



# *Resiliency and Thriving in Families and Youth*

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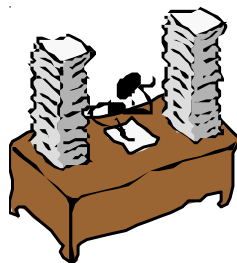
Hello all!

Fall is my favorite time of year because the students have just returned to campus, college football (my favorite sport) is upon us, the trees show their colors, and I feel a sense of excitement. However, this fall there is also a sense of loss as we mark the one-year anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy. This sense of loss might be overwhelming, especially for children, as they are inundated with the images of the tragedy by the media. Please check the section of my website entitled, "helping children deal with tragedy," as it does have some useful material for working with children. I would encourage all of you to find a special way to mark September 11. It is important that we all take time to remember.

I want to let all of you know about the future release of some new materials currently being published. The first set of materials addresses bullying in children. Two bulletins have been developed – one for parents and one for elementary school teachers. In addition, a power point presentation will be downloadable from my website for educators to use in teaching about bullying. The second set of educational materials is a bulletin for parents about protecting their children on the Internet. Both of these resources should be available by the middle of October. Finally, I want remind you that I still have posters available for *Reading Wizards*, *Dads Make a Difference*, and *Making Youth Sports Positive*.

Sincerely,

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



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## **FAMILY ACTIVITY**

### **Sundae Night!**

Have a family ice cream social. Make or buy ice cream, and allow everyone in your family to choose their favorite toppings. See who can create the most unique and tasty ice cream sundae! Here's an easy recipe for homemade ice cream without even using an ice cream maker:

Ingredients: ice, milk, sugar, vanilla, salt, 1 pint size ziploc® bag, 1 gallon size ziploc® bag.

Directions:

1. In the pint size ziploc® bag, put about a cup of milk, a teaspoon of vanilla, and a teaspoon or two of sugar.
2. Then seal the bag closed (make sure to get the air out).
3. In the gallon size bag, put several ice cubes and about 2 or 3 tablespoons of salt.
4. Put the smaller bag inside of the big bag, on top of the ice.
5. Then seal the bag closed (make sure to get the air out).
6. Have the children rub the big bag for 5-10 minutes, shaking it periodically.
7. They may need help because it gets really cold for their hands.
8. Periodically open the bags to see if the consistency of the milk mixture has become slushy.
9. Let the kids eat the ice cream with a spoon out of the small bag.
10. Be careful not to let the contents of the big bag get into the small bag.
11. You can also add chocolate syrup for more flavor.



## **POLICY POINT**

### **Couples and Marriage Research Brief**

[http://www.clasp.org/DMS/Documents/1028563059.86/Marriage\\_Brief1.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/DMS/Documents/1028563059.86/Marriage_Brief1.pdf)

The policy brief entitled “Marriage and Government: Strange Bedfellows” is the first in a new series on Couples and Marriage Research and Policy. This brief explores the question of what the legitimate role of government might be in promoting marriage, outlines some of the objections to government intervention in marriage, discusses the relationship between marriage and poverty, and offers a framework for a reasonable Marriage-Plus approach that focuses on promoting child well-being.

# RESEARCH BRIEFS

## Capitalizing on “Teachable Moments” for Families

Although military families may want to receive information about parenting and support, issues such as lack of time, poor fit between parenting needs and class material, mistrust, and fear of reprisal can prevent educational opportunities from being utilized. The authors of this article suggest that service providers capitalize on “teachable moments.” These moments occur when something happens to stress the family system, causing it to go out of balance. The family will then strive towards balance, creating a teachable moment. In order to encourage parents to be more effectively engaged in parenting education, there are four basic tenants of the “teachable moments” approach:



- Decentralize the teaching experience and provide information to people in a variety of settings. Information can be accessed from home via TV or the Internet, in a store via a flyer, or in the larger community via newsletters and church sermons.
- Make learning asynchronous to allow individuals to learn at their own preferred rate, time, place, and style. To achieve this goal, information should be redundant, readily accessible, appealing, and convenient.
- Align the individual’s needs with the message, setting, timing, messenger, and format. Gear messages to the wide variety of individuals who touch children’s lives, such as parents, extended family members, community members, professionals, and educators. Know when parents are most



ready to learn, such as at times of disorganization and change. Find a place that parents frequent and where they can easily access information and support, such as a local mall or fast food restaurant.

- Provide a learning continuum. Offer learners a range of options, from “nuggets” of information to more in-depth learning experiences. The goal of the continuum should be to allow a learner to connect anywhere on the spectrum of information.

This article reminds us of the importance of making our educational materials and programs accessible. Families, regardless of whether they are military, have teachable moments during times of transition (e.g., couples becoming parents, child starting school, other school transitions).

Found in: Mertensmeyer, C., & Hughes, R. (2002). Capitalizing on “Teachable Moments” as a Valuable Parenting Education Strategy for Military Families. *Family Focus*, 13, 14-15.

## Adolescent Self-Care: Still Need Parents

This paper explores the fit between adolescents’ needs and the resources available to them during after-school hours. In recent decades, there have been dramatic changes in the fit between after-school needs and resources. While most family schedules are structured around school and the workplace, both these institutions were designed in an era when most men worked while their wives stayed home with the children. Today, the presence of an adult at home during the day tends to be the exception rather than the rule. And although there are a wide variety of resources for the daytime care of younger children, at age 13 youth are no longer allowed in most private childcare centers, and relatively few community or school-based after-school programs exist for adolescents.

Statistics show that adolescents in self-care during the out-of-school hours may be more vulnerable to the wide variety of environmental ills that plague our society, such as violence, poverty, and drug use. Studies have shown that peak hours for violence and juvenile crime occur during after-school hours, particularly between 3 and 4 pm, just after school has been let out. The juvenile delinquency case rate has shown an overall increase of nearly 50% over the last ten years, and overall illicit drug use among youth has more than doubled.

Research has identified some risk and protective factors associated with adolescent self-care, which may be organized into six major categories:

- Location of self-care: A study of adolescents in three types of locations--at home, at a friend's home, or "hanging out"--found no clear risks from self-care for boys. However, the study found that girls in self-care showed more problem behaviors, had increased levels of conflict with parents, felt less accepted by parents, had increased contact with deviant peers, and had poorer self-images. Moreover, these problem behaviors increased if self-care was at a friend's home or a hang out rather than at the teen's home. Another study found that problem behaviors such as risk-taking, substance use, depression, and poor grades increased in all locations for adolescents in self-care, with problem behaviors increasing if the location of self-care was at a friend's home or a hang out rather than at home. However, one study found that the most frequent location for drug use was the adolescent's home.
- Hours per week in self-care: Adolescents spending more hours per week in self-care had increased occurrences of risk-taking, truancy, anger, stress, feeling afraid when alone, feeling that parents were absent too



much, family conflict, and use of tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana. These effects increased incrementally as time in self-care increased.

- Peer involvement: Adolescents involved in self-care had higher levels of peer involvement, which can be a problem if those peers are involved in high-risk behaviors, since adolescents tend to become more like their friends over time.
- Access: Easy household access to guns is associated with violence among adolescents, and easy access to cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs is associated with higher levels of substance use.
- Parenting practices: Authoritative parenting has been found to be a protective factor against negative peer impact on substance use and grades, and is also linked to significantly lower levels of problem behavior, even when parents are not present.
- Feelings of connectedness: A strong sense of parent-family connectedness was one of the strongest protective influences on teens. This feeling served as a protective factor against emotional distress and suicidality, violence, substance use, and early sexual activity. High levels of school connectedness were associated with lower levels of emotional distress and suicidality, violence, substance use, and early sex.

Providing increased supervision and connectedness for youth during the high-risk after-school hours can help make a difference in the choices they make that affect their lives. Adolescents need to be allowed to develop increasing autonomy as they prepare for adulthood; however, there must be a balance between adult control and adolescent autonomy.

Found in: Stewart, R. (2001). Adolescent self-care: reviewing the risks. *Families in Society*, 82, 119-126.

## A Promising Youth Project

The Food Project in Lincoln, Massachusetts, is a program that raises fresh produce for local food pantries and shelters, as well as for two low-cost, inner-city farmers' markets. The program also involves a community supported agriculture program, a series of free community lunches, and an environmental awareness program. The food project has helped to build a new sense of community in a largely immigrant neighborhood, and helps to bridge the barriers of racial and ethnic divides. Staffed by teenage crews of workers, the program also promotes positive youth development.

The Food Project has developed strategies to capture and sustain the attention of its young participants and offer them support and educational opportunities. First, participants are asked to sign a standards sheet as soon as they start working for the project, signifying that they are joining a community with common assumptions and goals. They are also made aware of the rules, violations, and consequences. The young people learn about work, service, farming, diversity, and community. They are kept motivated by seeing the concrete results of their labors and the the program. In addition to physical labor, young people also engage in intensive workshops and discussions guided by older teen interns and staff, during which they create personal and community goals, draft a plan for achieving them, set targets for measuring progress, and engage in "Straight Talk," a communication tool designed to encourage learning and personal growth. The Food Project gives young people a structured work experience coupled with service learning. In addition to speaking out on issues of environmental safety, pesticide and lead contamination, and hunger, the Project is a powerful force for positive youth development. Perhaps most importantly, the Project gives youth a sense of belonging in a larger community, in which the boundaries of race, class, and ethnicity are bridged by common goals.



Found in: Cervone, Barbara. (2002). Common ground: Young people harvest food and community. *CYD Journal*, 3 (1), 9-15.

## WEB RESOURCES

### **CDC Launches Kid's Page—BAM!**

<http://www.bam.gov/>

As part of the HHS/CDC continuing effort to provide consumer-driven health information, the CDC's Office of Communication and the Information Resource Management Office (IRMO) launched BAM!--Body and Mind--a quarterly e-magazine for kids. Aimed at youth ages 9-13, BAM! was created to answer kids' questions on health issues and recommend ways to make their bodies and minds healthier, stronger, and safer. BAM! also provides middle school health and science teachers with interactive activities that are educational and fun.

### **Report on Teen Behavior**

<http://www.cdc.gov/yrebs>

Health and Human Services (HHS) has released a report on teen behavior. The report finds that high school students are acting more responsibly by avoiding tobacco, marijuana, and risky sexual behavior. These findings are part of the 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, which surveyed ninth to twelfth grade students in 2001. The 2001 report includes data for the nation and for 34 states and 18 large cities.

### **Building Partnerships for Youth**

<http://www.bpy.n4h.org>

National 4-H Council, the University of Arizona, and the University of California, Davis launched the Building Partnerships for Youth web site to provide professionals with a database of youth development program options to help youth ages 9-13 develop the motivation to make healthy choices. Detailed information is provided for each program listed on the site. Additionally, the Building Partnerships for Youth web site provides other resources relating to positive youth development and an opportunity to interact with colleagues across the country.

### **Youth Plan It**

[www.ysa.org/PLANIT](http://www.ysa.org/PLANIT)

Youth Plan It takes young people through the steps of creating a viable program or service group in their communities. The pages guide kids in thinking 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!"

### **Youth, Pornography, & the Internet**

<http://www4.nationalacademies.org/news.nsf/isbn/0309082749?OpenDocument>

This new report examines approaches to protecting children and teens from Internet pornography, threats from sexual predators operating online, and other inappropriate material on the Internet. It discusses social and educational strategies, technological tools, and policy options for how to teach children to make safe and appropriate decisions about what they see and experience on the Internet.

### **BAPPS**

<http://www.bapps.org>

The Bridge for Adolescent Pregnancy, Parenting and Sexuality (BAPPS) is open to anyone interested in a research-based response to adolescent pregnancy, parenting, and sexuality concerns. Through a listserve, website, and conference participation, BAPPS disseminates research, resources, curriculum development, and evaluation tools in order to assist individual, community, and state leaders in the areas of adolescent pregnancy, parenting, and sexuality (APPS). In addition, through collaboration with key federal, state, and community stakeholders, cross-country partnerships have led to the development of innovative educational and research projects on current APPS issues.

### **Technology Resources**

<http://www.contentbank.org>

This new site is designed to spur the development of needed online content for low-income communities. It features recommended Web sites for health, education, jobs, and housing; message boards; information and tools to develop local content; and Web-based tools that will read the text aloud or translate it into Spanish to ensure the content is accessible to many communities.



### **Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance**

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5104a1.htm>

In the U.S., 70.6% of all deaths among youth/young adults aged 10-24 result from only four causes: motor-vehicle crashes (31.4%), other unintentional injuries (12%), homicide (15.3%), and suicide (11.9%). Substantial morbidity and social problems also result from the approximately 870,000 pregnancies that occur each year among women aged 15-19 and from the estimated 3 million cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) that occur each year among persons aged 10-19. To monitor priority health-risk behaviors in each of these categories among youth and young adults, CDC developed the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) which summarizes results from the 2001 national school-based survey and trends during 1991-2001 in selected risk behaviors.

Source: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly, CDC, June 28, 2002/51(SS04); 1-64

### **Free Books for Youth Organizations**

<http://bookbank.firstbook.org/nbb/get/nbbhome.asp>

Grassroots youth organizations can obtain free books for their youth programs from the First Book National Book Bank. The First Book National Book Bank is the first centralized system enabling publishers to donate large quantities of books to the non-profit sector for distribution to children from low-income families participating in community-based programs nationwide. Founded to utilize the large volume of children's books publishers generously offer First Book each year, the First Book National Book Bank delivers books through First Book's established supply pipeline to children from low-income families across the country. The First Book National Book Bank serves as a distribution system to national and local non-profit organizations reaching the broadest spectrum of children in need.



### **Wonderwise Women in Science Learning Series**

<http://www.wonderwise.unl.edu/>

Wonderwise introduces you to women who have made science their career. The nine Wonderwise kits provide a comprehensive instructional package that includes a video, activity book, and CD-Rom. With these kits, educators and youth explore the world of scientists and discover together the fun of learning science! Kit Cost: \$39.95



### **Learning Beyond School: Developing the Field of Afterschool Education**

[www.paerweb.org](http://www.paerweb.org)

Afterschool programs are increasingly being called on to support the academic performance of youth while not replicating the school experience. Researchers at the Harvard Program in Afterschool Education and Research recently released a report called "Learning Beyond School" that draws on in-depth interviews with practitioners, researchers, and policymakers across the country to determine how programs are and should be approaching this challenge. The report focuses on three central topics: (1) bridging the gap between the school and after school program, (2) homework practices, and (3) enrichment curricula or project-based learning. Each of these topics is discussed, along with examples of challenges and promising models from the field, and recommendations are included for improving policy and practice. To download the report, go to [www.paerweb.org](http://www.paerweb.org) under Publications.

## POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

### Philanthropy News Digest

<http://fdncenter.org/pnd/rfp/index.jhtml>

The Foundation Center posts requests for proposals regularly on their Philanthropy News Digest site. Categories include: arts and culture, children and youth, education, journalism and media, and many others. Check it often for updates on new funding opportunities.



### Start Something

<http://startsomething.target.com/info/about.asp>

*Start Something* is an innovative program for youth ages 8-17. Sponsored by Target and the Tiger Woods Foundation, Start Something helps children and young adults to identify and achieve their goals and to become active leaders in their communities. Youth can participate as part of a group or individually through the Internet. Upon completion of the program, youth can apply for a Start Something scholarship of between \$100 and \$5000, to be used to help them achieve their goal. Scholarships can be used for a variety of purposes, such as music lessons, special educational classes, travel, or many other possibilities.



Please check our **NEW** link for strengths-based programs on the FYRP Website:

<http://resiliency.cas.psu.edu/>

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This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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