

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

NDSU EXTENSION
SERVICE

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Parent Education in SW North Dakota

Reporting Period October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

The Situation

Parent Education is identified as a need in southwest North Dakota by families, schools, human service workers, and community agencies. High levels of stress in uncertain economics times, absence of local family support, and lack in knowledge of typical child development are risk factors to families. Some parents may be at risk for child maltreatment or other poor child outcomes because their own rearing was not positive. 2017 ND KIDS COUNT Fact Book reports 252 child abuse and neglect reports (FFY 2016) in 8 southwest ND counties. There were 448 suspected victims of child abuse and neglect with 125 victims in these cases where services were required, which is higher than the ND state average.

Extension Response

The NDSU Extension Service, in collaboration with Dickinson Public Schools, provides parent education through the West Dakota Parent & Family Resource Center (WDPFRC) to:

- Build and reinforce positive parenting skills.
- Strengthen parent-child relationships.
- Promote age-appropriate care to enhance a child's health, development and social emotional skills.
- Conduct research-based parent education.
- Serve 8 counties in SW North Dakota.

Funding from ND Department of Human Services—Community Based Child Abuse Prevention grant and local community partnerships support these educational sessions:

- Without cost to families.
- Offered in families' home communities.
- With on-site childcare during sessions.
- Offering a meal when resources allow.
- Reducing barriers for families to attend.
- As part of the ND Parent Education Network.

Parents obtain knowledge and skills to create safe, stable and nurturing environments with primary prevention education. WDPFRC conducted 33 parent education programs (most as multi-session series) in 203 direct parent contact hours with 442 participants (some returning for multiple sessions).

Impacts

"Of all the things that influence a child's growth and development, the most critical is reliable, responsive, and sensitive parenting" (Lurie-Hurvitz, 2009).

- 90% indicate the program helped them improve their parenting skills.
- 89% state they know how to help their child learn.
- 98% indicate they are able to soothe their children when they are upset
- 99% say they are happy being with their child.

Feedback

"These classes have had a huge impact on me and how I interact with my children."

"Attending the series of classes has given me greater confidence in how I parent and better options in raising my children."

"The things I have learned and now use are helping me to be the parent I really wanted to be."

Public Value Statement

Child abuse prevention is cost effective both from the standpoint of the instructional costs as well as the human toll and later life costs to society. \$1 spent on early childhood programming saves \$10 - \$16 dollars in prisons, police, welfare and other services. (Art Rolnick-former federal reserve).

Primary Contact

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Non-Extension Collaborators

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