

# Chinook

Extension Family Life Newsletter  
University of Wyoming

January-February 1994

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## BRINGING UP BABY IN THE 1990S

"Putting children first," a man once said, "Does not mean pushing a baby buggy into the busy street ahead of you." Rapid social changes do make it tough for parents to put kids first. Sixty percent of mothers of preschoolers are employed (50% of infants' moms), most often for economic reasons. Quality, affordable out-of-home care is often in short supply, due to lack of caregiver training and the low profitability of child care. Decreasing resources and support place both employed and at-home adults under greater stress.

*Decreasing resources and support place both employed and at-home adults under greater stress.*

Research on effects of child care suggest consistent, creative nurturing results in child confidence, bonding, and skills (motor, language, mental, social). High-quality care for 0-18 mo. kids is rare, expensive and less effective than preschool in replacing parent roles.

Quality preschool can enhance parent-child relationships and school readiness for 2-5 year-olds. Yet many employed parents cannot lose 12 mo. income and many at-home parents cannot afford a quality preschool.



This newsletter on children's issues is on child care: at home, out-of-home, and in the critical link between parents and caregivers. Quality care alone is not the answer. Patterns of effective parenting and cooperation with schools, agencies, and volunteer groups begin when children are young. Head Start models this approach: Activities appropriate for child development, collegial involvement of parents, and empowering for local action.

Extension personnel can act as educators for caregivers and families. They can play unique roles as advocates for children and families, promoting community awareness. Finally, Extension educators can be catalysts for action --bringing together families, providers, agencies, business and civic leaders to shape a positive future amid changing needs.

***Extension...can act as educators..advocates... and catalysts for action***

## ROUNDUP ON THIS EDITION

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"Let's Give Each Other a Break;  
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**FAMILY SPC. CALENDAR**

- Jan. 10 Rawlins
- Jan. 11 Ft. Collins/CSU Spec.
- Jan. 12 Cheyenne
- Jan. 19 Univ/Denver--Marr.Prep.
- Jan. 26 Worland
- Jan. 27 Basin
- Feb. 9 Pinedale for SW Dist.
- Feb. 10 Lander
- Feb. 16 Douglas
- Feb. 17 Gillette
- Feb. 24-26 HE agents at CSU Workshop; Ben in Denver for PREP

**HUM.DEV./FAMILY NEWS**

*More fathers are watching children at home--20% in a 1988-91 Population Reference Bureau study (vs. 15% in the decade before). Fifty-six percent of unemployed dads provided care, but more dads who work nights or limit work hours by choice are caring for preschoolers. Only 8% of kids 5-14 yrs. have dads as primary caretakers.*  
 --USA Today, 9/22/93, p. 6A

*Childcare quality is poor for many middle and working class families. A 1993 survey finds low pay and worker turnover, high child-adult ratios and low skills (esp. center and family day care) places preschoolers health, safety, and school readiness at risk. Authors Ed Ziegler and E Gilman, propose new school-based preschool/ child care (or school/after-school), with family support/education programs.*  
 --Pediatrics, 91, (1), p.175-178

*A federal task force has recommended expansion of Head Start to infants, toddlers, and families with full-day child care needs. Program expansion would provide children an additional year of school readiness and enable more parents opportunities for training and employment.*  
 --Laramie Boomerang, 10/23/93, p. 21

**EFFECTIVENESS:  
7 HABITS**

*How effective can we be as Extension Educators? That's like the question, "How long should a man's legs be?" Answer: Long enough to reach the ground. Keeping our feet on the ground requires intentional schedule managing, rather than allowing schedules to manage us. Consultant Stephen Covey provides a good inventory for evaluating our time use:*

*Looking at A&E reports, journals, or to-do lists, we may be able to see how we spend time in reactive rather than proactive ways. The key to moving ahead (vs. just keeping up is in the self-discipline maximizing time in Box II, reducing time in I, III, and IV.*

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*The National Child Protection Act act signed 12/20 by Pres. Clinton will create a database to check childcare applicants for child abuse/molestation/ drug indictments/convictions. Offenders often move state-to-state to maintain contact with children and escape detection of their criminal record.*  
 --National Public Radio, 12/20/93

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|--|--|
| <p><b>I: URGENT/ IMPORTANT</b><br/> <b>Crises</b><br/> <b>Pressing problems</b><br/> <b>Deadline-driven projects</b></p>   | <p><b>II: NOT URGENT/ IMPORTANT</b><br/> <b>Prevention,</b><br/> <b>Cont. education</b><br/> <b>Relationship bldg.</b><br/> <b>Recog. opportunities</b><br/> <b>Planning,</b><br/> <b>recreation</b></p> |
| <p><b>III: URGENT/ NOT IMP'T.</b><br/> <b>Interruptions</b><br/> <b>Some mail,</b><br/> <b>some reports</b><br/> <b>Some meetings</b><br/> <b>Proximate,</b><br/> <b>pressing matters</b><br/> <b>Popular activities</b></p> | <p><b>IV: NOT URGENT/ NOT IMP'T.</b><br/> <b>Trivia, busy work</b><br/> <b>Some mail</b><br/> <b>Some phone calls</b><br/> <b>Time wasters</b><br/> <b>Pleasant activities</b></p>                       |

Source: Stephen R. Covey. (1989). The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. NY: Simon & Schuster.

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*Educators nationwide are applauding chess as an alternative to drugs and a catalyst to reasoning skills, self-discipline, and social relationships. Irene Dixon Darnell, 73 year-old Reno grandma, was recognized with a "Points of Light" award from Pres. Bush and \$16,000 state Alcohol/ Drug Abuse Prevention grant for a range of local chess clubs she began.*

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## **PLIGHT OF YOUNG CHILDREN: A NATIONAL INITIATIVE**

Plight of Young Children (PYC) began in 1992 with a goal "provide comprehensive, flexible, and responsive programs to meet the needs of limited resource families (low income/ education, restricted access to resources) with young children age 0-5." PYC is not officially adopted by UW-CES, but many of its goals are embraced in county efforts to serve young limited resource families. Program objectives cover Parenting Practices:

\*Parent Ed. (physical, social, emotional, and cognitive dev. via education and support groups);

\*Money Management (Earned Income Tax Credit, financial attitudes and practices);

\*Nutrition and Health (prenatal and infant care, breastfeeding, monitoring growth, hemoglobin or hematocrit checks, immunization, food choices);

Networking (links to and within agencies to extend resources of families and of CES);

Community Decision Making (enhanced awareness of gaps in programs and services [via public issue education], joint efforts to implement solutions, and evaluate impacts on families, communities).

Efforts are to be Client-centered (involvement of limited resource families), Community-based (goals set by local needs and interests), and Collaborative (CES bridging agency/ organization boundaries). Specific and comprehensive indicators (including at least 2 of above content areas), number of counties participating, training and participating persons, direct and indirect impacts are outlined.

In 1993, PYC Strategic Planning Council gained a \$75,000 planning grant, led a "Partnering for Young Children" roundtable with over 20 groups, worked with the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect for funding of a home visiting program for high-risk, first-time parents; worked with Head Start on other grants; planned for coordination of PYC and Youth-at-Risk initiatives; and developed impact indicators.

## **EXTENDING PYC: RESILIENCY NETWORK**

Ben has participated in the national **Centers/ Networks for Family Resiliency** project developed to support PYC and YAR Initiatives. UW and 34 other states responded to a request for proposals in August 1993, and evolved a plan for a network of collaborators to support initiatives with research, information, curriculum development, policy, ... Ben is helping research family resiliency and write the national informational bulletin on resiliency. This material will be shared with county offices through 1994.

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***"A three-year-old child is a being who gets almost as much fun out of a fifty-six dollar set of swings as it does out of finding a small green worm."***

***--Bill Vaughan***

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## **WYOMING P.A.R.E.N.T.: A RESOURCE FOR ALL WYOMING**

**Promoting Awareness through Resources, Education, Networking, and Training** (PARENT) is a resource agency created in 1992 as a clearinghouse for resources, training, public policy awareness, and research for parents and professionals working with young children. Funded by a U.S. West grant, director Nancie Tonner West and volunteers maintain a clearinghouse/lending library (including resources from UW Dependent Care grants, featuring child development, single parenting, activities with young children, building healthy families, balancing work and family, guidance and discipline, and other topics). The office maintains a directory of community resources across the state. WP coordinates parent support and education groups statewide and produces "Early Care and Education MATTERS," a bi-monthly newsletter. They operate a 1-800 Talkline for parents and caregivers to gain information and resources. WP also conducts periodic surveys of Wyoming parents' concerns and views. PARENT also acts as Wyoming coordinator for the KIDS COUNT survey on the state of children. For information on child development or childcare, listings of lending resources, or public policy issues call 1-800-400-3999 or 638-4000 in Cheyenne or Torrington or write WP at 1807 Capitol Avenue, Suite 205, Cheyenne 82001.

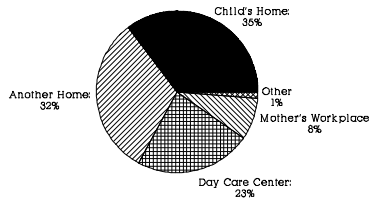
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***"Children need love, especially when they do not deserve it."*** -- Harold S. Hulbert

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**STATS AND FACTS:  
YOUNG CHILDREN AND CHILD CARE**

Where America's Young Children are Cared for:



Source: Population Reference Bureau Inc., 1993

How Children Fare:	Wyoming and Nation (1990)			
		Rate	Rank	Number
% low-birth weight babies	WY	7.4	34	515
	USA	7.0		289,418
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	WY	8.6	21	60
	USA	9.2		38,351
Child death rate/1000, 1-14	WY	30.4	29	33
	USA	30.5		15,367
% children in poverty	WY	13.0	8	NA
	USA	19.8		NA
% children in single-par. fam.	WY	16.7	6	NA
	USA	24.7		NA
% Women in labor force w/child under 6	WY	61.0		17,884
	USA	59.7		9,095,156

Source: Kids Count Data Book, 1993

**Percentage of Children Under 5 & 5-17 by County**

Albany (6, 15); Big Horn (8, 23); Campbell (9, 27); Carbon (7, 23); Converse (8, 25); Crook (8, 24); Fremont (8, 23); Goshen (7, 21); Hot Sps. (5, 21); Johnson (7, 20); Laramie (8, 20); Lincoln (9, 29); Natrona (8, 22); Niobrara (6, 18); Park (7, 21); Platte (7, 22); Sheridan (6, 21); Sublette (7, 21); Sweetwater (8, 26); Teton (8, 16); Uinta (10, 30); Washakie (7, 23); Weston (7, 23); WY Statewide (7, 22); USA (8, 18)

Source: Wyoming Data Book, 1991. Dept. of Admin. & Info.

**KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK**

Kids Count Data Book is an annual profile on America's children assembled to "foster a greater national commitment to improving outcomes for vulnerable children and their families." Indicators used include: % low-birth weight babies, infant mortality rates, child death rate, % of all births that are to single teens, juvenile violent crime arrest rate (ages 10-17), % graduating from high school, % teens not in school not in the labor force (ages 16-19), teen violent death rate (ages 15-19), % children in poverty, and % children in single-parent families. Each state is ranked on items and receives a composite score as comparison to other states. Family stability, educational achievement, health, employment, and safety outcomes can be derived from indicators.

The 1993 Data Book uses government statistics, with 1985 figures as indexes of trends. Demographic information on each state includes number and percent of population under 18, minority population under 18; children ages 5-17 who do not speak English at home; women in the labor force with youngest child under age 6, 6-17; children under age 6 with both or only parent in the labor force; and children under age 18 not living with a parent.

Two emerging patterns are featured in the current edition: 1) the continued rise in risks and hardships of adolescents; and 2) the severe disadvantages typical for minority low-income children relative to middle class white children.

To get your own copy, send \$12.50 including postage, to KIDS COUNT, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Suite 503, 1250 Eye Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

How much we pay to take care of:

Our cars Our garbage Our toilets Our children cleaning

Mechanics make	Janitors make	Tippers make	Plumbers make	Childcare workers make
\$13.10 per hour	\$5.41 per hour	\$8.75 per hour	\$12.37 per hour	\$4.50 per hour

Sources: US Dept. Labor, 9/92 survey of Louisville, KY city employers (Solid Waste Mgt.), KY statewide wage data 1989 report, Community Coord. Child Care, July 1993 survey.

**"How Can I Know a Good Place  
When I See It?"**

**QUALITY CHILD CARE CHECKLIST**

Quality Standards for Child Care

The persons caring for your children should:

- \* Tell you every day about your children's activities
- \* Talk to them often
- \* Hold them often
- \* Read books to them every day
- \* Rock them often
- \* Hold babies while feeding them
- \* Smile at the children often
- \* Talk to them in normal tones, never yelling
- \* Make sure children do not have toys so small they could swallow them
- \* Give three- to five-year-olds puzzles to play with, paper and crayons or paints, and blocks to build things with
- \* Let two- to five-year-olds play dress-up or "pretend" and give them things like old clothes, empty cereal boxes and books to play with
- \* Let one- and two-year-olds crawl and walk on carpet during a lot of the day, watching them carefully
- \* Let one- and two-year-olds play with soft toys that are washed often to kill germs that could make them sick
- \* Wash their hands after changing diapers
- \* Change diapers often and write down what babies ate and number of times they had bowel movements, so they can tell you that at pick-up time
- \* Make children feel good about finishing a project
- \* Sing or hum to the children

SOURCE: "Child Care Checklist." (October 1990). Southern Association on Children Under Six.

Quality Standards for Child Care

The day care center/home where you leave you child should:

- \* Be licensed, approved, certified or registered by the state
- \* Provide snacks and well-balanced, hot meals
- \* Have a fenced outside play area with outside toys, swings, and climbing cubes that are securely attached to the ground
- \* Have a daily schedule that includes a nap and inside and outside activity times
- \* Let you visit whenever you want
- \* Require an application form for each child with spaces for name, medical conditions, and addresses and telephone numbers for parents and doctor
- \* Remove dirty diapers and food scraps and throw away garbage every day
- \* Have some workers who have worked at the center six months or longer
- \* Give workers a small number of children to tend
- \* Tell you the rules for how children should act
- \* Have rules that "fit" the age and abilities of the children
- \* Not allow children to hurt themselves or others
- \* Not allow spanking
- \* Plan activities for each week that "fit" the children's ages
- \* Plan activities that use blocks, measuring cups, dolls, trucks, art materials, other creative toys
- \* Encourage children to play together and share
- \* Allow children to play alone some of the time
- \* Teach children about the world through field trips, poems, songs, and books
- \* Always require seat belts or car seats when they take field trips
- \* Require workers to keep learning about child development and care

SOURCE: "Child Care Checklist." (October 1990). Southern Association on Children Under Six.

**"Working Together"**  
**PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN**  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

by Peggy Cooney  
Instructor, UW Child & Family Studies

In thinking about the parent/caregiver relationship, it is important to keep in mind the purpose for establishing a partnership. It is for the benefit of the child. From the child's point of view, one of the most important factors for his/her maximum growth and development is communication between parents and teachers about the home and the child care settings. Successful communication depends upon parents and teachers educating one other about how the child is functioning in each environment. The caregiver must set the tone of the relationship by delivering the message to parents that their input is valued. Parents and children can sense whether their caregiver is sincere about this, even through body language alone. A specific way which I have found to accomplish this is by concentrating on something I really like about the parent as we approach one another. This simple technique ensures that a welcoming, positive tone is set.

Making a plan for regular communication with the parents is the caregiver's next step toward the partnership. Many child care programs require an orientation, send newsletters, greet the parents upon the child's arrival and departure, have parent meetings, conference twice a year with the parents, encourage parents to visit, survey the parents annually, and have special events. Important points to remember when making the plan for your program are:

- 1) Give parents some choice. Successful partnerships are individualized depending upon the parents' developmental level, needs, and time constraints. One parent may be rushed in the morning, but have time to talk at the afternoon pick-up. Another parent may not attend parent meetings, but visits the program regularly.
- 2) Find a way to have frequent, two-way communication. Concerns and problems have to be addressed before they become too serious. If the parent does not deliver or pick up the child, then arrange for a regular phone interaction or pass a journal back and forth several times a week.
- 3) Be understanding but firm. Allow parents to choose how they want to communicate but include in your parent handbook a firm policy with expectations for parent involvement and consequences for not fulfilling this responsibility.



- 4) Learn a form of conflict resolution and teach it to the children and the parents. Both parents and caregivers are frequently stressed and are bound to experience conflict over what is best for the child. Steps to use in conflict resolution typically involve listening, defining the problem, brainstorming solutions, and agreeing on a solution to try. This creates a win-win situation and thus maintains the integrity of the relationship.

Establishing and maintaining successful parent/caregiver partnerships requires work and vigilance. However, it is worth the effort. It is the mark of a high quality early childhood program, strengthens the family, and contributes to the child's maximum growth and development.

References which I recommend for both parents and caregivers can be obtained from the National Association for the Education of Young Children located in Washington, D.C. Their toll free number is 1-800-424-2460.

Carlsson-Paige, N.; & D.E. Levin. (1992). Making peace in violent times: A constructivist approach to conflict resolution. *Young Children*, 48, (7), 4-13.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1991). Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Lists specific criteria for a program to meet for nationally accreditation, with a section on staff-parent interaction. (\$7)

Powell, D.R. (1989). Families and Early Childhood Programs. (\$6)

Stone, J.G. (1987). Teacher-parent relationships. (\$3.50)

***Remember when your mother used to say, 'Go to your room.' This was a terrible penalty. Now when a mother says the same thing, he goes to his room. There he's got an air conditioner, a TV set, an inter-com, a shortwave radio--he's better off than he was in the first place.*** "--Sam Levenson

**"Hugging and Letting Go:"  
ATTACHMENT AND AUTONOMY**

Conventional wisdom suggests that too much attention, esp. will "spoil" a baby (i.e., make it too dependent/demanding) Research with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers suggests:

Rene Spitz (1946) noted infants in orphan hospitals with adequate hygiene and feeding but limited contact often failed to develop physically and became unresponsive to affection

Erik Erikson (1950), a psychiatrist, observed themes in child development related to knowing self and relating to others:  
0-18 mo. (learning to trust caring others meeting basic needs vs. mistrusting due to cruelty, neglect, misidentified needs);  
18-36 mo. (gaining autonomy, physical & emotional freedom to explore the world and express self [within safe limits] vs. feeling shame for wanting to express/expand self);  
36 mo.-6 yrs. (taking initiative to learn about self, others, the world vs. feeling guilt that any action is wrong and/or must have adult approval or will result in punishment).

Mary Ainsworth began a series of experiments in 1963 using a "strange situation" (lab playroom with/without parent/stranger) to detect differences among children from differing home environments. Her conclusions suggest:

- "securely attached" 18 mo.-olds (able to connect or separate) had responsive mothers 0-18 mo; were more social 3-4 yrs.

- "avoidant" toddlers (hostile, withdrawn) had angriest mothers 0-18 mo; less sociable and curious at 3-4 yrs.

- "ambivalent" toddlers (sometimes responsive, sometimes withdrawn) had inconsistent care 0-18 mo.

Rudolph Schaeffer & Peggy Emerson (1964) recognized indicators attachment between parent and child:

0-10 mo. **Proximity seeking** to any caregiver.

7+/- mo. to 11 +/- mo. **Separation anxiety**-general dislike for separation from familiar caregivers

7+/- mo. to 11 +/- mo. **Stranger anxiety**-wariness around unknown or less familiar persons

7 mo. + **Attention-seeking**-desire to be noticed, affirmed  
Harvard psychologist Jerome Kagan contends that cultural views of "appropriate" behavior influence interpretations of "secure attachment" (i.e., overprotected or well-bonded) and that child temperament (born-in disposition) vs reactions learned in caring or calloused homes. For parents, adapting to differences in children's temperament (activity level, mood, sensitivity, openness to new situations, adaptability to change, persistence) is the key to helping the child feel secure.

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**"...the thing your child needs in order to thrive emotionally is your emotional availability and responsiveness. You don't need to be rich or smart or talented or funny; you just have to be there, in both senses of the phrase. To your child, none of the rest matters, except inasmuch as it enables you to give of yourself."--Robert Karen**  
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Ways to Make Infants/Toddlers (0-36 mo.) Feel Cared For

Carry infant in chest pouch (papoose) during routine activities (cooking, housecleaning, shopping--not driving!)  
Stroke or massage child gently (different textures)  
Maintain eye contact when breastfeeding or bottle feeding  
Check and change diapers regularly  
Take time during baths to lavish child with warm water and warm feelings; provide support for head above water  
Respond consistently (soon, not instantly; calmly, patiently) to cries/needs for food/water, changing, warm clothes, etc.  
Allow child to choose favorite foods rather than forcing  
Provide a night-light and comfort when nighttime crying lasts longer than 3 minutes  
Cuddle child; sing to her/him softly; laugh with him/her  
Read to child (even when she/he doesn't understand)  
Play games (rattle, looking at target, blocks, soft dolls, peek-a-boo)

Making Toddlers (18-36 mo.) Feel Free to Express/Explore

Recognize that "NO!" is a statement of independence (readiness for new adventures) vs. rejection of authority  
Calmly introduce simple rules (toy sharing, limits to behavior [hitting, shouting] along with expressions of support) Provide safe places (sandbox, playroom) for exploration, and guide discovery of other places (pool, woods, farm, etc.) and activities (art, music,  
Provide times for the child to play with others his/her age  
Provide a variety of toys and "props" (hats, clothes, etc.) for dramatic play and TURN OFF THE TV!  
Use drawing, writing, storytelling to promote expression (try writing down a story the child dictates)

**Resources for Learning More**

Brazelton, T.B. (1981). On Becoming a Family: The Growth of Attachment. New York: Delacorte.

Sparling, J.; & I. Lewis. (1979). Learning Games for the First Three Years: A Guide to Parent-Child Play. New York: Walker. (\$5)

## **"Loving Your Most Important Job" PARENTING BY PLAY**

### Resolved:

Children need time to play alone.  
Children need peer playmates.  
Parents have important roles as guides  
and authorities which may be compromised  
by children seeing them as equals.

### Nevertheless:

Play is a fun, relationship-building, and  
effective learning activity for parents  
and children.

Parent assertiveness and child  
accountability (i.e., sharing in rule  
making) can produce a positive blend of  
fun and guidance

### **p How to Play with Your Preschooler**

Using a preschooler's "natural learning cycle," a parent can  
introduce and enjoy recreational and learning activities:

1. Observation: The child observes a demonstration by a  
trusted model.  
-ex: Notice what toys child plays with at a daycare, church  
nursery, or friend's home as a clue to toys to buy.  
-ex: Show child how to use play items (pots and pans for  
sorting, music; or help with using Christmas/birthday gifts  
competently).  
-ex: Child sees parent doing dishes or vacuuming floor and  
(at 4-5 years old) will want to/be able to replicate task with a  
toy (or blunt items in a sink).
2. Participation: The child begins to participate, and a  
collaborative effort can begin between adult and child that is  
suitable to the child's level of competence.  
-ex: Parent and child dress up in appropriate clothes and  
pretend a trip to China, a Cinderella ball, a cattle drive, a  
grand prix race, a fishing trip, etc.  
-ex: Parent and child begin to build block towers together  
(then at child's direction) after parent has demonstrated how  
to build.
3. Self-Regulation: The child engages in self-regulated practice.  
-ex: Child pours from pitcher to cup after demonstration,  
supervised practice.  
-ex: Child continues puppet dramas developed with parents,  
extending them into new scenes, characters, and settings.

4. Sense of Accomplishment: The child reaches the "eureka"  
moment when he/she is able to do something for the first  
time.

- ex: Child dresses in smock completes a water-color painting  
by him/herself, without direction.
- ex: Child plants seeds in garden one-by-one, in rows and  
realizes he/she "can do it just like mom/dad."

5. Performance: The child demonstrates mastery of the newly  
acquired skill and delights in using and showing off new  
competencies in the context of social purpose.

- ex: Child (4-5 yrs. for simple; 5-7 for more complex  
recipes) is able, with limited supervision to cook and bake
- ex: Child can feed the dog/cat by him/herself (with  
appropriate sized bag).
- ex: Child (3+ years) can play simple instruments such as  
tambourine, cowbell, cymbals, loomy sticks in rhythm  
(and/or sing a song).

### **p Some Things to Do**

As long as it's interesting and not too difficult, fun and  
fellowship are enough reason to play together. However, many  
play activities also aid learning and development:

Language: telling (and writing down, illustrating) stories;  
listening to songs, stories and poems; recognizing words, letters  
around town (such as "K" in K-Mart)

Sensory Development: blocks; sandbox; bathtub play; mystery  
box (smells, tastes, textures to guess); mixing water colors

Science: collecting plants, bugs, pictures of animals; planting a  
garden

Practical Skills: cooking; sewing; helping with pets; dressing

Art: water colors; play dough; puppet making

### **Resources to Learn More**

Britton, Lesley. (1992). Montessori Play and Learn: A Parents  
Guide to Purposeful Play from Two to Six. New York: Crown  
Publishers, Inc.

Holt, Bess-Gene. (1977). Science with young children.  
Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of  
Young Children. (\$7)



**"The Big Listen:"  
WHAT YOUNG FAMILIES NEED  
FROM COMMUNITIES**

**by Curtis Hobbs  
Child & Family Studies Graduate Student**

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*"In this country we tend to believe that families should be self sufficient, that parents should raise their children alone. That is not the way it should be."*

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With this quote, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton began the first of many parent coalitions in communities across America. Meetings of parents and professionals, sponsored by PARENT ACTION (PA), an advocacy organization, are transforming communities into more family-friendly places.

PARENT ACTION began in 1991 to help parents to transcend the isolation created by their busyness, stress, and self-reliance. Parents not only were concerned about their children's development, but experienced hassles at work and barriers in communities which hindered effective parenting. While popular and research materials on parenting abounded, norms of family privacy and autonomy kept parents from talking with each other. In the 1990s, empowered parent support groups are replacing traditional parent education, offering affirmation as well as ideas. Parents of hospitalized and "school problem" children, upset by institutional attitudes, provided much of the initial thrust to the parent action movement. Now parents and professionals are among 8,000 PA members seeking to change the expert-focused, bureaucratic approaches of the past. PARENT ACTION is seeking to become a public policy advocate for parents as AARP is for older Americans. Parents are working together to influence national decisions on health care and childcare and local concerns such as safe communities. The organization's newsletter keeps parents abreast of public decisions and personal actions (claiming child and dependent care expenses on tax returns) affecting their lives. PA members are instrumental in educating corporations on the benefits of family-centered decisions such as family leave and on-site or quality community childcare.

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***In the 1990s, empowered parent support groups are replacing traditional parent education, offering affirmation as well as ideas.***

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**Parent Action Process**

To organize parents for support, education, and action:

1. Begin with one or more parents with similar concerns (special needs children, school violence, typical parent-child issues, work-family conflicts, etc.);
2. Network with religious groups, day care parents, neighborhoods, ads in pediatricians' offices. Invite parents to talk and listen, listen, listen to experiences with children and with community resources/services/institutions;
3. Set times to get together for encouragement, growth as parents, meetings with community officials, etc.

Once interested persons are gathered, try these steps:

1. Recognize the legitimacy of your concerns. Identify other parents with similar concerns. Groups began in living rooms, coffee shops, after school events to explore issues in common.
2. Find out about available resources. Ask if organization emphasizes children and parents.
3. Create a list of goals to focus the group. Short term goals should be immediately achievable, simple, and practical, such as placing an article about group in local newspaper or doubling attendance). A long term goal might be to raise money for a playground or support specific legislation.

Keys: Inviting/Teaching persons to become involved in the process of sharing experiences, identifying needs, setting goals, and taking constructive actions for their children, their communities, and themselves. Empowering persons through training, resourcing, and supporting self-sufficiency.

**Resources for Learning/Doing More**

Braun, L.; J. Koplun; & P. Sonnenschein. (1984). Helping Parents in Groups Boston: Wheelock College. (\$23)

Community Action Planning Process developed by Oregon State is being implemented in Powell by Gene Rohrbeck. For info on using it in your county, call him at 261-5917.

Cornell Empowerment Project, 283 Martha Van Renssalaer Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. (607-255-1820)

Louv, Richard. (1993). Parent power. Parents, Sept. '93, pp. 178-179.

PARENT ACTION, P.O. Box 1719, Washington, DC 20013 (410) 752-1790. (\$25 membership). Newsletter, information on family support centers, resources, and programs.

## RESOURCE UPDATE: YOUNG CHILDREN AND CHILD CARE

### Must Read/Great Background on Early Childhood Issues

Brazelton, E.B. (1985). Working and Caring. Boston: Addison-Wesley. (\$15)

Edelman, M.W. (1992). The Measure of Our Success. Boston: Beacon. (\$16)

Hewlett, S.A. (1989). When the Bough Breaks: The Cost of Neglecting Our Children. NY: Basic Books. (\$22).

Schichedanz, J. (1986). More Than the ABCs: The early Stages of Reading and Writing. NAEYC--a fabulous \$6 deal!

### Key Issues Information for Community Coalitions

Caring Communities: Supporting Young Children and Families. NAEYC. (\$10)

Helping Children by Strengthening Families. Washington: Children's Defense Fund. (\$6.50)

Info. Kit on Employer-Assisted Child Care. NAEYC. (\$16)

Ziegler, E.F. (1990). Child Care Choices: Balancing the Needs of Children, Families, and Society. NY: Free Press. (\$23)

### Really Great Children's Books

Silverstein, S. (1974). Where the Sidewalk Ends. New York: Harper & Row.

Martin, B. & J. Archembault. (1987). Knots on a Counting Rope. New York: Henry Holt.

Mayer, M. (1968). There's a Nightmare in My Closet. New York: Dial Books.

Viorst, J. (1972). Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day. New York: Aladdin Books.

Waber, B. (1972). Ira Sleeps Over. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Yolen, J. (1987). Owl Moon. New York: Scholastic.

### For Programming with Educators and Parents

Cudaback, D. (1993). Parent Express. Oakland, CA: ANR Pub./UC-Berkeley (6701 San Pablo Ave.)--tested Extension newsletters for prenatal-13 mo. (\$4/set); 13-36 mo. (\$4/set)

Faber, A.; & E. Mazlish. (1981). How to Talk so Kids will Listen and Listen so Kids will Talk. NY: Avon. --the best \$7 you'll ever invest!

Glenn, H.S.; & J.Nelson. (1993). Raising Self-reliant Children in a Self-indulgent World. Marietta, GA: Active Parenting (\$10)

Greenberg, P. (1993). Character Development: Encouraging Self-esteem and Self Discipline in Infants, Toddlers, and Two-Year Olds. NAEYC (\$8)

How to Choose a Good Early Child.Program. NAEYC.

Riley, S.F. (1986). How to Generate Values in Young Children. NAEYC. (\$4.50)

Sawyers, J.K.; & C.S. Rogers. Helping Young Children Develop Through Play. NAEYC. (\$5)

Jalongo, M.R. (1991). Infants Can't Wait: Literature from Infancy to Six. NAEYC. (\$10)

### Recommend to Early Childhood Providers

Besharov, D.J. (1990). Recognizing Child Abuse: Guide for the Concerned NY: Free Press. (\$13)

Fenichel, E.; & L. Eggbeer. (1990). Preparing Practitioners to Work with Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families. Washington: Nat.Ctr.for Clinical Infant Programs. (\$5)

Matiella, A.C. (1991). The Multicultural Caterpillar. Santa Cruz, CA: ETR Associates. (\$13)

Raines, S.C.; & R.J. Canaday. (1990). Story Stretchers: Activities to Expand Children's Favorite Books. Mt.Rainier, MD:Gyrphon. (\$15)

Schiller, P.; & J. Rossano. (1991). The Instant Curriculum: 500 Developmentally Appropriate Learning Activities. St. Paul, MN: Toys 'n Things. (\$25)

## HUMAN RESOURCES

American Academy of Pediatrics  
141 Northwest Point Blvd.  
P.O. Box 927  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0927  
708/228-5005 or 1-800-433-9016  
#Publishes great child dev. materials

Ass'n. for the Care of Children's Health  
3615 Wisconsin Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20016 (202) 244-2801  
#Publications: "Family-centered Care for Children with Special Health Care Needs;" "Parent Resource Directory;" "Guidelines for Developing Community Networks;" the ACCH Net Newsletter  
#Videos: Seasons of Caring;" "Family Centered Care"

Child Trends  
2100 M Street NW, Suite 610  
Washington, DC 20037  
#Publication: "Identifying successful families: An overview

Children's Defense Fund  
122 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001 (202) 628-8787  
#Publication: Ado. & Young Adult Fact Book (\$13); The State of Children 1992 (\$15)

Committee for Children  
172 20th Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98122-5862  
1-800-634-4449  
#Training & pub. on youth violence, child abuse

Committee for Economic Development  
477 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10022  
#Informational material on policy issues, including child care

Gyrphon House  
P.O. 275, Mt. Rainier, MD 20712  
#Early childhood teaching ideas

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
1509 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036-1426  
(800) 424-2460 or (202) 232-8777  
-Note pub. listed on previous page

**Wyoming Early Childhood Association** (WECA), NAEYC affiliate, invests in training, resourcing, and advocacy for parents and caregivers for children birth-age 8. Annual conference in October at Casper. #Contact Anita Sullivan, Box 1361, Jackson, WY 83001 (733-8885).

Parents as Teachers National Center  
Marilac Hall, Univ. of MO-St. Louis  
8001 Natural Bridge  
St. Louis, MO 63121-4499  
(314) 553-5738  
-Write for info on school-based early parent education model

Southern Early Childhood Association  
7107 W. 12th Street, Suite 102  
P.O. Box 56130  
Little Rock, AR 72215-6130  
#Publishes Dimensions journal; readable books on children, families, and early childhood education

Yale Child Study Center  
P.O. Box 3333, New Haven, CT 06510  
-Write for info on innovative programs w/young children

ZERO TO THREE  
P.O. Box 25494  
Richmond, VA 23260-5494 (703) 528-4300  
#Newsletter, info on early intervention

**Child Care Publications and Video**  
2 hour videotape of videoconference: Achieving High Quality Child Care. (\$29.95 plus \$3 s/h) (142-page set of 25 different fact sheets \$12.50 plus \$1 s/h)  
To order contact Connie King, Ag Pub, Univ of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83844-2240 (208)885-8936.

## PROGRAMMING IDEAS

Family Information Services  
12565 NE Jefferson St., NE, Suite 102  
Minneapolis, MN 55434 1-800-852-8112 or (612) 755-6233  
#Publishes resource book on subscription (\$159 one pkg: parent/child; youth; marriage/family; or basic parenting; \$20 for each additional) full of programming ideas, book and research reviews. Ben agreed to write for FIS so agents can get a discount.

National Council on Family Relations  
3989 Central Avenue, NE, Suite 550  
Minneapolis, MN 55421  
(612) 781-9331  
#Publishes a Family Life Education Curriculum Kit (\$30) full of ideas for teaching about relationships and family. Ben has 4 teaching ideas in it, but he's not making a cent on recommending it!

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**Wyoming Coalition on Children and Youth** is an emerging association of human service professionals oriented toward collaboration, public awareness, and public policy changes on child and family issues. Contact Norene McKay, 2424 Pioneer, Suite 101, Cheyenne 82001 (632-3496).



## PARADOXES: A PARTING THOUGHT

**"Let's Give Each Other a Break;  
We Can Handle the '90s"**

Whereas adults observe, conclude, research, commiserate, and legislate the world of children, they might do well to sit back and appreciate the world from a four year-old's day:

I know you've got to work, mom/dad, so stop apologizing for not spending the day with me--let's just have a good time when we're together.

I hate to get up early--just like you--so please wake me gently, no alarm clocks, loud voices, bright lights, or barking dogs. I'm grouchy in the morning sometimes, so let's set out my clothes and just ask if I want Cherrios or Cap'n. Crunch and we won't have to argue and cry. Remember the times you made us late for work, too.

I like the days when we go to bed a little early and get up a little early and do something special--like the time we went fishing and watched the sun come up red, or cooked breakfast together and took it to grandma on our way to daycare, or made a list of things to do this weekend...

Please, let's not forget my boots (toy, permission slip, etc.) so I can do what other kids do at daycare/preschool.

I like to have a little toy or book or something to play with on the way to daycare/preschool; it's so boring riding in the back and not being able to see out the windows....and give my brother a toy of his own so he won't fight over mine!

I want you to meet my friends at daycare/preschool. Jake thinks it's cool when you say, "Good morning, Jake."

I was afraid when I first went to daycare/preschool. I'm glad you had been there and went in on the first day.

My teacher gets mad at me when you let me off early--can you guys work something out?

I've got some ideas you need to know about my daycare/preschool, so here's my list:

I like a place where they let you play (I learn a lot by playing). I don't want someplace where I have to sit at tables, do coloring books, or write on worksheets like Jeffrey does in Fourth Grade.

I love a place where I can go where I want and do lots of different things--blocks and drawing and pretend monsters and sand table and making up stories and...and...(not like my cousin Anita's where the teacher makes them stay at the same table all day!)

I like my daycare/preschool 'cause it reminds me of home--a place for my coat, a cubby for my toys, the little circle where we sing and talk and laugh like a family--that's my home-away-from-home.

I like it that I can just go to the bathroom when I want. I'm not a baby who needs help and I'm not like in the army where we all have to get in a straight line and march there.

Recess--did I say I like recess. Man, I don't think I could make it without fresh air and swings and sandbox and stuff. Snacks--Boy, am I glad they have good snacks like apples, bananas, carrot cake, and juice. Those brownies and candy they used to bring gave me a tummy ache sometimes.

Oh, one last thing--nap time. We can rest if we want, but we don't have to sleep all afternoon. There are too many bad guys to catch and pictures to draw for me to waste time snoozing!

This year it's really good because we have the same teacher as when I started. Last year we had a different teacher every 3 or 4 weeks and I was afraid to make friends with them.

My teachers this year are also good because they talk to us when we want them to. All I have to do is call out, "Mrs. Green, Mr. Antero," and they're not too busy to come over. I like my teachers 'cause they don't spank us, either. When we break the rules, they talk to us and we clean it up or take time out to calm down or apologize to our classmate.

I feel really important because we get to help make up some of the rules. Like the other day, two kids were playing rough and pushed me. The class talked about being safe and getting along and we wrote down that we didn't want pushing or calling names. We use our words and say, "That hurts me" or "I'll share it as soon as I'm done."

I think Mrs. Green is nice, 'cause she has special things for Mandy and Richard, the kids on crutches. I was afraid of them at first, but I found out they are fun to play with.

It's kind of nice to relax at the end of the day and read with you or Mr. Antero before we go home. He reads the same story to me every day just 'cause I ask.

That's another thing--I know what's going to happen every day and I can think about circle time and story time and free play and recess and snack and what I'm going to do.

When we get home, I'm just trying to have fun--so getting dirty, being loud, breaking things once in a while--that's just being four. I'm really not trying to make your life miserable. Oh, and one more thing, mom/dad: Did I tell you I loved you today?