

Devereux Early Childhood Newsletter: Spring 2008

This edition and past newsletters available for download from www.devereuxearlychildhood.org



Letter from the DECI Director

"Bringing Communities Together for Children-Children Bringing Communities Together" was the NAEYC theme for April 13-19th *Week of the Young Child*. Now that the week has passed, let's reflect on what that really means. How are we, as a nation, bringing communities together for children? And, are we allowing **the children** to bring communities together?

One of the best-documented research studies demonstrates that investments in young children pay back big dividends to society. Brain research and decades of social psychology demonstrate that children will be more successful in life and more successful in school if they have access to high quality early childhood education. While the science of early childhood development has marched forward over the last 30 years, practice and politics have both lagged far behind. As a consequence of the failure of our politicians to learn from our scientists, early childhood programs supporting children's mental health remain tremendously under-financed. The largest piece of the financial pie of public expenditures goes to K-12 programs. Unfortunately, many Americans don't understand or realize the importance of the first 5 years of life. They are still of the belief that babies, toddlers, and preschools are "waiting for school" so that they can begin to learn.

As we support young children and their families, we must remember that an important part of this support is the advocacy we provide to our communities regarding the needs of young children and how our communities can address those needs. What would happen in each community if everyone reading this would take it upon themselves to do one thing in their community to create awareness about the importance of young children's social and emotional health? And, who better to provide this information and leadership than those that work with young children everyday.

Even though the Week of the Young Child is now behind us for another year, let's not stop our advocacy efforts! Below you will find some ideas that may help you consider what you can do to advocate for children in your neighborhood or community. Please commit to one of these ideas or another one of your own advocacy ideas. Let's keep on bringing communities together for children, with the help of our most precious resources... the children themselves!

Advocacy Ideas...

- Ask to talk to a service group (Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce) about what you recognize as needs as well as the good things going on in your community for children.
- Invite some friends for pizza and share with them some of the important statistics regarding young children.
- Write an article for your local newspaper on the importance of quality early childhood education, and the focus on social/emotional development.
- Start a community movement to seek out volunteers for early childhood settings.
- Invite a local, regional, or state politician to visit your early care setting. Explain to him or her what is happening, how children are learning, and what the barriers are to helping children be as successful as possible.
- Host a parent training/information session for the whole community. Ask some local advocates for children to speak about what we can all do to make our community a better place for our children. Take lots of pictures, and invite the local newspaper to cover the event.
- Provide information to a pediatrician's office about the importance of children's social/emotional health (Kaplan would be willing to provide copies of *Now and Forever* for your Pediatrician's office - let us know if you are interested.)
- Use children's art work in public places to remind community members that young children are part of that community.

Linda K. Likins, *National Director,*
Devereux Early Childhood Initiative

What's New at DECI?

Announcing a new DECI Certified Trainer

The DECI Team is proud to announce that Joy Rowe has successfully completed the DECI Certified Training process. Joy works for the Delaware Early Childhood Center as an early childhood trainer and technical assistance provider. We are thrilled to have Joy as part of the DECI team!

Infant Toddler Companion Resources

The DECI team is currently in the process of translating the assessment into Spanish and finalizing three companion resources for the Infant Toddler assessment to support families and caregivers in their work to promote the resilience of babies and toddlers. Research studies are being conducted at this time. Please stay tuned for opportunities to participate.

DECA Program Protective Factor Kit

With over 100 ideas for building resilience, the Kit offers lesson planning ideas and ready-to-use materials to build children's social and emotional health. To learn more about the Kit, please visit our website at www.devereuxearlychildhood.org. To order, please visit Kaplan's website at www.kaplanco.com (key word "protective factor").

2008 National Training! To register for any of the sessions below, please go to: www.devereuxearlychildhood.org (click on "Training"). Registration is limited, please make arrangements soon!

- **April 21-23: FULL** Facing the Challenge Train the Trainer, Kansas City, MO
- **May 13:** DECA Infant/Toddler Launch, Kansas City, MO
- **June 16-20:** DECA Program Onsite Week (2 Day DECA Program, 1 Day DECA-C, 2 Day Local Program Mentor Training Sessions), Cincinnati, OH
- **September 26:** DECA Infant/Toddler Launch, Washington, D.C.
- **October 1-3:** Facing the Challenge Train the Trainer, Kansas City, MO
- **October 20-25:** DECA Program Onsite Week (2 Day DECA Program, 1 Day DECA-C, 2 Day Local Program Mentor Training Sessions), Villanova, PA
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Newsletter Contributions? (AND get free DECI goodies!) The next submission deadline is July 6th, 2008. Please email Karen at kcairone@devereux.org and title your email: "Summer newsletter submission". Please send suggestions for resources, websites, books, or your own resilience and DECA Program stories.

Upcoming DECI Presentations and Training Sessions: Mid-April Through October 2008



Below is a list of DECI training sessions or presentations for the next few months. Our training calendar is updated daily. Please contact deca@devereux.org for information on a session in your state or region, or to schedule training.

Sessions listed in **blue** are National Training Sessions: registration is available online at www.devereuxearlychildhood.org

Date of Training or Conference	Type of Training or Workshop	Program and Location
April 20-24	Facing the Challenge & DECA-I/T	NHSA
April 21-22	Two, 1-Day DECA I/T Trainings	EC Training Ctr. Portland State Univ. Portland, OR & Seattle, WA
April 21-23 FULL	Facing the Challenge Train the Trainer	San Francisco, CA
April 25-26	2 Day DECA Program Implementation Training	Child Guidance & Family Solutions Cuyahoga Falls, OH
April 26	Facing the Challenge	NIM, Phila, PA
April 27	Workshop & Concert El Dia De Los Ninos & Libros	The Day of The Child Celebrating Children and Books, Covington, KY
May 1-2	Social/Emotional Health Workshops	Community Foundation of St. Joseph County, South Bend, IN
May 1-2	DECA-I/T	PA Head Start
May 5	DECA Program presentation	MA Dept of Elementary and Secondary Ed
May 5-7	1-Day DECA I/T Webinar (over 3 sessions)	Early Intervention, Woodstock, New Brunswick, Canada

Date of Training or Conference	Type of Training or Workshop	Program and Location
May 6	Keynote	CCR&R of NE Iowa Waterloo, IA
May 7	Social/Emotional Workshop	Elwyn, Phila, PA
May 8-9	2-Day DECA Program Strategies	Starting-Point, Cleveland, OH
May 9	1-Day DECA I/T	ODMH (near Cleveland) Highland Hills, OH
May 13	DECA I/T LAUNCH	Kansas City, MO
May 15	Workshop	FL Infant MH Conference Jacksonville, FL
May 16	Workshop	Child Focus Cincinnati, OH
May 16-17	Link between play & resilience	Philadelphia, PA
May 20-23	2-Day DECA Program Implementation, 1-Day DECA I/T	Maryland Committee for Children, Baltimore, MD
May 29-30	2 Day DECA Program Implementation	Consortium for Resilient Young Children Cincinnati, Ohio
May 31	Half Day S/E health & literacy workshop	Capital District Childcare Coordinating Council, Menands, NY
June 8-11	Facing the Challenge Panel & e-DECA workshops	NAEYC Professional Development
June 10-12	3 Day Institute on Social Emotional	Jefferson County Public Schools Louisville, KY
June 16-20	DECA Program on-site Training	Cincinnati, OH
June 18	Workshop & Concert	Kenton County Library Covington, KY
June 25-26	2 Day DECA Program Implementation	Covington Resiliency Project Covington, KY
August 4-7	Infant Toddler Resilience	Birth – Three Institute Wash, D.C.
August 12	Infant Toddler Resilience	KY State Conference
August 20	3 hour Facing the Challenge Workshop	Peachtree Presbyterian Preschool, Atlanta, GA
September 26	DECA I/T LAUNCH	Washington D.C.
October 1-3	Facing the Challenge Train the Trainer	Kansas City, MO
October 20-25	DECA Program on-site Training week	Villanova, PA

Devereux Recognized Local Program Mentors (LPMs)

Last quarter in the LPM section of the DECI newsletter, we highlighted Devereux Recognized Local Program Mentors. We thank you for contacting us to help us compile a complete list. If your name was omitted, please accept our apologies for this oversight.

We have posted an updated list on our website at: http://www.devereux.org/site/PageServer?pagename=deci_training_lpm

If you are a DECI Recognized Mentor and you DO NOT see your name listed, please contact Nefertiti Bruce at nbruce@devereux.org

Remember, to become a DECI Recognized Mentor all you have to do is complete and pass the Competency Exam given out during your LPM Training. If you need a copy or assistance in completing your assessment, please do not hesitate to contact us.

NEW RESOURCES THIS MONTH for our DEVEREUX RECOGNIZED LPMs!

Visit: www.devereuxearlychildhood.org - scroll down to the bottom and click LPM ACCESS.

1. Learn at Home Packets for Families. As the school year starts to wind down for many programs, Learn at Home Packets for Families can help continue the teaching and building of Protective Factors! Print and create the packets using simple materials we are sure you have on hand. Information is available in both English and Spanish. Enjoy!
2. HELP WANTED SIGN Template. Ready to ask parents to complete their DECA? HELP WANTED signs are a creative way to ask. Download and print the template, add in the word DECA RATER and we are sure parents will "apply".



*For Registration information, please visit our website

Want a chance to win a FREE copy of the Classroom Moments DVD (a \$90 resource). This DVD features 28 video clips pertaining to challenging behaviors in young children and offers trainer activities and suggestions for use in professional development sessions.

In order to be entered in the drawing, which will occur on May 1st... please send your comments about the DECI newsletter including both strengths & strategies for improvement to: Kcairone@devereux.org

It's that easy!!!

Featured DECA Program Users: First Chance for Children, Boone County, Missouri



The Positive Impact of the DECA Program on Young Children and Teachers

First Chance for Children, a not-for-profit community organization dedicated to coordinating and supporting early childhood services in Boone County, MO, received a Foundations for Learning grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2005 to implement the DECA Program in six early childhood centers. The goal of the 18-month grant was to foster young children's resiliency by: (1) enhancing preschool teachers' knowledge and use of teaching strategies to promote social-emotional functioning; and (2) providing individualized family support services, including home visits. Boone County Educare provided the onsite support, and University of Missouri's Center for Family Policy and Research provided the evaluation services for this project. The quantitative and qualitative results from this study clearly demonstrate the power of the DECA Program to make changes in the lives of children, parents, and teachers.

Participants

A total of 35 lead and assistant teachers from 19 classrooms participated in the DECA training. Teachers completed the DECA on 176

children; 136 parents rated their children using the DECA.

Measures

Besides teachers and parents completing the DECA on children, teachers completed the DECA Training Knowledge Measure, which was developed by the evaluators in conjunction with DECA consultants to assess teachers' knowledge about resiliency and social-emotional development as presented in the DECA Program. The measure contains eight short-answer questions scored on a three-level rubric; the maximum possible score is 16.

Method

Preschool teachers and directors attended a two-day DECA training to learn about using the DECA Program. To help them with implementation, each classroom received 10 hours of onsite support per week from a DECA mentor (Educare Early Childhood Specialists who received intensive training in DECA). The mentors helped teachers to rate children appropriately using the DECA instrument and to use the other DECA Program tools and strategies. Children ages 2 to 5 were rated every 3 months by teachers and parents using the DECA. In the results reported here, the children received between 9 and 15 months of exposure to the DECA Program.

Results

Teachers made statistically significant gains in knowledge after the training. The pretest mean was 9.25 ($SD = 4.21$), the posttest mean was 12.50 ($SD = 2.86$), yielding a $t(24) = 4.27, p < .001$.

According to teacher ratings, children made statistically significant gains from pretest to posttest on every subscale of the DECA. (For Problem Behaviors, the scores decreased significantly.) In addition, **children made statistically significant improvements in their ratings by parents on every subscale except for Attachment.** (See Figures 1 and 2 on page 5 of this newsletter for mean pretest and posttest scores.)

The results from the qualitative research—which consisted of interviews and focus groups with directors, teachers, parents, home visitors, and DECA mentors at three time points throughout the project—were also very positive. Teachers reported that the program increased their

knowledge of social-emotional development and provided them with useful strategies in teaching children to develop resiliency. These anecdotal reports are buttressed by the fact that teachers made significant gains in their knowledge of social-emotional development. Teachers, directors, parents, as well as the mentors, reported seeing positive changes in children's behavior; these changes are clearly reflected in the quantitative results showing that children demonstrated increasing social-emotional resiliency and fewer problem behaviors over time. Families who received home visits expressed their appreciation for the information, support, and expertise provided by home visitors, as well as all staff associated with the project.

For further information, contact Dr. Wayne Mayfield, Senior Research Analyst, Center for Family Policy and Research, (573) 884-9299, mayfieldw@missouri.edu

Figure 1. Pretest and Posttest DECA Means: Teacher Ratings

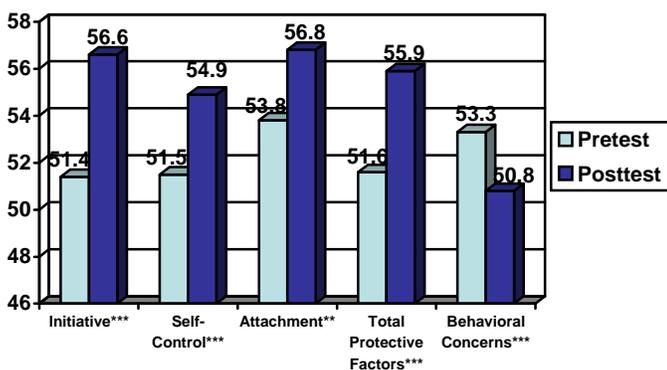
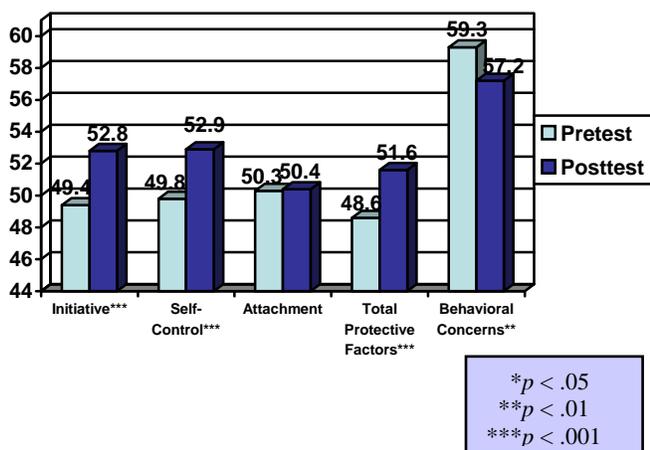


Figure 2. Pretest and Posttest DECA Means: Parent Ratings



Winter newsletter contest results: How many words did DECA Program users make out of the letters in "RESILIENCE"???
Karen Harshbarger from Iowa made 72!
Congrats to our winner who received 2 children's books on social/emotional health.

Useful Resources:

Creative Play Makes for Kids in Control
 by Alix Spiegel, February 28, 2008, NPR - Morning Edition

Organizing play for kids has never seemed like more work. But researchers Adele Diamond and Deborah Leong have good news: The best kind of play costs nothing and really only has one main requirement — imagination. This article discusses the "Tools of the Mind" curriculum. "<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=76838288>

Source: ExchangeEveryDay: Why Children Act Out

First posted on February 26, 2008.

In the Exchange Beginnings Workshop Book, "Behavior" <http://mail.ccie.com/go/eed/2251> Karen Miller describes why it is often difficult to deal with children in early childhood programs who engage in challenging behavior. One of the difficulties she presents is that children are "anchored in the here and now". "Behavior" has 24 articles written by experts in the field on how to deal with challenging behavior.

Close to Cleveland, Ohio??

"A Celebration of Resilience," is planned for May 9th at the Holiday Inn Select in Cleveland, OH. After seeing exceptional results from the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) tool, Starting Point's Special Needs Child Care Curriculum Committee was inspired to develop new innovative tools to help children, parents and teachers bring the concept of resilience into their everyday lives. You can preview these groundbreaking tools and learn more about DECA at this May 9th event. For more information, contact Constance Walker at constance.walker@starting-point.org

Useful Resources (continued):

Implementing Policies to Reduce the Likelihood of Preschool Expulsion

A new policy brief, *Implementing Policies to Reduce the Likelihood of Preschool Expulsion* by Walter S. Gilliam, examines factors associated with expulsion from prekindergarten. The author specifically addresses those factors that may inform changes in policy that can be both implemented and regulated. It is available online at http://www.fcd-us.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=636702

Challenging Behaviors and the Role of Preschool Education

Is there a rise in challenging behaviors among young children in early care and education? Is preschool a contributing factor or can it provide positive experiences that can reduce the rates of challenging behaviors? What about quality? In this NIEER policy brief, authors Lisa A. McCabe and Ellen C. Frede review the research in order to answer these questions and make recommendations that can lead to better behavioral outcomes. The policy brief is available at <http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/16.pdf>

Preschoolers Benefit from Mental Health Screening

A new study from the FPG Child Development Institute demonstrates that preschoolers can benefit by a simple and inexpensive mental health screening process designed to flag potential signs of more serious problems. A summary of the findings are available at <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~snapshots/snap50.pdf>

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: An Evaluation Tool Kit

Hepburn, K. S., Kaufmann, R. K., Perry, D. F., Allen, M. D., Brennan, E. M., & Green, B. L. (2007). Georgetown University, Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health; Johns Hopkins University, Women's and Children's Health Policy Center; and Portland State University, Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health.

This SAMHSA funded resource offers wonderful information on ECMH consultation including: the evidence-base, defining features, suggested evaluation tools, and how to use data for outcome measurement. http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/files/products_publications/TACenter/ecmhc_toolkit.pdf

JUST FOR FUN! The Angry Buddy

To increase children's social emotional health we are often told to enhance children's "feelings vocabulary." When children learn the words to express what is happening inside of them, they are better able to engage in the process of figuring out what to do with those very feelings. Anger is one of the toughest emotions to discuss with children, but at the same time it is one of the most important feelings to learn to understand and address. Angry buddy is a creative way of helping children talk about angry feelings. Angry buddy also helps children see what anger looks like inside of them when it gets bottled up!

	<p style="text-align: center;">Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Plastic jug ___ Ping pong balls (20) ___ Foam stock ___ Feathers (20) ___ Scissors ___ Glue Gun 	
 <p>___ Cut out and decorate your own head and hands from foam stock.</p>	 <p>___ Hot glue the head and hands onto the jar...</p>	 <p>LIKE THIS!</p>
To introduce Angry Buddy to the children:		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce Angry Buddy to the children (small groups are best). 2. Discuss how everyone gets angry sometimes, just like our Buddy! 3. Encourage each child to think of a time they were angry. 4. For every angry feeling children share they can put a ping pong ball in Angry Buddy's belly. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Once Buddy's belly is full, close him up and give him a shake. 6. Explain how this is what anger feels like when stuck inside us. 7. Give children a turn shaking Angry Buddy. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Ask children to brainstorm ways to help Angry Buddy calm his anger down. 9. For every idea a child contributes they can put a feather inside Buddy. 10. This way children can learn about what makes them mad, and what they can do to calm down! 	

Contributed by Rachel Sperry, DECI National Trainer

*We judge others by their behavior.
We judge ourselves by our intentions.*

~ Ian Percy