

STEPPING Stones

Parent & Community Based
Education for Healthy Living

SPRING 2006

CARE (Community Assessment Referral & Education) ~ (586) 541-0033 ~ www.careofmacomb.com

Remember what it was like when you were three?

It's Christmas morning. You are so excited. Everyone has come over to celebrate. Aunt Mary plants a kiss on the top of your head and pinches your cheek. Everyone has brought presents. Lots of presents. You are just starting to figure out what presents are all about. Up until now you would have rather played with boxes and empty milk jugs.

Now it's time. Everyone is watching and waiting for you to open your first present. You are excited too. I guess you are not opening it fast enough. Grandma reaches over to help. And now it's open - a play kitchen! WOW! NEAT! You start to play with a plastic hamburger. But wait. There is another present. Everyone is watching and waiting for you to open the second present. But you really just want to play with the kitchen.



Okay, okay. Rip goes the wrapping paper. This time cousin Tommy helps. Oh boy! It's playdough. You want to play with it. "No, don't open it" you're told. Here's another present. **BUT I WANT TO PLAY WITH THE PLAYDOUGH.** You wish you had the words to say "Please let me move at my own pace. Can't I open one present and enjoy it? And then another and enjoy it too? It may take me several hours to open and enjoy each gift. Wouldn't that be great?"

Instead you start crying, frustrated with the chaotic activity. Everyone is getting loud and telling you to open more, faster. Don't do this. Don't do that. Give Uncle Bob a kiss. Say thank you.

And on and on the morning goes. If only you had the words...

Letter to a school counselor

Dear Counselor,

I hope you remember my son, Timothy Laske, who is now 21. If you do, you'll remember a boy who always had a big smile to go along with his reddish brown hair, freckles and glasses. I am writing because Timothy had some learning challenges, but as his school counselor, you always spoke highly of him and would reassure me that he would be fine.

Timothy is now an Assistant Producer for Event Solutions, Inc. working with the Mercedes/BMW Car Show that travels across the United States. His strengths in "life skills" are, what I believe, the tolls that have gotten him this far. As I drove him to the airport I thought of you. Here he is with his briefcase, dressy casual clothes and his "organized" 3-ring binder - a far cry from the disorganized ADD student you believed so much in.

I believe that my years of learning and working with the STEP Parenting Program at CARE really paid off for Tim and me. It helped me keep my faith in him and focus on his strengths while still holding him accountable. It also helped me raise an independent, capable young man despite his learning struggles.

I hope that you will share Tim's story with the other counselors. Students like Tim need more counselors like you! Parents also need tools and education so please encourage your fellow staff to recommend parenting workshops to them. The CARE website - www.careofmacomb.com, always shows the most current workshops available as well as other community events.

I hope you know you are making a difference - you sure did with my child.

If you would like to receive the Stepping Stones newsletter via email, please send your email address along with your name to ctaylor@careofmacomb.com and we will add you to our list!

MYTHS & FACTS About Bullying

MYTH: Bullies have a low self-esteem.

FACT: Bullies actually suffer from an elevated self-esteem characterized through arrogant displays of behavior. Studies show they are frequently better connected socially, are less depressed or lonely than most youth.

MYTH: Bullying is mainly a behavior from boys.

FACT: Girls can be equally mean by using grouping intimidation, isolation or rumors to achieve power over others. While these methods of bullying can be subtle, they are just as destructive as name calling or more physical methods.

MYTH: The bully usually discards his/her negative behavior by the time they reach adulthood.

FACT: Studies show that bullying children and teens become bullying adults.

How can you help?

- ◆ Ask your school to establish strong anti-bullying policies and insist on an atmosphere of respect.
- ◆ Make bullying a talkable subject. Make sure your children know that the use of subtle forms of manipulation are considered to be bullying tactics.
- ◆ Assure your child that adults can and will help if bullying occurs in their life.

When was the last time you thought it was important to spend lots of time making sure your kids' spelling words were done correctly? How much time did you spend with them studying?

Lets spend the same amount of time telling your kids about drugs and alcohol. Talk to them about what you like about them. Maybe talk about healthy bodies and healthy foods. Take a walk. Drug and alcohol use is escalating and it affects EVERYONE'S LIFE! Spend a few minutes each day talking about prevention...it only takes as long as studying for a spelling test and it's important.

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Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the only iprmoatnt tihng in taht the frist and lsat ltteers be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not rad ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh? Yaeh and I awlyas touhgt spleling was ipmorantt.

Now computers have spell check...if only drug and alcohol use could be stopped that easily. If only we could build children's faith in themselves with the touch of a button. Lets remember what is really important when we spend time with our children. Lets not pass disfunction on to another generation We all know there are problems with substances, bring it out of the closet, look it in the face and say STOP! This is more important than correctly spelling words!

Jennifer Hoffman, Mother and CARE Volunteer

PROJECT FOCUS

Once again, CARE has received funding from the Department of Human Resources to host a **FREE** 14-session workshop to support families who are concerned about a loved one who is addicted to alcohol or other drugs. Children ages 6 - 12 will enjoy group support, education and fun while mom, dad or caregiver are down the hall in their group learning as well. Free childcare is also provided for children ages 3-5 years old. CARE uses the Department of Health and Human Services researched "Supportive Education for Children of Addicted Parents" curriculum for this workshop. A pizza and pop dinner is also provided at each **FREE** session. Please call Paddy Laske, Special Projects Coordinator for times, dates and locations at (586) 541-0033, ext 216 or visit our CARE website for more details at www.careofmacomb.com

Bits from Barb ♥ ♥ ♥

Barb Browe, Community Services Director

On Being Mom (and Dad)

All my babies are grown up now. If not for the photographs, I might have a hard time believing they were ever so little. Those sweet faces, those baby blue eyes and the adorable accents that would have made you believe we lived in New York City.

I say this not in sorrow, but in disbelief. I take great satisfaction in what I have today. An accountant, an advertiser and a Director of Operations. Three people who read the same books I do and have learned to not be afraid of disagreeing with me.

It seems like yesterday I had three children under the age of three. Today they organize corporate America and travel the world on business. I wonder if they recall those in their lives that put spoonfuls of food into their little mouths and zipped their jackets. Like the trick soap I bought for the bathroom with a rubber ducky at its center, the baby is buried deep within each of them, barely discernible except through the unreliable haze of the past.

Every part of raising children is humbling, too. Believe me, mistakes were made and have been enshrined in the "Remember-When-Mom-Did Hall of Fame". The outbursts, the temper tantrums, the bad language... mine, not theirs. The numerous crazy rules and outrageous consequences. What was I thinking? The biggest mistake is one that most of us make while raising children. I did not live in the moment enough. This is clear to me now that the moment is gone and I have mostly photographs.

There is a picture of the three of them stretched out on the living room floor. I wish I could remember what we talked about that evening. I wish I had not been in such a hurry to finish dinner, take baths, read a story and get to bed. I wish I had treasured the doing a little more and getting it done a little less.

I can remember worrying about my three year old twins not talking yet and wondering if something was wrong. The two of them just met in London following business meetings around the world. Trust me, they can talk just fine.

As a parent educator, I often spoke of "stepping back" and I was sometimes "over the top." And look how it all turned out. I would up with the three people I like best in the world, who have done more than everything to make my life worthwhile.

Treasure the moments. And make sure to take pictures.

"STUFF" DOESN'T BUY HAP- PINESS



A survey distributed by Synovate, a market research firm reports that kids want parents, not friends. While 43% of parents surveyed that they want to be their children's best friend, while 65% of the kids say their parents try too hard to be their friend. The study reveals that parents who want to be their children's best friend attempt to do so by buying them anything they want and not setting and enforcing reasonable rules. Only 10% of those children surveyed report that they intend to give their own



Macomb County's 11th Annual Parenting Conference

Saturday, March 4, 2006
8:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.



Sterling Inn Banquet &
Conference Center
34911 Van Dyke Road
(at 15 Mile Road)

Keynote Speakers:

Michigan's First Gentleman
Mr. Daniel Mulhern

*How Michigan Supports the "Career" of Parenting
&*

Mr. David Walsh, Ph.D.

Impact on the Media & Family

Cost is \$30 per person
Includes Continental Breakfast and Lunch

For registration please call 586-541-0033
or visit our website at www.careofmacomb.com



Calendar of Events

FASD Support Group

Raising children with FASD
2nd Monday of every month
6:00 - 8:30 pm

MARCH

National Mentoring Month
www.mentoring.com

March 4

11th Annual Macomb County Parenting Conference titled "Home Improvement" will be held at the Sterling Inn Banquet & Conference Center. Call 586-541-0033 for more information or to purchase tickets!

APRIL

Month of the Young Child & Alcohol Awareness Month

MAY

National Foster Care Month
www.fostercaremonth.org

May 21

4th Annual Tea at the Sterling Inn. Featuring Haywood Smith, author of "The Red Hat Club." Call 586-541-0033 for more information or to purchase tickets!

May 24

3rd Annual Summer Safety Fest. Call Barb Browe at 586-541-0033 for more information.

A Great Big Thanks!

We ask that you please support the following businesses that have donated to CARE:

Buca di Beppo

12575 Hall Road, Utica
586-803-9463

Macomb County Literacy Program

St. Maximillian & St. Francis of Assisi Church

Bittner Chiropractic Center
37316 Schoenherr, Sterling Heights
586-978-8088

teenintervene

Teen Intervene is a program for youth, ages 12-19 who are suspected of experiencing mild or moderate problems associated with alcohol or other drug use. Parents and school districts can refer youth to CARE to take part in the program.

Teen Intervene is a research based program, developed by the Hazelden Foundation, and offers school districts an opportunity to refer youth in lieu of suspension.

A three-part parent session is run simultaneously and is mandatory for teen participation. Call 586-541-0033 for more information.

CARE (Community Assessment Referral and Education) is dedicated to the prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use disorders.

Federal and State funding has been provided through Macomb County Mental Health/Office of Substance Abuse to support project costs.

Recipients of substance use services have rights protected by state and federal law and promulgated rules. For information, contact CARE Recipient Rights Advisor, 31900 Utica Road, MI 48026, (586) 541-0033 or State Recipient Rights Coordinator, P.O. Box 30664, Lansing, Michigan 48909.

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