February 2013

A Message from the Executive Director - Morgan Streeter

Wow, what a wonderful Summit. I would like to just thank everyone who made last week’s Summit such a huge success from the board members to the speakers, and especially those of you who were able to attend. I think that in my first year that was the highlight so far.

I wish I could take some time to enjoy that feeling, but the time to prepare for next year is on us already, and I want to address the idea that The Minnesota Fathers and Families Network will begin using the term “Spirituality” in our day to day work. Including Spirituality as a component of healthy family connections for all families is something that I hope will become another piece in the support toolkit of the workers who serve families. Also, letting families know that it is OK to have those conversations, or not. It’s more about practicing the idea of Spirituality than talking about it. Looking for those customs and traditions that forge those long-lasting bonds that strengthen our legacy but, even more importantly are fun.

As February hits us there is an interesting holiday coming up, that has never been on the top of my list, Valentine’s Day. It may be because Charlie Brown and I had a lot in common most Valentine’s Days and then I morphed that into the cynical idea that Hallmark pushes it on us in the name of capitalistic greed. But, that was before. Now Valentine’s Day gives me another opportunity to show my love, not only for my partner, but also for my children. I can now see Valentine’s Day as a celebration of love vs. pressure to be with someone. It provides me a chance to leave a stronger legacy with my children by creating and practicing a tradition with them and now I look forward to it.

Feel free to share ideas that you may have on celebrating Valentine’s Day with our children. You can reply back to MFFN or post them on our Facebook page. I look forward to it.

Excellence in Fatherhood Award winners
MFFN annually recognizes programs and individuals who are advancing fatherhood policy and practice throughout Minnesota. Congratulations to the following 2013 awards winners:
Program of the year: Family Service Rochester - Father Project
Organization of the year: Northside Achievement Zone
MFFN Membership
Watch for upcoming information on our website www.mnfathers.org for a new way to become an MFFN member. Details available on February 18th.

Conferences or Events of Interest:
- Partnering with Teen Parents
  Partnering with Teen Parents is a two-day training, offered by Parents as Teachers, for all professionals who work with adolescent parents and offers constructive insights into teen parents, their children and the issues they all face. The revised curriculum, Partnering With Teen Parents, will be available in October and is required for this class. The event is February 6-7, 2013 and offers 13 professional development hours and/or 1.3 CEU credits. The training covers:

  - developmental characteristics unique to adolescents, including adolescent brain development
  - mutual influences and potential impacts of the parallel developmental needs of adolescents and young children
  - information about child development, parent-child interaction, and family well-being
  - practical parenting principles that contribute to healthy lifestyles for teen parents and their children
  - techniques to enhance teen parents' feelings of confidence and competence and strategies to equip the adolescent's ongoing transition into adulthood while parenting
  - strategies to address the special family dynamics and multigenerational issues teen parents face
  - strategies to facilitate father involvement
  - ways to organize and conduct effective parent group connections and personal visits

Register online here http://www.parentsasteachers.org/training/knowledge-studio or contact Jennifer Barshack at Jennifer.Barshack@parentsasteachers.org

Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute TM(GRI)
The Military Child Education CoalitionR (MCECR) a nonprofit organization addressing the educational needs of children in military families, presents the training. The institute focuses on information needed to raise community awareness about the issues faced by children when a parent is deployed. Through a combination of direct instruction, group work and interactive activities, participants develop strategies and the framework of an Action Plan to support the "suddenly military" children. Log on to: http://www.militarychild.org/

  - February 27 & 28, 2013 - Minneapolis
  - May 15-16, 2013 - St. Cloud,

Resources of Interest
PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) symptoms are associated with a higher risk of divorce. Therefore, family support agencies should enhance their services for returning soldiers that screen positive for PTSD, according to a recent report titled: "Home Front, Post-Deployment Mental Health and Divorces." It was prepared for the Department of Defense by the RAND Center for Military Health Policy Research. Link to the report: Post Deployment Mental Health and Divorces paper.pdf

Men’s Therapy Group - Catholic Charities
Steven Roecklein, Men's Group Therapist, is holding a Men's Therapy Group through Catholic Charities. This therapy group for men will deal with:
- Issues of anxiety (e.g., feelings of stress, worry, insecurity, tension, anger, fear and guilt) and
- Problems of depression (e.g., low motivation, lack of interest in daily activities, loss of sleep and appetite, tiredness, hopelessness, agitation, loneliness and self-defeating thoughts.
More information on the attached flyer: MensGroupFlyer 9-12.pdf or contact Steven Roecklein at 612-388-3588.

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network would like to help promote your event or conference by sending it in our monthly e-newsletter. Send information to info@mnfathers.org. We will make every effort to include the information and apologize in advance if your event or conference is missed.

MFFN Change of Address:
Minnesota Fathers & Families Network
3109 West 50th Street #134
Minneapolis, MN 55410-2102

Like us on Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Minnesota-Fathers-Families-Network/250703460987

Send us your photos and/or stories of you or someone you know being a father to Sarah Cheesman mailto:scheesman@mnfathers.org. We would love to put those on our website. If you send something to us, you are authorizing us to share it with our members or put it on our website.