

In This Issue Developmental Parenting

This issue takes us back to the basics: Parenting and child development. We look at these familiar yet complex topics through the lens of Developmental Parenting. Learn more about this, read two scripted home visits comparing styles of home visiting, and see how an HFNY program used their site support day to re-think how they were promoting Parent Child Interaction. This issue's Milky Way focuses on breastfeeding as a tool to promote child development. We have a Spotlight on our colleagues at Cayuga/Seneca Healthy Families. As always, we have news and photos from programs highlighting the wonderfully creative work going on in Healthy Families New York. We are very excited to introduce a new feature in the Link created entirely by our readers: The Book Corner. Each issue will feature one or two children's books selected by HFNY staff along with why they chose it. Some of you shared books you've used with participant families, and others chose books that are meaningful to your own families.

In this Issue	1	An Interview with Suffolk County Healthy Families	6
Introducing Letters to the Editor	1	Program Updates	7-8
Welcome Steve DeJesus	2	The Spotlight on Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca	9
Farewell Kim DuMont	2	The Roving Reporter	10
A Note from OCFS	3	Farewell Rob Attardo	11
The Milky Way	3	The Book Corner	11
Developmental Parenting	4-5	In the Next Issue	12

Introducing Letters to the Editor

Another new feature in the Link is our Letters to the Editor section. We welcome your brief comments, questions and ideas. Letters may include follow up on something you've read in the Link, information you want to share, praise for something you've learned about in our state system, or anything else you think your HFNY colleagues would find interesting.

Please send your letters to Pam Balmer at pbalmer@preventchildabuseny.org.

From the Editor

You'll surely notice right away that this issue of the Link has taken on a fresh new look and feel. We hope you like it as much as we do! Partly it comes from the desire to have the Link reflect the renewed dedication and energy we are witnessing across the state after two years of uncertainty. As we touch base with you in QA visits and trainings, we hear a strong intention to get back to the foundation of our work and commitment: supporting parents in understanding their children and being the joyful "teachers" and advocates they want to be. And partly the new look reflects a new set of eyes: a bright new pair of eyes and hands have joined us in bringing you the Link. Layout and design have been taken over by Caitlin Vollmer, who graces us all with a deep respect for the work we do and years of experience developing communication strategies for international organizations. Welcome aboard and thank you Caitlin! Please share your comments and questions with us, and together we will continue to make the Link all it can be.

- Pam Balmer



All Artwork by Charlotte, Age 7

Welcome Steve De Jesus

Welcome Steve De Jesus, new Program Contract Manager!

Hi. My name is Esteban De Jesus, but I prefer to be called Steve.

I have been working with the Office of Children and Family Services for 12 years. I started out my career with OCFS as a Youth Division Aide in Brookwood Secure Center in Claverack and was later promoted to a Youth Counselor. In 2006, I transferred from facility life and the rehabilitative side of OCFS to the preventative work. My first job at 52 Washington was on the Adolescent Pregnancy Preventive Program. In 2008 I was transferred to the Kinship Program. I worked in Kinship until September 2009 when I took a promotional opportunity with the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance as a Disability Analyst. I returned to OCFS in August of 2010 to work with the Prevention Program. Unfortunately, due to fiscal conditions in New York, the Preventive Program came to an end. However, I was transferred to work with Healthy Families New York and as they say: "The rest is history."

I am excited to be working with as great a program as Healthy Families New York!
- Steve De Jesus

Farewell Kim DuMont, OCFS

Seven years ago, I joined the Healthy Families New York family to work with OCFS and CHSR on the program's randomized controlled trial. When I joined the team, I knew little about HFNY, but I quickly appreciated the value of the program, the logic of the model, the supporting infrastructure, the dedication of the program's staff, the evaluation's design, and the comprehensiveness of the data set. During the next few years, I became more familiar with the program's critical elements and the Kempe; with its management information system and performance targets; with the trainings for direct service, assessment and outreach; with the randomized trial; with Training Institutes and presentations; and with the many people who bring the HFA model and program to life.

Throughout the various tasks, grants, and committees, I especially enjoyed dialoguing about the intersection of research, policy and practice, engaging in creative problem solving, and working cooperatively with many of you to enhance and sustain the program. Now, after seven years, I find that I am best able to convey the spirit and successes of the program by relaying stories about the families served or singing the praises of the program administrators and staff, who continually strive to promote positive parenting, safe homes, and healthy families. I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to work at OCFS and with all of you. As I move to my new position at the William T. Grant Foundation, where I will be working to award grants to researchers investigating how settings, interventions, and families affect the development of youth, I will often remember my days with the HFNY family.

Thank you.
Kim DuMont

the Link

EDITOR Pam Balmer
Director of Training
& Staff Development
Prevent Child Abuse NY

MANAGING EDITOR Ellen Butowsky
Prevent Child Abuse NY

LAYOUT Caitlin Vollmer

PROGRAM COORDINATOR Bernadette Johnson
NYS Office of Children
& Family Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Christine Deys
Prevent Child Abuse NY

SUBMISSIONS
ebutowsky@preventchildabuseny.org

The Link is published two times yearly as a joint venture of Prevent Child Abuse NY and the New York State Office of Children & Family Services

PCANY
33 Elk St, 2nd Floor
Albany, NY 12207
518.445.1273 1.800.CHILDREN
cdeys@preventchildabuseny.org

NYS OCFS, DDPS
52 Washington St. 3N
Rensselaer, NY 12144
518.474.3166
bernadette.johnson@ocfs.state.ny.us

A Note from OCFS

Hello HFNY!

I am so happy to be able to say a few words to you in this issue of the Link! We all know the condition of the state's finances, that we have been going through some rough years and that we may have a few more rough ones ahead of us. Still, it is wonderful that the Governor and the Legislature recognized the fantastic and effective work that all of you are doing with the vulnerable families in New York State, and restored all of our funding. Many of our colleagues throughout the state are not as fortunate. While we may not have as many other programs or resources for referring program participants, I know that with your persistent focus on our families, they will continue to succeed and be the best parents they can be! Keep up the good work and thank you for all that you do!

I want to say so long to a friend and colleague to all of Healthy Families New York. Kim DuMont has been a research scientist for the program for the last seven years, and is a true champion for staff and the program. Kim has authored numerous papers and made presentations nationally and internationally about the Randomized Control Trial (RCT) and our outcomes. I will especially miss Kim's ability to bring the data to life for me-she has helped me to understand what it all means and how to use it effectively! Best Wishes, Kim!

- Bernadette Johnson, HFNY Coordinator



The Milky Way



Developmental Parenting has been described as Parent Child Interactions that support the development of children.¹ When home visitors support breastfeeding, they are supporting Developmental Parenting. One characteristic of Developmental Parenting is parental responsiveness, and breastfeeding provides a wonderful opportunity for this responsiveness to occur.

Baby-led nursing refers to the process by which the baby "requests" to feed by showing hunger cues. In a successful

Breastfeeding & Developmental Parenting

Rayza Delacruz-Stiff, RN, MSN, Program Director Bushwick Bright Start

breastfeeding relationship, the mother will quickly put the baby to breast upon reading a hunger cue, and both mother and baby will experience mutual satisfaction. This positive experience reinforces the behaviors.² The prenatal period is a great time to provide information on infant feeding cues so that parents feel more prepared to understand their baby. Home visitors can discuss what parents think hunger cues will look and sound like.

A successful breastfeeding relationship will increase parental self-confidence as the mother experiences herself as competent. The infant will experience satisfaction when her need is met in a timely fashion. The breastfeeding father will be engaged along with the mother in a kind of dance in which the parent and child become synchronized with one another.

During breastfeeding, the hormone oxytocin is released and the mother feels more relaxed. Good feelings and nurturing behaviors are more likely to occur, thereby facilitating bonding and attachment. Dr. William Sears coined the term "Attachment

Parenting." In his work he describes one of the principles of Attachment Parenting as "feeding with love and respect."³ It is important to remember the role fathers have in breastfeeding too. Fathers who are empowered with information about breastfeeding behaviors are more likely to support their partners and their babies in this process.

The breastfeeding relationship provides a great opportunity to support infant development when parents quickly respond to their baby's feeding cues. Healthy Families home visitors get to be a wonderful part of supporting Developmental Parenting when they support breastfeeding!

¹ *Developmental Parenting: A Guide for Early Childhood Practitioners.* Roggman, Lori, PhD, and Innocenti, Mark, PhD, 2008., Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

² *The Nature of Nurturing. Mutual Competence Grid.* Victor Bernstein, PhD, 2002.

³ *Attachment Parenting.* William Sears, MD. AskDrSears.com

Developmental Parenting

Wendy Bender, PCANY

Developmental Parenting is what parents do to support their child's learning and development. It includes valuing and encouraging development, and changing responses over time as the child grows. Promoting Developmental Parenting is a natural place for home visitors to incorporate the skills, approaches, and "way of being," that are the cornerstones of our work in HFNY: The Nature of Nurturing and Motivational Interviewing.

The Impact of Developmental Parenting

The home visitor's role is to facilitate the process of helping parents notice all of the small steps that are part of their baby's development. Here is an example of what that might look like:

I was with an 18-month-old child, Phillip, and his mother, Chelsea, last week. Phillip is learning words like crazy and in his excitement to see me, he excitedly pointed to my watch and said, "Watch!" He then looked at the clock on the wall and said, "Clock. Tick tock." My first reaction was to marvel at his use of words and his connecting a clock to a watch, but I quickly realized that what he was doing was far beyond just pointing to things and saying the word; he was having a conversation with me. He did not have the capacity yet to say, "Hello Aunt Wendy, it has been two whole months since you have been here. Where have you been? What have you been doing?" These are higher levels of communication that are not possible yet for the brain of an 18-month-old. Still, Phillip was greeting me and having a conversation in the best way he was able. He loves clocks and watches, and the sounds they make. So he was essentially saying to me, "Hi Aunt Wendy, I notice you have a watch. I love watches! Did you notice I have a clock? It says tick tock." It takes an awful lot of small steps to develop the skill of conversation and I was seeing some in action.

When I pointed this out to Chelsea, she beamed with pride in her son and began to fill me in on the kinds of conversations she and his dad have with him all of the time. She said, "I didn't realize he was really getting it, but he sure is, isn't he?"

Home visitors can help parents realize that their efforts to keep their child safe, along with their warmth, responsiveness, encouragement and conversation have a big impact on their child's development. In the book, *Meaningful Differences*, Betty Hart, Ph.D. & Todd Risely, Ph.D. show a direct link between a child's academic performance in third grade and the number of words spoken in their home from birth until age three. Hart and Risely actually recorded hours of conversation, and found that the children who did the best in school heard 30,000 words a day. That is like reading Dr. Seuss' *The Cat in the Hat* 18 times!

Hart & Risely's research also showed wide variation in the average number of minutes parents spent interacting with their children. Some parents spent more than 40 minutes with their child, while others spent less than 15 minutes. Similarly, some parents spoke an average of over 3,000 words per hour to their child, while others spoke fewer than 500 words. In the period of one year, children in the least talkative families heard around 3 million words, while children in the most talkative families heard around 11 million words. It is no wonder that children from more interactive families have an edge when they get to school.

The Importance of Facilitative Approaches

Depending on the home visitor's level of familiarity and expertise with Child Development, she or he may need to spend time reading through ASQs or program curricula in order to have an idea of the developmental milestones that lie ahead. Part of our work is to develop relationships with parents so we can encourage them to be engaged, curious, and interested in learning about their child's development.

Very few parents start out as experts, but they have an amazing teacher – their baby! When we are curious and interested, we allow ourselves to learn from the baby, and we can learn so much. Developmental charts and screens are helpful tools for making sure we are on track and preparing for what comes next.

On the next page is a snapshot of a home visit from two different perspectives. The first is a typical exchange. The second uses a facilitative approach. Try to notice the places where the home visitor used facilitative skills to promote Developmental Parenting. Can you pick out the home visitor's use of reflections and questions in the facilitative exchange that created opportunities for the parents to understand more about their child's development?

Where do we go from here?

It is important to recognize what an amazing opportunity we have to help parents learn about Child Development and the huge impact they have on their child.

We can learn a lot from the baby, our curricula, our own experiences and from each other. When we are curious and have learned to recognize cues, the baby will tell us a great deal about how she or he is developing. Our curricula include materials and information that invite us to learn continuously about developmental milestones. Through their relationships with parents, home visitors become 'partners in learning.' Home visitors and families get together week after week, and are able to observe and marvel at the baby. They come together and learn, and like scientists, try to figure out what all the information means and why it matters for the baby.

During each home visit, look for opportunities to observe the child. Be curious and partner with parents to learn more. And remember to talk about it in your weekly supervision!

Home Visit Snapshots & Resources

A Typical Exchange:

An FSW, Melissa, was visiting Tomika, Matt, and 18-month-old Dante. Dante was in his highchair and Matt was feeding him.

Dante: Took a bite and said "Mmm..."

Matt: Laughed and said, "Yeah, he likes peaches."

Tomika: "He was so funny at my mom's over the weekend. Everyone was feeding him and he just loved it!"

Melissa: "Yeah, you can tell how much he loves them!"

Matt: "It's always a good day when there are peaches."

Melissa: "That's funny."

Tomika: "Oh, I didn't tell you about the incident at my mom's. We were all having dinner and we heard sirens coming closer and closer. Well, they came to her next-door neighbor's house and arrested this guy who was staying with them. They were shouting and carrying on. It was crazy."

Matt: "Yeah, it was all anyone could talk about the rest of the day."

Tomika: "You know how everyone is into the gossip. They all had stories."

Melissa: "Boy, it sounds crazy!"

Tomika: "Yeah, we got home pretty late and we were all tired this morning."

A Facilitative Exchange:

An FSW, Melissa, was visiting Tomika, Matt, and 18-month-old Dante. Dante was in his highchair and Matt was feeding him.

Dante: Took a bite and said, "Mmm..."

Matt: Laughed and said, "Yeah, he likes peaches."

Tomika: "He was so funny at my mom's over the weekend. Everyone was feeding him and he just loved it!"

Melissa: "Wow. What was that like?"

Tomika: "My mom has a highchair for him there and he was sitting at the head of the table and everyone just kept coming over to feed him a bite. My cousin fed him and Dante doesn't even know him."

Melissa: "How did Dante respond to the cousin he didn't know?"

Tomika: "At first he just looked at him, then he looked at me and then he took a bite."

Melissa: "So, he just looked at you."

Tomika: "Yeah, and I guess I smiled and he was fine with my cousin."

Melissa: "That's really cool, because he was looking to you to be sure this stranger was safe. When he saw your smile, he realized you were saying it was OK. That's how much he trusts you; you let him know who is safe and who isn't."

Tomika: *Smiled.*

Dante: "Mmm..."

Matt: "It's always a good day when there are peaches."

Melissa: "How does he let you know when he's hungry, or wants more and when he has had enough?"

Matt: "He has been starting sometimes to point to the fridge and say juice. Usually, he just would whine, or cry."

Melissa: "He is getting better at letting you know what he wants. You must have gotten pretty good at getting what he meant, even when he didn't have the word juice."

Matt: "Yeah, it feels good when I get what he wants. You can just see him relax."

Tomika: "Oh, I didn't tell you about the incident at my mom's. We were all having dinner and we heard sirens coming closer and closer. Well, they came to her next-door neighbor's house and arrested this guy who was staying with them. They were shouting and carrying on. It was crazy."

Matt: "Yeah, it was all anyone could talk about the rest of the day."

Tomika: "You know how everyone is into the gossip; they all had stories."

Melissa: "How was Dante with all of that commotion?"

Tomika: "Wow! I just realized as you asked that's why he was so fussy to get to bed last night. I was so tired and he just wouldn't settle down; now I understand why. I hadn't even thought of that."

Resources

Here is a list of resources you can use to learn more about Child Development and Developmental Parenting.

Developmental Parenting: A Guide for Early Childhood Practitioners.
Lori A. Roggman, Lisa K. Boyce and Mark S. Innocenti

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/family.html>
See the family tools and training modules section

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/child-development>

<http://www.naeyc.org/play/teachers>
See the play resources for parents and families section

<http://www.zerotothree.org>
See the behavior and development section

An Interview with Suffolk County Healthy Families

On a recent QA/Site Support visit to Suffolk County Healthy Families, Caroline Chant, PCANY, shared information and resources on Developmental Parenting with Program Manager Giselle Cosme and Supervisor Jaisy Reyes. Here are some excerpts from Caroline's follow up phone call with them:

How do you think the Developmental Parenting approach helps the parent, rather than the home visitor, orchestrate interactions with the child?

Giselle: "It relieves the pressure and stress of feeling like the home visitor needs to be 'on,' and responsible for figuring out how they are going to get the mother and baby to interact."

Jaisy: "It gives the home visitor a different lens by letting them see themselves as facilitators."

What need do you see this material filling for you and your staff?

Giselle: "The material you presented will help us work with staff to put parents in the driver's seat. I have also been considering the connection between PSI scores; seeing if PSI scores go down in some areas the more control the parent has in interacting, and the more engaged they are, with the target child. Then, the home visitors can see that something has changed."

What was it about these materials that made you so excited and interested in presenting it to staff?

Jaisy: "There was something missing for staff. In their minds, they saw it as their job to promote PCI by showing Mom PCI."

Giselle: "The Developmental Parenting PCI piece is very helpful and helps with the questions about what PCI looks like. "What am I supposed to do in this model?" Using a Developmental Parenting approach helps staff better understand that the bonding is supposed to be happening between parents and baby, not baby and home visitor."

What are some of your plans for sharing this material with staff, and using it in your ongoing work?

Jaisy: "I'm using the materials in supervision. I'm also focusing more, both in conversations and during QA, on when and how home visitors are bringing the attention to the parent as the one interacting with their child. I'm working on helping the home visitor focus more on the parent and baby and keeping in mind that the role of the home visitor isn't to be in charge of the activity."



Program Updates



Early Advantages, Clinton County

Groups

We are excited about partnering with our local library to host a “Once Upon a Time” story time in their children’s room. We are also partnering with the Family Connections program to facilitate play groups three times each week. We have a rotation schedule so all members of our staff have a chance to participate. Both of these activities have helped our staff to develop their professional skills and for us to make contact with families in fun ways. In fact, we have re-engaged families that were on Level X when they attended the play groups!

Father Advocate and Breastfeeding

We may have discovered something interesting. It seems that the families who receive visits from our Father Advocate (FA) are more likely to breastfeed! We surveyed all of our participants and found that the families involved with our FA are all breastfeeding. We think this might be because the FA has been able to make a special connection with the fathers and use that connection to encourage breastfeeding. It seems when the fathers are onboard, the mothers are more likely to have the confidence to breastfeed. In addition to the health benefits, we hear two reasons fathers want their babies to breastfeed: The family will save money when they don’t have to buy formula, and everybody gets more sleep since babies often sleep better after nursing.

New forms

We created new forms to assist supervisors with the structure and content of supervision, and they are working well for us. If you would like a copy of these tools, please contact Esther Piper at 518-563-8206, extension 134. epiper@bhsn.org

- Esther Piper, Program Manager

Healthy Families Oneida County

Our Family Handbook

In September we started using a family handbook we designed that includes a family-friendly contract called “The Promise.” We adapted this handbook from one created by Starting Together in Madison County. It has contact names and numbers, information about services that are available, and informative articles on breastfeeding and the importance of father involvement.

Remembering what Dr. Victor Bernstein taught us years ago, we use this handbook as a tool for establishing clear, shared expectations about being in our home visiting program. The handbook includes a mutual agreement outlining what we promise to do (i.e., maintain confidentiality, keep our appointments, and support them as the parent) and what the families agree to do (i.e., participate in visits, keep appointments, work toward goals.) We also acknowledge and clarify boundaries around typical sources of misunderstanding, like transportation, child care, accepting gifts, requests for money, and we address what to expect when the weather is bad or if the home visitor or someone in the family is sick.

The handbook also outlines steps families can take when they have concerns, and describes our Quality Assurance practices. In short, our goal is to have all staff provide all participants the same information in a similar manner so families are able to make an informed and committed decision about whether to join the program. Families and their home visitor keep a signed copy of “The Promise,” and families also receive a certificate acknowledging their participation.

Since we began using the handbook, our caseloads have increased, and we have seen fewer discharges

Feel free to contact Annette Phillips at aphillips@fncny.org or 315-738-9773, extension 239 if you would like more information.

- Annette Phillips, Program Manager

Program Updates Cont'd.



BIRTH ('Naissance' in French) has been performed around the world in many languages.

Ulster County Healthy Start

BIRTH – a play

Ulster County Healthy Start (UCHS) is an active participant on the Wawarsing Council, a group that promotes health and wellness in the Wawarsing/Ellenville community. On May 6th, the Council sponsored a production of the play BIRTH, by Karen Brody as an education awareness project on birth, birth options and supporting women in childbirth. "Birth is a documentary-style play based on over one hundred interviews Karen Brody conducted with pregnant women across America about their birth experiences." (<http://boldaction.org>) Each BIRTH play is organized into a "BOLD" event: An event that raises money and awareness to make maternity care more mother-friendly. Our event raised money for the Doulas of the Hudson Valley. Sheena Ballard and Tina Mandiville from UCHS were in the cast.

The show was wonderful and over one hundred people attended. In fact, we ran out of chairs! The audience was swept up by the authentic portrayal of the characters, and by the telling of their stories. They laughed and cried, and many came up to us afterwards in tears. Several women shared how cathartic it was for them to watch, as it brought up feelings and memories of their own births, and enabled them to talk about things they had tried to forget or long since buried. Other women told us they had changed their mind about the kind of birth experience they want to have the second time around; they want to think more carefully and explore their options now.

Many professionals who work with pregnant and parenting women and families attended. The play evoked so many emotions and we are still getting feedback about how providers were affected and how it will impact the work they do. This was a great experience for all, and the ripple effects are still being felt and heard. Plans are in the works for our next performance to be held in July, either in Woodstock or Rosendale, and to perform it at our host organization in NYC. Feel free to contact Lori Rotolo for more information at 845-647-7743 or lrotolo@institute2000.org.

- Lori Rotolo, Supervisor

Starting Together/Healthy Families Madison County

Reading Together

Every March our program has a special initiative called "Reading Together." The goal is to encourage parents to read to their baby or child, even prenatally! While reading with children is encouraged throughout the year, we place a special emphasis on it during this time. The reasons are in the research.

- Children in families with incomes below the poverty line are less likely to be read to every day than are children in families with incomes at or above the poverty line. The average middle-income child is read to for 1200 hours, compared to 25 hours for low-income children.

- Research shows that early exposure to books and literacy experiences greatly increases a child's success in school. It is never too early to read to your baby, even before birth! Most importantly, reading together can create positive interaction between parent and child that stimulates brain growth and development. A strong and healthy attachment between parent and child is the key to supporting healthy development of the child, and this what we are all about!

At Starting Together, we developed over 20 reading tips which home visitors can share with families based on the needs and interests of the family. During the month, they share four tips with each family. The tips offer parents simple ways to introduce reading as well as share information about their child's development. They work really well for starting a discussion with a family about reading with their child.

We also hold our "Parent Child Play Groups" at local libraries. We find that this is a wonderful way to introduce families to their local library, a valuable resource.

Our Child Development Specialist plans and offers an annual family workshop with a focus on early literacy. This year it was titled "Learning Happens All Day!" It is always a fun time for families who get to do hands-on activities.

During the month, families receive two to four new children's books (depending on donations available) to encourage reading on a regular basis. Families also receive a canvas book bag they can decorate and use for traveling with their new books.

Feedback from both staff and parents about Reading Together has always been very positive. Feel free to contact Deb Munn at 315-697-3588 or dmunn@capmadco.org to learn more.

- Deb Munn, Program Manager

The Spotlight on Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca



Back row left to right: Tracy Akins, FSW; Vicky Meyers, FSW/FAW; Jennifer Stevens, FAW/FSW; Shalana Johnson, FSW/FAW (all Cayuga County); Christine Bajdas, Supervisor, Seneca County. Middle row (standing): Kelley Fitts, FAW/FSW (Seneca County). Seated: Kim Peterson, PM; Michelle Dutcher, FSW (Seneca County); Kathy Gallinger, Supervisor, Cayuga County.

Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca

At Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca (HFCS), we capitalize on our unique position as a program that is part of a Community Action Agency and we implement innovative ideas to break down barriers to participation. Established in 2007 through a grant from the Office of Children and Family Services to provide home visiting services in our counties, HFCS has grown into a very successful program.

Our host agency, Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, is a private, not-for-profit corporation whose mission is to assist people to achieve and sustain self-sufficiency and self-dignity. It currently administers more than twenty different programs including Family Development, Head Start, Early Head Start, Domestic Violence Intervention Program, and many more. While HFCS's primary goals are to promote Parent Child Interaction and child development, home visitors benefit from the agency's deep experience serving the community. Being part of CSCAA allows us to meet a variety of the needs our families have quickly and seamlessly through our intra-agency referral process and our network of community partners.

Cayuga and Seneca counties are located in the heart of New York State's beautiful Finger Lakes Region. Tourism is a major draw, with everything "from wine trails to fish tales" and everything in between. We have offices in both counties, and serve three zip codes in Seneca County and six zip codes in Cayuga County. Our staff of nine includes a program manager, two supervisors, two family assessment workers and four family support workers. Many of the staff have been cross-trained, which allows the program to be flexible with staffing to better meet the needs of families. It also helps staff to understand and support each other's roles. Shalana Johnson, who was originally trained as an FSW and recently went through the FAW Core shared: "It's nice to be a part of the whole Healthy Families process from doing outreach, getting the screen, engaging the family, completing the

assessment and enrolling the family." Jen Stevens, who was first trained as an FAW and then as an FSW said: "I feel it's an asset. It lets me look at both points of view. Sometimes there is role confusion, but it gives me a different outlook. You see both sides and it helps put the whole Healthy Families piece together."

Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca works continuously to ensure that participants are engaged in the program. We think creatively about ways to engage them initially and through their entire time working with us. With the help of two grants, we have successfully implemented an incentive program to engage and retain families.

A grant from Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central New York allowed us to purchase four cribs, mattresses, pads and sheet sets, four baby monitors, two high chairs with shatter-proof baby bowls, 130 safety swivel outlet covers, and 1,900 safety plug outlet covers. Families received the incentives based on the number of home visits completed and assessment of need, with the most valuable (the crib sets and high chairs) going to those who participated in ten home visits.

The second grant, from the BJ's Charitable Foundation, allowed us to purchase diapers, diaper wipes, and diaper creams. We have distributed 219 packages of diapers and pull-ups, 52 packages of diaper wipes, and 71 packages of creams. The items are provided as part of our "Baby Bucks" program and on an as-needed basis to participating families.

Baby Bucks is another incentive program at HFCS. We introduced Baby Bucks one year ago and it has been a huge success! Families earn "Baby Bucks" if they participate actively in Healthy Families by attending group meetings, achieving goals, being up-to-date on well baby visits and immunizations, and keeping their scheduled home visits. Items for sale include baby items and some items for parents, like body wash and toothpaste.

All of the families who receive incentives are very low-income and could not have afforded the items on their own. One parent who received a high chair is a single mother of three who worked two jobs for over a year. She is a Certified Nursing Assistant and recently quit one of the jobs and has enrolled in community college to become an RN. The types of incentives we provide help promote the health, well-being and safety of the children enrolled in our program. Families enroll and stay in our program for many reasons, including the fun and educational home visits we provide. Still, for some families, we think the incentives are the extra support they needed to remain connected to us.

As one of the relatively new Healthy Families New York programs, Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca is proud to be a positive and much-needed resource for new and expectant parents. Since starting up in early 2008, we have grown to a current enrollment of 74 families. We look forward to continued growth and to helping to assure healthier beginnings and brighter futures for all children living in Cayuga and Seneca Counties. Contact us at (315) 283-2030 X211 or kpeterson@cscaa.com.

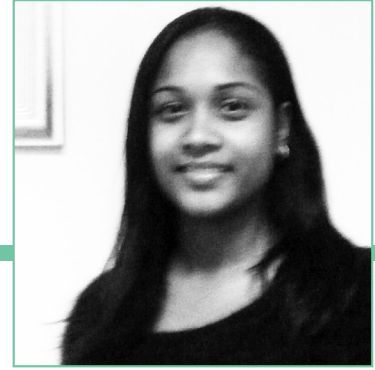
- Kim Peterson, Program Manager

The Roving Reporter

How do you keep the child's focus on the parents and not you during your visits?

"Can Mommy play with us?" Usually when I say this statement to the child they turn to Mom and include her. Then I encourage Mom to ask questions or praise the child, by clapping or cheering, for example.

--Jamie Tillock, FSW / FAW, Successful Start



I talk on behalf of the child, often saying things such as: "Mommy, let's do this together!" In addition, when a child approaches me with something interesting to play with, I say to the parents things such as: "It looks like she wants to play with that car." The parents usually ask the child about the toy and the child's attention is redirected to the parents.

--Maria Navarro, FSW, University Settlement Healthy Families

I re-direct the child away from me to an activity they can do with the parent. This takes the focus off of me. I think in advance about what mom and dad can do with the baby when bringing an activity.

-- Maria Cubero, FSW Healthy Families of Sullivan



I use things found in the home in a variety of activities so the items aren't "exciting things" I've brought. Sometimes I do demonstrate what the activity might look like to the mother, and then I let her do it with the child.

--Susan Hrynko, FSW, Healthy Families of Sullivan

Farewell Rob Attardo

After 3-plus years working with the Healthy Families Program, Rob Attardo will be leaving his position at Prevent Child Abuse NY in August. He will be attending graduate school in the fall to pursue a degree in secondary education. He takes with him years worth of experiences and lessons about the diversity of the state and the great work being done on behalf of the families of New York. He hopes that his future professional experiences involve working with people as passionate and supportive as everyone in HFNY has been.

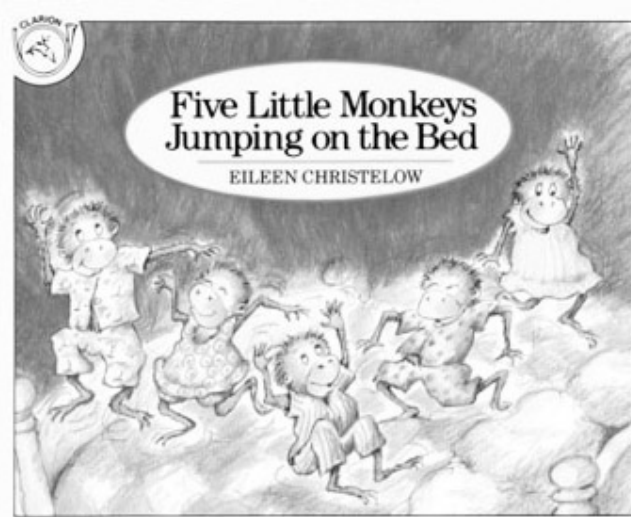
- Rob Attardo



Rob and Artemis

The Book Corner

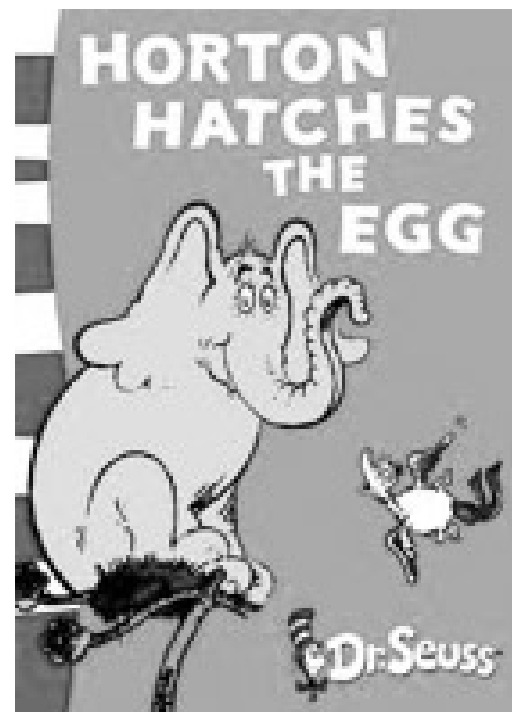
We had a wonderful response to our request for children's books! Thanks for sharing what you love about them in your work and with your own families. We look forward to sharing what you sent over the next several issues. Enjoy!



Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow

One of the books I love to read with children is *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*. This book has it all: You can sing it and you can read it. It holds children's interest and helps them to read along. The pictures tell the story, which helps children learn to develop their communication and thinking skills. You can even make it into a game that can help children use their imagination and learn to anticipate as they read along. Children and adults alike get excited with *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*. This book helps start a lifetime enjoyment of reading.

Submitted by Sarah Sabino, FSW, Successful Start



Horton Hatches the Egg by Dr. Seuss

I have read this story to my nieces who have been in my care from the time they were very young. This book points out that it does not matter who started the work (laying the egg). With dedication, you can positively affect the outcome (hatching the egg).

Submitted by Edrie Archibald, FAW, Early Advantages, Clinton County

theLink

June 2011



Prevent Child Abuse
New York, Inc.
33 Elk Street, 2nd Floor
Albany, NY 12207

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID

Albany NY
Permit No. 785

In the Next Issue

In our next issue of the Link, we'll focus on fathers: What are we learning from our work with fathers, looking for our next steps, and exploring what being a father looks like in some other cultures and countries. We'll have more books for children submitted by our readers, a Research Corner from our Evaluation Team, and hopefully some interesting Letters to the Editor. And of course, we'll have more of the great submissions from programs you've come to expect and hope for from the Link. Until then...

