

## Chapter III: PROGRAMS

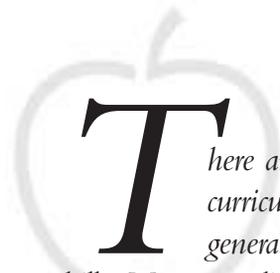
### Parenting Education Programs for Children and Teens

*Teaching . . . students how to be good parents may sound premature or even inappropriate. After all, children need large doses of parenting themselves. But the skills involved in good parenting—shaping values, negotiating conflict, communication, knowing right from wrong, responsibility, patience, and teamwork—make for successful friends, students, siblings, colleagues, and spouses. A caring human being does not equal a good parent. But learning and practicing these life skills helps to create effective, productive, nurturing, and accountable human beings who will have the tools for good parenting.*

**Janet Ruth Falon**

“Life Skills 101—Preparing Children for Parenting: A Curriculum Approach,”  
*Creative Classroom*, Children’s Television Workshop, January/February 1996





*There are many types of parenting education programs and curricula for children and teens. Elementary-level curricula generally emphasize the development of caring and empathy skills. Many use direct observations of babies and parent-infant interactions. Older students continue the study of child development, including physical, psychological, and emotional patterns. They also learn how to investigate and compare the opinions of different “parenting experts” in order to understand the diversity of effective parenting styles and techniques. Students of all ages learn nonviolent alternatives to physical punishment and how to solve problems without resorting to violence.*

Several parenting education programs have undergone outside evaluations that show their effectiveness. These evaluations confirm that young children display more appropriate responses to conflict and more empathic, nurturing behavior. Older students report that they are more likely to defer parenthood until they are mature enough to take on this challenging role.

This chapter includes detailed descriptions of parenting education programs for children and teens that are currently active in schools in the United States and Canada. Preceding the descriptions is a “Quick Reference for School-Based

Programs.” Also in this chapter is a supplement of summary evaluations of some of these school-based programs. This information has been provided by the individual programs; The Parenting Project has not evaluated these programs.

Ready-to-use activities and lessons can be found on The Parenting Project’s website section, “Parenting and Nurturing Activities and Lessons for Home, School, and Youth Programs” at <http://www.parentingproject.org/lessons.htm>. This includes lessons from eight programs, Family and Consumer Sciences, and New York State’s 2001 Academy for Teaching and Learning’s Parent Learning Experiences.

See also Appendix B, State Curriculum Standards, Guidelines, and Resources, including the New York State Parenting Education Resource Guide, written to help teachers implement the new State

*Why do we have so little regard for preparing students to be parents, workers, or family and community members? These skills are not innate and should be taught K–12—and not as an add-on or elective. Life is the final exam!*

**Marilyn Swierk**, CFCS, CFLE  
Chair, Elementary, Secondary, and Adult Education  
Section (2000–2002), American Association of  
Family and Consumer Sciences, and recipient of  
the 2001 American Association of Family and  
Consumer Sciences Leaders Award



parenting education high school graduation requirement, and Parenting and Paternity (PAPA) Program, a Texas curriculum for grades 5 to 12 offered through the Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General.

## Quick Reference for School-Based Programs

### **FACS** Family and Consumer Sciences

**Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:** Yes. Teachers are licensed by the state. Minimum Bachelor’s degree required.

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** Some materials

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes. Special materials are available.

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes

**Major Educational Focus:** Primarily grades 6 through 12, with some programming for elementary grades. Analyzes the roles and responsibilities of parenting and the physical and emotional factors related to becoming a parent. Evaluates parenting practices that maximize human growth and development and the external support systems that provide services for parents.



### **The Baby Think It Over® Program**

**Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:** Yes

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** Yes

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes

**Major Educational Focus:** Grades 6 through 12. Develops understanding of the commitment and responsibility of parenting. Uses a computerized infant simulator that is cared for by the teen.



### **Child Development, Parenting, and Parent Development**

**Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:** Yes

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** No

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** No

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes, in health educations or lifeskills.

**Major Educational Focus:** Grades 9 through 12. Emphasizes how parents and their roles change along with the developmental stages of their children and that children are entitled to be treated with dignity, respect, and understanding. Designed for use both as a full semester course and in flexible adaptations using component parts.



**DADS**  
MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE

**Dads make a Difference™**

**Teacher Training and Training Materials**

**Available:** Yes

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** No

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes, in Health or Family and Consumer Sciences

**Major Educational Focus:** Grades 7 through 12, through two programs. Younger teen program emphasizes the legal, financial, and emotional responsibilities of parents, particularly fathers. Older teens discuss relationships and do life-planning exercises to assess when they will be ready to be parents.



Educating Children  
for Parenting®

**Educating Children for Parenting®**

**Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:** Yes. Training is required.

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** No

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes

**Major Educational Focus:** Grades K through 8. Develops understanding of the responsibility to be caring individuals today and nurturing adults tomorrow. Students learn about the responsibilities of parenthood and about a parent's role in development, especially during the first three years of life. Curriculum uses monthly parent-infant classroom visits.





**Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care Curriculum**

**Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:** Yes

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** Yes

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes

**Major Educational Focus:** Grades K through 8. Develops caring skills.

Curriculum is focused on parent-infant visits to the classroom. Students plan for, implement, observe and evaluate the visits.



**Nurturing Parenting Programs®**

**Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:** Yes

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** Some materials

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes

**Major Educational Focus:**

- K through 12: Developing Nurturing Skills®.
- 7th and 10th grades: focus on nurturing self.
- 8th and 11th grades: focus on nurturing families
- 9th and 12th grades: focus on nurturing children.



**Parents Under Construction™**

**Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:**  
Yes

**Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** Yes

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes

**Major Educational Focus:** Pre-K through grade 12. Teaches child development, communication skills, nonviolent conflict resolution, and positive discipline techniques that will enable children to build healthy relationships now and strong families in the future.





## Roots of Empathy™

### **Teacher Training and Training Materials Available:**

Yes. Certification process is required

### **Curriculum Materials Available:** Yes

**Available in Spanish:** No, but the program is or will soon be available in French.

**Adaptable for Special Education:** Yes

**Evaluation:** Yes

**Curriculum Can be Integrated with Other Subjects:** Yes

**Major Educational Focus:** Grades K through 8. Builds parenting capacity in schoolchildren and raises levels of empathy. Curriculum focuses on the monthly visit to a classroom of an infant and his or her parent(s) with a certified Roots of Empathy™ instructor.

## Program Descriptions

### **FACS**

## Family and Consumer Sciences

Family and consumer sciences education is historically and currently the most widespread discipline to address parenting education through formalized programs of instruction. First emerging in the mid-1800s, the focus of the discipline was to apply scientific principles to the work of the home, thereby improving the economic and social quality, influence, and effectiveness of households.

Ellen Swallow Richards, the first female graduate and professor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is credited with spearheading this effort, creating the concept of “ecology” and formalizing the profession of home economics. Richards became the founder and first president of the American Home Economics Association in 1909. She was deeply concerned with issues of consumer education, nutrition, child protection, industrial safety, public health, career education, women’s rights, and the purity of air, food, and water.

Originally identified as “domestic science,” then “home economics,” the field was recently renamed “family and consumer sciences” in the United States. Throughout these name changes, family and individual human development has remained the fundamental concern, both nationally and internationally.

Over time, the emphasis has shifted from the technical aspects of running a household to the communicative aspects of nurturing and strengthening family



systems and the individuals within them, thereby improving conditions in the home, workplace, community, and broader society. Today's vision is that "Family and Consumer Sciences Education empowers individuals and families across the lifespan to manage the challenges of living and working in a diverse global society. Our unique focus is on families, work and their interrelationships."<sup>12</sup>

Family-oriented programming includes balancing family, work, and community; caring for self and others; and managing resources. This coursework specifically related to parenting education and related areas includes child development, child care, family and interpersonal relationships, and life planning.

The National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education serve as guidelines for developing programs by identifying key knowledge and skills associated with the discipline. Several standards specifically address the family and parenting. One such comprehensive standard is "Parenting" (15.0):

Evaluate the impact of parenting roles and responsibilities on strengthening the well-being of individuals and families.

This comprehensive standard is further defined through the following content standards:

- Analyze roles and responsibilities of parenting.
- Evaluate parenting practices that maximize human growth and development.
- Evaluate external support systems that provide services for parents.
- Analyze physical and emotional factors related to beginning the parenting process.

The content standards are then described at a greater level of detail through program competencies, or performance indicators, providing quantifiable objectives for instruction and assessment. To further assist educators in developing curriculum, academic proficiencies associated with instruction in this content area have also been identified. In addition, in the

*Despite public rhetoric promoting a "prevention model" of wellness, American society continues to operate primarily in a "crisis intervention mode." Public education could serve to improve the quality of life for individuals, family and community members by helping students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to function successfully in their current and future adult roles.*

**Barbara A. Woods**

Consultant, Family and Consumer Sciences,  
Vermont Department of Education



interest of fostering critical thinking, relevant process questions have been developed and included for each of the content standards.

The National Standards serve as a guide or starting point rather than as a mandate for developing state and local curricula. Parenting education is primarily directed toward high school students, though many middle school and some elementary programs exist.

Some states and local districts require family and consumer sciences courses for graduation. Many states provide requirements or guidelines to school districts for courses in the field. Most state education agencies employ one or more family and consumer sciences program specialists who provide assistance with developing instruction and assessment.

Family and consumer sciences teachers are licensed through their state education agencies. Most often, this involves successful completion of a state-approved college or university degree program in family and consumer sciences education, which is available at nearly sixty U.S. locations. These programs include extensive instruction in theories of human development and family systems, including research-based instruction in parenting.

Family and consumer sciences faculty in middle schools and high schools also sponsor co-curricular or extracurricular programming through Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), formerly Future Homemakers of America. (See p. 96 for more information on FCCLA.)

See Appendix B for a list of family and consumer sciences associations for professionals, State and U.S. Territories administration contacts, the reference for the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education, and individual state curriculum guides and resources.



## **The Baby Think It Over® Program**

The Baby Think It Over® Program is designed to help teenagers understand the full-time commitment and responsibility of parenting. The program is built around an infant simulator: a computerized Baby programmed to require care day and night. It was designed as a more realistic substitute for the “egg babies” and “flour sack babies” that teachers sometimes use.

Baby, like a real infant, deprives the teenagers of sleep, disrupts their social lives, and attracts disapproving looks in public. Baby is programmed to track the care it receives, reporting any “neglect” or “abuse” when returned to the instructor. RealCare® Baby, the newest infant simulator, requires “feeding,” burping, diaper changing, and rocking. Its care schedules are based on those of



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real infants. The electronics provide a very detailed report of care, including rough handling and Shaken Baby Syndrome. Baby also provides positive feedback to the caregiver by cooing when it has been properly cared for.

The program materials that accompany RealCare® Baby include a parenting education curriculum that covers such topics as infant health, safety, and lifestyle changes that new parents must understand. In addition, the company, BTIO Educational Products, Inc., offers a Drug-Affected Demonstrator that depicts an infant exposed to drugs in the womb, and a Fetal Alcohol

Syndrome (FAS) Manikin that demonstrates the physical characteristics of an infant prenatally exposed to alcohol. The company has also expanded its program offerings to include The Gamble™ Learning Module, which includes curriculum and activities. This learning module deals with the effects of using alcohol or drugs while pregnant. More than a million teens have experienced the Baby Think It Over® Program.

Media articles about the Baby Think It Over® Program can be found on the BTIO website listed with the contact information.

**Program History**

BTIO President and CEO, Mary Jurmain, and her husband, Rick, were watching a TV show about teen pregnancy. It depicted teens in school carrying around sacks of flour to simulate carrying babies. Rick remarked that those were poor substitutes for babies because they didn't cry or wake the "parents" up in the middle of the night. Mary responded, "Well, you're an engineer. Why don't you make something better?" He did. Development of the first Baby began in 1993, and the first product was sold in 1994.

There was a trickle of orders at first, but interest grew steadily. Currently,



*“Two weeks ago I was positive that I wanted to have a baby. This week was my week to take home Baby. My mind is completely changed now. I want to wait a really long time to have a baby.”*

**Misty**  
High School Student, South Carolina

BTIO has thousands of customers. The majority are schools, but social service agencies, youth groups, and hospitals also use the program.

### **Demographics**

The users are extremely diverse. They represent a cross-section of many ethnic groups and socioeconomic levels. The Babies are created to represent a variety of racial and ethnic identities.

### **Teaching Eligibility**

Classroom teachers are the primary users, and most program users are professionals who work with teens in some capacity.

### **Training and Training Materials**

Workshops are available for a modest fee plus travel expenses. Some BTIO users work with staff to create their own training program for their state or organization. The new trainers are then able to instruct additional people in their own organizations.

Teacher-training manuals included with the complete training packages can also be purchased separately for \$4 to \$99.

### **Curriculum**

There are three critical parts of the program:

***Baby and Wristbands:*** The teen “parent” wears a tamper-proof wristband that has an ID (for RealCare Baby) or a care key (for Realistic Head Support and Standard Baby) attached to it. This assures the instructor that only approved people provide care. The electronics in Baby provide detailed information about the care Baby receives.

***Equipment:*** A diaper bag and car seat can be included in the program. The equipment adds to the realism of the simulation. A diaper bag is recommended at all times. A car seat teaches teens how to protect an infant in the car.

***Activities and Assignments:*** Activities may be included before, during, and after the parenting simulation. Program materials include reproducible worksheets and forms designed in consultation with instructors. The student video explains how to care for Baby. During



the parenting simulation, students work with many record-keeping materials, including diaries and a worksheet on which to research and record the cost of an infant's first year. Pre- and post-simulation questionnaires help instructors evaluate the impact of the program on teens' attitudes. Suggestions for other activities and discussion topics are included in the program materials. Baby is accompanied by a package of instructional materials. These include operating instructions, other instructor materials, and student worksheets and activities.

### **Curriculum Implementation**

The program can be used as a stand-alone unit but is more commonly used as part of a broader curriculum. BTIO refers to it as a "modular curriculum" to indicate that it is typically used this way.

### **Program Cost**

A RealCare® Baby Starter Package (single Baby, all program materials and a control unit) costs \$449. Each additional individual Baby without program materials or control unit may be added for \$349. Discounted package sizes are available that include 2, 4, 10, 20, or 30 Babies, with all program materials, diapers, bottles, breastfeeding devices, IDs, wristbands, batteries, birth certificates, and a control unit for programming and managing data for up to 99 Babies at one time. The Classroom Package for RealCare® Baby includes 20 Babies and accessories and costs \$6,742.

### **ESL Availability**

All program materials for RealCare® Baby, including videotapes, are available in Spanish. The control unit used with RealCare® Baby as well as an optional infrared printer are both bilingual. Program materials for the Drug-Affected Demonstrator and the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Manikin are also available in Spanish.

### **Special Education**

The program has been used to show developmentally disabled adults the challenges of parenting. However, no special materials are available from BTIO. Instructors who use the program have modified the materials to meet their clients' needs.

### **Parent Involvement**

RealCare® Baby's schedules are based on detailed diaries of real infants, kept by

parents. All activities (diapering, feeding, burping, and rocking) are based on the information provided by these parents. The program materials provide suggestions for ways to involve the parents of students in the simulation experience and to encourage more communication between a student and his or her parents. Having Baby in the home makes it easier to discuss topics like parenting and family values. Parents of students who have gone through the program frequently comment on how the experience opened communication with their teens.

### **Program Evaluation**

See p. 71 for an evaluation summary for the Baby Think It Over® program.



### **Child Development, Parenting, and Parent Development**

Child Development, Parenting, and Parent Development is a comprehensive high school curriculum designed for use in the New York City public schools both as a full-semester course and in flexible adaptations using its component parts. It can be adapted for use with non-pregnant, non-parenting teens as well as with pregnant and parenting teens. The program emphasizes how parents and their roles change along with the developmental stages of their children. It also stresses the need for teachers to be positive models of the philosophy of the curriculum, which is that children are entitled to be treated with dignity, respect, and understanding.

### **Program History**

When Lou Howort was teaching health education in a vocational high school, he realized that many students believed that harsh corporal punishment was the way to teach young children how to behave. He began to incorporate some parenting education into his health education program. He then collaborated with Dr. Margaret Kind, a psychiatrist, to write a parenting curriculum. In 1984 Howort taught his first full-semester parenting course at New York City's High School for the Humanities. In 1989 Howort and Dr. Kind received a grant from the City of New York's comptroller,

#### **Contact**

##### **Lou Howort**

449 Rugby Road

Brooklyn, NY 11226

Phone: 718-693-6194

Email: LouH2o@aol.com (the o in H2o is the letter, not a zero)



Harrison Goldin, which enabled them to complete the writing of the parenting education curriculum for publication. The grant also enabled Howort, Dr. Kind, and Board of Education Administrator Mel Warren to train forty teachers and conduct school visitations. Howort was given partial release time from teaching to do this. Initially, thirty-two schools used the program. Howort continued to teach the curriculum as a full-semester course until he retired from teaching in 2001.

### **Demographics**

Students in the High School for the Humanities are racially and culturally mixed. The largest group is Asian, followed by Latino, African American, and Caucasian. Students originate from eighty countries, and most are from very low income families.

### **Teaching Eligibility**

The curriculum is intended for professional teachers. However, others could be trained to use the curriculum in other settings.

### **Training and Training Materials**

Training materials are not available. Howort will provide training at a cost to be determined.

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum includes lesson plans, activities, and readings for thirty-three topics that cover child development, childrearing skills, motivations for having children, the stresses of parenthood, and applications to students' current family life. The curriculum relies heavily on the work of Jean Piaget, the Swiss child psychologist.

The Curriculum is available for \$8 from  
New York City Board of Education  
Office of Publications  
131 Livingston Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

### **Curriculum Implementation**

Howort taught the curriculum as a one-semester high school course. Selected portions could be used as a unit of a health education or lifeskills

*Explaining to my class in an all-boys vocational high school how the nervous system is slow in developing, I asked them what they would do if a three-year-old accidentally knocked over a glass of milk. The most common response was, "I'd beat the kid up. How else are you going to teach him?" I realized then that these perfectly decent kids might someday abuse their children out of ignorance. That's when I started thinking about teaching a parenting class.*

**Lou Howort**

Teacher and Co-Author, *Child Development, Parenting, and Parent Development*



curriculum. Individual lessons such as the history of childrearing practices can be used in social studies classes. Other elements of the curriculum could also be used in a psychology class.

### **Program Cost**

After initial start-up, \$10 per child per year. This cost covers textbooks, videos, visual aids, and other materials.

### **ESL Availability**

Not available.

### **Special Education**

The curriculum can be adapted for any type of student.

### **Parent Involvement**

While parent involvement has not been integral to the curriculum, it could be integrated.

### **Program Evaluation**

While the curriculum was field-tested, no evaluations have been conducted.



**DADS**  
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DIFFERENCE

### **Dads Make a Difference™**

Dads Make a Difference™ is a paternity education project developed by the University of Minnesota Extension Service and Minnesota Department of Human Services–Child Support Enforcement. Its mission is “To promote the positive involvement of fathers and educate youth about responsible parenting.” The program offers two curricula, Dads Make a Difference™ for middle schools and The R Factor: Building Resiliency in Young Adults for older teens.

### **Program History**

Four agencies in Ramsey County, Minnesota, joined forces to accomplish a mutual goal: reducing the number of children without fathers in their lives. Their aim was to provide students with information about the importance of fathers before the students became parents themselves. The four agencies were the Family Tree Clinic, the University of Minnesota Extension Service–Ramsey County, the Children’s Defense Fund–Minnesota, and the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office–Child Support and Collections. They received a small county grant that leveraged federal child support money to develop a paternity education curriculum.



**Contact**

Jan Hayne

**Dads Make a Difference™ Project**

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Service

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Gary Greenfield, hired as the first coordinator in July 1993, was charged with developing a curriculum. He hired middle school teacher Julie Endersbe to produce the Dads Make a Difference™ curriculum. In April 1994 a group of high school students was trained to teach the curriculum to 7th and 8th graders in two Ramsey County school district pilot projects. After revisions, the

first training was held for teens from other schools later that year. In January 1995 a copy was sent to every middle school in Minnesota by the attorney general. In 1995 the program opened its training to any school in Minnesota. Since then, Dads Make a Difference™ has trained 1,863 teens from 144 schools or community agencies, who have taught more than 28,000 middle school students. During the 2000–2001 school year, approximately fifty-five schools used trained teens to teach the program. Other schools that started with teen teachers now use the materials without the “youth-teaching-youth” model.

Since 1997 Dads Make a Difference™ has conducted training for teens in Massachusetts, Maryland, and California. Teens from Iowa, North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Oklahoma have attended training in Minnesota. An estimated fifteen schools or agencies in those states are actively using the program. The basic curriculum is Minnesota-specific in terms of child support guidelines. For an extra cost, Dads Make a Difference™ has produced versions specific to Oklahoma, Maryland, California, and Massachusetts.

The R Factor high school curriculum was first implemented in 1998. Since August 1998, some 60 adults, primarily teachers, have been trained, and about 1,500 students have been taught.

**Demographics**

In the 2000–2001 school year, 44 percent of the schools using teens to teach the middle school curriculum were from rural or small towns in greater Minnesota; 29 percent from suburban Minneapolis or Saint Paul; 27 percent from urban schools or agencies within the Twin Cities. Of the total number of youth involved, including both teen teachers and middle school students, 21 percent



*What is the most important thing you've learned from being involved in this project?*

#### *Teen Males*

- *Don't have sex too early and don't be a dad who leaves.*
- *How not having a father or mother could affect a child. There are many consequences to having sex at an early age.*
- *Dads are important and if you're going to be a dad, make sure you're prepared.*

#### *Teen Females*

- *To wait and that premarital sex is a big risk.*
- *To be very careful about who I choose to be the father of my children.*

**Minnesota middle and high school students after several Dads Make a Difference™ trainings**

are from greater Minnesota, 61 percent from suburban Twin Cities, 19 percent from urban areas. From 1994 through 2001, of all teen teachers trained, 71 percent were Caucasian, 13 percent African American, 5 percent Asian, 3 percent Latino, 2 percent Native American, 2 percent mixed race, 4 percent unknown. Data for the students who have been taught are unavailable.

### **Teaching Eligibility**

Some classroom teachers teach the Dads Make a Difference™ program without using trained teens. The program, however, supports training older teens in 10th through 12th grades to teach 6th through 9th graders. The teen teachers work in male-female pairs.

The R Factor high school curriculum is taught by adults, most often teachers.

### **Training and Training Materials**

The program provides a two-day training in the Dads Make a Difference™ curriculum at least once a year for teens and at least one adult

from their school or agency. The manual used in training teens includes the activities from the curriculum's lessons plus additional activities. Usually, four to six groups of twenty to twenty-four teens are trained at the same time. Each training group is led by a team of one adult male, one adult female, one teen male, and one teen female who have taught the curriculum to middle school students, plus one child support worker to answer questions. The cost is \$50 for each Minnesota participant and \$85 for out-of-state attendees. Each attending teen and adult receives a copy of the curriculum.

Recently, Dads Make a Difference™ began offering condensed one-day trainings in greater Minnesota for teens for whom a two-day training is a barrier. The training is often funded with local dollars. The average cost of bringing a team of four to another state has been approximately \$8,000. A one-day training in another state is less expensive.

One-day training for adults in The R Factor curriculum is also available. The current price, including the curriculum, is \$175. The curriculum is also for sale without training at \$99.



## Curriculum

There are two separate curricula: 1. Dads Make a Difference™: a middle school curriculum designed to be taught by older trained teens, male and female, to middle school students, discussing the legal, financial, and emotional responsibilities of parenting, particularly fathers. 2. The R Factor: a program designed for older teens that uses research, case studies, and simulations to help students discuss relationships and plan their lives so that they can assess when they are ready to become parents.

Additional information on the curricula is available from the program. The highly interactive Dads Make a Difference™ middle school curriculum includes four complete lessons, supplemental activities, and definitions. It also includes masters for all worksheets, handouts, activity “props” and overheads, an eighteen-minute video, and family homework assignments for students to work on with their parents.

*Lesson 1: Risky Business:* Students learn about risk and protective factors; examples of positive and negative risks; and about the importance of fathers. They discuss and decide the definition of risk in small groups and watch the eighteen-minute video. Each lesson ends with the students writing in their own journals.

*Lesson 2: Being a Responsible Father:* Students learn what it means to be a responsible father; how to establish paternity; how paternity benefits the father, mother, and child; and how a parent pays child support. They match definitions for “biological father,” “legal father,” and “Dad.” They write their own descriptions for a “responsible father” and build the definition. Through overheads, students learn about paternity establishment and how child support is determined and enforced. Students role-play a twenty-two-year-old unmarried, responsible father and the various people in his life to whom he owes money, such as a landlord or insurance agent. Students learn that after the father pays child support each month, his \$9-an-hour job doesn’t go far, and it would be better to wait until he is emotionally and financially ready before having a child.

*Lesson 3: Fathers and Their Families:* Students learn how families are diverse; the roles fathers and mothers play in families; how the media portray fathers; and the importance of co-parenting. Student volunteers match definitions with seven “family types” (such as “step-blended family”) and list TV programs or movies as examples for each family



type. Through the “take a step forward” activity, students “join” one of six different families with various risk and protective factors to discover how risk factors, particularly not having an involved, legal father, can make it harder for children to take steps forward in life.

*Lesson 4: Decisions Are for the Making:* Students learn how risks can alter their future; how they are responsible for their choices; and how to visualize a positive future. They complete on paper their “lifeline,” detailing key events in their past and their future plans, including when they want to become parents. Students then pick one of sixteen “take-a-chance” cards that describe either a positive or negative risk they “took” and determine if that “risk” altered their lifeline. Students write a final journal activity, which completes the sentence “A good parent is . . .”

### **Curriculum Implementation**

Both curricula fit within health or family and consumer sciences courses in which sexuality or parenting might be covered. Many schools use the “peer helper” role to satisfy a “service learning” requirement for older teens.

### **Program Cost**

The curriculum is available for \$99 without training. Those attending a middle school curriculum training for teens receive the curriculum as part of the registration fee.

### **ESL Availability**

Not available.

### **Special Education**

According to its equal opportunity statement, the University of Minnesota is required to provide the program in alternative formats upon request. An alternative format has never been requested.

### **Parent Involvement**

The middle school curriculum includes family homework assignments that can be sent home to foster discussion between students and parents. At the statewide level, there is no parent involvement.

### **Program Evaluation**

See p. 74 for an evaluation summary for Dads Make a Difference™.





**Educating Children  
for Parenting®**

## **Educating Children for Parenting® (ECP)**

Educating Children for Parenting® (ECP), founded in 1978, is a national nonprofit organization. It trains educators and personnel in youth-serving programs to implement a research-based, field-tested, standards-driven parenting education curriculum. ECP's mission is to use the examination of the parent-child relationship to engage youth in a process that leads them to an understanding of their responsibility to be caring individuals today and nurturing adults tomorrow.

Students learn about a parent's responsibilities in nurturing a child's emotional, social, psychological, physical, and intellectual development. Each of ECP's seven curriculum units features benchmarks and assessments and activities to integrate parenting education across all academic subjects.

ECP has reached more than 100,000 students from all demographic settings throughout the United States. The curriculum meets Goals 2000 National Education Standards, a set of skills standards and certifications that was established by Congress in 1994 "to improve learning and teaching by providing a national framework for education reform." ECP collaborates with school districts to meet their local teaching and learning goals. Parents, teachers, administrators, and other school staff members participate in an initial planning process. National ECP training staff provides staff development, ongoing support, and regional training conferences and seminars. Please contact ECP to request curriculum samples or to arrange for training. A newly produced video, *Building for the Future*, which gives a complete overview of the ECP program, is available for \$25.

Media articles about Educating Children for Parenting® can be found on the program website listed in contact information.

### **Program History**

Out of concern for the alarming incidence of child abuse across all demographic groups, in 1978 Sara Park Scattergood and Julie Currie, her colleague at Philadelphia's Germantown Friends School, worked with an interdisciplinary

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*In this program, first graders have an opportunity to diaper, to feed, and to observe developmental progress in small babies. Since most children are not in large families today, this gives them an opportunity to see the baby as a person and to experience a role in handling and nurturing babies.*

**Dr. T. Berry Brazelton**  
and **Dr. Stanley I. Greenspan**  
*The Irreducible Needs of Children*  
(Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books, 2000)

team of professionals to create a curriculum for teaching parenting to children. The team was led by Dr. Henri Parens, Director of the Early Child Development Program and Research Professor of Psychiatry at the Eastern Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute (EPPI) of the Medical College of Pennsylvania, and included six doctors and social workers from the Institute.

During the 1978–79 academic year, Scattergood, Currie, and other Germantown Friends School teachers piloted units of varying lengths throughout the elementary grades, as well as an eight-week unit for a 7th and 8th

grade classroom and a year's elective for the 11th and 12th grade students. Through these teaching experiences, Scattergood and Currie began to identify methods and materials most appropriate for use with students of different ages. Over the next several years, the ECP program was used primarily in public schools in Philadelphia as the formal curriculum was being written.

During the 1980s, ECP staff engaged in a careful process of curriculum and materials development before the publication of the agency's draft curriculum in 1990. Following focus group analysis and field testing in more than five hundred classrooms, the final ECP curriculum was published in 1996.

In 1997 ECP retained the services of Research for Action, an external evaluation firm, to engage in a process of assessment and revision of its teacher and staff training. By 2000 ECP had piloted its revised two-day comprehensive teacher-training model and established its first regional demonstration site in the school district of Philadelphia. During the 1999–2000 academic year, ECP served more than 9,500 students in 294 classrooms in 71 public, private, and charter schools in Pennsylvania, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Virginia, and Louisiana as well as 7 programs for adjudicated youth under the auspices of the Community Renewal Team of Greater Hartford (Connecticut).

## **Demographics**

The Educating Children for Parenting® program is not designed for specific populations. ECP has been successfully implemented in urban and suburban settings and in public and private schools, serving young people in all demographic settings. Because many schools and programs requesting ECP serve at risk populations, ECP reaches a large number of young people who can be classified as at risk.



## Teaching Eligibility

Lay people can be trained to use ECP's curriculum.

## Training and Training Materials

One critical element of the ECP program is the training and ongoing technical support that ECP provides teachers and personnel before the curriculum is used in any setting. The teacher training model recently went through a rigorous, research-based redesign. The two-day initial implementation training immerses teachers and program personnel in a comprehensive, interactive experience that provides participants with content and skills they can immediately apply in their classroom or program settings. This is supplemented by on-site technical support and coaching provided by regional staff, school coordinators, and ECP master teachers who also provide colleagues with mentoring and networking opportunities. ECP's training staff does not conduct on-site training for fewer than three teachers or program personnel.

The cost of training varies, depending on whether it is conducted on site or at ECP's Philadelphia headquarters; the location of the school/program site; additional ECP staff time and travel that might be involved in tailoring a given training to a site's specialized needs or goals; and how many teachers participate in a training. Trainers' travel costs and incidental expenses are not included in the training fee.

During the 1999–2000 school year, training fees for an individual teacher or program personnel, including ECP's copyrighted curriculum and activity kits, began at \$500. Discounts are offered for groups of more than three teachers.

All participants in initial implementation "trainings" are contractually required to participate in mid-year and year-end training workshops. Depending on enrollment and on the availability of stipends, fees for the required training workshops range from \$75 to \$150 per person, not including travel expenses. Teacher-training manuals are not available for purchase.

During 2000, ECP piloted a train the trainers model that will eventually provide participants with the skills and experience necessary to train teachers to implement the ECP curriculum.

*I wanted to bring my two-year-old son into the classroom, because many of the children in this school do not have fathers in their homes. I wanted to show them how being a father is part of being a man and that maturity includes nurturing roles. I want the boys to see that a man can bond with his child and keep involved with his child's life, and I want to show the girls that not all men leave their families.*

**Father**

William B. Mann Elementary School,  
School District of Philadelphia



## Curriculum

ECP has seven curriculum units, each of which features benchmarks and assessments and activities to integrate parenting education across all academic subjects. The curriculum is very adaptable. The units do not have to be presented sequentially, and teachers can choose to spend as much or as little time as desired on each. The curriculum may be presented in one year or over several years. The units are not intended for specific grade levels. Teachers adjust the complexity of the material covered to the needs of their students.

Available in each unit are pre- and post-tests and suggested portfolio assessment activities related to the objectives. Each instructor selects what is developmentally appropriate for his/her students. Curriculum materials are available for purchase only for teachers or personnel who have been trained to implement the curriculum.

*Unit 1: Introduction:* Students are introduced to the parent-infant visit and learn to recognize the importance of the role of the family as a primary caring unit, appreciate diversity of individuals and families, and identify and practice caring behaviors.

*Unit 2: Needs:* Students learn to identify the universal needs of people; understand and appreciate the vital role of parents; appreciate that responding to needs will differ among individuals, families, and cultures; and understand requirements of meeting the needs of each family member.

*Unit 3: Change:* Students learn to recognize and appreciate babies' predictable but variable pattern of development; identify developmental changes in the visiting baby; recognize that parenting includes planning for, responding to, and facilitating changes; and appreciate that responses to change will vary by temperament and culture.

*Unit 4: Communication:* Students learn the importance of communication skills and methods of communication, how babies communicate, parents' responsibility to interpret and respond to their child's communication, and the observation and practice of communication skills.

*Unit 5: Learning:* Students learn that throughout life, learning involves acquiring knowledge or skills by experience, instruction, or study; about methods of learning and the relationship between play and learning; how a baby learns about his or her world and the importance



of the parental role; and how acquiring information and skills empowers people to meet daily life challenges.

*Unit 6: Differences:* Students learn the uniqueness of every human being and parent-child relationship; how temperament affects behavior and the parent-child relationship; differences in families based on lifestyle and culture; societal values placed on differences (e.g., gender bias and stereotyping); and ways in which cultural differences enrich our lives.

*Unit 7: Conclusion:* Students review the first six units and learn about toddlers; appreciate observation, planning, reflection, and problem solving as parental and interpersonal skills; and plan an appropriate year-end visit and thank you for the visiting parent and baby.

### **Curriculum Implementation**

ECP's curriculum has been used primarily in classrooms. The curriculum content and training design specifically address the importance of integrating ECP effectively across each of the subject areas of a school's or program's core. The curriculum includes resource bibliographies and standards and content indexing to help teachers integrate ECP into core subject areas, such as language arts, science, math, and social studies.

The premise that ECP can and should be implemented in a variety of settings in order to reach as many young people as possible underlies the processes of developing and of field-testing and refining the curriculum. ECP works with personnel in each program to address the specific needs of its population and considers the content and structure of these after-school programs to assist staff in effectively integrating ECP. A pilot project initiated in 1998 in seven programs for adjudicated youth under the auspices of the Community Renewal Team of Greater Hartford (Connecticut) has indicated that ECP is valid and effective in alternative settings.

### **Program Cost**

Current program costs, based on a classroom of thirty students, average \$50 per child per year for the first year, including all training and materials, decreasing to \$21 per child per year in the second year, and \$14 per child in the third year.

### **ESL Availability**

Not available.

### **Special Education**

ECP's board and staff began to examine the implications of the ECP program



in special needs settings in 1993, with a three-year pilot project at the Mercer Junior-Senior High School in Trenton, New Jersey.

Based on the findings of that research and on a request from the Silver Springs–Martin Luther School in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, a day and residential school for severely emotionally disturbed young people, ECP established a schoolwide model in 1996. These program evaluations are reported in the last section of Chapter IV.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents, teachers, administrators, and other staff participate in an initial planning process. The underlying philosophy and pedagogy of the Educating Children for Parenting® program stress the positive involvement of parents and caregivers in the life of a child from birth. As a school-based program, ECP creates a wealth of opportunities for parents' active involvement in the classroom. (ECP staff note that parent volunteers who visit classrooms with their infants and toddlers become more involved in other activities at the school and share with other parents the students' observations, reflections, and questions.)

### **Program Evaluation**

See p. 79 for an evaluation summary for Educating Children for Parenting.®



## **Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care Curriculum**

The Caring Project develops students' abilities to feel, think, and act on behalf of another person's interests, "caring" abilities that are basic to parenting as well as to cooperative living. The project uses Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care, a field-tested curriculum focused on monthly parent-infant visits. During these visits, parents model caring for their newborn, infant or toddler. Students plan for, implement, observe, and evaluate the visits using The Caring Process, a method for thinking through how to nurture someone in their care. The students make plans and predictions for each visit based on their growing knowledge of human development. After each visit, the students assess the adequacy of their plans and the accuracy of their predictions. The curriculum also encourages teachers to model effective caring and to integrate caring issues into other classroom studies and activities.

### **Program History**

In the 1970s teachers Sara Scattergood and Julie Currie at Germantown Friends School in Philadelphia had parents bring their babies to their classrooms for



monthly visits. Students asked the parents about how they cared for their infants. The teachers learned that involved, nurturing parents with their babies make wonderful models for teaching about caring human relationships. These visits also provided a basis for teaching about human development.

In the 1970s, Dr. Harriet Heath, a developmental psychologist and the director of the Parent Center at Bryn Mawr College, recognized that parents frequently use a planning process while raising their children. The process entails describing the details of the situation; brainstorming ways they might deal with the situation; and developing a plan based on their own values and their children's needs, feelings, and characteristics. Parents implement their plan and then reflect on its effectiveness. Heath named this process "The Parenting Process" and explained it in a manual for parents currently titled "Planning: A Key to Mastering the Challenge of Parenting."

In 1981 Heath joined Scattergood at Education for Parenting (now Educating Children for Parenting®), a nonprofit organization formed to promote this parent-infant visit model of parenting education for children and teens. She found that a simplified version of the "Parenting Process" provided structure to the parent/infant visit, and that this simplified parenting process could be implemented in any situation that required nurturing. The "Parenting Process" was used to structure the visits. Eventually, the process became known as "The Caring Process." Heath, as senior author of the curriculum Learning about Parenting: Learning to Care (1983, Heath, Scattergood, and Meyer), integrated the Parenting/Caring Process into the parent-infant visits.

In 1989 Dr. Dana McDermott, a Chicago-based developmental psychologist, began to work with the Philadelphia group. Through a grant from the Irving Harris Foundation, she implemented the program in a Chicago neighborhood that had one of the city's highest numbers of child homicides perpetrated by parents. Later in 1989 Heath left Education for Parenting and joined with McDermott and a group of educators to form The Caring Project. Their goal was to integrate caring into all aspects of school life by using The Caring Process. McDermott and Heath have continued this initiative.

## Contact

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*The students are more aware of each other as individuals. They appear to be more accepting of differences. . . . My class got to observe a loving, caring mom who is really involved with her children's development.*

**Teacher**

Francis M. McKay School, Chicago Public Schools

Following the 1989 project, in response to teacher recommendations, McDermott began to include a companion program for school parents in the Chicago projects, and Heath, after leaving Education for Parenting, developed a new curriculum version intended to be easier for teachers to use. This curriculum version, initially commissioned by the state of Alaska and later funded by George C. Clemens, is the Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care edition currently available. It has been used in Chicago and New York City and in

school districts in Alaska, Ohio, and New York State. Heath has recently adapted her curriculum for use by New York State teachers.

McDermott and others have gone on to integrate the Caring Project and the Learning How to Care curriculum into numerous sites, including parochial, public, and private schools in Chicago and Cleveland. In 1993 McDermott developed implementation resources, available in her Caring School Guide. In response to many recommendations, these resources were directed toward helping integrate the parent-infant visits into a broader caring school initiative.

Most recently, McDermott has implemented the program in an upper-middle-class independent school in grades 7 and 8 in Chicago. McDermott applied the “Parent/Caring Process” for parents and students in addressing bullying with highly successful results. A colleague has introduced the program into parochial schools in Cleveland. (In these schools, students, especially girls, reported that though they valued the parent role, they had come to feel they were not ready to be parents.)

The curriculum has been presented at many conferences, including the National Council on Family Relations, Independent Schools of the Central States, Family Resource Coalition (now Family Support America), the American Orthopsychiatric Association, the Parenting Symposium, Mid Atlantic Counselors Meeting, and the American Schools as well as at events in India, Israel, Russia, Peru, Venezuela, and elsewhere.

## **Demographics**

The program has been used with students from all socioeconomic groups, in various cultures and countries, in urban and rural settings, and in schools with predominantly African American and Latino student populations. Currently, the



curriculum is being adapted by Heath for use in religious settings to prepare older children to care for younger siblings when their parents are occupied elsewhere.

### **Teaching Eligibility**

Classroom teachers have been the primary users of the curriculum, although staff in family agencies and after-school programs have also used it. Professionals in the mental health field could also use the program effectively. Some background and experience in teaching and child development are desirable.

### **Training and Training Materials**

Training programs are tailored to meet the needs of individual schools or institutions. Options include training classroom teachers or training a liaison teacher, who then supports the classroom instructor. Training is done onsite or at a central location.

Training and consultation are provided by Philadelphia-based Dr. Harriet Heath, or Chicago-based Dr. Dana McDermott, at \$100 per hour plus expenses. Presentations and demonstrations are available. Guides and resources that supplement the curriculum for teachers and liaisons are included in the initial training cost.

Some experienced teachers choose to work directly from the curriculum. However, most teachers choose to participate in some training workshops. Some initial training with follow-up support is recommended.

The trainers help institutions develop an assessment program that fits their instructional plan. Assessment plans are expected to include outcome evaluations as well as ongoing process evaluations. The latter help teachers monitor and adapt the delivery of their program to their group as needed. Several assessment tools are included in the teacher's training guide.

The five types of assessments are: 1) record of events, forms for recording ongoing activities; 2) questionnaires and other tools to obtain written comments from teachers, parents, and students; 3) assessing The Caring Process, a pre- and post-test tool for knowledge of, and the ability to apply The Caring Process. In these tests children analyze what is going on in pictures of infants and toddlers to answer questions related to the five major components of The Caring Process; 4) traditional knowledge of child development measures; and 5) video records of teachers and students in classroom activities, for use in content analysis.

### **Curriculum**

The Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care curriculum features three units that may be adapted to the developmental levels of the students. They have

been used both in the early elementary years and with middle school students. A curriculum for high school students is in the pilot stage.

*Unit I. Parents and Their Newborns Visit the Classroom—Using The Caring Process:* This unit gives an overview of how a mother cares for herself while pregnant and prepares for the baby’s arrival. A set of math questions focuses students on the costs of having a baby. The unit follows the parents during at least the first three months of the infant’s life. Students learn from parents the work involved in caring for and nurturing a newborn.

*Unit II. Parents and Their Infants Visit the Classroom:* Using this unit, students chart the development of their visiting infant over the year and record what the parents do to facilitate that development. Content focuses on temperament patterns of infants, their needs and feelings, and communication styles.

*Unit III. Parents and Their Toddlers Visit the Classroom:* Students continue using The Caring Process as they plan for the complexities of having an active baby visit their classroom. During the visits students chart the development of the toddler years. Content focuses on specific areas of development, such as learning language and the role of play in development. Discussion always considers the role of parents in their children’s healthy development. This unit is most easily taught when it follows Unit I and Unit II, or at least Unit II.

## **Curriculum Implementation**

The Caring Process taught in *Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care Easily* integrates into traditional academic subjects and can be used as a tool to improve classroom management. Planning for and reflecting on the parent-infant visit, as well as the actual visit, incorporate problem-solving skills. The observations of parents and their children and the reflections of students about their own childhood experiences provide rich content for written work. Reading assignments can include books with themes of caring. (Lists are available; however, caring themes can be found in almost any book in the class or school library.) Science class work on preserving the environment can also integrate The Caring Process. Teachers encourage students to apply The Caring Process in their social relationships. The program also involves engaging teachers in using The Caring Process in relating to parents, teachers, students, and others.

Heath has adapted the curriculum for after-school programs, religious



settings, and mentoring programs where older children care for younger ones. She is also working on a curriculum that will help students prepare for the GED while learning about parenting and human development.

McDermott has documented her broad experience in integrating the program in a variety of settings. This documentation, “Learning How To Care: A Paradigm Shift in Home, School and Community,” is available free of charge online through the National Parent Information Network at <http://npin.org/library/2000/n00471/n00471.html>. McDermott offers other written materials, including a position paper and bibliography for self-starters and a Caring School Guide for implementation.

### **Program Cost**

The program cost depends on the training required. Curriculum materials are available in three units, each covering a year’s work. The cost is \$20 per unit or \$50 for the complete set. As there are no books for students, material costs per child are negligible. A \$50 teacher’s training guide is available only with the training program.

### **ESL Availability**

An ESL curriculum developed by Dr. Heath and an ESL teacher is available. Since almost all children, regardless of their native country and culture, know about families, family members, and the activities of the home, the curriculum builds on these universal concepts to teach English.

### **Special Education**

Many special education students excel in the kind of experiential learning used in the curriculum. They learn to reach out to others and develop competencies that enhance their self-esteem.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are an integral part of the program. Parents who have brought in their infants for visits report that they felt they were making an important contribution to the education of children. The Caring Project has also helped schools support parents through monthly meetings on child development topics, and recommends that schools offer Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care’s six-to-eight-week parent discussion series on The Planning Process.

### **Program Evaluation**

See p. 81 for an evaluation summary for Education for Parenting.





## **Nurturing Parenting Programs®**

### **Developing Nurturing Skills®: K–12 School-Based Curricula and Nurturing Skills Curricula**

Developing Nurturing Skills® K–12 School-Based Curricula is a comprehensive classroom program for teaching healthy lifestyles to students by teachers, counselors, and school psychologists. The primary purpose of the curricula is to build nurturing skills in school age children through four goals:

- To empower children and teenagers with the ability to nurture themselves
- To develop the ability of children and teenagers to nurture other children and teenagers
- To enhance the ability of children and teenagers to increase nurturing in their family
- To increase the awareness of children and teenagers regarding ways to nurture their community and environment

The curriculum for junior and senior high schools is a series of six developmentally sequenced semesterlong classes covering Nurturing Self, Nurturing Family and Community, and Nurturing Children.

Developing Nurturing Skills® Curricula originated from the Nurturing Parenting Program®, redesigned for classroom use with children and teens. Nurturing Parenting Programs are validated, extensively tested family-centered programs for parents and children which are designed to build nurturing skills as alternatives to abusive parenting and childrearing practices. They were developed and produced by Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph.D., President of Family Development Resources, Inc.

The Developing Nurturing Skills® Curricula extends from Nurturing Parenting's philosophy, which places emphasis on the importance of raising children in a warm, trusting, and caring home. The goals are to stop the

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generational cycle of child abuse by building nurturing parenting skills and to reduce the rates of juvenile delinquency, alcohol abuse, and teenage pregnancies. Nurturing Parenting uses six principles to guide childrearing:

1. The family is a system.
2. Empathy is the single most desirable quality in nurturing parenting.
3. Building positive, healthy interactions is key to reducing family violence.
4. To be effective, education must engage the learner on both the cognitive (knowledge) and affective (feeling) levels.
5. People who feel good about themselves are more capable of nurturing.
6. Given a choice, all families would rather display happy, healthy interactions.

### **Program History**

In 1979 Dr. Stephen J. Bavolek was the principal director of a National Institute of Mental Health project aimed at developing and validating a family-centered parenting program for the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect. The project's goal was to create an effective intervention to break the cycle of child abuse and neglect by building nurturing parenting skills.

Research in 1979 by Bavolek, Kline and McLaughlin found that the parenting and childrearing attitudes of abusive and neglecting families were significantly ( $p < .001$ ) more abusive than those of their nonabusive/nonabused counterparts. The study concluded that the need to develop a validated family-centered parenting program to prevent the maltreatment of children is paramount to decreasing the negative impact of child abuse and neglect on many segments of society.

The foundation of the Nurturing Programs® was developed from identified behaviors of abusive parents:

- Inappropriate parental expectations of children's developmental skills and abilities
- Parents' lack of empathic awareness of their children's needs and emotions

- A strong belief in the use of corporal punishment as a means of disciplining children
- Reversing parent-child family roles
- Oppressing children's power and independence

Nurturing Parenting Programs are now presented, nationally and internationally, in social services, mental health, and educational settings; in private nonprofit organizations; in community action programs; in correctional facilities; in homeless and battered women's shelters; and in all branches of the military, including Department of Defense schools. Developing Nurturing Skills® Curricula extended from the Nurturing Parenting Programs. The curricula originated in nine different states, in junior and senior high schools, in public and private schools, in alternative teen parent schools, in a psychiatric

hospital and a mental health center, and with at-risk populations. The field research on Developing Nurturing Skills® was completed in 1990. For approximately twenty years, more than a million families have participated in Developing Nurturing Skills® and the Nurturing Parenting Programs® in schools and other settings throughout North, South, and Central America and in Europe.

*NURTURING: The single most important skill to acquire during the process of growing up. Children and teens who are capable of nurturing themselves, others and their environment can relate in a positive way to society. We all benefit.*

**Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph.D.**  
 Founder and President of Family  
 Development Resources

## Demographics

Developing Nurturing Skills® has been useful in helping children at risk and in transition to

change and reduce undesired behaviors. The curriculum has been used successfully with children and teens involved in public, private, and alternative schools. The population involved in the curriculum's initial field testing was 70 percent white, 8 percent black, 8 percent Latino, 6 percent Native American, and 6 percent other. Forty-seven percent of students in field testing were male; 53 percent were female.

## Teaching Eligibility

The structured activities of the Developing Nurturing Skills® Curricula enable skilled teaching professionals to implement the programs without extensive training; however, professionals report that training in the program's philosophy and practice in conducting program activities is helpful. Family Development Resources recommends training by a certified consultant. The courses may be



taught by professionals or paraprofessionals, teachers, social service workers, and mental health service providers.

### **Training and Training Materials**

The Developing Nurturing Skills® Curricula are extremely user-friendly. Each session in the manual is designed as an individual lesson plan. Recommended training is available through Family Development Resources. For further information about training, call 828-681-8120 or email [fnc@nurturingparenting.com](mailto:fnc@nurturingparenting.com).

Family Development Resources sponsors two- and three-day Nurturing Skills Seminars throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. The seminars help professionals and paraprofessionals increase their nurturing skills. A one- or two-day seminar is available for those who prefer on-site training. Family Development Resources also maintains a large cadre of consulting trainers who will provide seminars for school and center staff and invited participants.

The Teacher Nurturing Training Seminars provide skills and strategies for teachers to develop a more nurturing classroom environment. Goals and objectives of the training are to increase a teacher's awareness of the conceptual basis of Nurturing Teaching, self-nurturing skills, and nurturing teaching practices; and to increase a teacher's ability to use humor as a teaching technique. Teachers receive workbooks during this training.

### **Curriculum**

*Elementary Schools—Grades K–3:* Daily lessons approximately twenty minutes in length teach students nurturing through art, music, games, role-playing and discussions. Children share with others and learn the beginnings of building a healthy lifestyle by increasing their understanding of behaviors that can nurture themselves and others.

*Middle Schools—Grades 4–6:* Thirty- to forty-five minute classes of daily instruction are designed to increase nurturing skills with self, family, community and children. Students learn ways to express feelings of comfort and discomfort, to solve problems, to discover themselves through self-awareness activities, to build their self-images, and to be contributing members of their families and communities.

*Junior and Senior High Schools—Grades 7–12:* The Nurturing Skills Curricula for junior and senior high schools are a series of six developmentally sequenced semester-long classes covering Nurturing Self, Nurturing Family and Community, and Nurturing Children. The semester classes are sequenced to maximize growth but may also be offered independently

- 7th and 10th grades focus on nurturing self



- 8th and 11th grades focus on nurturing family and community
- 9th and 12th grades focus on nurturing children

The major goal of the Nurturing Children segment is to increase the nurturing parenting skills of pre-parent teen and preteen populations in order to reduce the risk of child abuse. The curriculum is based on the premise that parenting children is a learned behavior and that children are reared in an environment that closely resembles the childhood environments of their own parents. Abusive parenting practices, like nurturing ones, are passed down from generation to generation unless a significant effort is made to substitute more desirable parenting practices for less effective ones.

Content issues presented in the 9th and 12 grade Nurturing Children classes include being a mother or father; single parenting; delaying parenting to adulthood; being a teenage parent; assessing parenting strengths and weaknesses; ages and stages of development; danger-proofing an environment; recognizing and understanding children's feelings; praise for being and doing; needs and payoffs; building power in children; spoiling children; myths about spanking; discipline, rewards, and punishment; redirection; family rules; behavior management and encouragement; ignoring; stimulating and communicating with children; nurturing routines; nurturing bedtime routine; nurturing bath-time routine; nurturing feeding-time routine; nurturing diapering and dressing routines; toilet training; nurturing touch with babies; and infant massage.

The Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory-2 (AAPI-2) is used to assess adolescents' nurturing skills and attitudes. The newly revised AAPI-2 is available in English or Spanish (IPAA-2) in a kit with printed test forms. A new CD-ROM computerized version is available in English only. Family Development Resources also offers a variety of resources for families, including teen parents, featuring manuals, videos, resource materials, games, instructional aids, assessment tools and certificates. All curriculum materials are available online and through the free Family Development Resources catalogue.

### **Curriculum Implementation**

The school-based curriculum can be used as a health curriculum or in classes designed to reduce drug and alcohol abuse and to develop the self. It can also be incorporated into a home economics, family and consumer sciences, lifeskills or humanities curriculum. The program could also be adapted for use in out-of-school settings.

In addition, some of the Nurturing Parenting Programs® for parents include parallel and joint programming for the participants' children. The



programs can be implemented in schools, community centers, mental health centers, churches, shelters, and correctional facilities. The sessions are taught for age-appropriate time periods: kindergartners receive twenty-minute lessons, and senior high school students receive fifty-five-minute periods of instruction.

### **Program Cost**

The complete Developing Nurturing Skills® K–12 Curricula costs \$1,576.62. Individual program components or materials for individual grades may be purchased separately.

### **ESL Availability**

The school-based Developing Nurturing Skills® program is available in English only. The Nurturing Coloring Book, the Nurturing Game, and the Ask It–Tell It game are available in English and Spanish. These tools help children learn about gentle touch, sharing, expressing feelings and caring for others. The Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory–2 (AAPI–2), which measures adolescents’ and adults’ nurturing skills and attitudes, is also available in Spanish.

The family-centered programs for parents of children from birth to five years and from four to twelve years are available in Spanish as Crianza con Cariño. The parent handbook of the ABC’s for Parents, a program for parents of children entering kindergarten, is also available in Spanish. Nurturing Parenting Skills for Hmong Families®, a program in Hmong developed by and for Hmong families living in the U.S., is also available.

### **Special Education**

Materials have been used with a number of different special populations.

### **Parent Involvement**

The 2002 ABC’s for Parents Program is a seven-session program for parents and their children entering kindergarten. Children learn comparable skills at an age-appropriate level through puppets, role-play, music, art activities, and leader-led discussions. The complete kit with handbooks, videos, and manual costs \$745.75.

### **Program Evaluation**

The initial Nurturing Parenting Program® for parents and their children ages four to twelve was extensively field-tested twice at each of six sites in six different states. A total of 121 parents and 140 children participated in this field test. Of these, 101 parents (83 percent) and 118 children (84 percent) completed the program. Children showed significant increases in assertiveness, enthusiasm, and “tough poise.” Subsequent Nurturing Parenting Programs® have also been extensively field tested and validated nationally.





## **Parents Under Construction™: Building Healthy Relationships Today and Strong Families Tomorrow<sup>13</sup>**

Parents Under Construction™: Building Healthy Relationships Today and Strong Families Tomorrow is an award-winning curriculum for children from preschool through 12th grade. It teaches child development, communication skills, nonviolent conflict resolution, and positive discipline techniques that enable children to build healthy relationships now and strong families in the future. Essentially, the program teaches children today the parenting skills they will need tomorrow.

Created in 1991 by ChildBuilders, formerly known as Houston Advocates for Mental Health in Children, in partnership with the Houston Independent School District (HISD), the program has reached more than 35,000 children in Texas and six other states. Parents Under Construction™ has been referenced to meet teaching criteria for the state exam (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills—TAAS) and the state curriculum (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills—TEKS) and has succeeded in seventeen independent evaluations. Parents Under Construction™ has been honored with local and state awards for its innovation and program excellence and was selected by the Children’s Trust Fund of Texas as an approved curriculum.

### **Program History**

ChildBuilders is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing parents and children with an essential array of life skills and resources to help them build healthy family environments. In 1991 Janet Pozmancier was asked by ChildBuilders to design a mental health program for children. With funding from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health and in collaboration with the Houston Independent School District, she developed a parenting education program designed to highlight how parenting practices affect a child’s self-esteem and mental health, as well as society at large. An initial program component (the 7th–12th grade curriculum) was developed in 1991 and a pilot program for the first group of students in four schools was implemented in the spring of 1992.

By 1998 curricula had been developed for 4th through 6th grades, K through 3rd grade, and preschool. Spanish versions were also completed, and in 1999 parent education/activity components were phased into each curriculum.

Each year at least 150 instructors and 5,000 children receive Parents Under Construction™ training and program instruction. Teachers in 50 to 90 classrooms implement the program annually. At least one teacher, counselor, or



nurse from almost all of the HISD's 288 schools has participated in program training. To date, more than 1,800 professionals in school districts in Texas, California, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and several other states have been trained.

### **Demographics**

The backgrounds of the students reached by Parents Under Construction™ reflect the demographics of the more than 211,000 students enrolled in HISD. The district's diverse student body is 52 percent Hispanic, 34 percent African American, 10.6 percent Caucasian, 2.8 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.1 percent Native American. More than 60 languages are spoken among students' families in the district, and almost 24 percent have limited English-language proficiency. Approximately 66 percent of the students in the district meet federal criteria for free and reduced-price lunches.

### **Teaching Eligibility**

Any schoolteacher, counselor, nurse, administrator, or other professional who completes training can teach the program in the Houston School District. Paraprofessionals, parents, and volunteers can also be trained to teach the program.

### **Training and Training Materials**

The program cost includes the curriculum, all necessary materials, and experiential training. Continuing education credits are offered, and personalized consultation is available if needed. The experiential training focuses on the curriculum and related theory. It lasts one day (seven hours), and takes place at Houston Independent School District training facility. Training staff will also travel to sites outside the Houston area.

### **Curriculum**

There are four Parents Under Construction™ curricula: Parent/Pre-K, K–3rd grade, 4th–6th grade, and 7th–12th grade. Each of the four age-appropriate curricula is composed of four units.

*Unit One: Building a Foundation for Mental Health:* Child development; infant needs

### **Contact**

Janet Pozmantier, Program Director,  
Parents Under Construction™  
ChildBuilders  
7000 Regency Square #230  
Houston, TX 77036  
Phone: 713-783-8470, extension 25  
Fax: 713-783-8858  
Email: jpozma@aol.com  
Web:  
<<http://www.childbuilders.org/programsFolder/programs.htm>>

*I strongly encourage other school districts and community-based organizations to implement [Parents Under Construction™]. The benefits are both immediate and long-lasting on many levels.*

**Dr. Rod Paige**, Ph.D.  
U.S. Secretary of Education,  
Superintendent of Houston Independent  
School District  
April 26, 1999

**Unit Two: Self-Esteem:** Parental influence regarding the development of self-esteem; promoting self-esteem

**Unit Three: Raising Children:** Parenting styles; communication skills; positive discipline techniques

**Unit Four: The Mentally Healthy Family:** The role of humor in parenting; solving problems and getting help

Lessons include parenting styles, myths, and realities; child development; positive discipline techniques and communication skills; self-esteem; and mental health. Methods of teaching include discussion, videos, role-play, writing, and demonstrations. Curriculum materials (video, student handbooks, transparencies, and so on) are included in the cost of training or can be purchased separately.

### **Curriculum Implementation**

The program can be either a separate course or a module that can be integrated into a broader curriculum. At the elementary or preschool level, the teacher can weave various lessons into the curriculum. For example, for the preschool and K–3 levels, there is a special supplement that provides activities in sciences, math, language arts, art, music, and other content areas. At the secondary level, instructors in home economics, language arts, sciences, history, life skills, and other courses have taught the program, either as a separate course or integrated into the existing curriculum.

### **Program Cost**

In Houston, the cost is \$24 per child per year, as ChildBuilders provides two part-time staff to assist HISD in program training, implementation, and evaluation. For programs outside the district, initial costs are approximately \$125 per K–12th grade classroom (\$7 per student). Annual costs thereafter involve only the printing of student workbooks, at approximately \$2 per student. Startup costs for the preschool program are \$75, with no additional costs thereafter.

### **ESL Availability**

The K–3rd and 4th–6th grade curricula are available in Spanish, as are all



student materials for levels K–12. Student workbooks for all levels (K–3rd, 4th–6th, 7th–12th grade) and the program video are available in Spanish. Parent brochures and evaluations for K–3rd, 4th–6th, and 7th–12th are also available in Spanish.

### **Special Education**

Parents Under Construction™ has four curricula, each specially created for different developmental levels, pre-K through 12th grade. Special education students in older grades can be taught using a curriculum originally designed for younger students. The teacher/trainer can also select activities from any curriculum that is best suited for his or her students.

### **Parent Involvement**

Curriculum implementation: All curricula, preschool through 12th grade, include parent involvement and education activities for every lesson, so that parents can learn the information along with their children.

Program development: Parents provided input and feedback during the piloting and evaluation process for each curriculum. Parents also reviewed content and gave input to shape the Spanish K–3rd and 4th–6th grade programs' cultural relevance and sensitivity.

### **Program Evaluation**

See p. 85 for an evaluation summary for Parents Under Construction™.



### **Roots of Empathy™**

Roots of Empathy™ is a nonprofit charitable organization dedicated to building parenting skills in schoolchildren and raising their levels of empathy. The Roots of Empathy™ program revolves around monthly classroom visits by an infant and his or her parent(s), accompanied by a certified Roots of Empathy™ instructor.

Students learn emotional literacy by observing the baby and his or her relationship with the parent(s). Emotions are identified, labeled, and discussed. Students in kindergarten through 8th grade chronicle the baby's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive milestones over a one-year period, making students keenly aware of the vulnerability and wonder of the first year of life. This is facilitated by the Roots of Empathy™ instructor through two additional monthly classroom visits without the infant and parent.

Media articles about Roots of Empathy™ are scheduled to be posted on the

## Contact

### Roots of Empathy™

401 Richmond Street West

Suite 205

Toronto, Ontario

Canada M5V 3A8

Phone: 416-944-3001, toll free within

North America: 1-866-766-8763

Fax: 416-944-9295

Email: [mail@rootsofempathy.org](mailto:mail@rootsofempathy.org)

Web: <http://www.rootsofempathy.org>

Mary Gordon, Founder/President

Email: [mgordon@rootsofempathy.org](mailto:mgordon@rootsofempathy.org)

program website listed in the contact information.

## Program History

In 1981 Mary Gordon initiated Canada's first and largest parenting and family literacy program operated by a school board. In 2000–2001, this family program served 7,000 families and 11,000 infant through four-year-olds in elementary schools in inner-city communities in Toronto. The Maytree Foundation invited Gordon to take these principles of parenting education and create a program to address the children of today as the parents of tomorrow. In 1996 the Maytree Foundation funded the start-up and implementation of Roots of Empathy™ in six kindergartens in two inner-city schools. Roots

of Empathy™ currently operates in 178 classrooms in five Canadian provinces. Plans for further expansion throughout Canada were underway in 2001. In addition, there have been requests for training from the United States, Australia, England, Luxembourg, South Africa, and Japan.

## Demographics

Toronto, site of the original Roots of Empathy™ programs and its head office, is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse cities in the world. Up to 50 percent of students in Toronto schools do not speak English at home. The cultural groups primarily represented in this diverse mix are Vietnamese, Chinese, Somali, and Tamil.

## Teaching Eligibility

Roots of Empathy™ is only taught by certified Roots of Empathy™ instructors. These instructors represent a broad range of backgrounds, including public school teachers, public health nurses, social workers, school psychologists, guidance counselors, and early childhood educators.

## Training and Training Materials

Roots of Empathy™ delivers a four-day on-site training to boards of education and collaborating organizations. Three days of training are offered initially, with the fourth day held midyear. The certification process also requires instructors to complete a written examination successfully, submit a self-evaluation midway through teaching their first Roots of Empathy™ class, agree to be reviewed and



assessed at least once by a local Roots of Empathy™ mentor to ensure that they are meeting the certified standard of programming, and submit a final year-end report.

Once instructors have achieved the certified standard of performance, completed one year of instruction, and submitted the final report as detailed above, they will receive certification for a five-year period with one day of retraining each year. Each instructor receives the curriculum and the training guide during the training. Roots of Empathy™ has three manuals, which are not available for purchase without the training, although an informational video is available at a minimal cost. The manuals are the curriculum, with lesson plans for the nine themes. Each theme has a lesson plan for the prefamily visit, the family visit, and the postfamily visit; a training guide with philosophy, teaching strategies, infant development, student development, and enriched background information on the nine themes; and an implementation manual with information on Roots of Empathy™ start-up.

## Curriculum

There are four curriculum levels, each of which has twenty-seven lesson plans: kindergarten, primary (grades 1–3), junior (grades 4–6), and senior (grades 7 and 8). Each visit to the classroom has a complete lesson plan outlining goals and related activities. The lesson plans match the curriculum expectations of each grade level. Two class visits per theme, which do not include the baby and parent, are used to prepare for and follow up the family visit. The Roots of Empathy™ instructor participates throughout all visits.

The classroom teacher participates in all Roots of Empathy™ programming. Rather than delivering the curriculum, the classroom teacher’s key role in the program is to weave the language, values, and information from Roots of Empathy™ sessions in a natural way throughout the regular classroom interactions and instruction. In this way, the classroom teacher has a singular opportunity to capitalize on “teachable moments” to reinforce the Roots of Empathy™ messages.

## Curriculum Implementation

The program can be introduced at any grade level. Ideally, children should be exposed to Roots of Empathy™ at two different points in their elementary school years. The curriculum for each grade level involves the observation of

*My students developed a bond with the baby and the baby’s family. We learned a lot about the care and love a baby needs and the importance of family. My students were so sensitive to the baby’s needs and enjoyed watching her grow.*

**Grade 7/8 teacher,**  
Market Lane Public School,  
Toronto District School Board

a two- to four-month old infant, starting in September and continuing for a nine-month period. The program can be introduced using a shorter time frame by having weekly visits. Roots of Empathy™ uses the math, language arts, music, science, visual arts, and drama curricula to teach empathy.

### **Program Cost**

Specific cost information may be obtained by calling or writing to the Roots of Empathy™ office in Toronto.

### **ESL Availability**

The program has been offered in Japanese and French and also with a Native American focus. The materials are currently being translated into French.

In Toronto, where Roots of Empathy™ is used in 80 classrooms, 50 percent of the school population is classified as ESL. The parent–infant relationship, the linchpin of this program, transcends language. Classroom teachers report that ESL students make huge vocabulary gains through their interaction with the family in the program. Great efforts are made to have the instructors and the Roots of Empathy™ parents represent the diversity of the community.

### **Special Education**

The Roots of Empathy™ program has been offered to special education classrooms. Teachers believe it provides a positive experience that helps these children, who feel somewhat marginalized, discuss their feelings and grow in empathy. Teachers report that children with special needs who have been integrated into regular classrooms have made major gains through the Roots of Empathy™ program.

Partnerships have been formed with major children's hospitals to invite families who have a developmentally challenged infant to become a Roots of Empathy™ family. For example, hospitals arrange for babies born with cleft lips or palates to be Roots of Empathy™ babies.

### **Parent Involvement**

Community parents are pivotal to the implementation of the Roots of Empathy™ program. Local fathers and mothers serve as models of empathy when they visit monthly as the Roots of Empathy™ family.

### **Program Evaluation**

Roots of Empathy™ was first evaluated from 1997 to 1999. Currently the Roots of Empathy™ program in Vancouver is working with a research team from the University of British Columbia. A national research project is scheduled for 2002. Contact the program for more information.



## Summary Evaluations of School-Based Programs

Below is a summary of the research provided to The Parenting Project by six individual parenting education programs for children and teens. For more information, contact the programs directly.

Contact information for and descriptions of these and additional programs can be found in the sections where they are discussed in Chapter III. Nurturing Parenting Programs has also been evaluated, and information about the evaluation is found in Chapter III.



### Baby Think It Over® Program

The Baby Think It Over® Program is a parenting simulation project that uses a computerized infant simulator. The program allows teens to improve their knowledge and attitudes about parenting through their interactions with Baby, and to encourage the delay of parenthood.

Space and Wood (1998) evaluated the program in a New Mexico school district. The results are summarized below.

**Subjects:** Sixteen 8th grade students identified as being at risk were asked to participate. Ten females and one male agreed to take part.

**Methodology:** Three intervention methods were used for each student: 1) shadowing a teen parent for a day; 2) biweekly counseling with a parent and counselor; and 3) using the infant simulator for one week. Students were interviewed following the interventions and again nine months later.

**Results/Conclusions:** Ten of the eleven participating students said that the program had affected their decision to delay parenthood. The one student who did not feel the program affected her decision to delay

### Glossary

**Mean score** = the average of the scores

**p** = the probability that the results were obtained by chance rather than true effects. The smaller the p, the better.

**r** = the symbol for correlation. Zero = no correlation at all, while 1.0 means a perfect correlation.

**f** = a statistical procedure used to determine whether or not there are differences between two or more groups.

**t test** = a statistical procedure used to determine whether or not there are differences between two groups.

**n** = the number of subjects in the sample.

parenthood said that the program taught her responsibility. Further evidence of the program's effectiveness was noted at the time of the second interview: none of the program participants was pregnant or parenting at that time, whereas two of the five nonparticipating at-risk students were pregnant.

Clark (1998) found similar results in two schools in Elliot Lake, Ontario.

**Subjects:** One hundred fifty adolescent students took part in a parenting simulation project using the Baby Think It Over® Program.

**Methodology:** Students cared for the Baby for forty-eight hours and kept journals of the time this care required. At the conclusion, students wrote essays about their experiences.

**Results/Conclusions:** Students reported being exhausted and complained of sleep deprivation. They felt that parenting involved too much responsibility. They expressed feelings of anger and resentment, saying that they had no time to themselves. All the students who participated reported that parenting was much more difficult than they had thought, and 95 percent reported that they were not yet ready for parenthood.

Rosenbaum and Parietti (1997) reported the following results of their research using the Baby Think It Over® Program.

**Subjects:** Thirteen 8th grade students in New Jersey.

**Methodology:** Pre-test and post-test assessments of attitudes toward sexuality and teen pregnancy, and a self-assessment of risk. No control group was used.

**Results/Conclusions:** Use of the infant simulator showed significant changes in attitude. All who participated felt that raising a baby was a twenty-four-hour job and that it required the presence of both parents. Of the eight students who at pre-test reported the desire to have a baby by age twenty, only one reported maintaining that desire at post-test. In post-test discussions, the teens were more open to discussing sexual attitudes, parental restrictions, risk factors, and peer pressure. They also reported a sense of empowerment through having gained good reason and the ability to say no to sex.

Strachan and Gorey (1997) reported the following results of their research



examining the effects of the Baby Think It Over® Program on attitudes and beliefs about parenting.

**Subjects:** Forty-eight high school students from Buffalo, New York. Six students were assigned to the primary intervention group and received an infant simulator. Seventeen students were considered a vicarious part of the intervention group, and twenty-five students served as the control group.

**Methodology:** The primary intervention group used the infant simulators for approximately seventy-two hours. The vicarious intervention group was able to observe the demands of having the simulator for one full day. The Parenting Attitude Scale was administered to the students pre- and post-test.

**Results/Conclusions:** Though not statistically significant, the results were in the expected direction. Students tended to have a more realistic view of the demands of parenthood at post-test. In addition, those in the simulator group had more realistic attitudes about parenting than those in the control group. Following the experiment, many of the students (83 percent) doubted their ability to be tolerant and understanding if a baby cried persistently, but prior to the experiment they tended to believe that such a scenario would be “no big deal.” All students believed the experiment was helpful, and 75 percent thought having support from a spouse would be important.

### **Strengths of the Baby Think It Over® Program Based on Available Research**

- It has been shown to be effective in deferring adolescents’ decisions to become parents.
- Students exposed to the program have a decreased tendency of becoming pregnant compared to students in a control group.
- It teaches about the realities of parenthood as evidenced by students’ admissions that parenting is much more difficult than they had thought.
- Students who observe others using the infant simulator report getting vicarious benefits from that exposure.



## **DADS** Dads Make a Difference™ MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Dads Make a Difference™ is a paternity education project focused on educating youth about the importance of fathers in children's lives. It uses two different curricula, one for middle school teens and another for older teens. The middle school program was designed to be taught by older teens and uses a videotape that features teens. Its focus is on the legal, financial, and emotional responsibilities of parenting. The R Factor, the program for older teens, uses research, case studies, and simulations to help students discuss relationships and do life-planning to determine when they are ready for parenting.

Wilder Research Center (1995–1996) conducted an initial evaluation of the Dads Make a Difference™ middle school curriculum and its Teen Teacher training. The results are summarized below.

**Subjects:** Eight hundred eight-one students from 12 Minnesota middle schools and 287 teen teachers from 57 schools or agencies throughout Minnesota participated in the evaluation. The average age of the students was 13.5 years. Forty-nine percent were females, 51 percent males. Student ethnic data were not provided. The average age of the teen teachers was 16.5 years. Fifty-three percent were females, 47 percent males; 75 percent were Caucasian, 9 percent African American, 3 percent Latino, 3 percent American Indian, 2 percent Asian, 8 percent other or missing information.

**Methodology:** Both students and teen teacher trainees completed pre- and post-surveys, including knowledge-based questions taken from the Dads Make a Difference™ curriculum; and they were asked to rate the project. Teens were also surveyed to measure attitude change.

**Results/Conclusions:** The middle school students increased in knowledge about risky behavior and the importance of child support. Their correct responses increased from an average of 8 of 12 questions in the pre-survey to 10 of 12 questions following the Dads Make a Difference™ training. Statistical significance was not reported.

The surveyed teens increased in knowledge about “defining paternity” and “information about child support.” Teens also changed some key attitudes in the desired direction, for example, “acknowledging the importance of establishing paternity, regardless of the couple’s relationship.”



Both the student subjects and the teen teachers were asked to rate the Dads Make a Difference™ project. Fifty-four percent rated the project as good, 30 percent as excellent, 16 percent fair, and 2 percent poor. Approximately 40 percent reported that the information is “definitely” interesting to them, and 56 percent reported that the information is at least “sort of” interesting. Additionally, 37 percent reported that they learned “a lot,” and 61 percent reported that they learned at least “some.” More than half reported that they believe the information will be “very useful” to them in the future, and 95 percent reported they believe the information will be at least “sort of useful” to them. Finally, 75 percent reported that they “definitely” liked having the teen teachers present the information to their class.

Hayne (2000) interviewed Dads Make a Difference™ teen trainers for a “qualitative descriptive research study.” The study looked at how the teens learn through the program; changes in their knowledge, skill, attitudes, and behavior; and how developed skills are useful in other areas of their lives. The results are summarized below.

**Subjects:** Thirteen paid Dads Make a Difference™ teen trainers who had been highly involved with the projects.

**Methodology:** Teens were interviewed using a text, following three to five years as a teen trainer.

**Results/Conclusions:** Summary information was reported and indicated the following; specific data and significance levels were not reported:

- Twelve of thirteen teens reported improved feelings of self-confidence and self-esteem.
- All teens identified the importance of a relationship with a caring adult, and 11 of 13 teens had a significant relationship with the adult advisor at their school.
- Teens were sought out for their perceived expertise or found themselves in situations in which they shared their knowledge of the Dads Make a Difference™ concepts outside the program.
- Eleven of the 13 reported a change in their future plans about



career choices and parenting following the program.

- Twelve of 13 teens experienced attitude changes with regard to a variety of topics, including seriously considering choices about sexual activity and personal responsibility and knowing what experiences are desired prior to parenting, rather than just knowing they would be parents “someday.”

Professional Data Analysts, Inc. began a three-year program evaluation in spring 2000 to update previous findings and to measure impact beyond the immediate conclusion of the Dads Make a Difference™ middle school curriculum or Teen Teacher training. This project is designed to determine:

1. To what extent do middle school students’ knowledge and attitudes change after participating in the curriculum?
2. To what extent do teen teachers’ knowledge and behavior change over time as a result of participating in the program?
3. What are the “best practices” that contribute to schools’ active, sustained participation in Dads Make a Difference™?

Preliminary results are summarized below.

### *Evaluation of Middle School Students*

**Subjects:** Four hundred ninety-seven middle school students from 23 classrooms in urban, suburban, and rural schools completed the pre-survey; 434 completed the post-survey; and 430 completed the follow-up survey. Average student age was 13. Half were male, half female. Fifty percent were suburban, 39 percent rural, 11 percent urban.

**Methodology:** Students were surveyed by trained teens before being presented with the four-lesson curriculum, immediately after the four lessons, and six weeks later. The surveys were administered anonymously; therefore, the unit of analysis was the classroom rather than the individual student. The surveys measured knowledge about legal fatherhood, child support, and risk; attitudes about parenting too early and dads; and feedback about the curriculum. The curriculum was presented by teens in all classrooms.

**Results/Conclusions:** Using a paired samples t-test, students showed



statistically significant gains in five areas from the pre-survey to the immediate post-survey; identifying risk (18 percent); knowledge of child support (12 percent); knowledge of legal fatherhood (11 percent); attitudes about parenting too early (9 percent); and projected age when they will be ready to have a child (5 percent).

Six weeks later at follow-up, students had retained knowledge gains and attitude changes in all five areas. Comparing pretest results to follow-up results, using a paired samples t-test, identifying risk (27 percent); knowledge of child support (9 percent); knowledge of legal fatherhood (11 percent); attitudes about parenting too early (8 percent); and identifying benefits of legal fatherhood (6 percent). Students were significantly less able to define a “dad” six weeks after the curriculum ended (-5 percent).

At six weeks, twenty-one students who had not participated in the curriculum scored much lower than the students who had participated. These differences were statistically significant; attitudes about too early parenting (30 percent); identifying risk (23 percent); knowledge of legal fatherhood (14 percent); and identifying benefits of legal fatherhood (14 percent). Seventy-four percent of students agreed that having teen teachers made it easier for them to talk openly and ask questions. When asked, “What’s the most important thing you learned from Dads Make a Difference?” 24 percent said, “Dads are important,” 20 percent said, “Wait to have a child,” and 15 percent said, “Wait to have sex.”

### *Evaluation of Teen Teachers*

**Subjects:** One hundred thirty-three teen teachers who attended Dads Make a Difference™ training in the 1999–2000 school year and completed a survey before and after the training. Sixty-two of the 133 also completed the one-year follow-up survey. Average age at training was 16.5. Fifty-one percent were females, 49 percent males. Forty-four percent were from suburban schools, 29 percent urban, and 27 percent rural.

**Methodology:** The fifty survey questions measured knowledge of paternity and child support; attitudes about paternity and fatherhood; and skills in leadership and decision making. The surveys also included questions about the teen teachers’ own lives: sexual behavior;

contraceptive use; pregnancy; and parenting.

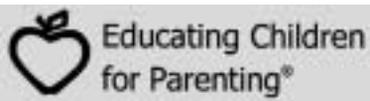
**Results/Conclusions:** Teen teachers showed statistically significant gains in four areas immediately after the training: attitudes about teen parenting; attitudes about fatherhood; knowledge of paternity and child support; and knowledge of paternity benefits. One year later, teens continued to gain in knowledge and desirable attitudes, with statistically significant gains in knowledge of paternity benefits (11.8 percent); knowledge of paternity and child support (11.4 percent); leadership ability (4.7 percent); and attitudes about fatherhood (3.3 percent). Sexually active teens reported using birth control more often after one year—an increase from 69 percent to 89 percent. After one year, three of the teens had become parents; all three had established paternity, and two had child support orders in place. The number of times a teen taught middle school students positively influenced his or her scores on the survey in four areas: leadership; knowledge of paternity and child support; decision making; and attitudes about fatherhood.

Final results will be available in fall 2002, after the Year 2 Survey is administered to teen teachers and the Best Practices survey is administered to a random sample of schools.

### **Strengths of Dads Make a Difference™ Based on Available Research**

- Knowledge scores improved following the program.
- Attitude scores improved following the program.
- Some knowledge and attitude gains are maintained over time.
- The vast majority of students reported they believed the training will be useful to them in the future.
- Teens tended to share the information they learned with others who had not been exposed to the program.





## Educating Children for Parenting® (ECP)

ECP focuses on teaching parenting skills, including nurturing and caring behaviors; knowledge of early childhood development; more nurturing solutions to common parenting problems; and relationship skills. In addition to instructive presentations, throughout the school year, students learn from classroom visits by community parents and their babies. Students observe early development of young children and ask questions of the parents.

Masterpasqua (1992) evaluated the program from 1989 to 1991. The results are summarized below.

**Subjects:** Students in 5th and 6th grades in seven schools in New York and Pennsylvania. There were 67 students in the treatment group and 71 in the control group in the first year of the study from three different schools. In the second year, there were 108 students in the treatment condition and 109 in the control group from four different schools.

**Methodology:** Pre-test and post-test control group design.

**Results/Conclusions:** Children in the treatment condition had a significantly larger number of solutions to the parent-child problems than the control group,  $f(1,119)=7.71$ ,  $p=.006$ . They also had a significantly greater number of solutions that reflected positive caring by young children:  $f(1,119)=5.93$ ,  $p=.02$ . The researcher concluded that children can be taught nurturing childrearing strategies; the program promoted the subjects' ability to generate solutions to childrearing problems; there was an increase in reporting positive nurturing responses to parent-child problems; and there was a trend toward a reduction in physical punishment as a parenting response.

Gulkas (1994) completed a similar study in a special needs school.

**Subjects:** Information unavailable.

**Methodology:** Pre-test and post-test control group design.

**Results/Conclusions:** Children in the treatment group chose significantly more positive caregiving and nurturing strategies than children in the control group. In addition, children in the treatment group showed significant gains from pre-test to post-test when

compared to the control group on positive caregiving and nurturing strategies.

Research for Action (1996) conducted an evaluation of ECP's parenting education program. Though details of the subjects and methodology that were used were not provided for this publication, the researchers concluded the following:

- Teachers, students, and parent volunteers were enthusiastic and positive about their involvement with the program.
- Interviews and observations indicated that the children increased their knowledge of babies' needs and development, had increased skills in predicting developmental changes, and had increased skills in questioning and observation.
- Principals and teachers described ECP as contributing to creating a respectful and welcoming school environment for students and parents.

Masterpasqua (1998) released results of his outcome study on another special needs school. The school's students consisted of children who were unable to remain in their own homes due to situations like family crisis, abuse, or behavioral difficulties.

**Subjects:** Forty-one (20 in the control group and 21 in the treatment group) students enrolled at the Silver Springs–Martin Luther School in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania.

**Methodology:** Pre-test and post-test control group design, measured over two years.

### **Results/Conclusions**

- The ECP program had a beneficial effect on students' learning, knowledge, and interpersonal problem solving.
- Children in the treatment condition had a larger number of solutions to common parent–child problems than the control group.
- The curriculum had important effects on children's knowledge and understanding of early child development and early parenting.



- Student narratives conveyed a strong sense of connection between the students and the babies, and with the babies' mothers.

### **Strengths of Educating Children for Parenting® (ECP) Based on Available Research**

- It provides knowledge of early child development and parenting.
- It teaches children to generate solutions to childrearing problems.
- It helps students learn to handle conflict.
- It exposes children to caregiving alternatives, thereby promoting parental competency among children.



### **Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care Curriculum**

Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care is a K–12 curriculum that focuses on teaching youth caring skills by developing the abilities to feel, think, and act in the best interests of one another. By teaching students alternative methods of relating, it provides an alternative to violence. Parents and infants visit classrooms at least once a month to share information on the responsibilities and difficulties of parenting. The parents model effective caring for children. The program teaches students child development information and how to generate a variety of options for responding to infant needs.

Murphy and Heath with D'Anna & Hoe (1989–90), conducted a study in two inner-city schools in Chicago to evaluate the original curriculum, Learning About Parenting: Learning to Care. A total of 474 K–8th grade students, 15 teachers, and 17 parents participated. Forty-seven percent of students were African American, 40 percent were Latino, 12 percent Caucasian, and 3 percent Asian, Arabic, and Native American. Fifty-three percent were female, 47 percent male. The first-year results are summarized below.

#### **School #1**

**Subjects:** One hundred fifty predominantly Latino students participated in the program and evaluation.

**Methodology:** Every third student in grades 5 through 7 (34

students) was tested. Students' understanding of The Caring Process was measured before and after participating in the program, using Heath's Assessing The Caring Process tool, which was administered individually to students in Spanish or English. This tool consists of six pictures of infants and toddlers. Students answer questions about the pictures. The questions cover the major components of The Caring Process: 1) what the student saw in the picture (ability to observe); 2) what might have happened in the picture just before it was taken; 3) what might happen next (ability to anticipate); 4) all the ways a parent might handle the situation (ability to brainstorm); and 5) what the student would do and why (ability to plan with consideration of the developmental level of the children involved). Qualitative evaluations included analysis of questionnaires and student journals measuring content learned and satisfaction. No control group was used.

**Results/Conclusions:** Results showed that after participating in the program, students

- Made more accurate observations.
- Could better identify age-appropriate behavior.
- Valued the parent role more.
- Could generate more options for handling situations and more frequently chose an appropriate one.
- Made modest gains in knowledge of physical and social dimensions of child development.
- Teachers surveyed all made positive comments about the program, as did parents of the infants. All but 2 of 150 students indicated that they felt they had benefited from the program.

## **School #2**

**Subjects:** One hundred thirty-two predominantly African American students participated in the program and evaluation.

**Methodology:** Most students, and all teachers and participating



parents, completed a post-program questionnaire and evaluation. Eighteen 7th grade students participated in structured individual interviews. All student journals were analyzed.

**Results/Conclusions:** Students reported having learned a great deal and expressed an appreciation for, and better understanding of, parenting. Content analyses of journals found that students identified infant safety and the responsibilities involved in parenting as the most important things they learned.

Teachers' evaluations of the program implementation indicated that they:

- saw the usefulness and appropriateness of the program in schools and were convinced that with time it could be integrated into other curricula;
- felt that to be effective, the program had to be part of an entire school effort that focused on the caring and parenting/caring skills involved in human relationships;
- saw that the skills learned in the visits were skills that could improve classroom management and student-student, student-teacher relations;
- wanted the students' parents involved in learning the same caring process of parenting that the students were learning.

In 1992–93, a draft of the current Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care curriculum, revised from the original to be more user-friendly, was piloted in an inner-city K–8 parochial school in Chicago.

**Subjects:** Two hundred forty-two students participated in the program and its evaluation.

**Methodology:** All students, teachers, and participating parents completed a post-program questionnaire and evaluation. Heath's Assessing The Caring Process tool, a stories-told-to-pictures measure, was administered individually to every third student in grades 6 through 8 (43 students).

**Results/Conclusions:** There were some positive trends but no

significant improvements on the caring tool. Seventh graders showed the most positive change. Qualitative evaluations by teachers, students, and parents were almost unanimously positive.

In 1994–96, the revised version of *Education for Parenting: Learning How to Care* was used in three inner-city Chicago public schools and one suburban parochial school.

**Subjects:** Approximately 400 students who participated in the program.

**Methodology:** Most students, teachers, and participating parents completed a post-program questionnaire to assess learning, perceived benefits, and how the program might be improved.

**Results/Conclusions:** Student and teacher evaluations showed that students had a greater appreciation of the work parents do and a better understanding of their own parents.

The inner-city public school students identified infant safety and the twenty-four-hour/day responsibilities involved in parenting as the most important things they had learned.

The suburban parochial school students focused more on applying The Caring Process, learned from the parent-infant visits, to their own peer problems. Results of an in-depth intervention with sixteen 5th grade students showed they could successfully apply The Caring Process model to their own problems. The greatest gain was in generating options and appreciating individual differences.

Teachers found the shortened user-friendly curriculum adequate for implementation.

Additional formative evaluation data are available from Dr. Dana McDermott by telephone: 773-973-7744, fax: 773-973-7744, or email: [caring@rcnchicago.com](mailto:caring@rcnchicago.com).

### **Strengths of Education for Parenting: Learning How To Care Based on Available Research**

- Program includes community involvement—school administrators, teachers, students, and visiting parents all participate and benefit.
- Students showed improvement in several areas of caring.



- Program teaches students to generate options for parenting situations and to choose the most appropriate option.
- Almost all participants reported benefiting from the program.



## Parents Under Construction™: Building Healthy Relationships Today and Strong Families Tomorrow

Parents Under Construction™: Building Healthy Relationships Today and Strong Families Tomorrow (formerly Primary Prevention) is a curriculum that teaches preschool through 12th grade students the child development, communication, problem-solving, and positive discipline skills that will enable them to build healthy relationships today and strong families tomorrow. The program focuses on increasing knowledge about child development and positive discipline techniques and educating children about the relationship between parenting practices and a child's mental health. The following is an overview of five of the seventeen program evaluations conducted to date. (Contact the Parents Under Construction™ office for complete reviews of all studies.)

### Study I, 1994–95

**Subjects:** Three hundred forty 4th through 6th graders and 350 7th through 12th grade students. Ethnic breakdown for 4th through 6th grade participants: 54 percent Hispanic; 41 percent African American; 4 percent Caucasian; 1 percent other. Seventy-six percent were eligible for the state's free lunch program. Ethnic breakdown for 7th through 12th grade students: 52 percent Hispanic; 26 percent African American; 20 percent Caucasian; 2 percent other.

**Methodology:** A pre- post-test control group design with two to three month follow-up. Separate questionnaires were developed for 7th through 12th graders and 4th through 6th graders. Each test contained two sections: one to measure knowledge gain and another to measure attitude change.

**Results/Conclusions:** 4th–6th Grade: No significant correlation between scores and demographic variables. Students in the program group scored significantly higher at post-test (mean score=5.12) than

the control group (mean score=3.64,  $p<.001$ ). No decline in program group's follow-up test scores compared to the post-test (5.07 versus 5.12, respectively). The program was very effective in educating students about parenting practices and children's mental health. There was no decrement in that knowledge after two months. Students' perceptions of corporal punishment changed as a result of the program. The program group significantly decreased endorsement of corporal punishment as a discipline technique. Classroom teachers were found to be more effective than counselors, nurses, or volunteers in presenting the program to younger children.

7th-8th Grade: Evaluation showed significant increase in knowledge items related to discipline techniques for the program group, and significant correlation between knowledge score and more favorable attitudes toward positive discipline techniques. Follow-up data were not analyzed because of student attrition (for example, moved, dropped out, course changes). No significant changes in attitude from pre-test to post-test. Students made significant gains in parenting knowledge and were receptive to positive parenting strategies. Attitude changes regarding corporal punishment were not significantly altered by the program, although positive changes in attitude were noted in subsequent studies. (See Peraino, 1996-97, 1999)

## **Study II, 1995-'96**

### *PART 1: KINDERGARTEN-THIRD GRADE STUDENTS*

**Subjects:** Two hundred sixty-three students; average age=7.3 years. Fifty-one percent were African American, 37 percent Hispanic, 10 percent Caucasian, and 3 percent other. Approximately 72 percent were eligible for the state's free lunch program.

**Methodology:** A post-test-only control group design with a 2-3 month follow-up.

**Results/Conclusions:** Students in the program group scored significantly higher than those in the control group in changing toward a less favorable attitude toward corporal punishment. K-3rd grade children were able to identify parenting styles, positive discipline techniques, and the techniques that would likely improve self-esteem. There was a significant correlation between knowledge score and a lack



of support for the use of corporal punishment as a discipline technique ( $r=.37$ ,  $n=263$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Follow-up scores indicated that the students retained parenting knowledge, but attitude change was not as stable. Significant knowledge gains and attitude change were found at post-test and follow-up.

## *PART 2: INSTRUCTOR TRAINING*

**Subjects:** Eighty-two teachers, counselors, and nurses who attended training. Ninety-one percent were female; 64 percent were teachers. Forty percent were Caucasian; 46 percent African American; 12 percent Hispanic; 1 percent Asian.

**Methodology:** The Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI) was administered prior to and after the training program. The AAPI assesses parenting and childrearing attitudes, particularly parenting practices associated with abusive and neglectful parenting styles.

**Results/Conclusions:** The training was successful in changing parenting attitudes while teaching positive parenting concepts. Instructors' parenting attitudes were more appropriate and less "abusive" following training. Analysis of variance demonstrated that post-training scores were significantly higher than pretraining scores ( $p<.001$ ). Data indicated the training had a particularly significant impact on instructors' parenting attitudes in the areas of: reduced belief in the use of corporal punishment and more appropriate attitudes about the developmental expectations of children.

## **Study III, 1999 (Empathy and Prosocial Behavior)**

### *PART 1: STUDENTS*

**Subjects:** 4th–6th Grade: Sixty-seven students. Fifty-seven percent male; average age 10.9 years. Fifty-three percent Hispanic; 47 percent African American. Twenty-one percent were 4th graders. Fifty-four percent of the sample constituted the program group.

7th–12th Grade: Two hundred fifteen students. Average age 14.3 years, ranging between 12 and 18. Approximately 58 percent were male. Forty-eight percent Hispanic; 47 percent African American; 2 percent Caucasian; 1 percent other. Forty percent 7th grade; 26 percent 9th



grade; 32 percent 10th grade; 2 percent 11th grade. Fifty-eight percent of the sample constituted the program group.

**Methodology:** A pre- post-test control group design with follow-up. Three student questionnaires were used: the previous Primary Prevention Program questionnaires developed by Peraino (1994–95); the Emotional Empathy Scale (Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972); and a scale developed by Peraino (1999) measuring prosocial and antisocial behaviors.

### **Results/Conclusions:**

#### *4th–6th Grade:*

*Knowledge:* Program condition significantly affected post-test scores ( $f=10.22$ ,  $n=47$ ,  $p <.01$ ). Students in the program group scored significantly higher (mean score=10.20) than the control group (mean score=7.94).

*Attitude:* Program students demonstrated a significantly lower belief in the effectiveness of corporal punishment than did control group students ( $f=4.26$ ,  $n=47$ ,  $p <.05$ ). Mean post-test score for the program group was 21.13, while for the control group the mean score was 18.89.

*Empathy:* Mean scores for program and control groups were 3.90 and 2.47, respectively. Differences were not significant. Girls scored higher than boys at post-test.

*Prosocial Behavior:* Analysis of variance demonstrated a significant trend toward increasing prosocial behaviors and reducing antisocial behaviors for the program vs. control group ( $f=2.85$ ,  $n =47$ ,  $p <.10$ ).

#### *7th–12th Grade:*

*Knowledge:* Results demonstrated a highly significant difference between program and control groups on knowledge ( $f=11.87$ ,  $n=133$ ,  $p <.001$ ). Students in the program group scored higher on the post-test knowledge questionnaire than students in the control group (average number correct=13.06 and 11.40 for program and control groups, respectively). There was a significant correlation between grade and knowledge scores. Students in the higher grades attained higher knowledge scores ( $r =.53$ ,  $p <.01$ ).



**Attitude:** Analyses demonstrated a highly significant difference between groups on post-test attitudes ( $f=21.98$ ,  $n=133$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Higher post-test scores were attained by the program group (mean score= $24.22$ ) than the control group ( $20.81$ ), indicating less belief among the program students in the use of corporal punishment and less belief that babies can be spoiled.

**Empathy and Prosocial Behavior:** There was no significant difference between the program and control groups on the emotional empathy scale or the prosocial behavior scale. Girls scored higher than boys at pre-test but both genders scored equally at post-test.

**Overall findings:** Change scores were calculated and correlated for those students who had pre- and post-test scores ( $n=54$ ). One significant finding showed that changes in knowledge were correlated with changes in attitude ( $r = .40$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In addition, higher post-test knowledge was associated with a higher positive change in attitude ( $r = .41$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and higher post-test attitude was associated with a higher positive change in knowledge ( $r = .43$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and empathy ( $r = .27$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Another finding showed that younger students had significantly higher positive change scores on knowledge ( $r = .43$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and attitude ( $r = .34$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

This study found a significant increase in knowledge and more favorable attitudes toward positive discipline techniques for the program group versus the control group. This result was found for both the 4th–6th grade and 7th–12th grade curricula.

## **PART 2: TEACHERS**

**Results:** Because of the low number of teachers participating in the study (twelve), statistical analyses were not performed. Tallies and averages of a questionnaire designed to measure certain student behaviors demonstrated that teachers perceived improvement in the following areas: fewer arguments and verbally abusive behaviors such as calling names, teasing, and insulting; increased empathy among students; and an increase in the number of positive communication/discipline techniques. Eleven of the twelve teachers reported their skills were positively affected by the program and would like to teach the program again.

## Study IV, 1999 (Pre-K):

### *PART 1: STUDENTS*

**Subjects:** Sixty-three students from three preschools, two public schools and one private school. Fifty-three percent were male. Thirty-five percent were Caucasian; 14 percent African American; 46 percent Hispanic; 2 percent other; 3 percent unknown. Mean age was 60 months (5 years); ages ranged from 53 months to 74 months.

**Methodology:** The study included program and control groups using a post-test-only control group design. Students were randomly assigned to the program or the (wait-list) control groups. All students took both pre- and post-tests, but for statistical analyses, the program group's post-test scores were compared to the control group's pre-test scores. The control group's pre-test scores essentially served as their post-test. The questionnaire included twelve items assessing concepts taught in the preschool/parent curriculum. Students were asked to point to pictures indicating their responses, and they also used dolls and props to answer questions.

**Results/Conclusions:** Age significantly correlated with post-test score ( $p < .05$ ); older students scored significantly higher than younger students. Children in the program group (mean summary score=7.93,  $n=28$ ) scored slightly but not significantly higher than children in the control group (7.09,  $n=23$ ). Detailed analysis, however, demonstrated a significant group condition by school interaction effect ( $f=3.40$ ,  $n=51$ ,  $p < .05$ ). That is, depending on the school, there were significant differences between program and control groups.

Since all students eventually completed both pre- and post-tests, an analysis was conducted to determine whether scores improved from pre- to post-test. For those students who completed both pre- and post-tests ( $n=51$ ), the average score at pre-test was 7.00. At post-test, the average score was 7.75, a gain of .75 points (6.25 percent). This difference was statistically significant ( $t=2.81$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Two different analyses revealed that the students improved slightly overall (approximately 6 percent) in their grasp of concepts regarding raising babies. Results might not be generalizable due to the small sample size, a newly developed questionnaire, and a lack of internal evaluation to determine if all concepts were taught by all teachers.



## PART 2: PARENTS

**Subjects:** Parents of children participating in the program were invited to attend program parent activity sessions with their children. Thirty-eight completed surveys.

**Methodology:** A survey containing eight items was developed to assess parents' reactions and comments about the program. The items were administered on a four-point Likert-type scale. A parent attendance roster was kept.

**Results/Conclusions:** Survey results indicated that parents responded favorably. On all items (except for one item in which one parent disagreed), 100 percent of parents either agreed or strongly agreed to the mission of the program or reported their child benefited from it.

### Study V, 2001: (One Year Follow-Up)

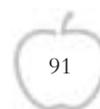
Conducted by Hawkins & Backscheider, University of Houston, Department of Educational Psychology (4th–6th Grade and 7th–12th Grade at One Year)

**Subjects:** *4th–6th Grade:* One hundred seven students in the program group and 99 students in the control group at the time Parents Under Construction™ was administered in spring 2000. At follow-up (spring 2001), 55 students remained in the control group and 50 remained in the program group.

*7th–12th Grade:* Sixty-seven students in the program group and 132 students in the control group at the time Parents Under Construction™ was administered in spring 2000. At follow-up (spring 2001), 24 students remained in the program group and 67 remained in the control group. (Please refer to 2001 Final Evaluation in Resources: Chapters III and IV for complete demographics.)

**Methodology:** Pre-test, post-test and follow-up control group design. The same questionnaires (see 2001 Final Evaluation study) were used for pre-test, post-test and follow-up and administered to both program and control groups.

**Results/Conclusions:** *4th–6th Grade:* At one-year follow-up, knowledge and attitude scores of the program group were still improved from their scores at pre-test ( $n=50$ ,  $p's<.05$ ), although students



did not maintain the full gains evident at post-test ( $n=50$ ,  $p's<.01$ ). In contrast, control group scores at follow-up were not different from pre-test scores.

*7th–12th Grade:* Students in the program group showed a stronger pattern of results on the knowledge test. Students in the program group maintained their gains from post-test to follow-up ( $n=24$ ,  $p<.01$ ); students in the control group showed no change from pre-test to follow-up ( $n=64$ ,  $p>.10$ ). On the attitude questionnaire, there was a trend for program group students to score better than they had at pre-test ( $n=24$   $p<.10$ ); however, the follow-up scores dropped significantly from post-test scores ( $n=24$ ,  $p<.05$ , one-tailed).

Follow-up testing one year after program completion demonstrated a significant change in student knowledge over time in the program group at both the 4th–6th and 7th–12th grade levels, and a trend toward attitude change at both grade levels. Students' self-reported empathy and prosocial behavior scores did not change at post-test or follow-up, in contrast to program group teachers' reports of improved student prosocial behavior at post-test.

### **Strengths of Parents Under Construction™: Building Healthy Relationships Today and Strong Families Tomorrow, based on available research**

- It has been extensively evaluated in seventeen separate, independently conducted research studies and found effective in teaching children parenting skills; affecting children's attitudes away from corporal punishment as a discipline technique; increasing empathy among students after participating in the program; demonstrating to teachers implementing the program that student behavior improved; and garnering overwhelming approval of the program from parents participating in parent-child program activities.
- Program offers a comprehensive curriculum covering Pre-K through 12th grade.
- Spanish components are available and tested as effective.
- Program has a positive effect on teachers' parenting attitudes.

