

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 E. Boulevard Ave. - Dept. 325, Bismarck N.D. 58505

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Contacts: LuWanna Lawrence at 701-328-1892 or Heather Steffl at 701-328-4933

Parent Education Network offers resources to help strengthen parenting skills and families

Bismarck, N.D. – Being a parent can be both a rewarding and challenging experience. It is not uncommon for parents to need a little help along the way. The North Dakota State University Extension Service, the North Dakota Department of Human Services, along with other public and private partners offer various programs, resources and training opportunities through the North Dakota Parent Education Network.

“Parents and caregivers need to know they are not alone. Information and support are available to help with child issues they may be struggling with or just with general parenting questions,” said Marlys Baker, child protection services administrator for the department. “This support builds parents’ confidence, and helps them pass that confidence on to their children.”

The network consists of seven Parent Resource Centers located in Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Langdon, Mandan, Minot and Valley City. Parents and caregivers can access a resource lending library equipped with books and DVDs on general parenting, divorce and blended families, and “Love and Logic” parenting materials, along with other topics for self-study. Also available are *Take and Learn Topic* bags, support groups, newsletters and other educational materials for parents and other family members. A majority of these services are available at no cost to families.

Baker said nearly 3,000 parents and caregivers received parent education and programming through the North Dakota Parent Education Network last year. Learn more at www.ag.ndsu.edu/pen.

In addition, family-based parent education classes are also available. One program showing very positive results with families is the *Nurturing Parenting Program*. Trained facilitators guide families through a 16-week program, which features different training modules each week to address a different parenting issue. Participants complete a weekly self-assessment that helps measure their family’s progress and success with the program. The *Nurturing Parenting Program* is also offered at no cost to families and is funded by the Department of Human Services.

Amy Tichy, *Nurturing Parenting Program* coordinator said, “Based on feedback from over 250 participants last year and the results of a pre- and post-class inventory, the program had significant impact on families. Among the benefits, parents gained child development knowledge, learned alternatives to physical punishment, and became more empathetic as a result of their participation.”

For more information on the *Nurturing Parenting Program*, call 701-845-6652, toll-free 855-NURT1ND (855-687-8163), or visit www.ndnurturing.org.

Parents and caregivers who are not able to attend face-to-face classes can also benefit from over 20 online independent learning opportunities on various parent and family topics geared towards newborns to adolescents. These online offerings have been reviewed by parent educators for quality and accuracy, and vary in length and cost.

For a complete list of independent learning opportunities, visit <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pen/for-coordinators/independent-learning-for-parents>.

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