Parent Education in Region 4
Grand Forks, Nelson, Pembina, and Walsh Counties

The Situation
According to the 2016 Kid’s Count Data Book growing up in a low-income family can have profound effects on children. Poverty can contribute to poor health and impact cognitive, social and emotional development. Poverty also impacts parental time spent with a child, which evidence shows enhances their development.

Region 4 county data from 2016 Kids Count reports:
- 32.8% - 42.7% are eligible recipients of free or reduced price school lunch.
- 21.3% to 28.2% with children ages 0 – 17 are single parent families.
- 26.6% to 37.8% of children ages 0-17 live in low-income families (<200% of poverty).

City County Health Rankings identified 460 reports of child abuse and neglect in Region 4 in 2015.

Extension Response
Classes for parents and child care providers are designed to enhance understanding and performance of positive parenting by strengthening their knowledge and skills. Attending a series of evidence-based classes has shown a reduction in the primary risk factors of child abuse and neglect.

Referrals come from Community Violence Intervention Center, Northeast Human Service Center, Head Start, the Public Health Department, law offices, judges, schools, and area churches. The Parent Information Center at Grand Forks Public Schools partners with Extension and emails a monthly newsletter advertising classes to nearly 8000 families.

In 2016, agent Soeby offered 81 classes: 68 single classes (47 which I taught at a woman’s residential treatment facility in Grand Forks), and 13 series classes (5-6 sessions per series).

Offerings in 2015-2016 included:
- Parenting the Love and Logic Way
- The Nurtured Heart Approach
- How Much Is Enough?
- Helping Your Child Control Anger
- Baby Signs
- Parents Forever
- Conscious Discipline

Impacts
From July 2015 to September 2016, 618 people received direct parent education, including 15% minority population and 38.1% single/divorced.

Of the participants completing the Protective Factor’s and Parent Education Participant Survey:
- 89% of participants agreed that this program has helped them improve their parenting skills.
- 87% said after participation in class their ability to move forward and solve issues they are facing improved.

A statistically significant effect (p<.001) occurred in the following results.
- A decrease from 61% to 48% to the statement “When I discipline my child, I lose control.”
- A decrease from 63% to 58% to the statement “There are times I don’t know what to do as a parent.”
- A decrease from 68% to 56% to the statement “My child misbehaves just to upset me.”

Participant Feedback
- “What I liked most about this program is that I can relate to the others and not have the feeling I’m alone, and that there is help to learn how to change my actions to help my child.”
- “Being able to attend this with my husband was extremely helpful.”
- “The childcare provided was awesome. We were very pleased with the workers.”
- “I am using the Nurtured Heart Approach when my children visit. Our relationship is changing for the better.”

Public Value Statement
Parents, grandparents and child care providers can decrease the risk of child abuse by learning proven methods of positive parenting which improves relationships with children.

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