



PRACTICAL PARENTING PARTNERHIPS  
*Working Together for Our Children*

*Volume 15, Issue 3  
November 2010*

## AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

by Janet Shepard, Director

November 14-20 is American Education Week with two major teacher organizations providing easy to use themes and resources designed to help schools celebrate the week. PPP was pleased to see that both the Missouri State Teacher Association (MSTA) and Missouri National Education Association (MNEA) emphasize the importance of parent involvement as a part of their American Education Week promotional materials. MSATA has the following suggestions:

*You and your CTA can use American Education Week to:*

- *Acquaint the public with successful programs, activities and teaching techniques in your school.*
- *Increase public understanding of the needs and problems of American education.*
- *Secure community support for measures that will improve public schools.*
- *Help students recognize the importance of American education.*
- *Improve staff morale and enthusiasm.*
- *Increase parental involvement.*

The above information was taken from their website and additional information, tips and templates appear on the [Missouri State Teacher Association](#) website. [MNEA](#) also has resources on their web site. They encourage schools to celebrate a special group of educational supporters each day. PPP has added some ideas to their list of designated days as follows:

Monday November 15 – Open House Day – *if you have not yet welcomed families into the school this is the perfect time to do so. If you have yet to survey families for this year, you might have computer stations where parents could complete a short on-line survey or ask some volunteers to interview parents as they enter or leave the building.*

Tuesday November 16 -- Parents Day -- *the idea is to give parents the opportunity during the day to observe classroom instruction or to participate in learning activities. If an open door policy allowing parents to observe at any time already exists, you may want to remind parents how that works. Displayed work might be to labeled the correlating grade level expectation.*

Wednesday November 17 -- Education Support Professionals Day -- *What a great day to celebrate parent liaisons and the terrific work they do building relationships with families to improve the academic success of our students. There are many other support professionals who guide, nurture, and protect our students including office staff, cafeteria workers, health professionals, specials services paraprofessionals, custodial staff and bus drivers just to name a few. All of these folks also help schools foster strong relationships with the community and with families.*

Thursday November 18 -- Educator for a day -- *Community helpers, career day, VIP luncheons, guest readers, adopt a school partners are some of the ways a school might recognize an educator for the day. Elections are over and what a great opportunity to invite newly elected state senators and representatives to visit your school before they begin their work in Jefferson City in January.*

Friday November 19 -- Substitute Educators Day – *Perhaps at least a portion of your substitute educators are parent leaders in your community. They also can share with you a perspective of the climate and culture of the school which is an important component of relationship building. Can substitute educators help you take a fresh look at your school? Please also thank them for doing what can be a very difficult job.*

PPP is proud to serve as a resource to public schools all over the state of Missouri and to several schools in thirteen other states. We salute each and every one of you for educating our children and building partnerships with the families of our children. Please let us know ways we can improve our support and service to you. Thank you for allowing us to work for you!

## PPP CENTER UPDATE

by Janet Shepard, Director

November finds both Janet and Shelly busy offering professional development and training. Regional meetings are in full swing, with many locations remaining. If you have not yet attended, we hope you will register and join Shelly and colleagues from schools in your area for *Staying Focused on the Mission: Strengthening Family Engagement*.

St Louis Public Schools are hosting PPP Implementation training December 14 and 15. The training is open to other schools. Beginning with this training, we will make a procedural change for PPP Certified School status. We previously asked you to apply for this status. Now we will award the banner at the training where an administrator and at least one other team member attend the training together. The logo for website, letterhead and more will be e-mailed shortly after training to qualifying schools. The certified facilitator pin will also be awarded at the conclusion of training along with a certificate.



It is been a gratifying year so far with good participation at regional meetings, home visit training and with work scheduled in districts. A tip of the PPP umbrella to Doniphan R-I for scheduling five professional development workshops with us, to Warrior Ridge Elementary in Warren Co R-III and to Gotsch Intermediate in Affton 101 for scheduling family nights led by PPP, and to Licking R-VIII for the large resource order!

While this year is going well, we are keeping our eyes on next year. The Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC) grant program from the US Department of Education will end in September and that is currently our main source of funding. We invite you to help us think about sustainability for PPP. The participation, orders, training requests and more tell us that PPP still has a place in supporting the work you do with the families of your students. We have posted [a funding survey](#) and hope you will take few minutes to complete it.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- November 14 – 20 American Education Week
- November 14 – 12 [National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week](#)
- November 16 [St. Joseph: RPDC](#)
- November 25 Happy Thanksgiving!
- November 30 [Cape Girardeau: RPDC](#)
- December 3 [St. Louis - Parents As Teachers National Center](#)
- December 7 [Springfield: Burrell Behavioral Health Center](#)
- December 14 – 15 St. Louis [PPP Implementation Training](#)
- January 11, 2011 [Macon: RPDC](#)
- January 12, 2011 [Jefferson City - Cole County MU Extension Center](#)
- January 20, 2011 [Kansas City: RPDC](#)

## HOME VISIT HISTORY AND STORIES

by Janet Shepard, Director

PPP began offering home visit training in 1998 for K-12 school based home visitors. We developed the materials and created the training at the request of Missouri educators. Even Start educators wanted PPP materials in a format more suitable for home visits. A middle school counselor in Springfield, who was a former PAT educator and who later became a PPP trainer, dreamed of visiting every student before school began in the fall. An advisory panel, including representatives from these two groups and other experienced home visitors, helped us shape the training and identify the topics for the resource notebooks.

PPP wasn't the first organization in the nation to recommend home visits with families of school age children, but we were, I believe, the first to offer widespread training. Since that time other trainings have been developed. The most notable is presented by an organization in Sacramento which began making visits as the result of a 1996 meeting between a school principal and an angry parent. This meeting which evolved into the *Parent Teacher Home Visit Project* began their visits without a systematic training, but they have since created one.

The *Parent Teacher Home Visit Project* is featured on the National Education Association [website](#). If your school or individual teachers are considering making home visits, this web article will provide some basic information. It also shares many personal stories of school based home visitors. There is additional food for thought in the comment section and space for you to share your own experiences or questions.

## FACILITATION TIPS – FREE AND BARGAIN RESOURCES

by Janet Shepard, Director

Cherisse Thibaut with **Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)** has been working with students on digital citizenship and I asked her to share a little bit about that work with you.

In this day and age youth are constantly hearing the word DON'T – especially when it comes to their digital activities. While DON'T messages are often times appropriate, it is also important to teach youth the things they CAN DO online. Below is a list of affirmations that youth can use to show others how they practice safe, legal, and ethical behavior online.

*I open doors to my future by posting pictures and words that I want my peers, parents, and school to see.*

*I understand that if it is in the digital world it is not private, therefore, I am careful when posting my name, contact information and pictures.*

*I protect my password.*

*I understand that I have the right to use technology without being threatened or harassed.*

*I use technology to help others and myself. I stand with my friends against cyberbullying.*

*If I meet someone online that threatens me, sends me things or makes me keep secrets, I will talk to an adult.*

To inquire about receiving **Digital Citizen Identification Cards** for youth please visit [www.mosaferonline.org](http://www.mosaferonline.org)

PPP needs to recoup some of our investment in marketing and resource materials and we need to empty a storage unit in November. To encourage you to help us meet our goals, we are offering some great deals! Please check the [PPP Sale order](#) form on the resource page of the website. Some items are of limited availability. Please note that you will be invoiced for actual shipping costs on these items or you may pick them up. We will deliver if we are in your community. Items offered at a reduced price are umbrellas, *What Does That Mean?* PPP Guide to School Terms for Parents and Volunteers, *Promoting Math and Science in Everyday Life*, conference bags suitable for take home activity bags.

## **REENERGIZING – STRENGTHENING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

by Shelly Lock, Program Development Coordinator

The 2010-2011 PPP Regional workshops are off to a fantastic start! Our topic this year: *Staying Focused on the Mission: Strengthening Family Engagement* is drawing a mix of participants including administrators, teachers, counselors, Title I staff, and more. Discussions focus on how family engagement is more than planned events and can evolve into supporting parents in helping their child learn, connecting with *all* parents, relationship building, coordinating the many parent involvement efforts going on in schools, and motivating and empowering parents and staff members.

The following are reflections and goals shared by participants from the first three regional workshops:

- I'm going to share a tip of the week with parents for supporting learning.
- Home visits are a good idea for relationship building.
- I liked the different ideas provided to get more parental involvement.
- I plan to provide my staff with information gained from this workshop to get everyone refocused on the value of parent involvement.
- We plan to explore staff beliefs about parents.
- You have motivated me to empower parents.
- I am always inspired by these regional workshops with new approaches and thoughts.
- I really like the emphasis on valuing parents and their perspectives.
- Collaboration of paper work and events when it comes to parent involvement makes sense.
- I gained good ideas for Title I parent involvement.
- I will try to combine PTO and other school-family events.
- It is helpful to look at parent assumptions.
- Loved the idea of giving parents index cards at family nights to jot down thoughts to take home with them.
- I will combine the Title I parent meeting with other activities.

- Take home activity bags are a great way to promote learning in the home.
- I love all of the new ideas to get parents involved.
- I am reminded of the many benefits of parent involvement for everyone.
- I plan to give more specific information and ideas to parents.
- I like the idea of a parent bulletin board with activities for the week and handouts.
- All parents can support learning regardless of their education.
- I feel very encouraged!

Below are the locations and dates for the regional workshop still to come. Visit the PPP website for registration information. Please join us at a regional and get reenergized to make a difference in student success by improving family engagement!

- November 16 [St. Joseph: RPDC](#)
- November 30 [Cape Girardeau: RPDC](#)
- December 3 [St. Louis - Parents As Teachers National Center](#)
- December 7 [Springfield: Burrell Behavioral Health Center](#)
- January 11, 2011 [Macon: RPDC](#)
- January 12, 2011 [Jefferson City - Cole County MU Extension Center](#)
- January 20, 2011 [Kansas City: RPDC](#)

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Children's Trust Fund Conference**

*April 13-15, 2011*

---

Practical Parenting Partnerships was created in 1992 by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with support from the Danforth Foundation.

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).

For information on the PPP program, please contact:

Director	Janet Shepard, 573/761-7770	<a href="mailto:jshpard@pppctr.org">jshpard@pppctr.org</a>
Program Development Coordinator	Shelly Lock, 573/761-7770	<a href="mailto:slock@pppctr.org">slock@pppctr.org</a>
Office Manager	Patty Stegemann	<a href="mailto:pppctr@pppctr.org">pppctr@pppctr.org</a>

**520 Dix Road, Suite C, Jefferson City MO 65109**

**Phone: 573/761-7770**

**Fax: 573/632-4601**



## SUPPORTED LEARNING AT HOME

By Shelly Lock, Program Development Coordinator

The 2010-2011 school year is well underway. You have likely had report cards come home, parent-teacher conferences, and perhaps a few family events at the school. How are you feeling about the school year so far? Perhaps you have concerns about your child's progress? Many parents feel challenged when it comes to helping their child do better in school. Do you feel that you do not know how to help your child with reading? Do you look at his math and feel that it is at a level beyond what you can explain? Do you wonder if you are using the best approach in helping your child with homework? These are common concerns expressed by parents.

All parents, regardless of education level, economic status, or career type CAN help their children learn. Parents are not only their child's first teacher but continue to be a proven influence on their child's success in school. Here are a few thoughts on helping your child do his or her best in school:

- Children pick up on parents' attitudes about the importance of school. When a parent expresses a negative attitude about school, children value education less. When a parent discusses school and how important a good education is, children do better.
- Parents make a statement about the importance of what is going on at school by taking time to go through their child's backpack with them or looking at papers, work, and notes that come home. Children place a greater value on these things when their parents take the time to look at and discuss them.
- Parents often make the difference on whether or not a child completes homework. By providing a quiet place for homework, enforcing time for homework as a priority in the schedule and by sitting with or talking to the child about what she has for homework, a parent reinforces the importance of school work.
- A parent can support reading skills with children in various ways: reading to a child, listening to a child read, modeling reading, and having books available for children.
- Parents can incorporate learning in the home by involving their children in daily activities such as cooking, remodeling, traveling, grocery shopping, list making, keeping a calendar and more.
- If a child has a test coming up, a parent can help foster success by listening as the child shares what will be on the test, discussing the material, encouraging a quiet time and place for studying and then following up by asking the child how he thinks he did on the test.
- Parents should get involved in their child's school. By establishing a relationship, parents and teachers can work together to support the success of the child. When parents participate in family activities with the school, they gain strategies for supporting learning in the home.
- Conversation between parent and child is a wonderful learning tool. Children become better listeners, learn to process information and respond to it, and gain insight into various topics.

If you hesitate to work with your child because you aren't sure you know the best approach, remember this. The best approach is to be involved, discuss what your child is doing, and show support. The worst approach is to not engage in helping your child because you fear you aren't doing it correctly. Keep in mind how strong your influence is as you leave impressions about the importance of education on your child by the signals you send. Parent involvement isn't just the things you do at school, but it's also what you do outside of school. These simple practices that show your child the value you place on education influence your child's success and motivation. Parent involvement is a powerful tool.