

Parents TOGETHER PRIMER

Spring 2009

A Newsletter for Greenwich Parents of Children from Birth Through Fifth Grade ©
www.parentstogetherct.org

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PARENTS TOGETHER PROGRAMS

Monday, April 20
Alan Mathis, President and CEO of Liberation Programs presents "Teens and Risky Behavior - Discussion and Strategy."

Monday, May 11
Erica Crist, MS, RD, CDE, Center for Healthy Living (affiliated with Yale New Haven Health Heart Institute), Greenwich Hospital presents "Positive Nutrition."

30 YEAR CELEBRATION

Tina de Varon presents "Songs from the MotherRoad"
Thursday, May 7, 7:30 pm
Arcadia Coffee Shop
For reservations and more information please call Lori Jackson at 698-0158.

Did You Read a Book Today? A Librarian's Thoughts

By Betsy Benenson

Editor's Note: The following article first appeared in Parents Together Primer in Summer, 2001. We reprint this in memory of Kate McClelland, former head of Youth Services at Perrot Memorial Library in Old Greenwich who, along with Kathy Krasniewics, recently lost her life en route to the Denver airport when her cab was struck by a hit-and-run driver.

valued in our homes and schools for the enrichment it gives to the lives of our children. Yes, literature can educate. But children need to discover the joy of books so that reading becomes a lifetime passion, not a chore. I recently sat down with Ms. McClelland and asked her to share her knowledge, expertise and insight from being a librarian for the past twenty years.

Parents Together: What can you tell us about different types of readers?
Kate McClelland: There is more than one valid reading experience: the experience of the student reading at the computer, clicking rapidly from text link to text link, is a very different experience from that of the student reading *Harry Potter* and *the Sorcerer's Stone*, by J.K. Rowling, or *Charlotte's Web*, by E.B. White.

The student reading on the computer is practicing a kind of reading called "efferent reading." The reader's attention is focused on the information to be acquired, questions to be answered, and the logical solution to a problem.

The reading represented in *Harry Potter* and *Charlotte's Web* is another kind of experience entirely. It is called "aesthetic reading." In aesthetic reading, the reader literally lives within the experience of the book. Aesthetic readers cry when *Charlotte* dies. Aesthetic readers will be lifelong readers.

"We have concentrated so hard on teaching children **how** to read that we have forgotten to teach them to **want** to read. As a result, we have created a nation of schooltime readers, not lifetime readers."

Jim Trelease, author of
The Read Aloud Handbook

Put the fun back into reading! According to Kate McClelland, Assistant Director and Head of Youth Services at Perrot Memorial Library in Old Greenwich, "We can all agree that Greenwich schools are doing a superb job teaching reading, providing beautiful books, up-to-date information and wonderful library and media centers with skilled professionals in both the classroom and the library. However, what I can see with my own eyes as a librarian is that some students are motivated to read and some are reluctant."

Literature should provide enjoyment and delight. It should be

Did You Read a Book Today?

continued from page 1

PT: What else can you tell us about reading and readers?

KM: There are two other ways of categorizing readers: motivated and unmotivated or reluctant readers. Almost all motivated readers recall being read to on a regular basis as children. They also had books of their own to read, they reported joining libraries and having their own library cards, and they belonged to book clubs and participated in story times and reading groups.

Unmotivated or reluctant readers who do not ever choose to read are quite the opposite. They were rarely read to on a consistent basis, they rarely owned their own books, rarely had a library card, and rarely belonged to a group where reading was a focus.

PT: Why do you think some students are reluctant to read?

KM: Reluctant readers have a negative attitude towards books. This often happens when children's reading skills are tested before they discover delight in books and a love of story. They regard reading as a skill to be measured and tested, not as a pleasurable activity. Testing can produce anxiety which is then associated negatively with the act of reading.

PT: How can parents reinforce that reading is not a skill, but an enjoyable activity?

KM: People who love books and love reading usually have children who love books and love reading. Parents are the people who can demonstrate to children that reading can be a source of joy. Home is the place where reading is not done strictly for academic achievement. Reading together is a bonding experience: sitting snuggled close, focused on each other, connected by the loving parent's voice.

PT: How has today's culture influenced the reading experience?

KM: We now live in a world where reading, writing and speaking have changed dramatically. Written and spoken language has become streamlined and simplified as our culture now focuses on the need to gain useful information fast. This kind of communication has little to do with story, which is the first and oldest kind of human communication. It is a love of story that will motivate a child to choose to read, not just read out of pure necessity. Mark Twain once said, "The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them."

PT: How can parents raise committed readers who choose to read for the rest of their lives and want to live inside the experience of a book?

KM: Read aloud to your child on a regular basis. Choose a book that is richer in language and style than the book he can read for himself. Choose a book that you enjoy yourself and **do not stop reading aloud when your child can read independently.** Get your child a library card and give him freedom and unlimited choice in what he reads.

PT: What if a parent loves books, owns and provides books, reads aloud to their kids and *still* has a child who doesn't enjoy reading?

KM: Believe or not, that happened to me! I read all of the time to my kids but one of them just wasn't interested in reading independently. This is the child who needs to be read to the most. You are still giving a great gift to the child: a model of rich language, wonderful vocabulary, engrossing story and the family connectedness that reading together provides. And you know what? Today my child, who never loved to read by himself, now loves to read to his child all of the time. So the story has a happy ending.

Books are plentiful and they come in all shapes and sizes, in all forms of fiction and nonfiction, at every reading level, with and without

pictures, and cover almost every imaginable topic. In fact, there are more than 90,000 children's books in print.

Model to your children that reading is a pleasure. Literature gives kids things to think about. Books, and the ideas that come from them, can provide the foundation for thought development. Books provide insight into the world and helps children entertain ideas they never considered before. The amount of thoughts, images, and dreams that lie waiting to be discovered in books is endless. Books are exciting! A love of reading and a taste of literature are among the finest gifts we can give our children.

Newbery Medal Winners and Honor Books

2009: *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman, illus. by Dave McKean (HarperCollins);

Honor books:

- ◆ *The Underneath* by Kathi Appelt, illus. by David Small (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster);
- ◆ *The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom* by Margarita Engle (Henry Holt);
- ◆ *Savvy* by Ingrid Law (Dial Books for Young Readers);
- ◆ *After Tupac & D Foster* by Jacqueline Woodson (G.P. Putnam's Sons)

2008: *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village* by Laura Amy Schlitz (Candlewick);
Honor books:

- ◆ *Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis (Scholastic);
- ◆ *The Wednesday Wars* by Gary D. Schmidt (Clarion);
- ◆ *Feathers* by Jacqueline Woodson (Putnam)

Money Matters

Talking to Kids about Economic Ups and Downs

By Anita Gurian, Ph.D.

In these times of economic uncertainty, family talk is apt to center on money, mortgages, jobs, moving, school tuition, and credit cards. Talking to kids about money issues is tough, especially when parents are under stress and have to deal with their own anxieties. Although parents may want to protect their children from worries, kids pick up the signals when things change and when there's tension in the household. When they don't know the facts, they're likely to fill in the gaps themselves with their own imagination or with misinformation based on media reports or talks with other children and teenagers.

Open and honest communication with kids is important, but parents should be careful not to overburden them or tell them more than they need to know. Take your cue from your child, listen to questions, and provide information in an age-appropriate way.

Children under 5 are most concerned about themselves and need assurance in simple and concrete terms that they will be cared for. They can be content with short term rewards and gifts such as stickers, rather than more expensive toys.

Children aged 6-9 can understand the concept of waiting or saving to buy more expensive things at a later time. They can go through catalogs and can make wish lists of what they want for birthdays and holidays. On shopping trips they can learn to read labels critically and to comparison shop.

Children aged 10-12 can put facts together in more complicated ways and understand that the family has to cut back. They can understand everyday effects of having to

economize and can contribute ideas to budget planning.

Teenagers may feel pressured to keep up with the latest fashion or what their friends have, but can understand the need to prioritize when there's a limited amount of money. Teenagers are capable of understanding the ramifications of the economic crisis and can discuss issues in more detail, understand more subtle effects of having less money, and be active in problem solving.

What parents can do

- ◆ Be a model for your children. Demonstrate how to solve problems, how to deal with a crisis, how to make decisions. When they see you handle a situation with confidence they learn that they, too, can handle life's challenges.
- ◆ Use the financial situation as an opportunity to help children learn the difference between what they *need* and what they *want*; kids need to learn that every wish cannot be granted. Let them know their parents' personal values about how to save and spend money.
- ◆ Don't feel guilty about saying "no" to some requests, and explain that everyone will have to be more watchful about spending.
- ◆ Establish a regular schedule for family conferences on how the drop in income will affect everyone's life.
- ◆ Discuss life style changes, such as changing recreation and vacation plans.
- ◆ Talk about decisions about priorities for spending money; planning a budget.
- ◆ How each family member can help control spending.
- ◆ Discuss ways for teenagers to earn money.

- ◆ Involve children in helping out at home - e.g., babysitting, household chores — but don't make them think they're responsible for supporting the family
- ◆ Maintain household routines as much as possible.
- ◆ Help children focus on the positive aspects of their lives. Explore fun, low cost activities.
- ◆ Assure kids that many families are facing the same issues and need to budget.
- ◆ Let children know you're concerned, but sharing your feelings too much or too often can cause undue stress. Kids depend on their parents for security, and when parents are tense and upset the kids feel unsupported.
- ◆ By responding to questions and concerns regarding the family's economic situation in a truthful and respectful manner, parents help develop children's personal self-confidence, problem-solving ability and knowledge.

The good news is that kids are resilient. Resilience is the ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or other significant sources of stress. Resilience helps children manage stress and feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. However, being resilient does not mean that children won't experience difficulty or distress. Pay attention to signals such as sleep and appetite changes, nightmares, avoidance of people or situations that may indicate that your child is having difficulty and consider a consultation with a mental health professional.



Source: NYU Child Study Center. View this and other articles at www.aboutourkids.org.

SPRING FAMILY CALENDAR

March



1

Maple Sugar Sunday

11 AM - 3 PM

Stamford Museum and Nature Center, Stamford.

Activities include maple-themed crafts, storytelling and more. Price included with museum admission.

322-1646; stamfordmuseum.org

5

"Parenting With Love and Logic" Program

7 - 9 PM

Greenwich High School, Greenwich Four-week parenting program with George Klein, counselor at Central Middle School, that addresses how to create a home environment that stimulates responsibility, academic achievement, and build character.

Sponsored by Greenwich Continuing Education. Registration required. \$59. 625-7474

6

"Beauty and the Beast" Musical

8 PM

St. Catherine of Siena Church, Riverside Well-loved musical presented by St. Catherine's Players. Reservations recommended. Also 3/7 at 8 PM; 3/8 at 2 PM; 3/13 at 8 PM, 3/14 at 8 PM; 3/15 at 2 PM; \$15.

661-2942

7

Colonial Family Day

Noon - 2 PM

Bush-Holley Historic Site, Cos Cob Interactive exploration of life in colonial times. \$8, non-members, \$5 members. 869-6899

"Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day" Production

2 PM

Cole Auditorium, Greenwich Library Pick up free assigned seating (limit 6) at the auditorium door starting at noon. Sponsored by Friends of the Greenwich Library. For ages 5-9.

622-7938

8

"Exploring the Orchestra" with the Stamford Symphony

1 & 2:30 PM

Bendel Mansion, Stamford Museum and Nature Center, Stamford.

Discover the thrill of music together with your family! Tickets available through the Stamford Symphony. Call for cost. Each concert is 45 minutes.

325-1407

"Globe at Night" Planetarium Show

3 PM

Stamford Museum and Nature Center, Stamford

Members free, non-members \$3 adults, \$2 children. Not suitable for children under 5.

322-1646; stamfordmuseum.org

Daylight Savings: Spring Forward

Don't forget to turn your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed.

12

Greenwich Board of Education Work Session

7 - 9 PM

Havemeyer Building, Greenwich Avenue 625-7400

13

Middle School Dance

7 - 10 PM

Boys and Girls Club, Greenwich Bring a can of food for a ticket to the Red Cross. Sponsored by the Junior United Way and the Red Cross.

869-8444

14

49th Annual Pancake Breakfast

8 AM - 1 PM

Greenwich Civic Center, Old Greenwich Sponsored by the Lions Club of Old Greenwich. Entertainment and door prizes. \$7 at door, \$6 in advance, \$1 discount age 6 - 11, free age 5 and younger.

637-9292

22

35th St. Patrick's Day Parade

2 PM

Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich Annual event sponsored by the Greenwich Hibernian Association. Free. 869-1531

23

"The Effects of Bullying" Lecture

7 PM

Noble Conference Center, Greenwich Hospital

Dr. Young Shin Kim will review cumulative scientific evidence examining the psychological effects of bullying. Part of the Yale Child Study Center lecture series. Registration required. Free.

863-3627; www.greenhosp.org

27

"Amphibian Amble" Hike

7 - 8:30 PM

Stamford Museum and Nature Center, Stamford

Join staff on an adventure to the vernal pool. Ages 5 and older. \$5 members, \$8 non-members.

322-1646; stamfordmuseum.org.

28

"Ashforth Children's Concert"

2 PM

Cole Auditorium, Greenwich Library Sponsored by Friends of Greenwich Library. Free.

622-7900



29

"Art and Artists" Family Day

1 - 4 PM

The Bruce Museum, Greenwich
Fun-filled day for the entire family with a focus on the creative side. 3 PM "Art on Stage!" interactive performance. Activities free with Museum admission. 869-6786



April

2

Greenwich Board of Education Work Session

7 - 9 PM

Havemeyer Building, Greenwich Avenue
625-7400

4

High School Crew Races

8:30 - 10:30 AM

Greenwich Harbor, Cos Cob
Sponsored by Greenwich Water Club. Free for spectators. 661-4033

Easter Egg Hunt

10 AM

Roger Sherman Baldwin Park, Greenwich
Sponsored by the Lion's Club of Greenwich. Raintdate 4/5. Call for cost. 661-2540

7-10

Public School Vacation Workshops

10:30 AM

The Bruce Museum, Greenwich
Suitable for students in grades 1-3.
Tuesday: Mobiles
Wednesday: Casting
Thursday: Modeling
Friday: Found-Objects Art Collage
Each session is \$5, non-members \$7. 869-6786

18

Town-Wide Spring Cleanup Day

8 AM - Noon

Bring your kids, friends and join your neighbors and help clean up the town! Stop by any Town firehouse. Trade collected trash for spring plants. Sponsored by Greenwich Green and Clean. 531-0006

Father's Forum

8 - 9:30 AM

Sponsored by the Greenwich Family and Youth Options. Call for location and topic. Free. gccud@yahoo.com

Kite Flying Contest

10 AM - 3 PM

Tod's Point, Old Greenwich
Sponsored by the Greenwich Department of Parks and Recreation. Raintdate 4/19. Free. 862-6750



23

Greenwich Board of Education Meeting

7 - 10 PM

Riverside School, Riverside
625-7400

24

"Best Practices and New Perspectives in the Field of Learning Disabilities" Symposium

Eagle Hill School, Greenwich

2-day seminar. Registration required. \$100 and up. 622-9240

Drumming For Everyone

6:30 - 7:30 PM

Center for Integrative Medicine, Cos Cob
For thousands of years, people worldwide have joined together in drum circles, a unique celebrative and healing experience that transcends cultural differences. Registration required. \$18 adult, \$10 child. 863-3630

30

"Surviving Autism: Social Processing" Lecture

7 PM

Noble Conference Center, Greenwich Hospital
Kevin A. Pelphey, PhD., will discuss work that might help us understand why children with autism spectrum disorders often have trouble understanding the actions and intentions of other people, and why they can be prone to behavioral disruptions. Registration required. Free. 863-3627; greenhosp.org

May

4

Greenwich Board of Education Work Session

7 - 9 PM

Havemeyer Building, Greenwich Avenue
625-7400

16

24th Annual Outdoor Crafts Festival

10 AM - 5 PM

The Bruce Museum, Greenwich
Activities include music, entertainment, and fun, educational craft activities. Fun for all ages. Also 5/17. Free for members and children under 5; \$8 for non-members. 869-6786

28

Greenwich Board of Education Meeting

7:00 PM

North Street School, Greenwich
625-7400

29

St. Paul's Fair -for-All

Rides, games, book sales, food and more
6 - 10 PM, also 5/30, 11 AM to 10 PM
200 Riverside Ave, Riverside

Bullying

What It Is and Why Kids Do It

By Nicole Danforth, M.D.

Editor's Note: In light of the adoption of a new Bullying policy by the Greenwich Board of Education, we decided to reprint this article from Fall, 2001. To review the policy in its entirety, please go to www.greenwichschools.org

DRecent tragic, high profile school shootings across the country have illustrated that youth violence often involves the issues of bullying and revenge. Bullying is widespread in American schools, an idea that may be well known on the playground but not in the minds of parents and teachers until now.

According to the National Education Association, over 160,000 children skip school each day because of intimidation by their peers. A study in the April 25, 2001 Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) also suggests that bullying is prevalent: thirty percent of the almost 16,000 6th- through 10th-graders polled reported that they have participated in bullying, been bullied, or both. Overall, 16% of U.S. schoolchildren say other students have bullied them. As Duane Alexander, M.D., director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development notes, "Being bullied is not just an unpleasant rite of passage through childhood. It's a public health problem that merits attention. People who were bullied as children are more likely to suffer from depression and low self-esteem well into adulthood, and the bullies themselves are more likely to engage in criminal behavior later in life."

What is bullying?

Bullying is a type of behavior that intends to harm or disturb someone, occurs repeatedly over time and involves an imbalance of power. At

the elementary school level such behaviors may be physical, such as hitting or stealing; verbal, such as teasing or name calling; or psychological, such as socially isolating students. The key component is intimidation, with the more powerful person or group targeting the less powerful one.

A certain amount of conflict and harassment is typical during childhood, but bullying presents a more serious threat to healthy development. As outlined by the Educational Resources Information Center, bullying can have negative effects on the general school atmosphere and on the rights of children to learn in an environment without fear.

Who are bullies?

Both boys and girls bully. Boys, however, are more likely to bully others and be victims of bullying. Boys typically engage in direct bullying methods, such as pushing or slapping; girls are more apt to use verbal and psychological strategies. Studies indicate that bullies often

come from homes in which there is the use of physical punishment; children are taught to strike out physically as a way to handle their problems. In addition, there seems to be a lack of parental involvement, warmth and close relationships with siblings.

Bullies need to feel powerful and in control and derive satisfaction from inflicting suffering on others. Students who bully are generally defiant or oppositional toward adults and are more likely to engage in problem

behaviors such as smoking and drinking.

When does bullying occur?

According to the JAMA study, although bullying exists at the elementary-school level, most bullying occurs in sixth through eighth grade, with the peak in middle school and then declining during the high school years. However, recent disturbing trends show that bullying is increasing the most at the elementary-school level.

School size and racial makeup do not appear to be distinguishing factors. The school setting, whether urban, rural, or suburban does not predict the occurrence of bullying, but suburban youth are two to three percent less likely to bully others.

Who gets bullied?

Most elementary-aged students who are victims of bullying are typically anxious, insecure, and suffer from low self-esteem. They rarely defend themselves or retaliate. They are more likely

"Both boys and girls bully. Boys tend to push or slap; girls tend to name call and tease."

to report feelings of loneliness and seem to have a greater difficulty making friends than those who are not bullied. The major physical characteristic of victims is that they tend to be weaker than their peers. As the JAMA study author states, "It's likely that kids who are socially isolated and have trouble making friends are more likely to be targets of bullying...in turn, other kids may avoid children who are bullied for fear of being bullied themselves."

How do I know if my child is being bullied?

Victims of bullies often fear school and see it as an unsafe place. Students report that teachers rarely talk about bullying until verbal intimidation crosses the line to physical assault. If your child suddenly shows an unwillingness to go to school, comes home with unexplained bruises or asks for more lunch money, it is time to ask some questions. In addition, children who are being bullied tend to keep silent about it and may become withdrawn, depressed and feel no one can help.

What can I do if my child is being bullied?

First, talk with your child and listen. Parents are often unaware that their child is experiencing a problem at school. Express confidence that the problem can be resolved. Help your child develop strategies in dealing with bullying. For example, if there are certain times when they are more apt to be harassed, see if there are ways to avoid these situations. Help them practice some things to say or do, like laughing or ignoring comments or teasing. Be persistent. Victims often feel that adult intervention doesn't work and worry that telling adults will only worsen the bullying. Keep trying until you find someone who will help.

What if my child is the bully?

Have a serious talk with your child and make them realize that you are aware of their behavior and are not going to tolerate it. Don't let your child talk his or her way out of the behavior. Work with the school to set clear and consistent expectations of behavior and then follow up to make sure the behavior has changed.

Children bully in an effort to increase their own sense of self. Work with your child to find positive ways for him or her to get attention.

What happens after bullying?

Being a victim of bullying is very

stressful. Many victims begin to distrust their peers at school and have problems making friends. They feel isolated and think there is nobody to help them solve the situation. When victims receive support from adults, they usually survive the experience of being bullied without long term effects. Without support, however, being bullied can lead to depression and low self-esteem, problems that can continue into adulthood.

Kids who bully other kids often experience legal or criminal difficulties as adults. Dan Olweus, and expert on bullying research and prevention and author of *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*, found that 60% of those characterized as bullies at age seven had at least one criminal conviction by age 24. In addition, chronic bullying impairs the person's ability to develop and maintain close, positive relationships.

What are some solutions?

Effective intervention must involve the entire school community, not just the bullies themselves. All school activity should stress the fundamental values of tolerance, respect, and safety.

Olweus details an anti-bullying approach in his book that includes intervention at the individual, classroom and school levels. Schools that implemented this program reported a 50% reduction in bullying. The book suggests the following:

- ♦ Students, parents, teachers, and school administrators need to assess the extent of the problem, and level of teacher and parent awareness. Results can then be discussed within the classroom, at a school assembly

or publicized in a community newsletter.

- ♦ Parents can participate in an awareness campaign, with goals to understand the extent of the problem and emphasize the importance of parental involvement.

"Recent studies show that incidents of bullying are increasing the most at the elementary-school level."

- ♦ Teachers can work at the classroom level by developing classroom rules against bullying, engaging students in role-playing exercises, and encouraging students to assist victims of bullying. This sends a clear message that bullying will not be tolerated.

- ♦ Other components include individualized interventions with bullies and their victims; the implementation of cooperative learning activities to reduce social isolation; and an increase in adult supervision at prime bullying times such as recess and lunch.

Bullying is an increasingly common school problem that, if not dealt with early on, can lead to isolation and more violence. It has a negative impact on a student's sense of safety, as well as his or her academic and social development. Involving students, parents, and teachers in tackling this problem is a first step in making our schools a fear-free environment.

Resources:

Olweus, D. (1993) *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*. Cambridge, MA.

Educational Resources Information Center. www.ericseece.org.

Educators for Social Responsibility, www.esrnational.org



Nicole Danforth, M.D., is a psychiatrist specializing in adolescents. She has a private practice in Chestnut Hill, MA.

Who We Are

Parents Together is an independent, nonprofit organization in Greenwich, CT, that offers ongoing opportunities for parents to communicate, share, support and learn together. We work in cooperation with the Parent Teacher Associations of the public, private and parochial schools in town. The *Parents Together* organization and delegates from Greenwich schools plan programs for parents of children in grades K through 12. We also publish two quarterly newsletters: *Parents Together Primer*, for parents of children from birth through fifth grade, and *Parents Together*, for parents of adolescents.

Distribution: *Parents Together Primer* is distributed to parents through their children's preschools and elementary schools. *Parents Together* is mailed to parents of children in grades 6 through 12 in all Greenwich public and independent schools.

Newsletter Subscriptions and Correspondence: We invite parents and other readers interested in local parenting issues to subscribe to either or both newsletters. For an annual subscription, please indicate which newsletter you wish to receive, and send your name, address and \$10 for each subscription, in a check payable to **Parents Together**, to P. O. Box 4843, Greenwich, CT 06831-0417.

Contact Us!

Do you have a story idea, writer suggestion or comment for the *Parents Together Primer* staff? You may fax it to 698-3376 or e-mail it to ptprimer@optonline.net.

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We Need Your Help!

For the past thirty years *Parents Together* has been providing ongoing opportunities for parents to communicate, share and learn. *Parents Together* helps parents navigate the challenges of parenting in today's changing world, addressing a broad range of age-old issues and emerging ones, too. Recent program and newsletter topics have included successful parenting through divorce; body image; protecting our children from cyberbullying; and looking at our children's temperaments.

We continue to collaborate with other community groups that wish to educate parents about alcohol and drugs. In addition, special publications such as the *Guidelines* series for coaching kids in sports and for teen parties complement our programs and newsletters, and have been widely distributed.

The *Parents Together* newsletters are distributed to over 15,000 families, and our lectures have been attended by caregivers from other towns. Feedback continues to be overwhelmingly positive that *Parents Together* is a vital element in our community. Please help us carry on this important work. Your fully tax deductible contribution will help assure that the *Parents Together* legacy lives on to benefit future generations of parents and families. We cannot continue without your support, and we hope you will consider a generous donation to help us continue! Please mail checks to *Parents Together*, PO Box 4843, Greenwich, CT, 06831

Betsy Benenson
Polly Hyman
Co-Editors

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Parents  **TOGETHER**

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