

Making a Difference

2019 Lubbock County Parenting Child Development Education

Improve Family Life for Texans

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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 24th 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 Board of Directors and the Media/Public Relations Committee 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 review/edit 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 24th 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 (\$1,500 from a Charitable Trust in addition to \$1,740 from 185 participant fees). Twenty other donors were the collaborating agencies who donated time to plan and work the conference, present educational exhibits, serve as

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speakers, and provide hospitality room snacks. There were 28 speakers, 5 volunteers, 13 exhibitor tables from collaborating agencies, 6 facilitators, and 15 committee members for a total of 215 attending. Morning Keynote speaker, Sarah Wakefield on “Connections: The Way to the Future” was heard by all. Other speakers for concurrent sessions were: “Connecting with the Unconnected: That Teenager in Your House You Used to Know”-Terry & Marty Groves, National Center for Parenthood Enrichment; “Connecting with the Present/The Power of Meditation and Mindfulness”-Michael Mincher, General Manager, Walking X Inc.; “Connectando los Puntos: Desarrollo Sexual Durante la Adolescencia”-Elizabeth Trejos, Ph.D., associate professor of human health development and family studies, Texas Tech University; “Connecting Mental Health Care to Health Care”-Keino McWhinney, Texas Tech Mental Health Institutes Director,; “Connections Instead of Correction: Fun and Nurturing ways to interact with Your Children to Change Behaviors”-Dana Bearden, Director of Family Outreach, Methodist Children’s Home of Lubbock; “Connecting the Dots of Self Care and Restoration”-Ann Krier, “Calming the Chaos Through Connection”-Emily Johnson, Registered Play Therapist; “Connectando Generaciones de Diferentes Culturas”-Oscar Reyes, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Principal, Lubbock Independent School District; “Connecting Students and Families for Success”-Fiona May, United Way Communities in Schools, South Plains Chief Federal Program Officer; “Connecting the Family with Healthy Cooking”-Kay Davis, MS, LD, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Lubbock County Extension Agent-Family & Community Health; “Haciendo la Conexión con la Salud Mental y Como Reconciliar”-Adelaida Montemayor, clinical social worker and Janie Hernandez, LISD teacher; “Adolescent Sexual Development: Connecting “The Birds and the Bees” with Your Teen’s Health”-Nancy Trevino, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Urban & Youth Development Agent Lubbock County, and a closing session with a student panel. In 2019, there were: 100 total lunch tickets turned in; 7% Males, 93% Females; Area of Service or Residence: Rural-19%, City-81%; Reason for Attending the Conference: Work Related-32%, Parent-23%, Both-45%; Children’s Grade Level: Birth-3/Early Childhood Program--12%; Pre-School--13%; Grades--K-5-24%; Grades 6-8--17%; Grades 9-12--18%; College--8%; N/A-8%; Age Groups Attending: Under 15 Years-0%, 15-20 Years-1%, 21-40 Years-60%, 41-50 Years-17%, Over 50 Years-22%; Ethnicity: Hispanic-41%, Anglo-49%, African American-9%, Native American-1%, Other-0%; Salary Range: Under \$25,000-19%, \$25,000-\$40,000-38%, \$40,000-\$60,000-21%, Over \$60,000-22%. 100% indicated the conference was helpful and they would attend next year.

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Summary – Due to the continued success of the BSF Conference, the committee will resume meeting in January 2020 to begin planning a 25th Celebration for the 2020 Conference for October 22nd. In addition, there are plans are to possibly offer the Families/Fathers (FRED) Reading Every Day program in 2020 with the LISD Head Start Program.

VALUE	
Parenting Education	
	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.