Recognizing Mental Health Problems in Children

Children’s mental health problems are real, common, and treatable. Although one in five children has a diagnosable mental health problem, nearly two-thirds of them get little or no help. Untreated mental health problems can disrupt children’s functioning at home, school, and in the community. Without treatment, children with mental health issues are at increased risk of school failure, contact with the criminal justice system, dependence on social services, and even suicide. Parents and family members are usually the first to notice if a child has problems with emotions or behavior. Your observations, along with those of teachers and other caregivers, can help determine whether you need to seek help for your child.

The following signs may indicate the need for professional help:

- Decline in school performance
- Poor grades despite strong efforts
- Constant worry or anxiety
- Repeated refusal to go to school or take part in normal activities
- Hyperactivity or fidgeting
- Persistent nightmares
- Persistent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums depression, sadness or irritability

Early identification, diagnosis, and treatment can help children reach their full potential. If you suspect a problem or have questions, talk with your child’s pediatrician or contact a mental health professional.

An evaluation may include consultation with a child psychiatrist, psychological testing, and medical tests to rule out any physical condition that could be causing the symptoms. A comprehensive treatment plan should include psychotherapy and, in some cases, may include medication. The plan should be developed with the family. Whenever possible, the child should be involved in treatment decisions.

For more information call Mental Health America at 1-800-969-6642 or visit www.mentalhealthamerica.net

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**KIDSTOCK V - Spring Festival for Families!**

**SATURDAY, MAY 19TH**

**WATAUGA HIGH SCHOOL**

10:30 am-4:00 pm

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
Group Opportunities for Information & Support

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<th>SUPPORT GROUPS</th>
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<td><strong>Watauga:</strong> Challenging Behaviors</td>
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<td><strong>Watauga:</strong> Medically Fragile Children</td>
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First Friday at 6pm/
Dinner and Childcare Provided. Information/register: 828-262-6089

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<th><strong>Alleghany, Wilkes &amp; Ashe:</strong></th>
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For information on times & places call Norma: (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

**For Watauga Women**
**Exploring Women’s Health**

**Dine and Discover:**
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

**Butterfly Garden**

Butterflies appear in gardens where there are lots of good plants that they can live and feed on. Many of these are wild plants and flowers that are easy to grow!

To plant your butterfly garden select seeds and plants that are known to attract butterflies, keeping in mind what you would like to see in your garden. One plant that is a known butterfly attractant is the Butterfly Weed! In fact, they are so well-loved by butterflies that they were named for them! Butterfly Weed is a relative of milkweed that has bright orange flowers in the summer.

Some other flowers to plant: lantana, zinnias, day lilies, phlox, lavender, and thistle.
Once your garden had bloomed, and is full of butterflies, enjoy, enjoy!

For activities and fun facts about butterflies go to:

www.thebutterflysite.com/

**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.

Roberta 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. Congratulations Roberta!

**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.

**Her Name Is Foster Mother**

(*unknown author*)

There is a special mother
Deserving of much praise,
Who welcomes someone else’s child
To comfort and to raise.

She has the blessing of the court
To offer tender care
To a victim of special circumstance
That seemed beyond repair.

Her name is Foster Mother;
It should be Angel Queen…
For she has all the nobleness
That motherhood should mean.

Her child has not come to her
By the grace of nature’s art,
But by the choice made freely
From the goodness of her heart.
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 she 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

Help us save money!! If you have an email address that we can use for this newsletter, please email to hayeskl@appstate.edu or call (828) 262-6089. This newsletter is also available on-line at www.parent2parenthighcountry.org.
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