



Hello!

The holiday season is upon us and I am certain that all of us are quite busy. I do hope you take some time off to enjoy family and friends. I also encourage you to think about establishing a family ritual that involves service. Whether it is baking cookies and delivering them to shut-ins or volunteering at the local food bank--the holidays are perfect time to establish a new family ritual involving service.

Several new materials are available in the Publications Distribution Center for you to use with schools and parents. Two bulletins on bullying have been developed (CA UI367 & UI368). A power point presentation is on the web for educators to use in teaching about bullying. Another bulletin entitled Protecting Children on the Internet has been published (CA UI366).

In addition, I worked with two undergraduate honor students this fall to develop supplemental activities for two curriculums — Theatre Arts (<http://pa4h.cas.psu.edu/CommExpArts.html>) and Pets (<http://pa4h.cas.psu.edu/ansci.html>). The students, Amy Lucas and Elizabeth Barrett, were introduced to me by Liesel Dreisbach (Lehigh County). They had interned with her this past summer. The experience of working with such capable students was a delight and very productive. I encourage all of you to check out their work on the 4-H webpage.

Finally, the last page of this newsletter contains a question that I need you to complete and return to me-- surface mail or e-mail.

Sincerely,

Daniel F. Perkins
Associate Professor
Family and Youth Resiliency and Policy



... What's Inside ...

**Family Activity
Research Briefs
Web Resources
Possible Funding Sources
Policy Point**

FAMILY ACTIVITY

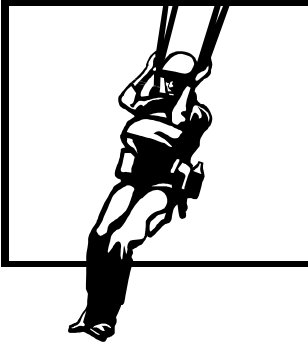
Wintertime has arrived! Challenge your family to a snowman building contest. See who can make the most unique snowman or even the closest family member look-alike. No snow outside? No problem! Move your contest indoors by using such creative items as marshmallows, cotton balls, cake frosting, or even mashed potatoes to build your snowmen!



RESEARCH BRIEFS

Supporting Families the Military Way

The military confronts families with unique challenges such as relocation, family separation, residence in foreign countries, short-notice deployments, long hours, and the risk of the service member's injury or death. As a result, the military has developed support systems for families at critical points in the life cycle.



Today, the U.S. is in need of a more comprehensive system of universal family support, and some of the best aspects of the military model can be applied to our society at large. For example, the military has developed Family Support Centers (FSC), which provide a wide variety of services such as relocation assistance, personal financial management services, spouse employment assistance, emergency financial aid, family life skills education, and information and referral services. The FSCs are comprehensive, follow a life-cycle model, and are delivered by a trained professional staff. In addition, many different services are located in the



Center so professionals in one area can link the client with other services. Committees that include service providers and military leaders meet regularly to explore problems and gaps in service delivery and collaborate on solutions. The goal is to maximize both awareness and use of the services provided by a broad cross

section of the community and encourage those families who need services most, but are least likely to use them, to take advantage of the services. The following strategies have been developed to achieve this goal:

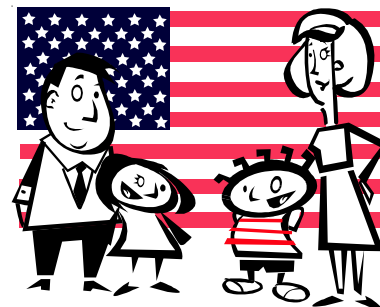
- Improve linkage between the FSC and underserved populations by integrating the FSC into the whole family's introduction to a military base.
- Locate universal and targeted services in the same place. This helps to reach needy populations without stigma.

- Increase social integration using formal and informal networks. The military networks with local organizations, social, and civic groups to generate associations between potential users and services.
- Identify loci of intervention for each target population, then extend formal, office-based service through proactive outreach and mobile service delivery at alternate locations.
- Facilitate the bonding of the spouse and the institution through spouse clubs, civic and volunteer groups, and celebratory rituals.
- Effect values change regarding help seeking behavior by emphasizing teamwork and the interdependence of individuals and helping resources.



Families face challenges in attempting to meet work and family obligations in both the military and the private sectors. Like the military, the private sector can make family more central to corporate philosophy and policy by offering support to family members when making extraordinary job demands and at critical points in the life cycle.

Found in: Albano, Sondra. (2002). What Society Can Learn from the U.S. Military's System of Family Support. *National Council on Family Relations Family Focus*, 13, 6-9.



What Men and Women Think about Parenting

In recent years, researchers, policy makers, and federal agencies have shifted the focus of statistical portraits of families from concentrating almost exclusively on women and mothers to examining the male role in fertility, parenting, and family formation. This report provides the first comprehensive portrait of mothers and fathers in America and offers a systematic comparison of and appreciation for the contributions both mothers and fathers make in raising children. The report draws on 13 federal and privately collected national surveys to present information on more than 40 measures in three major areas of interest: parenting, family formation, and fertility. Due to this newsletter's page limits, we will only focus on a few highlights in the parenting area.

- 78% of men and 83% of women agree that watching children grow up is life's greatest joy.
- 87% of mothers and 73% of fathers report that they show their children physical affection at least once a day, and similarly high percentages report telling their children that they love them every day.
- While the vast majority of mothers and fathers report sharing responsibility with each other for playing with their children, mothers are more likely to engage children in "quiet" activities like board games, puzzles, and looking at books, while fathers are more likely to play sports or do outdoor activities with children. Mothers are also more likely to be highly involved in their children's schools and are more likely to take their children to religious observances.
- In general, children spend more time with their mothers than their fathers on any given day, possibly reflecting higher levels of employment among fathers than mothers. In two-parent families, children ages 12 and under spend an average of 2 hours and 21 minutes a day with their mothers, compared to 1 hour and 46 minutes with their fathers.
- In single-parent families children spend about one and a quarter hours a day with their mothers, compared to less than half an hour



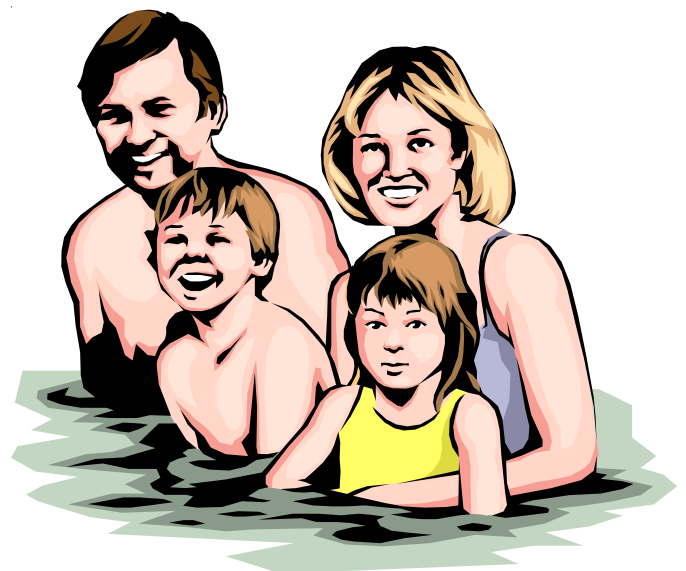
with their fathers, presumably because more children in such families live with single mothers than fathers.

- Mothers are somewhat more likely than fathers to report setting limits for their children on how much television they can watch, what programs they can watch, and on who their children can spend time with.



The data highlight the unique contributions that mothers and fathers make to rearing their children. One insight from these data is that many men have a deep commitment to raising children in the context of marriage, and that substantial percentages of fathers are deeply and regularly involved in play, discipline, and primary caregiving. To learn more visit the website.

Found in: Halle, T (2002). Charting Parenthood: A Statistical Portrait of Fathers and Mothers in America. Washington, DC: Child Trends. Retrieved from: <http://www.childtrends.org/PDF/ParenthoodRpt2002.pdf>



Drinking and Religion Don't Mix

The vast majority of American high school seniors report having used alcohol at some time, and numerous health-compromising outcomes associated with drinking such as delinquency, psychopathology, school failure, and other problem behaviors are becoming increasingly prevalent among our youth. This study examines the extent to which religion predicts: the decision to use alcohol; the choice among users of how much and how often to drink; and the experience of alcohol-related problems.

Data from this study were drawn from a four-wave panel study of 1,175 middle-adolescent youth from two suburban school districts in western New

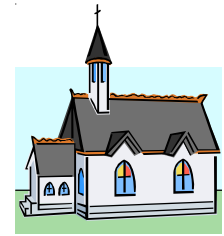


York. Trained research staff administered questionnaires to the youth (15 or 16 years old) in their high school setting. The sample was 98.5% White, and mostly middle class, with a median annual family income

of more than \$40,000. Seventy four percent of the sample was Catholic, 16% Protestant, and 10% other.

The results of this study showed that the importance of religion to the youth and attendance at religious events and services were negatively associated with the prevalence of alcohol use. In addition, self-reported importance of religion was a significant predictor of the decision to begin drinking. However, when peer, family, and school variables were included in the analysis, the effects

of religiosity were insignificant. Indeed, the strongest correlate and predictor of the decision to use alcohol was association with alcohol-using peers, suggesting that the effects of religion on drinking may be mediated by peer selection.



Religious attendance was a significant correlate and predictor of how much and how frequently youth chose to drink, suggesting that religious boys and girls are likely to internalize religious principles and develop personal standards of conduct to guide their actions. Indeed, religious attendance was associated with reductions over time in the quantity and frequency of alcohol consumption. Likewise, alcohol use was inversely related to subsequent religious attendance and salience, suggesting that religious boys and girls may rationalize their drinking behavior by altering their religious beliefs and practices. The study found



that religious attendance had a moderately negative effect on the occurrence of alcohol-related problems. Further research is needed to determine whether the findings of this study can be generalized to non-Whites and to youth of other religious traditions.

Found in: Mason, W. A., & Windle, M. (2002). A longitudinal study of the effects of religiosity on adolescent alcohol use and alcohol-related problems. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 17, 346-363.

WEB RESOURCES

RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONALS

Family Strengths: Often Overlooked, But Real
<http://www.childtrends.org/PDF/FamilyStrengths.pdf>

Contrary to many popular portrayals, the majority of American parents and children report strong family ties and daily routines that encourage close parent-child relationships, according to this Child Trends Research Brief.

Helping Children Resist Bias and Hate
<http://www.partnersagainsthate.org/publications>

This new activity guide is designed to provide background information on bias-motivated behavior and youth-initiated hate crimes. It also provides tools and strategies to help adults engage in meaningful discussions and activities so they can learn about the causes and effects of prejudice and bias-motivated behavior.

Bilingual Booklet on Access to Health Insurance

<http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/confidence/Confianza.pdf>

The National Council of La Raza and the United States Department of Health and Human Services have worked together to produce a bilingual booklet that explains how parents can receive low-cost or free health insurance. The booklet also serves as a guide for families with concerns about immigration status. "Protect Your Family's Health with Confidence" examines Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program, and answers questions regarding children's health coverage when a parent is not a U.S. citizen. A copy of the booklet can be downloaded in PDF format.



Health Trends over Fifty Years

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus.htm>

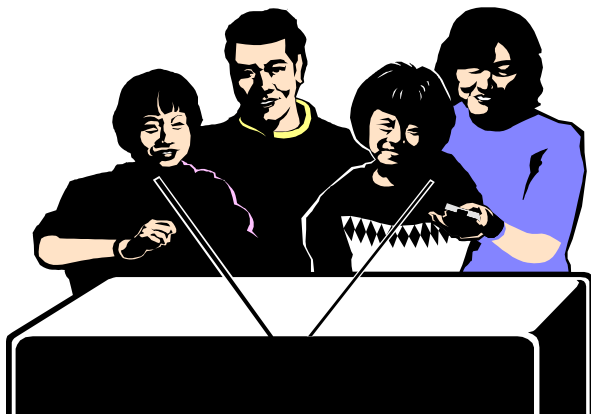
Infant mortality rates have dropped 75% since 1950 to a record low in 2000, according to the 26th annual statistical report on the nation's health from the Department of Health and Human Services. Death rates among children have been cut in half over the past 50 years and homicide rates among young black and Hispanic males dropped almost 50% in the 1990s. But homicide is still the leading cause of death for young black men. New AIDS cases are still being reported in young people, and obesity is an increasing problem for adults and children.

The nation spent \$1.3 trillion on health care in 2000, or 13.2% of the gross domestic product, far more than any other nation. Seventeen percent of health care costs were paid out of pocket by consumers, while government programs—mainly Medicare and Medicaid—paid 43% of all medical bills.

National Institute on Media and the Family Website

<http://www.mediafamily.org/index.shtml>

The National Institute on Media and the Family is a national resource for teachers, parents, community leaders and other caring adults who are interested in the influence of electronic media on early childhood education, child development, academic performance, culture and violence. The Institute offers a number of unique resources, including movie, television and video game content ratings; media awareness programs; fact sheets, including recent research on television and childhood obesity; and helpful hints for parents and families to evaluate their media use.



Moving an Out-of-School Agenda

<http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/resspeech.htm#moving>

The Greater Resources for After-School Programming (GRASP) project partnered with four cities to evaluate current out-of-school time offerings and discuss challenges programs face. The resulting documents, *Moving an Out-of-School Agenda: Lessons and Challenges Across Cities*, describe the commonalities found among the cities and the issues they face. The report is accompanied by ten short "Task Briefs" that summarize the common challenges cities face as they attempt to saturate their neighborhoods with high-quality supports and opportunities for learning and development.



New KIDS COUNT Census Data Available

<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/census>

Kids Count has created an interactive database using the results of the 2000 U.S. Census. You can create your own reports on income and poverty, parental employment, education, language, disability, and neighborhood characteristics.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

Guide for Parents: Personal Safety for Children
www.nochildleftbehind.gov/parents/safety/index.html

Every year in the U.S. more than 200,000 children are abducted by family members seeking to interfere with a parent's custodial rights. Over 58,000 children are abducted by non-family members. In the most dangerous type of abduction—stranger kidnapping—fully 40% of children are killed. *Personal Safety for Children: A Guide for Parents*, available in both English and Spanish, is a publication of the Departments of Education and Justice and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. For a copy, while supplies last, contact 1-877-4ED-PUBS (433-7827), or visit the above website.

Parent Teen Relationships
<http://www.aces.edu/teens/parenteen/index.htm>

The Parent Teen Relationships website explores ways of handling changes occurring in parent-teen relationships. Included are Parent-Teen Activity Ideas, Parent-Teen Video Messages, Parent &



Teen Websites, and Stay Connected--Resources for Military Families.

Talk with Your Kids
<http://www.talkingwithkids.org/index.html>

Talking With Kids About Tough Issues is a national initiative by Children Now and the Kaiser Family Foundation to encourage parents to talk with their children earlier and more often about tough issues like sex, HIV/AIDS, violence, alcohol, and drug abuse.

The Netsmartz Workshop
<http://www.netsmartz.org/>

The NetSmartz Workshop is an educational resource on Internet safety for parents, teachers, and children of all ages. The NetSmartz Workshop features age-appropriate, interactive games and activities that utilize the latest web technologies to entertain and educate.



RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

Young Inventors Awards Program
<http://www.nsta.org/programs/craftsman/>

The 2003 Craftsman/National Science Teachers Association Young Inventors Awards Program is open to all students in grades two through eight. Students must work independently to conceive and design a tool invention that performs a practical function. Tools may mend, make life easier or safer in some way, entertain, or solve an everyday problem. Students must receive guidance from a teacher-advisor, parent, or significant adult; however, the tool must be conceived, designed, and built by the students. Two national winners will receive a \$10,000 United States Series EE Savings Bond. The deadline for applications is March 4, 2003. Visit the above website for more information and to download the application form.



Bam! Body and Mind
<http://www.bam.gov/>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has created *BAM!* to answer kids' questions on health issues and recommend ways to make their bodies and minds healthier, stronger, and safer. *BAM!* also serves as an aid to teachers, providing them with interactive activities to support their health and science curriculums that are educational and fun.

Youth Plan It
www.ysa.org/PLANIT

This website takes young people through the steps of creating a viable program or service group in their communities. The pages steer kids to think through each aspect of the task ahead: what their specific mission is, how to accomplish it and what resources are available. Youth Service America has created an easy answer to the age-old complaint, "But I don't know how to get started!"

POLICY POINT

The latest research about children's early care and education is presented in terms of policy implications for Pennsylvania. "Early Care and Education: The Keystone of Pennsylvania's Future" details research findings and recommendations for the future of Pennsylvania's early care and educational delivery system. The report calls on the state Legislature to lower the compulsory school age from 8 to 6, make preschool programs available to 3- and 4-year-olds, and give school districts funding for full-day kindergarten. <http://www.state.pa.us/papower/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=431623>



PO\$\$IBLE FUNDING \$OURCES\$

Girls Going Places College Scholarship

<http://www.glic.com/wc/frameset.html?http://www.glic.com/wc/ggp.html>

The Guardian Life Insurance Company's annual initiative is designed to help women create, invest and protect wealth by rewarding the enterprising spirits of girls ages 12 to 16. Guardian awards college scholarships to 15 girls who demonstrate budding entrepreneurship; are taking the first steps toward financial independence; and make a difference in their school and communities.

Three top scholarship prizes of \$10,000, \$5,000 and \$3,000 and 12 finalist prizes of \$1,000 will be awarded. The nomination form can be completed on the webpage. Scholarships will be presented to each winner within her respective community among her peers. Nomination period for the Girls Going Places Scholarship Program begins September 1, 2002 and ends February 28, 2003.

For College Scholarships and Financial Aid

<http://www.fastweb.com/>

If you have access to the world wide web and are willing to fill in the online forms, this service promises a free customized list of financial aid sources. FastWeb is a searchable database of more than 400,000 private sector scholarships, fellowships, grants, and loans from more than 3,000 sources for all levels of higher education. First-time visitors have to register, then complete a profile, including background and fields of study. Registrants then receive a list of all currently relevant funding sources. The entire process can be a bit tedious: about five to twenty minutes, depending on the connection speed. Approximately 500 new scholarships are added to the database daily, so registrants can stay current. Provided courtesy of Financial Aid Information Page and Student Services, Inc. and sponsored by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.



Response section: Return by January 15, 2003

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I will download from the webpage.

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!

*Please check out new links for strengths-based programs
on the FYRP Website:
<http://resiliency.cas.psu.edu/>*



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