

Congregations & Early Childhood

From the Early Childhood Faith Initiative, a collaboration between Durham's Partnership for Children & End Poverty Durham

Tenth Edition

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SECTION 1: FAITH COORDINATOR NEWS

Summer is a time for R&R as well as planning for the fall. As you regenerate, take a few hours of "thinking time" for how to address early childhood programming in the fall. Add a committee on families and early childhood ministry? Add a birth to five outreach committee or a plan for one project per month? Provide feedback to me: Newsletter ideas? Lunch and Learn topics?

THANKS to Lincoln Memorial Baptist Church and Rev. Linzie Atkins for involving me in their Mother's Day service. It was a most enriching experience as Rev. Atkins exclaimed "**everyone** is a stake - holder of our children". Contact me, Winnie Morgan at 732-1524 or at winniewmorgan@juno.com to speak to your congregation or to help with planning for the fall for early childhood.

SECTION 2: RESOURCES & MATERIALS

Anna Berkley (aberkeley@communitypartnerships.org) from Community Partnerships shared the following "Five Questions to Ask Parents When Working with their Child" at the session, "Welcoming Children with Autism to Faith Classrooms". Use them when working with any young child.

1. What does your child do that makes YOU smile?
2. What does your child do that makes THEM smile? These first two questions could also be about the child's favorite activities, strengths, reason they choose the program, etc.
3. What makes your child angry or sad? The answer this question will help you understand what triggers that child's challenging behaviors (ex: loud noises, lack of structure, specific activities, being hungry, etc). Asking it this way helps parents feel more comfortable & willing to share information & gives you time to come up with solutions before a problem starts.
4. What does it look like when they get angry or sad? The answer will help you understand what you will see when the child gets angry or sad (e.g., Does the child withdraw from the group? Make a specific facial expression? Cover his ears with his hands?)
5. What should we do when that happens? The answer will help you understand any calming or soothing strategies that work for the child.

Remember that you don't always need to know a diagnosis. Getting to know the child and understanding what they need to be successful is what is important!

SECTION 3: QUOTES

My father didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it. **Clarence B. Kelland**

The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother. **T.M. Hesburg**

It is much easier to become a father than to be one. **Kent Nerburn**

Every parent is at some time the father of the unreturned prodigal, with nothing to do but keep his house open to hope. **John Ciardi**

My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person, he believed in me.
Jim Valvano

A man's children and his garden both reflect the amount of weeding done during the growing season.
Author Unknown

SECTION 4: SHARING IDEAS - Father Involvement Studies

“Studies on California mice show they have at least two things in common with human parents. First, they are both generally monogamous. Second, the presence of an involved father has a major impact on the babies: pups weigh more, their ears and eyes open earlier, and they have a great survival rate than pups that are separated from their fathers.” (The New Father by Armin A. Brott)

Dr. Anna Sarkadi (Swedish researcher) reviewed studies using different measures of father involvement including, father presence in the home, involvement in child care and direct engagement with children. They found that all but two studies reported positive effects of father involvement on a range of specific outcomes including:

- enhanced cognitive development during infancy
- better than average social functioning in childhood
- higher educational attainment
- decreased likelihood behavior problems in adolescence
- lower rates of delinquency and criminal behavior
- reduced likelihood of regular smoking (web site: Father Involvement Research Alliance)

What is your congregation doing to involve fathers with their children? Are you offering sessions for fathers to become better parents? Look for opportunities to enhance father's roles on Father's Day!

OUTREACH: According to Children's Defense Fund, a black male born in 2011 has a one in three chance of going to prison in his lifetime. What is your congregation doing to change this statistic? How are you investing today so all children can live to their full potential? Contact Mary Mathew (mary.mathew@duke.edu) to get involved with East Durham Children's Initiative (EDCI).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

www.dpfc.net/EarlyChildhoodFaithInitiative.aspx; www.endpovertydurham.org;
[Sign-up for e-news from Durham's Partnership for Children and join us on facebook!](#)

Better Brains for Babies (<http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/bbb/factSheets.php>)

To unsubscribe or for more information, contact Winnie Morgan at winniewmorgan@juno.com.

We would appreciate your feedback on this newsletter and ideas to be shared with others on birth to five and their parents in congregations. Please forward this newsletter to appropriate persons on your staff or submit their e-mail.