"Finding of the Parenting Education Summit"
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As presented at the Massachusetts Parenting Education Conference, 11/5/07

Important Research

- ✓ Nick Carter, "See How We Grow"
- ✓ Dr. Charles Nelson, Brain Development
- ✓ Rhea Simpson, MIT Children's

Challenges in Parenting Education

- ✓ Limited recognition of field
- ✓ Stigma
- ✓ "Educating the customer"
- ✓ Funding
- ✓ Professional development
- ✓ Normalizing parenting education
- ✓ Not acceptable for parents to reach out for education
- ✓ Paraprofessional vs. professional
- ✓ Validation of parenting educators
- ✓ EBP/Best practices
- ✓ Overwhelming for parents (what's right? So many programs!)
- ✓ Issues with special populations, i.e. teen parents
- ✓ Keeping parents engaged
- ✓ Helping staff balance parenting education and case management
- ✓ Issues in affluent communities
- ✓ How to define ourselves (occupational ID)
- ✓ Cultural competency
- ✓ Funding and evaluation
- ✓ Seeing parenting education as a universal need
- ✓ Parent as a child's first teacher
- ✓ Parents understanding their role
- ✓ Parents believe that they're supposed to be "born parents"

Challenges Identified at the Summit

- ✓ Program evaluation
- ✓ Societal and economic stressors
- ✓ Cultural diversity
- ✓ Content and process
- ✓ Funding, fees and compensation
- ✓ Curricula issues
- ✓ Parent follow-up
- ✓ Supporting fathers
- ✓ Knowledge and skills for parenting educators

- ✓ Standards and certification
- ✓ Public awareness and appreciation

Issues Identified

- ✓ "Every single parent can benefit from parenting education, some more than others."
- ✓ Major challenge = we're not brining young people into the field
- ✓ What's the different between parenting education and family support? Parenting services?
- ✓ Buzzword = family engagement, parent engagement

Breakouts

Content and Process

- ✓ Use NPEN's definition of parenting education
- ✓ Programs must have evidence and evaluation
- ✓ There must be core standards/core or essential elements of any parenting education program
- ✓ Parenting education programs need to connect families with community supports
- ✓ How do we deal with the "pre-education" parents?
- ✓ There's no "one size fits all"
- ✓ Parents identify what they think that they need
- ✓ Address the issue collaboratively
- ✓ Parenting educators need to participate in summits and be community advocates for parenting education
- ✓ Link parenting educators with funding opportunities

- ✓ Wide range of content:
    - o Topics: discipline, communication, school success
    - o Personal growth themes, reflection on values
    - o Problem-solving
    - o Share information and experiences

- ✓ Strength-based
    - o Valuing parents' instincts and knowledge

- ✓ Technology
    - o New vehicles for content distribution

- ✓ Parallel Work
    - o Educators are models for relationships, listening, emphathising, problem-solving
    - o Modeling: multi-directional
    - o Self-understanding = better understanding of children

- ✓ Skills more important than content
    - o Relationship are key!

- ✓ Universal benefit

- ✓ Summary: A lot of good content already exits. Adapting content to meet the needs of parents and the quality of relationships and communication between parenting educators and parents are key to success.

Knowledge, Skills and Certification

- ✓ Need lead agency
- ✓ Look at both professional and non-professional track
- ✓ Points for experience, points for book learning
- ✓ Need a "larger view" of parenting education

- ✓ Establish a professional identity

- ✓ Core competencies and standard needed

- ✓ Embedding parenting education in training of other professions

- ✓ Distance learning

- ✓ Communicate, network, partnership

- ✓ Minnesota – certification process, not based on academic background

- ✓ National leadership

- ✓ Compensation related to training, credentials, etc.

- ✓ Inclusive vs. exclusive
    - o Credentialing
    - o Career ladders
    - o Peer-to-peer

- ✓ How do we establish a professional identity?
    - o What comes first? Credentialing or identity?
    - o Do they exits without each other?

Public Appreciation and Awareness

- ✓ Big "P" = media
    - o Actively endorsing use of community supports

- o Normalizing effects
- ✓ Little "p" = consumers
  - o Stigma (historical)
  - o Mandatory, institutional relationship
  - o Word of "education"
  - o Sharing the playing field
  - o Parent "coaching"
  - o Power of the word-of-mouth
  - o Co-facilitation, peer groups

- ✓ Parenting ed = stigma

- ✓ Use the same language
  - o Define parenting education

- ✓ Philosophy
  - o Who decides philosophy

- ✓ Multi-media

- ✓ Technology

- ✓ Unified field

- ✓ Recognized value of parenting education
  - o Social policy, funding, credentialing

- ✓ Create national umbrella organization (sustainability)
  - o Cohesive, collaborative
  - o Inclusive vs. exclusive
    - ▪ Who joins?

- ✓ Summary: In some cases, there is no awareness. In other cases, awareness exists, but with different meanings and interpretations.

Program Evaluation

- ✓ Some have built-in evaluation process
- ✓ CTF has process
- ✓ Should this be under an organization? NPEN?
- ✓ Funding is an issue

- ✓ Need accurate measures
  - o Are tools culturally biased?
  - o Are tools measuring for our intentions?

- ✓ Work with funders, re: importance of parenting education
    - o Realistic outcomes
    - o Realistic research design

- ✓ Must evaluate process and outcomes

- ✓ Discovering unintentional side effects/consequences of programming

- ✓ Build bridges between academic institutions and community organizations

- ✓ What to do with discovered failures?

- ✓ Don't reinvent the wheel: share ideas!

- ✓ Tap into research resources

Universal Issues

- ✓ Unite and communicate
    - o Build on best practices
    - o Don't reinvent the wheel

- ✓ Cultural competency

- ✓ Funding
    - o How to find funding
    - o Provide efficacy
    - o Communicate to funders