you learned as a child—remember tag?—and teach them to the children in your life.

For more on this, contact the College of Optometric Vision Development at 1-888COVID-770 or www.covd.org or The Optometric Extension Program at www.healthy.net.

Resources

The
Washington
State Dairy



Council offers a wealth of early childhood nutrition products. Colorful, informative, printed materials and posters provide parents and early childhood educators with games and activities that promote healthy, well-balanced eating habits. Select materials are available in languages other than English. For material orders and catalog requests, go to www.eatsmart.org. Call 425-744-1616 for a printed catalog.



C.H.E.F.'s Early Childhood Grants

C.H.E.F.® is pleased to announce that in the first two cycles of our new grants program we have funded the following organizations within the three strands of our Early Childhood Initiative area:

Promote and support responsible parenting:

- Camp Fire Boys & Girls, Snohomish (\$5,000)
- Columbia Valley Community Health Clinic (\$3,900)
- Kittitas County Head Start (\$6,200)
- NE Washington Rural Resources (\$6,700)
- Opportunity Council, Bellingham (\$3,000)

Enhance the ability of child-care givers to provide safe, health-promoting care:

- Dayton School District #2 (\$7,500)
- Kitsap Infant Mental Health Coalition (\$8,500)

Mobilize communities to adopt child- and family-friendly policies:

- Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse (\$2,000)

C.H.E.F.'s grant cycles end on April 30 and September 30. Our guidelines and applications are available on our Web site at www.chef.org/grants.htm, or call Sue Haughton at 206-824-2907 for a grant application packet.

Great Reading!

Early Violence Prevention – Tools for Teachers of Young Children

Ronald Slaby, et. al., National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1995.

Recent research confirms the incredible amount of brain development and learning that young children accomplish starting from the moment of birth. We now have research that supports what kindergarten teachers have long known: children without social and emotional skills and maturity face greater risks for school difficulties than children who don't know their alphabet or numbers on their first day of school.

Early Violence Prevention is an excellent resource for early childhood teachers and caregivers who promote the social and emotional development of the young children they teach and care for. Starting with the premise that violence is a learned behavior, Slaby, et. al. summarize and discuss the research, provide specific examples of ways to prevent violence and aggressive behaviors, promote cooperative behaviors, and effectively respond to incidents. The authors summarize each chapter with valuable "Points to Remember."

Available at www.naeyc.org.