



Parents & Practitioners

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Missouri Parent Cafes

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Missouri Project LAUNCH (*Linking Action for Unmet Needs in Children's Health*) is a five year federally funded project that is focusing on children, families and the community, using the public health approach.

One of the Project LAUNCH's five main goals is focusing on strengthening families. The St. Louis team has begun hosting parent cafés on monthly basis. These cafes are structured and in each meeting, families and community members focus on two to three protective factors, having heart to heart conversation about their successes and struggles raising their children and grandchildren.

Each café starts with a half an hour lunch to allow for networking. The meetings are hosted by a parent or a community member. More than thirty parents and community members attend each café. Transportation, child care, lunch and door prizes are provided.

Project LAUNCH has offered three sessions on Saturdays, and will offer three sessions during the week day and three during evening time, to ensure all parents and community members can attend. Because sustainability is a big piece, Project LAUNCH staff are reaching out to

churches in the community to invite them to be part of the café, but also host these cafes on an ongoing basis.

Below are some remarks from parent participants of the Café.

"It takes a village to raise a child, and the Parent Café helps build that village."

~Kayia Shelton



Sam Blue, Kayia Shelton & Keisha Shelton

"My experience with the parent café has been spectacular. A group of total strangers with only a zip code in common, has become friends and family for life. This is a unique concept with a common sense approach. I highly recommend the café to any community in America."

~Sam Pointer



Sam Blue, Sam Pointer & Keisha Shelton

"I enjoy being a part of the parent cafés. We have great discussion about families and communities that taught me a lot. I love hearing from the younger members and older members. I feel the group helps me learn a lot with my family. I am very proud to be with the parent café because it's about children, families and communities helping one another."

~Calvin Kennedy

After the Parent Cafes, participating parents were presented with Parent Leadership certificates.

~Submitted by Sanaria Sulaiman

Young Child Wellness Coordinator, Project Launch, Vision for Children at Risk

FRIENDS Partners:

- * Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, Lead Agency
- * Child Welfare League of America.
www.CWLA.org
- * Circle Of Parents
www.circleofparents.org
- * Independent Living Resources Inc
www.independentlivingresources.com

Couple Relationship Education Important for Families



According to James P. Marshal Ph.D., LMFT, Associate Professor of Family Life, University of Arkansas, one of the primary responsibilities of the safety-net service providers is to protect and strengthen the lives of children and families. One important way this can be done is by helping them have more stable relationships. Research has shown that an unhealthy or abusive relationship between parents is detrimental to children's development and safety. Therefore helping individuals and couples learn healthy relationship skills is an effective strategy for improving outcomes for parents and children alike.

Thankfully, safety-net service providers do not have to be relationship experts, have ideal relationships themselves, or even be in relationships in order to help couples have stronger

and more stable relationships. The fact is, no one, and no relationship, is perfect. To be helpful, one simply needs to be willing to learn, practice and share a few proven (research based) principles of healthy couple relationships.

This information is taken from the tip sheet "My Relationship Isn't Perfect – How Can I Help Couples" from the National Resource Center for HEALTHY MARRIAGE and FAMILIES. You can download it by going to

www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org

. In the menu bar across the top click on about Healthy Marriage & Relationship Education where the document is available for download.

~Submitted by the Editor

Developing Parent Leadership



In October, we had the opportunity to provide the Parent Leadership Ambassador Training here in Anchorage, Alaska. Parents and practitioners came together to continue and strengthen Parent Partnerships. We had discussions about comprehensive support for parents, development of parent leadership skills, and maintaining and supporting meaningful parent involvement in parent partnerships here in Alaska. An activity during the training that stood out most to the group of parents that participated was an exercise using a balloon given each parent for a scenario he/she faces prior to contributing as a parent partner in a program. "A day in the life of a parent leader" was a great visual for parents and practitioners alike representing the many "balloons"/burdens we all often overcome or carry with us in our hearts as we show willingness to contribute, collaborate, organize

and support organizations and parents in their toughest job of raising strong families. Seeing the volunteer holding 20 plus balloons and the ways she tried to juggle them reminded both the parents and practitioners the importance of meaningful relationships and the trust it takes to partner together to support the families in communities where we live. The parents and practitioners in the group look forward to using this training to increase Parent Partnerships in meaningful ways for action planning in the future.

*~Brook Hauffbaur,
FRIENDS NRC CBCAP
Parent Advisory Council*



FRIENDS NRC CBCAP Online
(Visit www.FRIENDSNRC.org)

FRIENDS NRC offers many online tools that can assist programs with their Parent Leadership Initiatives.

On the Home Page:

- ~Evaluation Toolkit
- ~The Outcome Accountability Guide
- ~Support Family Program Survey
- ~Peer Review

Under Trainings & Downloads

Under Parent Support

- ~Meaningful Parent Leadership, A Guide for Success.
- ~September 2013 webinar: Parent Leadership E-Learning – Utilizing the course for enhanced parent leadership and involvement.

Missouri's Strengthening Families Conference

Missouri Children's Trust Fund was one of the sponsors of a statewide Parent Leader Summit: *Strengthening Families Navigating Life, A Family Enrichment Conference* held on April 11–12, 2014 at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage, MO. Carla Sondgrass, a partner of FRIENDS NRCCBCAP, was keynote speaker. She began by encouraging the families not to judge others, but look for the best in others and the opportunity to help and work with parents to become Family Leaders. Everyone was very impressed with Carla's presentation, and they hope to invite her to St. Louis to do presentations on strengthening families and Community cafes.

FRIENDS PAC members Sam Blue and Jessica Diel participated in the Summit. In addition to helping plan this conference, Sam Blue facilitated the Fathers Matter Workshop. He kicked it off by sharing special moments about his children to others at the workshop. As a result many fathers began to also share special moments about their child(ren). There was laughter, smiles and tears of joy and appreciation from both dads and moms. Many exchanged contact information and received a lot of support information to help them to navigate fatherhood. This session was very well received by the participants, and brought

some fathers to tears.

~Submitted by Sam Blue,



Jessica Diel, Sam Blue & Carla Snodgrass

FRIENDS PAC

Circles® Campaign

The mission of Circles is to transform the community by building relationships that inspire and equip people to end poverty. We envision everyone in our community having enough meaning, resources and relationships in his or her life to thrive.

Circles® creates a framework for people to build intentional relationships across class and race lines with the goal of ending poverty. This is accomplished by identifying people in poverty who are ready to build a path to self reliance and to participate in classes and weekly training meetings. These participants are connected with community volunteers interested in creating new friendships and learning new perspectives. Together they are able to work to eliminate local barriers and

help end poverty in our community. Circles also fosters an atmosphere where community members may become part of the conversation regarding poverty in the community. United Way of SW Missouri & SE Kansas has invested in the national Circles® Campaign to help address the root causes of poverty in the four counties served, beginning with Jasper County and the Joplin area. In partnership with a number of community organizations, including the Joplin Tornado Long Term Recovery Committee, United Way is providing funding, volunteer manpower, and mentoring expertise through Circles to assist these families in achieving financial stability.

The Circles Campaign in the Joplin area was launched in 2012, joining some 70 member communities across more than 20 states that also employ the program. Circles is the brainchild of the New Mexico-based Move the Mountain Leadership Center.

Through the program individuals participate in a series of educational classes and are paired with community mentors to help them develop and implement a personalized action plan to lift them out of poverty. For more information go to the National website: <http://www.circlesusa.org/>

~Submitted by Jessica Diel

FRIENDS CBCAP PAC

New FRIENDS Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Member



The FRIENDS PAC welcomes new member Sam Blue. Sam Blue is a supportive husband of twenty three years and the father of nine children (seven daughters and two sons).

At Grace Hill Head Start in 2009, he served as the Chair of the Magnolia Center's Parent Committee as well as

the Vice Chair of the Policy Council. He has been an AmeriCorps member for two years serving as the Male Involvement Specialist. He is committed to the success and empowerment of both the fathers and children in the Head Start Program.

Sam was selected as the Missouri Head Start Association's "2011 Father of the Year." In addition, he has also been named the Region VII Head Association's "2011 Father of the Year."

Sam earned an Associate's Degree in Applied Science/Human Services at

St. Louis Community College in 2007. He is currently the President of the Peabody Tenant Association and the Vice President of the City Wide TAB (Tenant Association Board). Currently Sam is the Community Engagement Specialist for Project LAUNCH (Linking Action for Unmet Needs in Children's Health). He helps engage key leaders in developing a common strategy and plan for improving positive outcomes for young children, families, and the community.

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FRIENDS Parent Advisory Council Pictured from l-r: Sam Furhmann, MaryJo Caruso, Brooke Hoffbauer, Fatima Gonzalez, Jessica Diel, Shari Kueker, Dawn Patzer, Jill Gentry, Eliza Cooper and Art Hernandez

We're on the web
www.friendsnrc.org

Family Resource Information, Education, and Network Development Service (FRIENDS)
National Resource for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

FRIENDS NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER INFO

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

The ACE Study is one of the largest investigations ever conducted to assess associations between childhood maltreatment and later-life health and well-being. Childhood abuse, neglect, and exposure to other traumatic stressors which we term adverse childhood experiences (ACE) are common. FRIENDS currently has an ACEs workgroup that is examining ACEs and their link to prevention. The workgroup has released a web page on <http://friendsnrc.org/> about ACEs in Prevention and is currently collecting data via an electronic survey of

CBCAP leads to better understand the use of the data in practice and what technical assistance needs states may have in integrating this information.

In February, FRIENDS also hosted a webinar entitled ACEs and the Protective Factors: Effects on parent involvement. This webinar included information from the original study. Two programs shared information on the prevalence of ACEs in their parent population and how they are working to engage parents and build protective factors. A parent leader shared her own adverse childhood experiences and the proactive steps she is taking to keep her children from experiencing the same. You may view the archived webinar at [http://friendsnrc.org/teleconference-and-webinar-archive/2014-teleconference-](http://friendsnrc.org/teleconference-and-webinar-archive/2014-teleconference-and-webinar-archive/459-february-2014-aces-and-protective-factors-effects-on-parent-involvement)

[and-webinar-archive/459-february-2014-aces-and-protective-factors-effects-on-parent-involvement](http://friendsnrc.org/teleconference-and-webinar-archive/459-february-2014-aces-and-protective-factors-effects-on-parent-involvement).

~submitted by
FRIENDS NRCCBCAP Staff

