



Supporting the Parent

Information & Support
for Families of Children with Special Needs
Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, & Yancey

May 2007

Helping Children Grow Up Healthy - Mind and Body

Tips for Working Parents

It is easy for parents to identify a child's physical needs – nutritious and balanced meals; adequate shelter and clothing; sufficient rest and physical activity; immunizations and a healthy living environment.

However, a child's mental and emotional needs may not be as obvious. Good mental health allows children to think clearly, develop socially, learn new skills, build self-esteem and develop a positive mental outlook.

These are the basics for a child's good mental health:

- Give children unconditional love. Children need to know that your love does not depend on their accomplishments.
- Nurture children's confidence and self-esteem. Praise and encourage them. Set realistic goals for them. Be honest about your mistakes. Avoid sarcasm.
- Encourage children to play. Playtime is as important to a child's development as food. Play helps children be creative, develop problem-solving skills and self-control, and learn how to get along with others.
- Enroll children in an after school activity, especially if they are otherwise home alone after school. This is a great way for kids to stay productive, learn something new, gain self-esteem and have something to look forward to during the week. Or check in on children after school if they are

home alone. Children need to know that even if you're not there physically, you're thinking about them, and interested in how they spent their day and how they'll spend the rest of it.

- Provide a safe and secure environment. Fear can be very real for a child. Try to find out what is frightening him or her. Be loving, patient and reassuring, not critical.
- Give appropriate guidance and discipline when necessary. Be firm, but kind and realistic with your expectations. The goal is not to control the child, but to help him or her learn self-control.
- Communicate. Make time each day after work and school to listen to your children and talk with them about what is happening in their lives. Share emotions and feelings with your children. Get help. If you're concerned about your child's mental health, consult with teachers, a guidance counselor or another adult who may have information about his or her behavior. If you think there is a problem, seek professional help. Early identification and treatment can help children with mental health problems reach their full potential.

For more information, contact your local Mental Health America affiliate, call Mental Health America at 1-800-969-6642 or visit www.mentalhealthamerica.net. If you are in crisis now, seek help immediately. Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or dial 911 for immediate assistance.



150 Den-Mac Drive
Boone, NC 28607

(828) 262-6089
Toll Free Parent Line:
(866) 812-3122
Fax: (828) 265-5394

WITH SUPPORT FROM

- Appalachian State University
- Children's Developmental Services
Agency-Blue Ridge
- Family Support Network of North
Carolina
- High Country United Way
- Avery & Mitchell-Yancey
Partnerships for Children -
Smart Start
- Friends of Parent to Parent FSN-HC

Upcoming Events

Check out page 2 for
Information on:

**Support Groups in
Watauga, Wilkes &
Ashe**

Love and Logic classes

Dine and Discover

Group Opportunities for Information & Support

SUPPORT GROUPS

Watauga: Challenging Behaviors
Watauga: Medically Fragile Children
First Friday at 6pm/Dinner and Childcare provided
Information/register: 828-262-6089
Wilkes & Ashe: Groups are beginning!
For information call & leave message for Norma at (866)812-3122

LOVE AND LOGIC PARENTING CLASSES are offered in Avery, Ashe, and Watauga. For more information on the times and places of these classes call: 828-262-6089

Dine and Discover:

For Watauga Women
Exploring Women's Health
Earn \$10 cash or \$10 gift card for attending!
May 24 6-8pm St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church
Dinner at 6pm Group at 6:30pm
Childcare provided
Information/register: 828-264-1532

VH-1 Classic Rock Autism

VH1 Classic's Rock Autism campaign is designed to help educate parents and build awareness about autism, and to raise funds for a variety of autism research, advocacy, and support organizations. Autism affects one in every 150 children, with a child diagnosed every 21 minutes. VH1 Classic aims to galvanize a community of artists and fans in support of this cause. Visit www.vh1.com/partners/vh1classic_rock_autism/

Hats Off!

Roberta Yates - named State Service Provider of the Year at the recent annual convention of the North Carolina Foster and Adoptive Parents Association in Durham. Yates has been employed with Watauga County D.S.S. for over ten years, coming to the agency with a BA in Child Development and a Master's in Agency Counseling.

Sheri & Roger Church - are recognized for their love and dedication as Foster Care parents for the last 13 years. May has been designated Foster Care Month to heighten awareness of these precious children. These children and youth, having experienced significant trauma and hardships, are depending on their foster, adoptive, or kinship parents to look after their best interests, though often face significant challenges as they try to provide love, nurturing, stability, and most importantly, a place to call home.

KIDSTOCK V - Spring Festival for Families!

SATURDAY, MAY 19TH
WATAUGA HIGH SCHOOL
10:30 am-4:00pm

Come participate and play with us! This is our Fifth Annual KIDSTOCK with many fun things to do. Some of the activities will be:

- Crafts
- Face Painting
- Jump! Activities
- Battle of the Bands

FUNDRAISER for
PARENT TO PARENT FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK
&
WESTERN YOUTH NETWORK

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

to help staff activities.

Lots of fun choices!!!

Two shifts: 10:00-1:15 and 1:00-4:15.

CALL Parent to Parent FSN-HC
828/262-6089 or Toll-free
866/812-3122



FamilyFun.com - Be Your Own Meteorologist

Is today's forecast strictly for the birds? Find out by making this old-fashioned weather device that measures "birdometric" pressure with the help of a friendly yarn worm.

1. Using a variety of craft foam colors, cut out 2 rectangles (ours were 6 1/2 by 8 1/2 and 5 1/2 by 6 inches), the bird's body, wing, and beak.

2. Hot-glue the foam pieces together as shown, attach an eye, punch a hole beside the bird's beak for the yarn worm to wiggle through, and knot both ends of the yarn.

3. Complete the project by jotting down potential weather conditions and hanging the birdometer outside to consult before braving the blustery March weather.

CRAFT MATERIALS:

- Craft foam in several colors
- Scissors
- Glue
- Hole puncher
- Yarn
- Paper
- Crayon or marker

Time needed: About 1 Hour



Parent to Parent FSN-HC Presents: Pearls of Love and Logic

Special Thoughts on Raising Kids ©Love and Logic Press, Inc. www.loveandlogic.com 1-800-338-4065

Taking Charge of Chronic Problems The Strategic Training Session

Young people seem to have an uncanny knack for knowing when their parents are vulnerable to “kid attack.” They turn on their little radar sets and find ways to get the upper hand, just when we have the least amount of tactical support.

One dad said, “Little Erin behaves just great when we go somewhere she wants to go, but just let it be a grocery store trip for me and she goes wild. It always happens in public. Everybody stares, and I’m so embarrassed!”

This is something that happens to all of us. But once our children have played their hand a few times, waging war in public, we can counter with the Strategic Training Session.

The dad who told us about little Erin, recently employed the Strategic Training Session. He called his best friend saying, “I’ve been having trouble with Erin at the store and I need your help. Would you station yourself at the pay phone outside the mall tomorrow at 10:30?” They visited on the phone and set up the Strategic Training Session.

Dad and Erin shopped for groceries the next day, and Erin was her usual obnoxious self. Dad, in a quiet voice, asked, “Would you rather behave or go sit in your room?” Erin called Dad’s bluff and continued to act out. The next thing Erin knew, she was being escorted to a phone in the store where Dad called his friend and said, “Shopping is not fun today. Please come!”

Erin, still figuring this to be a ploy, continued whining and begging. A minute later her eyes grew large when she saw Dad’s best friend walk up to her and say in a calm way, “Let’s go to your room. You can wait for your father there.”

Erin was sent to her room while Dad had a quiet shopping trip and Dad’s best friend watched TV. Erin was allowed to come out of her room as soon as

Dad came home and her appeared happy to see him again. Dad was pleasant because he had a great time all by himself.

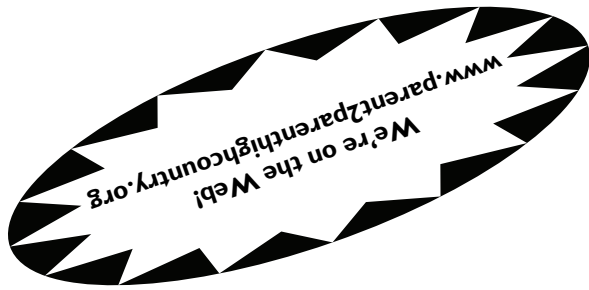
Dad and his best friend set up another Strategic Training Session two days later. Erin started her usual store behavior with teary eyes and a whining mouth. However, when Dad asked if she would rather shape up or go to her room, her eyes opened wide and her mouth shut tight.

For more information on classes:
(828)262-6089 or (866)812-3122
or (866)812-3122



Elements of a Strategic Training Session

- *Find someone who will help*
- *Schedule the session on a day when you both have energy and you support team is available*
- *Play it cool; take good care of yourself*
- *Show no anger*
- *Schedule an additional practice session within a short time as a reinforcement*



Parent to Parent FSN-HC
150 Den-Mac Drive
Boone, NC 28607



If you would like:

*To talk with another parent who understands
Information about a specific disability or health condition*

To be a Supporting Family

More information about  FSN-HC

To make a tax deductible donation

Please call: 828-262-6089 or Toll-free family line: 866-812-3122

Or hayeskl@appstate.edu

All services are FREE and CONFIDENTIAL