

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services  
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Bismarck ND 58505**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 30, 2015**

For information, contact: LuWanna Lawrence at 701-328-1892 or Heather Steffl at 701-328-4933.

## **Nurturing Parenting Programs: Building Stronger Family Relationships**

BISMARCK, N.D. – Parents with children birth to age 12 can now enroll in Nurturing Parenting Programs that will be held in nine North Dakota communities beginning in January. Nurturing Parenting Programs are family-based parent education classes that help parents strengthen their parenting and nurturing skills through interactive dialogue and engagement with other parents.

The Nurturing Parenting Programs will be offered in Belcourt, Bismarck, Devils Lake, Fargo, Harvey, Jamestown, Minot, Valley City, and Williston.

“These classes give parents the tools they need to parent children in a positive, nurturing way, which will ultimately help prevent child abuse and neglect,” said Marlys Baker, child protection services administrator with the North Dakota Department of Human Services. “Children also attend with their parents so the entire family can benefit from the experience.”

Certified facilitators guide families through a 16-week program, which features different training modules each week to address a different parenting issue. Some topics include understanding a child’s growth and development, establishing nurturing family routines, building self-worth, managing and communicating feelings, developing family rules, managing anger and stress, understanding healthy ways to discipline, and more.

The classes are conducted in a group setting with separate parent and child sessions and a family time activity. Participants complete a weekly self-assessment that helps measure their family’s progress and success with the program. A nutritious meal is also provided each week and transportation assistance is available with prior approval.

The Nurturing Parenting Programs also measure a participant’s growth and feedback.

“The greatest change parents report is an increase in their understanding of their children’s needs, which leads them to respond in a more loving, respectful way,” said Amy Tichy, statewide Nurturing Parenting Programs coordinator with North Dakota State University Extension Service. “This shows we are investing well in the future of our children and families.”

The North Dakota Department of Human Services contracts with the North Dakota State University Extension Service to offer the Nurturing Parenting Programs. The programs are offered at no cost to families.

To register or for more information on the programs being offered in cities throughout North Dakota, call 701-845-6652, toll free 855-NURTND (855-687-8163), or visit [www.ndnurturing.org](http://www.ndnurturing.org).

Additional parenting information is also available through the North Dakota Parent Education Network at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/pen](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pen) and Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota at [www.pcand.org](http://www.pcand.org).

###