

Making a Difference

2018 Lubbock County Parenting Child Development Education

Improve Family Life for Texans

E. Kay Davis, MS, LD, Lubbock County Extension Agent-Family & Community Health

Relevance

Despite changes in their structure, families remain the most basic unit of society. Today's families need support to build the resiliency necessary to meet life's challenges head-on. There is encouraging evidence that research and educational programs can contribute to the strength and resiliency of all families. The Lubbock County Leadership Advisory Board identified financial management, childhood obesity and health management as issues in Lubbock County. However, they identified parenting issues as being one of the top 10 issues. Lubbock County Family and Consumer Sciences Advisory Board extended the topics to child abuse, teenage needs & risky behavior, teen pregnancy, and parenting skills. More than 30% of all households are single or non-family groups and one-fourth of children are in a family with married couples, the rest are in blended families, with grandparents, or in foster care. Children of single parents are now the poorest age group in the United States. Twenty-two percent of Lubbock Children live in poverty according to the 2018 Lubbock County State of Health Report. Parental challenges are considerable. One in four adolescents engages in social behaviors that can lead to serious long-term difficulty. The State of Texas Children 2007 indicates that in Lubbock County, 19.9% of births were to teens and that there were 1,239 confirmed victims of child abuse in 2007 and 20 deaths to children and teens. Many children in day care and pre-school have developmental issues and day care workers and pre-school teachers need tools in order to work with these children while their parents are at work, school, etc.

Response

Now in its 23rd year, the Building Strong Families Conference was started by Lubbock Partner's for Parenting Coalition, a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service advisory board/coalition, to address these issues listed above. It is now an incorporated agency of its own and Extension serves as a voting board of director's member. I served on the Media/Public Relations Committee, was on the Evaluation Committee for 2018 and was responsible for attending meetings, & assisting with/serving on the speakers committee, assisting with registration distribution to schools and daycares in Region 17 Education Service Center area as well as to other agencies and locations in Lubbock County where clientele would have access to it. I assisted with promoting the conference with other County Extension Agents, contacting media with news releases and giving interviews, helping get sponsor donations, set up on the conference day, provide educational exhibits, and develop and compile evaluation results. The BSF Board meets monthly to plan the annual conference. The various committees work independently and report on activities at the monthly meetings. Speakers and topics for the conference are determined by the speaker's committee and approved by the board based on evaluations received from the preceding year's conference. Donor support and grants are applied for throughout the year. Grant writing/sponsor contact is a responsibility of the chairman and treasurer. Other donor support and volunteer support is sought by various committee members.

Results


The 23rd Annual Building Strong Families Conference was held at the Broadway Church of Christ in Lubbock. Breakfast, lunch, and speakers were provided for a \$12 registration fee. Other expenses were offset by the donor's grant funds (Betenbough Homes--\$950 and Community Foundation of West Texas--\$1,400 in addition to \$1836 from participant fees). Nineteen other donors were the collaborating agencies who donated time to plan and work the conference, present educational exhibits, and provide hospitality room snacks. Keynote speaker, Dr. George Comisky

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spoke on “Playing Catch: The iGen Children and Their Parents” and was heard by all with the aid of headphones and a Spanish interpreter. Other speakers for concurrent sessions were: “A Parent’s Guide to Preparing Students for College and Career Readiness”-Charlotte Sessom and Dr. Stacy Caviel-Watson; “ABC’s of Parenting in Today’s World”-Johnna Weatherbee; “My Game of Catch Doesn’t Seem to Have Any Rules”-panel of parents; “Sparkle of HOPE”-Ann Marie Casiraghi; “Positive Parenting Strategies”-Martha Dodge; “Our Technology Connected Children & Teens”-Dr. Jaclyn Cravens; “Teaching STEM Accessible to Families at Home”-Amanda Vieregge; “Help, Something is Wrong With My Kid”-Dr. Michael Gomez; “Developing Healthy Children: Beyond the ‘Bubble’”-Dr. Michael Gomez; “Connecting With Kids: Relieving Some of the Stress Related to Correcting Negative Behaviors”-Dana Bearden; and a Closing Session with a student panel. In 2018, there were: 225 total lunch tickets turned in; 8% Males, 92% Females; Area of Service or Residence: Rural-33%, City-67%; Reason for Attending the Conference: Work Related-40%, Parent-30%, Both-30%; Children’s Grade Level: Birth-3/Early Childhood Program--7%; Pre-School--12%; Grades--K-5-24%; Grades 6-8--56%; Grades 9-12--16%; College--10%; N/A-16%; Age Groups Attending: Under 15 Years-0%, 15-20 Years-0%, 21-40 Years-44%, 41-50 Years-26%, Over 50 Years-30%; Ethnicity: Hispanic-96%, Non-Hispanic or Latino-4%; Anglo-73%, African American-20%, Native American-3%, Other-4%; Salary Range: Under \$25,000-24%, \$25,000-\$40,000-29%, \$40,000-\$60,000-21%, Over \$60,000-26%.

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Summary – Due to the continued success of the BSF Conference, the committee will resume meeting in January 2019 to begin planning the 2019 Conference for October 24th. Plans are to possibly offer a child care conference/training by collaborating with a cluster of counties in District 2 in 2019.

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| Parenting Education | |
|  | <p>Parenting programs from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service increase participants’ knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are essential to a child’s development. Parents who are consistent, respectful, involved, and serve as positive role models increase their children’s potential for success and help prevent delinquent behavior during the adolescent and teen years.</p> |