



Dear Educators:

Summer is gone and we are moving into fall with all its Glory. Fall is a magical time of year; the leaves change colors and cover our world with breathtaking scenes. I hope you all have a joyful fall and take time to enjoy the scenery about you. This is the third issue of the newsletter's fourth volume.

I want to take this opportunity to introduce you to a new resource that was published in July. I have just developed a series of four parent bulletins entitled, *Ready, Set Go... Getting children ready for school*. These bulletins are tools for parents of children between the ages of three and six. They are designed to assist parents in making the most of time with their children in terms of preparing them for school. Each bulletin addresses a specific area (i.e., math, science, art, and reading) and contains tips on how parents can have fun with their child while enhancing their child's skills. The bulletins can be found at my website:

<http://resiliency.cas.psu.edu/Ready%20Set%20go/School%20Readiness.htm>

Please let me know how you use these materials.

Sincerely,

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



### ***What's Inside:***

Family Activity  
Research Briefs  
Web Resources  
Possible Funding Sources

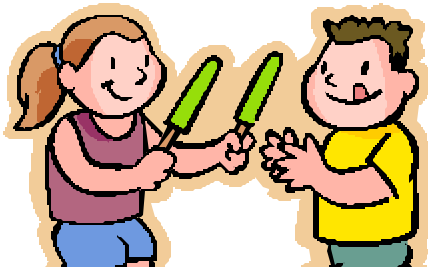
## ***FAMILY ACTIVITY***

Before too long, the weather will be cold and it will be dark by 5:00 p.m. So spend time with your family outside by playing silly games that are fun for kids of all ages. For example you can play *Red Light/Green Light*. One of my favorite games is *Lions Club*. Here is how you play: You need 4 players ages 5 and up. Select a person to be the Lion. Have the lion sit with his back to the other players at least ten feet away. Put a stuffed animal behind the lion and have the lion pretend it is his cub. Have the other players take turns sneaking up behind the Lion and trying to steal the cub. If the lion hears the person sneaking up it can roar and then turn around. If the lion catches a player the player then takes the lion's place and the lion goes back to the other players. If there is no player close when the lion roars, the player lion remains the lion and the game starts again. Found in:  
[http://www.gameskidsplay.net/games/sensing\\_games/index.htm](http://www.gameskidsplay.net/games/sensing_games/index.htm)

## RESEARCH BRIEFS

### *How Children Are Doing: The Mismatch between Public Perception and Statistical Reality*

Child Trends and the Annie E. Casey Foundation recently conducted a series of polls to get a better understanding of what American adults know about how children in the U.S. are faring. The findings show that the public is generally misinformed about the well-being of children in the United States. Specifically, the public regularly overestimates social and economic problems among American children, and is generally unaware of progress made during the last decade on several key indicators of well-being.



The poll asked participants about their perceptions of indicators and trends in child well-being, including the number of children receiving welfare, the percent of children without health insurance, the percent of children in poverty, teen crime rates, teen birth rates, and the percent of children living in single-parent homes. The poll of 1,000 adults has a margin of error of three percentage points. For example, approximately two-thirds of the public (66%) believe the percentage of teens who commit violent crimes has increased, yet violent crime by teens is at its lowest levels in more than 25 years. Moreover, approximately half of adults (49%) believe about 30% of children live in poverty when in reality it is 16%. The findings suggest that the good news about children is not entering into the public's and policymakers' consciousness. Thus, without this awareness about the good news, the public and policymakers may become less likely to invest in programs that are actually working. Indeed, as the author of report points out, federal programs have helped reduce the number of children who lack health insurance to 12%. But 93% of those polled believe 20% to 30% of children lack health insurance.

Basically, the public is unaware of progress made by parents, communities and government according to child trends president Kristine Moore. Scholars and practitioners, alike, need to try gain media attention

for the good news about children and families as well as the bad news.

Found at: Guzman, L., Lippman, L., Moore, K., & O-Hare, W. (2003). *How Kids Are Doing: The Mismatch Between Public Perception and Statistical Reality*. Washington, DC: Child Trends. Retrieved on July 3, 2003 at <http://www.childtrends.org/PDF/PublicPerceptionsRB.pdf>

### *Don't Fill Children's Plates*

Dr Fisher from Houston's Baylor College of Medicine and two PSU professors, Drs. Rolls and Birch, conducted a six-month nutrition study about proportion size and intake of food by children. In the study, two series of lunches were served to 30 preschool children, aged three to five, in central Pennsylvania in 2000. One series offered an age-appropriate portion of a macaroni-and-cheese entree; the other, a portion twice as large. The researchers found that, overall, the children ate about 25% more of the entree when they were served the larger portion, and their overall calorie intake at lunch was 15% higher. Thus, preschool children generally took bigger bites and consumed more food when served super-sized portions of their normal entrees, but when these same children were offered smaller portions, they ate less than when served the super-sized portions.



Fisher and her colleagues noted that the capacity of large portion sizes to encourage overeating among young children is alarming, given the growing problem of obesity in children. The findings imply that minimizing children's exposure to excessive portions may reduce overeating.

Fisher, J., Rolls, B., & Birch, L. (2003). Children's bite size and intake of an entree are greater with large portions than with age-appropriate or self-selected portions. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 77, 1164.

## Why Kids Misbehave

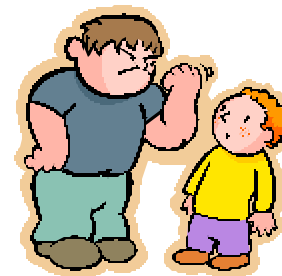
In her review of literature, DeBord (1996) found that according to some child development experts, children usually misbehave for one of four reasons. Here are the motives for misbehaving--and ideas on how you and your child can work through the challenge.

- **Attention** - When children believe they "belong" only when they are noticed. They feel important when they are commanding total attention. Parents can respond by giving positive attention at other times, ignoring inappropriate behavior, setting up routines, encouraging, redirecting, or setting up special times.



- **Power** - When children believe they belong only when they are in control or are proving that no one can "boss them around." Parents can respond with kind, but firm, respect, giving limited choices, setting reasonable limits, encouraging, and redirecting the child to a more acceptable activity. When children test their limits and use a public display to assert themselves, parents can continue to stick to the basic rules letting them know their behavior is unacceptable. Leave the situation if possible (store or home in which you are a guest). Talk when things are calmer at a later time.

- **Revenge** - When children believe they belong only by hurting others, since they feel hurt themselves. Sometimes the reason for misbehavior is not clear. When there is a new pattern of acting out, children and parents should talk about how they are feeling. Parents can respond by avoiding harsh punishment and criticism, building trust, listening, reflecting feelings, practicing sharing of feelings, encouraging strengths and acting with care.



- **Inadequacy** - When children believe they belong only when they convince others not to expect anything of them since they are helpless or unable. Parents can respond by encouraging their children to try things, focusing on children's strengths, not criticizing or giving in to pity, offering opportunities for success and teaching skills in small steps.

Found in: DeBord, K. (1996). Appropriate limits for young children: A guide for discipline, Part 1.

Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. Retrieved on July 2, 2003 at:

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/human/pubs/limits1.html#anchor310087>

## WEB RESOURCES

### RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONALS

#### SAMHSA Children's Program Kit

<http://www.samhsa.gov/news/addictedparents.html>

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Children's Program Kit has curriculum materials, stories and videos to teach the children of clients in substance abuse treatment the skills they need to cope with the effects of their parents' addiction. The kit also contains information to help parents understand the needs of their children, and training materials for treatment staff who plan to offer support groups for children.

#### Hearts N' Parks Community Mobilization Guide

[http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/heart/obesity/hrt\\_n\\_pk/index.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/heart/obesity/hrt_n_pk/index.htm)

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and the National Recreation and Park Association jointly designed this community mobilization guide to help local community, park, and recreation agencies promote heart-healthy lifestyles that incorporate increased physical activity and healthy eating among children and adults. The guide includes activities that can be incorporated into a variety of programs - nutrition and fitness activities, stress reduction or family life programs. Activities can be adapted for children, youth, adults and seniors.

### **Keeping Kids Healthy**

<http://www.healthinschools.org/sh/obesity.asp>

Keeping Kids Healthy: Obesity, Nutrition & Physical Exercise website provides links to basic information on the obesity problem, prevention strategies, and key government documents. Future additions to this section will present summaries of model programs and evaluated interventions.

### **Out-of-School Time Evaluation Database**

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html>

Harvard Family Research Project's Out-of-School Time evaluation database provides accessible information about evaluation work of both large and small out-of-school time programs and initiatives. Each profile contains an overview of the out-of-school time program or initiative that was evaluated, as well as detailed information about each evaluation report produced about that program. Electronic links to actual evaluation reports, where available, are also provided, as are contacts for program directors and evaluators.

### **Pediatric Oral Health Tips in Spanish**

Email [brushup@cdc.gov](mailto:brushup@cdc.gov)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has produced a guide for parents in caring for their children's teeth. The guide is in Spanish, entitled "Refresque Sus Conocimientos sobre Dientes Sanos: Pasos Sencillos para Sonrisas Infantiles" (Refresh your Knowledge of Healthy Teeth: Simple Steps for Kids' Smiles). Some of the tips in the guide include: Start cleaning teeth early; Supervise brushing; and Talk to your child's doctor or dentist

## **RESOURCES FOR PARENTS**

### **How-to Information**

<http://www.beehive.org>

This website provides how-to information to low-income populations across America, focusing on topics aimed at helping the more than 30 million American low-income residents raise their standard of living. Topics include money management, health care issues, jobs, education and family. Under money, visitors can learn to open a checking account, write a check, use an ATM and create a budget. Under health, there is information about free health insurance, getting immunizations for your children and implementing better health care practices. The site is written at a seventh grade literacy level and includes content in English, Spanish, Russian, Haitian, Creole and Urdu.



### **How Parents Can Help Kids Succeed in School**

<http://www.aft.org/lessons/four/brochure2.html>

"Helping Your Child Succeed: How Parents Can Work with Schools and Communities to Help their Children Meet High Standards," a booklet from the American Federation of Teachers, has advice for parents on how to establish good relationships with the school community, how to make the most of disappointing grades, and how to guide children's out-of-school activities.

## **RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH**

### **Kid Websites about Everything**

<http://sln.fi.edu/tfi/hotlists/kids.html>

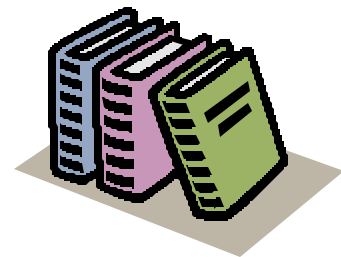
This page contains links to web pages produced by kids on a wide variety of topics, including science, social studies, art, mathematics, language arts, and school newspapers. Within these headings are pages on everything from lions to the war of 1812 to Harriet Tubman to story problems.



### **Children's Books**

[www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index.html)

This website contains internet resources on children's books. Included are book reviews, recommended reading lists, book awards, resources for teachers and parents, and discussion boards on children's literature. The site also contains links to other children's book sites on the web.



### **Aspiring Young Writers Resource**

<http://www.write4kids.com/index.html>

This page has moved. The website contains advice for aspiring writers on writing children's books. Included are articles, resources, and tips.

# POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

## Captain Planet Foundation

<http://www.captainplanetfdn.org/aboutUs.html>

The Captain Planet Foundation supports hands-on environmental projects for children and youth ages 6 through 18. The Foundation is interested in funding innovative programs that empower children around the world to work to solve environmental problems in their communities. Nonprofit organizations and elementary and secondary school teachers are eligible to apply.



## Grantwriting Guideposts

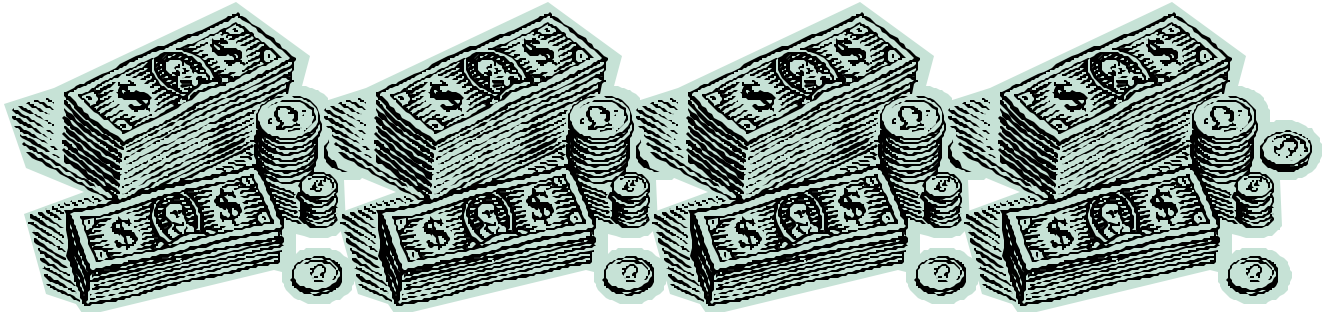
<http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html>

This guide is sponsored by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting which evaluates hundreds of proposals each year for a variety of funding. *Basic Elements of Grant Writing* is an easy guide to assist the novice grant writer with developing their first proposal. It offers guideposts to help you through each stage of the process.



Please check out policy briefs in family and youth resiliency 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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