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WORK HARD, PLAY EVEN HARDER--BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY

Jolie Ogg Graybill* and Darcy Tessman

ABSTRACT:

How do you balance your work life and home life? Are you unbalanced, mixed-up, and confused? Is your work life-home life balance tipped evenly or does work tip the scale and send you over the edge? Take a deep breath, sit back, relax . . . Trade stress for success!

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TREASURES OR TRASH? THE FAMILY TIMES REPLICATION PROJECT

Patricia Gruber MS, MA, CFCS*, Zona Hutson M.A., Patty Mulkeen Ph.D., Patty Morrison M.A., Sue Riggs M.A., Deborah Shriver M.A. and Carl Townsend M.S.

ABSTRACT:

West Virginia University Extension agents in 17 counties replicated the Family Times Newsletter project that had been piloted in four West Virginia counties in 2000-2001. The research questions were (1) If user-friendly parenting information is easily available, will parents use it, thereby increasing their knowledge and parenting skills? (2) Can newsletters increase the use of positive parenting techniques as self reported by respondents? Ten newsletters were distributed monthly to kindergarten parents between September 2001 and May 2002. The first newsletter introduced the series while the following nine each focused on a topic of concern to parents and offered specific recommendations for putting the information into practice. The survey instrument was a post-then-pre-test questionnaire design. Parents from schools in each county received the survey. The first five newsletters were evaluated in the Phase 1 survey, while the remaining four newsletters were evaluated in the Phase 2 survey. Each evaluation phase was conducted with a different parent sample. The surveys were identical except for response options for the question regarding the number of newsletters the parent had read and the items specific to newsletter topics. The two-page survey distributed to parents included general questions about the newsletters, a series of post-then-pre-test questions assessing parenting behavior before and after reading the newsletters, and demographic questions. Seven hundred and fifty-two Phase 1 surveys were distributed, with 240 returned for a response rate of 31.91 percent. Four hundred and eighty-one Phase 2 surveys were distributed, with 131 returned for a response rate of 27.33 percent.

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"FUN TO PLAY"

Jo Anne Kock Ph.D.* and Olga Soto

ABSTRACT:

A recent survey of teachers estimates that over one third of children entering kindergarten are not ready for school. Many of the children do not have the problem-solving and language skills necessary for school. Youngsters lacking these skills have difficulty keeping up. Children start building their knowledge about the world long before they reach school, and the home environment has a strong effect on children's skills. Therefore, parents play a vital role in a young child's learning abilities. "Fun to Play" allows interested educators and program facilitators to design a parent educator program that suits their own interests and needs, as well as the interest and needs of the audience they are trying to reach. While "Fun to Play" is an educational program built upon learning and play, it is designed to increase parent's knowledge and abilities. The overall goal of the program is to teach young parents ways to play and interact with their children and to increase the amount of positive parent-child interaction. The activities are chosen to spark the interests and hearts of parents and children in the joy of learning and play.

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ENGAGING FATHERS THROUGH "ME AND MY DAD" ACTIVITY-BASED PROGRAMS

Marilou Rochford* and Elizabeth Kaminsky

ABSTRACT:

This teaching roundtable will highlight the substantial impact fathers have on children's lives, as well as the current trends in fatherhood. It is based on the presenters' research and development of the "Me and My Dad" and "Just for Dads" projects. It will offer tested outreach strategies to involve and teach fathers. Participants will be able to develop their own action plan for working with fathers in their own communities. They will learn the specifics of how a variety of "Me and My Dad" activity-based programs have successfully engaged fathers and children, improving communication, building trust and strengthening family relationships.

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ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PREVENTION AMONG LATINAS

Carla M. Sousa*, Anne Driscoll, Marilyn Johns, Faye Lee, Darlene Liesch, Fe Moncloa and Stephen Russell

ABSTRACT:

Latina teens have higher pregnancy and birth rates than all other ethnic groups. At the same time, this group makes up the fastest growing portion of the youth population in California. While the research community has explored the reasons for teen parenthood among white and African American youth for some time, only recently have researchers focused on Latino youth. Thus, relatively little is known about how to aid young Latinos to postpone parenthood, let alone assist young parents to prevent additional teen births. This project builds and enhances research efforts that has already been conducted by team members. The purpose of this study was to: (1) enhance the research team's knowledge of how to help Latino teen parents procure the assistance they need to improve their lives and their children's lives; and (2) learn what factors are crucial to increasing the odds that teens will delay a second child until they are better equipped to handle the additional responsibilities and burden. Members of the research team conducted qualitative interviews with pregnancy prevention professionals about the degree to which the best practices suggested by the National Council of La Raza have been effective. The respondents, from both rural and urban areas of the state, were also asked to identify additional culturally appropriate practices for pregnancy prevention. Both male and female practitioners were interviewed, as well as Latino and non-Latino individuals. The research findings will be shared along with recommended effective strategies for pregnancy prevention among Latina teens.

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UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO PARENTS-AS-TEACHERS DEMONSTRATION
PROJECT

Kathee Tifft* and Carol Hampton

ABSTRACT:

"Parents-As-Teachers" is a research-based parent education program that helps parents develop their skills as their children's first and best teacher. The program includes four components: monthly personal visits to the family, group parent meetings, screening of children for health and developmental concerns, and networking with other community resources. This strength-based program is free, voluntary and open to all families. There are currently 13 Parents As Teachers programs being implemented in Idaho communities through University of Idaho Extension. The programs are impacting 311 enrolled families and 458 children, prenatal to five years of age. At each visit, parent educators provide handouts with additional information for parents to read. They also provide activities and suggestions for parents to work on until the next visit. Among parents who had been in the program for a year, 82% reported that they followed up on more than half of the visits, with 58% following up more than three-quarters of the time. After one year of participation, parents are reporting substantial gains in knowledge of child development, confidence in their parenting abilities and skills to help their young children learn. Parents indicate an increase in the amount they read to their children. Parents report a high level of satisfaction with the program (based on the surveys of 100 families.)

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MEETING AND EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS: HOW TO MAKE A LIVING AND STILL HAVE A LIFE

Dr. Mary Williams*, Rod Buchele and Dr. Janet Fox

ABSTRACT:

When Alice went to the Mad Hatter's tea party in Wonderland, she noticed that he was wearing a most unusual timepiece. "What a funny watch" she observed. "It tells the day of the month but doesn't tell what o'clock it is!" That relaxed approach to time might sound like a dream come to Extension professionals, whose watches never seem to have enough o'clocks in the day to get everything done. While no one can add even one minute to a 24-hour day, the solution lies not in wishing for more time but shifting paradigms for balancing work, family and personal roles. Presented in an interactive way, the participants will learn what research tells us about balancing work, family and personal roles to form a strong foundation for action. Through small-group discussion within life focus areas, participants will identify challenges and solutions. Resources and strategies will be shared to help participants not just survive but thrive through teamwork that exceeds expectations.

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FAMILY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

Kay Zimka*, Jane Frobose and Margaret Miller

ABSTRACT:

"Family Matters" is a monthly two-page newsletter developed for parents and caregivers of children, preschool through grade three. The English and Spanish translated newsletter is researched and written through the collaborative efforts of Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Front Range Region Family and Consumer Sciences Agents. It is distributed throughout Colorado and to national subscribers reaching more than 15,000 families, organizations and agencies each month. It is available in single copy print format, through Email: as a PDF, and via the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Website. Content includes an age-appropriate parenting article, child safety tips and nutrition information. The increasing number of documented cases of child abuse and neglect in the state of Colorado as well as nationally; the reported incidences of family violence; the expressed lack of awareness and/or understanding of age-appropriate behavior by parents and caregivers; the growth of the Spanish/Hispanic population in the state of Colorado; led FCS agents to develop and distribute a positive parenting newsletter, "Family Matters." "Family Matters" enables Colorado parents and caregivers of children preschool to third grade to increase their positive parenting skills and to increase their understanding of age-appropriate behavior. Parenting article content is determined from environmental scans, current trends, state and /or societal issues, client (subscriber) input, defined interpersonal relations building skills and techniques, and research-based age-appropriate information.

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