The Reasons We Give

By: Dayne Alexander

During the Dance Marathon, a student left and returned with a $300 donation for Parent to Parent Family Support Network-High Country (FSN-HC). This student heard the stories of the families that attended, and was moved to make a contribution to the program. She chose to remain anonymous, but her gift made such a difference in our work. As with all non-profits, Parent to Parent FSN-HC is pressed for funding. Donations to the program do so much in the way of keeping our services going and we are truly grateful for those people who are able to donate. But what makes people want to monetarily contribute to Parent to Parent FSN-HC? What experiences do people have with the program that encourages that kind of altruism? I interviewed five donors to the program about the value of Parent to Parent FSN-HC and why they choose to donate to the program.

Betsy Galchutt interned at Parent to Parent FSN-HC in the summer of 2009. A professional writing major, she wrote stories for the program’s newsletter. Betsy had a great internship experience although she was working during a period of significant financial difficulty. She saw the need for the services Parent to Parent FSN-HC provides and how valuable the program is to the communities it serves. While writing a newsletter article, Betsy read feedback from support group members and discovered just how much of an impact the program has on the families involved with it. She donates to the program to help director Kaaren Hayes give back to these families. Betsy recognizes the dedication Kaaren has to her work and says “I can’t thank her enough!”

Elizabeth Kerley interned at the program in the summer of 2010. She snuck into a healthcare provider fair for ASU faculty and met Kaaren there. She had not previously heard of Parent to Parent FSN-HC, but immediately knew that this was the kind of work she would like to do. Prior to her internship, Elizabeth had not realized how many families rely on the program. The impact of Parent to Parent FSN-HC, she says, is its presence in the lives of many families so they do not feel lost. She notes that the phone rings incessantly at the Parent to Parent FSN-HC main office (I can definitely attest to this) and wonders what families would do without the support program provides. Elizabeth donates to Parent to Parent FSN-HC because the monetary needs of the program are significant, but the impact of the program is even greater. She says that volunteering with Parent to Parent FSN-HC is helpful, but money is what keeps invaluable services available.

Dr. Connie Green is a professor of B-K Education at Appalachian State University, and
has known about Parent to Parent FSN-HC since it started in 1988. Dr. Green believes that it provides important resources for families and supports them (both initially and ongoing). She encourages families at Parent to Parent FSN-HC to speak in her class “Families in the Educational Process”, which she has co-taught with Kaaren for the past four years. She hears so much appreciation from these parents regarding Parent to Parent FSN-HC and donates to it because she knows how great the need is for the program. In particular, Dr. Green remembers one parent who talked about the monthly support group meetings and what a difference they made in her life. Hearing the families at Parent to Parent FSN-HC talk about how much the program means to them, she wants to the program to continue to be there for these families.

Sally Sloop is retired but works part-time at an NC Pre-K program for at-risk children. She worked with Kaaren for ten years at the state family support network. Sally has a very personal connection to the mission of the program, as she has a 28 year old son with autism. Diagnosed at 2 ½ years old, Sally’s son has benefited greatly from early intervention programs and now lives independently in Boston. He has a great job, wonderful friends, and a support network to help him along. Sally wants to support Parent to Parent FSN-HC because she knows the value of these programs first hand. They are significant to their communities and change opportunities for residents even though most are struggling financially due to lack of funding. Sally believes that programs such as Parent to Parent FSN-HC are extremely vital in rural areas where families may be isolated and have fewer accessible resources. She admires Kaaren for being strong and dedicated in her work throughout all of the struggles that come with running the program. Sally calls Kaaren a “true advocate” for families and wants to support her and the program by donating to the cause.

Marianne Fulazzo first became aware of Parent to Parent FSN-HC 22 years ago while residing in another state. She was the vice president of the Parent to Parent in Florida, where there was a local membership requirement. She was surprised that the program here did not require a fee and says it was not a stretch for her to donate because she was accustomed to paying for services. Marianne has a daughter who has graduated from high school and entered the adult arena. She notes that the demands of children with special needs are life-long, and the support of Parent to Parent FSN-HC helps her to be her daughter’s best advocate. Recently, the program was essential in making Marianne’s move to North Carolina easier because she did not know anyone here. Marianne says that parents need Parent to Parent FSN-HC throughout their lives because you can rely on them for support and information. On the value of Parent to Parent FSN-HC, she says “I get my best information from other parents.” She goes onto say that parents in the program keep up with available information because they have a vested interest and want to tell other parents what they discover. For Marianne, the networking of Parent to Parent FSN-HC is quite valuable and the experiences she has had with the program make her want to keep it going.

Grow your own name or shape

Materials
- Wheat berry seeds or Rye grass seeds (available at natural food stores)
- Bowl of water
- Shallow, rimmed tray or baking pan
- Potting soil, moistened
- Letter cookie cutters (optional)

Instructions
1. Soak the wheat berry seeds in the bowl of water overnight. Rye grass seeds don't need to be soaked in a bowl of water overnight.
2. Fill the tray with about an inch of moist potting soil. Help your child arrange the seeds in the shape of her name, then have her gently press them into the soil with her fingertip (we set alphabet cookie cutters on the soil to use as a guide, then removed them after the seeds were pressed in place).
3. Mist the soil around the seeds to keep them moist, but don’t pour water directly on them until the roots are established. Place the tray in a sunny window, and the seeds should sprout within a few days.
PARENT TO PARENT FSN-HC PLANS SILVER ANNIVERSARY BASH TO BENEFIT LOCAL FAMILIES

By Laine Isaacs and Jessica Coggins

Parent to Parent Family Support Network-High Country is celebrating 25 productive years in the High Country with a dinner celebration in Valle Crucis. Come join us for “A Starry, Starry Night, the Silver Anniversary of Parent to Parent FSN-HC”. The event will take place in Skiles Hall at the Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Valle Crucis, NC on Saturday, June 16th from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This banquet will also honor Kaaren Hayes, the Director of Parent to Parent FSN-HC, who has worked with the program since it began in 1988.

A donation of $50 per person will include the evening’s gourmet dinner and entertainment. The menu will include beef bourguignon, salmon with amaretto cream sauce, as well as vegetarian options and will be prepared by Earl LeClaire, a cookbook author and poet. The evening’s entertainment will include music from Harold McKinney and Ken Lurie and poetry by Earl LeClaire. The celebration will be hosted by Douglas Galke and Mary Williams co-founders of Parent to Parent Family Support Network with a tribute by Dean Charles Duke of the Reich College of Education. Douglas Galke is the former director of the Children's Development Services Agency of the Blue Ridge and Mary Williams was the first director of Parent to Parent FSN-HC.

Funds raised from this event will be used to help ensure that the program will be able to continue to provide support and information for families who have children with special needs. To make your tax deductible donation for the Silver Anniversary Celebration or for more information about the organization, please go to parent2parent.appstate.edu or call the Boone office at 828/262-6089.

Thank you to the Wilkes Health Foundation for helping to sponsor this event.

Harold McKinney

Ken Lurie

Earl LeClaire
Love and Logic Tips

- For each choice give two options, each of which are ok with you. For example, “Do you want to do your chores now or in fifteen minutes?”
- Give choices before your child gets resistant. If you give them afterwards, you reward resistance.
  - For each choice, give them no longer than 10 seconds to choose.
  - If they don’t choose, or they choose an option you didn’t provide, choose for them.
    - Only give choices that fit your value system.
    - Give 99% of your choices when things are going well.
- When things aren’t going well, say, “You’ve been getting to make a lot of choices around here. Now it’s my turn.”

Area Support Groups: Contact Information

**Ashe County Support Group:** Norma Bouchard at 336/246-3222 or toll free: 866/812-3122 or bouchardnj@appstate.edu

**Mitchell County Support Group:** Teresa Emory at 866/448-5781 or emorytd@appstate.edu

**Watauga County Support Group:** Kaaren Hayes at 828/262-6089 or toll free: 866/812-3122 or hayeskl@appstate.edu

**Wilkes County Support Group:** Norma Bouchard at 336/838-0977 ext. 212 or toll free: 866/812-3122 or bouchardnj@appstate.edu

**Yancey County Support Group:** Teresa Emory at 828/682-4772 or emorytd@appstate.edu

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