



PRACTICAL PARENTING PARTNERSHIPS
Working Together for Our Children

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM PPP

by Janet Shepard, Director

Practical Parenting Partnerships has a lot to be grateful for as we come to the end of 2009. When we were first cut from the state budget, we projected that we had sufficient funds to sustain our work through the end of December. By closing the center and working from home, scheduling some contract work, being very conservative with travel and more, we now have funds to survive for at least a portion of 2010. We continue to seek and apply for new grants and use our very limited funds as judiciously as possible.

We want to thank those of you who have continued to support us by ordering resource materials, attending regional meeting, scheduling on site workshops or sending folks to training. Our experience of the past two years has certainly taught us not to take anything for granted. These experiences of loss and change have served to make us mindful of the nation's economic troubles and how this impacts education, communities and families.

The holidays are a time of celebration and sharing, a time for families and friends to be together, a time when those of us who like to cook fix our special candies, cookies and other favorite recipes. It is also a time of paradox. The holidays are a time when it must be especially hurtful if you cannot afford to feed or provide a home for your family, a time when it must be hardest to be separated from loved ones by war or incarceration. Marian Wright Edelman, President of Children's Defense Fund expresses similar thoughts in [A Thanksgiving Prayer to End Poverty in Our Time](#). If you have not previously read this, I hope you will now.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND ONE OF THE 2009-1010 PPP REGIONAL WORKSHOPS!

The topic for this year's regional workshops is organizing, maximizing and utilizing school volunteer programs. These workshops will support schools in their efforts to utilize volunteers, especially in the challenging times we now face. This workshop will explore the value of volunteer programs, discuss how to establish a program, strengthen volunteer skills, look at working with students, teachers, and parents, review management and legal issues and provide tips and resources. The workshop should be attended by:

- school staff members and/or volunteers who are interested in taking the information back and training volunteers in their school community;
- volunteers interested in receiving training.

Participants will receive a training notebook. Come join us and others in your region for support in strengthening parent and community involvement in your school, thus improving education for students!

Follow the link for registration:

[Click Here for PPP 2009-10 Regional Flyer](#)

PPP CENTER UPDATE

by Janet Shepard, Director

Happy Holidays to you, the rest of the staff, students and their families!

As you finish up your holiday shopping, please remember that purchases made from Amazon through our [website](#) will generate funding for our Founder's Award. Just click on the Amazon button on the right hand side of the home page. If your holiday plans include travel, you can support our partner, Missouri KidsFirst, by reserving hotel nights at [Drury Hotels](#). Reservations must be made through this link.

PPP was pleased to be included in the 2009 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity in October. A team of collaborative partners which form the Bright Futures team were nominated by the Marjorie Cole School Nurse Supervisor with the Department of Health and Senior Services for the award. You will find details in the article below which was written by Lori Buchanan with DHSS. PPP presented a session on parent involvement at one of the series of regional meetings referred to in the article.

2009 Governor's Award

Missouri's Bright Futures Team recently received the 2009 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity for their efforts in addressing a public health approach to mental health.

Approximately 20 percent of children and adolescents suffer from mental health problems that result in mild functional impairments, and an estimated 10 percent have moderate to severe impairments. Less than 50 percent of these children receive adequate, or any, services. To address this public health problem, the Departments of Health and Senior Services and Mental Health invited local leaders from mental health, schools, and public health to common tables in regional settings.

The Missouri Bright Futures Project sought to engage communities to use a public health model to prevent mental illness and plan for the healthy physical, social and emotional development of children with mental illnesses. The Missouri Bright Futures goals are to promote mental health in children, adolescents and their families; provide prevention, early recognition and intervention strategies in health and education settings and encourage partnerships and collaboration between professionals, families and communities.

"Over a two-year period, we had an overwhelming 800 Missourians meet to discuss mental health promotion in children within their communities," said Marjorie Cole, state school nurse consultant. "It was the first time that communities really communicated with each other and shared resources."

A state planning team was developed and is working intensively with three communities in a training academy. These three communities-Randolph, Phelps and Jasper will be Missouri's first Show Me Bright Futures communities and will serve as mentors to the next communities.

Missouri's Bright Future Team received the Governor's Award on Quality and Productivity. Janet Shepard, PPP Director joined staff members from DHSS, MSBA, MSSN, DMH, CAMHPS, Head Start, Children's Trust Fund, and Georgetown University. Photo by Larry Thomas of DHSS.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, January 6	PPP Regional Workshop – Rolla
Thursday, January 14	PPP Regional Workshop – Cape Girardeau
Thursday, February 4	PPP Regional Workshop – St Joseph
Wednesday, February 10	PPP Regional Workshop – Jefferson City
Monday, March 1	Kindergarten Transition Training – Cape Girardeau

GRANTS

by Janet Shepard, Director

Champions for Healthy Kids grant applications are due January 15. There will be 50 grants of \$10,000 each available from [Cheerios](#). Click on Cheerios to get the details.

The Spring 2010 cycle of **Lowe's Toolbox for Education** is now open. The deadline for submitting applications for this grant cycle is 5pm EST, February 12, 2010. However, if 1,500 applications are received before the application deadline, then the application process will close. To get started, click on the [Lowe's Toolbox for Education](#) website. Fall 2009 cycle applicants will be notified via email as to the status of their grant application by the end of January 2010. (copied from Lowe's Toolbox for Education website.)

At PPP we have been watching the process closely as Missouri's team prepares its **Race to the Top** state grant application due in January. You can follow the process, submit ideas and view the recent webinars on DESE's special web page for the project at <http://dese.mo.gov/rt3/>.

PPP is also seeking and writing grant applications for funds to sustain our work. We are most appreciative when you can include funding requests in the grant applications you submit to support your work with PPP or to begin working with us for the first time. We are happy to provide any supporting documentation you might need from us.

FACILITATION TIPS

by Janet Shepard, Director

Some topics are much harder than others to facilitate in workshops. Some topics are so difficult, that it is hard to imagine that we even need to offer workshops on the topic. Child sexual abuse is one of those topics. Two opportunities in 2009 helped me to understand the importance of talking about this topic in schools.

First I was in a planning meeting with educational service providers for a large Schools of the 21st Century program. One of those providers shared about their work in talking with children about sexual abuse. Hearing about the numbers of children who ask to speak privately with them after they make a presentation was astounding to me.

Secondly, our new partners, Missouri KidsFirst offer the [Stewards of Children](#) training in Missouri and asked me to become a trained facilitator. I attended a two-hour regional meeting on the topic. I was saddened to learn that statistically one in four of all girls and one in six of all boys will be victims of sexual abuse. Most will be the victims of someone they know such as a family member, a neighbor, a youth group leader, or someone else who has their trust. I then attended an all day facilitator training session and learned how to present a workshop.

I am now convinced that we all must begin to talk in our schools and in our communities about how to protect our children from sexual abuse. We have added this topic to our list of professional development topics. We would especially like to schedule this workshop in your community in April.

Missouri KidsFirst has committed to offer a Stewards of Children workshop every day during the month of April. April is, of course, child abuse prevention month. PPP has committed to help Missouri KidsFirst meet or exceed their goal. We will be talking in future issues about other ways you can observe Prevent Child Abuse Month, but may we schedule your Stewards of Children workshop now? The cost is \$20 per person with a minimum of 25 participants preferred. E-mail [Janet](#) with questions or to schedule a workshop in your community.

HOME VISIT

by Janet Shepard, Director

At the recent Coordinated School Health Conference we featured some of the home visit resource notebooks which we thought would be useful to school nurses and social workers. Featured topics included *Grief and Loss, Sexuality, Hygiene and Health Issues, Safety Issues, Violence, and Drug and Alcohol Abuse*. Many of the other notebooks would also be useful to school nurses and social workers.

A school social worker who was attending the conference and who saw the notebooks wanted to know how she could add them to her set. Her question served as a reminder to me that we may not have mentioned these extra sets of materials recently. All sets are still currently available and may be ordered from PPP. For those who have already attended PPP Home Visit Training, the materials may simply be ordered by using the form on our [website](#). The materials are available to those schools which have attended training.

Nurses and social workers typically have both classroom and clinical training as home visitors as a part of their college course work, but many still find our training useful because the focus is on school based home visiting. We are currently surveying for interest in home visit training to be scheduled this school year. If you are interested or would like more information, please complete this [brief survey](#). We are continuing to offer home visit training at a special price.

SITE NEWS

by Janet Shepard, Director

Backpack programs providing food for our students over weekends and school breaks have become common in virtually every school district in our state and in every state in the nation. PPP Trainer Francine Nichols and the Moberly School District where Francine works as Home School Communicator were featured recently in an article on [CNN.com](#).

The holiday season is a great time to boost stock for backpack programs. Peanut butter was added to Janet's grocery shopping list for today to support high school students at School of the Osage as they try to collect 300 jars of peanut butter before the holiday break. The pantry, which supplies the food for the school's distribution of 70 packs per week, is out of peanut butter.

Projects such as this provide a good opportunity to incorporate service learning. You can read more about the service learning concept on [DESE's website](#). There are even mini grants for student created projects.

PPP Is sustained by a fee structure, contracts and grants with major funding from the U. S. Department of Education Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC).

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HOLIDAY FUN FOR THE FAMILY

by Shelly Lock, Program Development Coordinator

The holidays can be a fun season for the whole family. Along with the joy often comes stress and busyness for parents. Perhaps your family could turn some of the stress and hustle and bustle into great family time together. Rather than just getting through your task list, try including the children and turn those things that have to get done into family activities. Writing out cards together, making home made gifts, baking cookies and decorating the home as a family, bring pleasure and pride to all. Here are a few ideas:

- Christmas cards with a personal touch: Create your own holiday cards out of construction paper decorated with cut-outs, glitter, handprints, photos, and more to give them the personal touch.
- Popcorn ball ornaments: Make or buy popcorn balls then embellish them with mini M&Ms, colored sprinkles, and other candies, using icing as the glue. Can be hung for decoration or gobbled up!
- Photo in a lid ornament: Using a jar lid (such as a pickle jar), paint the lid on the outside, add glitter to make it sparkle, use a hammer and nail to put a hole through the lid and, glue a photo inside the lid. Tie a ribbon through the hole to hang. This ornament brings back memories each year it is hung.
- Sock stockings: Make your own stocking out of socks belonging to each family member. Decorate the socks with glitter, ribbon, sequins, beads, and more. Add names with paint pens. Hang on the mantle ready for goodies.
- Bejeweled pretzel rods: Dip large pretzel rods into melted white chocolate then sprinkle with colored sugar and sprinkles. Stand pretzels upright in a cup with the decorated end up to serve.
- Snowman cheese ball: Using your own recipe for a cheese ball, form the cheese ball into 2 or 3 balls. Stack the balls to build a snowman. Decorate the snowman with chocolate chips and mini M&Ms for buttons, eyes and mouth. Top with a mini cracker for the hat.
- Secret elf game: Draw names in the family but keep the name you get a secret. For a week, do nice deeds for the person whose name you drew. Proceed sneakily. At the end of the week, see who figured out their secret elf.
- Holiday shirts: Make shirts to wear during the holidays from t-shirts painted with fabric paint and decked out with jewels or other items glued on with fabric glue. Have fun wearing your hand made shirts to family gatherings.

As you spend time together, think about the traditions you are establishing. These family activities are what your children will remember long after they forget the purchased gifts they received. Pass on your family beliefs, rituals, and history. Enjoy laughter, share stories, and most importantly, cherish this time together.