



Department of Family Services
Volunteer Connections
 for Children, Youth & Families Division

January 2010

Issue 1



BeFriend Holiday Party

Nearly 100 children and volunteer mentors with the BeFriend-A-Child mentoring program took part in the festive annual holiday party on December 5. Mentors were recognized for their valuable contribution in enriching the lives of children.

Ten businesses, individuals and organizations generously contributed to the “winter wonder” experience of games, music and dance, crafts, banquet lunch and gifts for the children: anonymous donors, Santa Peter Barnett, Crowne Plaza Hotel at Tyson’s Corner, face painter and singer Emma Earnest, George Mason University’s Mason Ambassadors and the Urbanology Dance Group, Temple Beth Torah of Centreville, deejay Steve Tyson and balloon artists Nathan Wei and Mike Wei.

Thank you to our volunteers and donors!

Here are some pictures of the fun:



Nathan & Mike Wei



Emma Earnest

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Thank You Also To the Parenting Education Programs Donors and Partners

We extend also a heartfelt thank you to the many community partners and individuals who generously sponsored Nurturing Parenting Program® families over the holidays by providing gifts. Hats off also to the individuals and groups who provided meals to the families attending our programs. We could not do it without you!

Springfield / Franconia Family Resource Center

Have you ever wondered how recent immigrants and others new to Fairfax County navigate all the services offered here? Family Resource Centers are one way. They are neighborhood-based drop-in centers offering a safe, relaxed setting for family-oriented, on-site programs, resources, activities and classes to strengthen families in their communities.

Currently, the Department of Family Services Child Abuse Prevention Services manages centers serving families in the Culmore and Springfield/Franconia communities. With a focus on parenting and family support, the centers are a collaborative effort among community-based organizations, the private sector and county agencies to bring services, information and resources to parents and children. One center is highlighted below.



The Springfield / Franconia Family Resource Center serves families in the Springfield and Franconia areas of Fairfax County. It has worked with families for over 10 years. Various partners and other county departments offer a variety of programs to serve a mostly immigrant clientele. Most of the individuals and families served (99 percent) are Hispanic- , and of those 75 percent are Hondurans.

The center is busy, seeing about 300 walk-ins per month. To add to that number is another 300 who come to the variety of programs offered at the center. One partnership with Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) provides health care to those without health insurance. They provide physicals and help with chronic disease management. Some of the conditions they see and offer assistance with include asthma, high cholesterol, hypertension, and diabetes.

The Department of Family Services, in conjunction with faith-based and other community partners, host and have special events to benefit the local community. One such event includes a holiday party where food, toys, backpacks, school supplies and information about resources is provided.

The center provides a valuable link in connecting residents with resources, and also letting them know that support and encouragement is there when needed!



**Back to School Event
Fall 2009**

Staying Healthy This Winter

Although you've heard a lot about "germ mitigation" and how to keep healthy this flu season, it never hurts to revisit this important subject!

A Little Bit of Soap

The simple act of washing your hands is one of the most effective ways to kill germs. According to our county web page, frequent hand washing kills germs that cause colds, influenza, staph infection, strep throat, and other illnesses. The proper way to wash your hands is to use warm water and soap and to scrub your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds. Wash your hands before cooking and eating, and before touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing, using the toilet, touching animals, eating, drinking, touching raw meat or poultry, or after changing diapers. If you don't have access to soap and water, hand sanitizer is a good alternative.



To Work or Not to Work?

In case you're wondering if you should go to work when you're sick, the short answer is no. Stay home in order to prevent spreading germs to others and to get the rest you need to help you get well sooner. According to medical web site webmd.com, staying home is especially advisable if you have a fever of over 100.3 degrees or if you know you have a viral or bacterial illness that could spread to your coworkers - or the families you work with in the parenting programs.

Eat to Defeat (Colds and Flu)

Watching what you eat is also important in staying healthy this winter. Cut back on sugary foods during cold and flu season, since sugar makes the body acidic, which is just the way pathogens like it. Also, try to get your children to eat three to five servings of fruits and vegetables per day, since these foods have a lot of immune enhancing properties. If you can't get your kids to eat enough produce, a children's vitamin can provide the nutrients they don't get from their diet. Encourage the children you mentor and the families you work with to "eat to defeat". Make sure you role model it to provide that good example, and to take great care of yourself too!

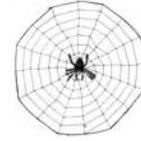
Drink to Your Health

It's important to drink plenty of fluids - not just when you are sick, but also when you are well in order to prevent illness. An article on webmd.com states that proper hydration keeps your immune system working properly, and it also keeps the tissues of your respiratory system moist, which prevents microbes from settling in and making you sick.

The Fine Art of Sneezing

Your mother and father probably taught you to cover your mouth with your hand when you sneeze or cough so you don't share it with the people around you. Today's moms and dads are going this one better by teaching their kids to cough and sneeze into their elbow or arm so that the germs expelled in the sneeze or cough don't land on their hands, where they can then be spread to others very easily. If you don't want to sneeze onto your clothes, tissues and handkerchiefs are also very good for helping you keep your sneezes to yourself.

Interesting Web Sites



- www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/healthhuman/food/
Food stamps, now known as the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), help people with low or no income buy food. This link will tell you more about this program.
- www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/roads.htm
Did you ever wonder who maintains the various roads in Fairfax County? Check out this link to find the answer!
- www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/a-z-index.htm
A great county site for information on recycling. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select under the video section the “Pop-up Trash” video for an entertaining and informative video about what happens to our trash.
- www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rec/afterschool.htm
This community and recreation site shares information on after school activities for youth.

Welcome To New Parenting Education Programs Staff Member—Susan Rice

Susan has worked as a social worker in the field of international adoptions for eight years. Susan was a therapist at the Women's Center in Vienna, Virginia for two years after graduating from Virginia Commonwealth University with a Master's in Social Work degree in 1997. She is working part-time with the program—mainly with the families with children in the 0-4 year old age range.



Susan grew up in Michigan and graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's degree in Community Services. She worked for Bethany Christian Services and Catholic Social Services in Michigan and also lived abroad in Lebanon and Cyprus when she was on staff with the Navigators, a Christian service organization. She enjoys traveling, swimming and reading. Susan is very active at her church and enjoys leading women's bible studies. She loves small groups and is excited about leading small groups with the Nurturing Parenting Program®.

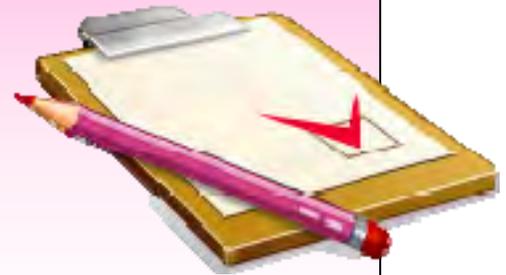
Welcome Susan! We are excited as having you as part of the Family Services team.

Accentuate the Positive

Studies have determined that people who are optimistic about life tend to be healthier than those who are pessimistic. So instead of dreading all the bad things that might happen to you (i.e. losing your job, becoming seriously ill), try focusing on the good things that are happening in your life, even if they might seem trivial.

Remember: while you may not be able to control what happens to you, you can control the way you react to it. So don't worry, be happy, and stay healthy in 2010!

1. If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.
(Milton Berle)
2. The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt
The person doing it.
(Chinese proverb)
3. A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity;
an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.
(Winston Churchill)
4. There are always flowers for those who want to see them.



Parenting Education Programs Training Survey

As of press time, the results of the training survey were still under review. We are resending the survey to those who did not have time to respond. Once we know the results, they will be shared with volunteer facilitators.

Please Note:

If you prefer phone communication or United States mail instead of e-mail, please let me (Laurie) know at 703-324-7871, TTY 703-222-9452.

Please note however, that regarding mailed items, such as this newsletter, we are promoting environmentally friendly and cost saving measures by sending items electronically.

Thank you!

Laurie Eytel -Editor
 Leigh Giza - Assistant Editor

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Our web site:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/about/volops.htm



Projected Parenting Program Groups

Please contact Laurie at 703-324-7871, leytel@fairfaxcounty.gov if you wish to facilitate with one or more of these groups.

The following groups meet 5:30-8 p.m. in 2010 and will be conducted in English unless otherwise noted:

1/25/10- 4/26/10	Monday	Parent/Teen	Alexandria	12 weeks
1/26/10- 4/27/10	Tuesday	5-11 age range	Centreville	13 weeks
1/28/10- 4/29/10	Thursday	5-11 age range	Springfield	13 weeks
1/10- 4/10	Wed.	Fatherhood class**	Alexandria	12 weeks
2/1/10- 6/21/10	Monday	0-4 age range in Spanish	Fairfax	21 weeks
2/3/10- 6/16/10	Wed.	0-4 age range	Springfield	21 weeks
3/17/10- 6/9/10	Wed.	5-11 age range African American Culture	Alexandria	13 weeks
3/17/10- 6/9/10	Wed.	5-11 age range Spanish	Alexandria	13 weeks
3/23/10- 6/22/10	Tuesday	Parent/Teen	Falls Church	12 weeks
TBD	TBD	0-4 age range Spanish	Reston	21 weeks
6/3/10- 8/26/10	Thursday	5-11 age range	Springfield	13 weeks
6/7/10- 8/30/10	Monday	5-11 age range	Alexandria	13 weeks

**Fatherhood class: for fathers of children of all ages, in English (offered in partnership between Family Services and the Capital Youth Empowerment Program)

Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations call 703-324-7871, TTY 703-222-9452. Please allow seven working days in advance of the event in order to make the necessary arrangements. This information is available in alternate formats by calling 703-324-7871; TTY 703-222-9452.