

**Family Living Programs
Plan of Work for Joan Sprain
Position/County Family Living Agent, St. Croix County
Dates covered by the plan -2008**

**Title of Priority Program:
Strengthening Families through Parent Education**

Affiliate State Team – Parenting Education and Stress and Transition Team)

Situation Analysis/Priority Setting

Need for Parent Education

Research confirms two key claims regarding parenting. In general, we know that the way children are parented impacts their long-term outcomes. For example, we know that parenting which is both demanding and nurturing leads to success in school (Sternberg & Williams, 1995) while permissive, chaotic or abusive parenting can lead to juvenile crime problems (Loeber et al., 1998). Secondly, research also confirms that often parenting education and support programs can be very effective in helping parents improve their childrearing skills (for example see Gomby et al., 1999). By improving how children are parented, we can improve the outcomes for children and ultimately save money used to support social service programs. (Grunewald & Rolnick, Federal Reserve Bank, Minneapolis, 2006)

Families remain the primary place where children are raised, but there is increasing recognition that the task is shared by others outside the family. Raising children has become a more complex and challenging responsibility due to a myriad of familial, social and technological trends such as the growing diversity of family forms in which children are raised, the high rate of employment by both mothers and fathers, the greater diversity of social values and an increase in external influences such as the media and Internet. There is a growing need among parents, professionals, community leaders and citizens for educational opportunities and technical assistance that can expand their knowledge and skills about child rearing. The need for effective, high quality parent education and family strengthening programs remains a high priority in Wisconsin and St. Croix Co. unfortunately; the effectiveness of many current programs remains unproven. (UW-Extension Parenting Education Team Plan of Work)

There are few parent education programs in St. Croix Co. The Family Resource Center provides home visiting and play groups for parents of children birth to age 6. Some school districts like New Richmond provide a short-term program called "Love and Logic". In order to meet the gaps in service, the UW-Extension Family Living program will focus primarily on parenting adolescents and older school-age children. UW-Extension will also serve as a consultant to the Family Resource Center of the St. Croix Valley providing access to research-based curriculum and resources.

Parent Education for Incarcerated Parents

Families of incarcerated individuals often experience economic, social and emotional burdens. Family relationships are strained and family stability is compromised. Since 1991, the number of minor children with a parent in a federal or state correctional facility increased by more than 500,000 in 1999 (from 936,500 to almost 1.5 million). These children often experience multiple changes of caregivers and/or living arrangements. Research has shown that children of incarcerated parents are more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system (juvenile and adult), are more likely to develop attachment disorders, and often exhibit broad varieties of behavioral, emotional, health and educational problems.

In Wisconsin, only 40 of the more than 3,500 jail staff were categorized as “educational” (representing 1% of all jail staff); this compares to 440 clerical and maintenance staff (12%). Among the special education programs offered for inmates, 11% of Wisconsin jails provide programs in parent training and 26% in life skills training (which may include personal finance). (Source: UW-Extension Families in Stress & Transition Team Plan of Work) In St. Croix Co., there is one staff member that coordinates educational efforts in the jail.

Influences Affecting all Families

All families experience varying degrees of stressful events and transitions during their development, but the number of stressors and the degree of hardship has reached a peak for many families. Stresses can include divorce, poverty, children with special needs, separation from family members due to military deployment, job demands, natural disasters, as well as the daily demands on family members’ time and energy.

Evidence shows though, that many families, even those facing the most challenges, manage to raise their children successfully and support their members. These resilient families have protective factors and recovery factors that play a critical role in promoting their ability to rebound after crisis situations. To build family strengths, actions must be taken to enhance these protective factors and coping capacities of family members while further increasing the external resources and supports accessible to families. (Source: Families in Stress & Transition Team Plan of Work)

One of the biggest stressors affecting families in St. Croix County is the distance traveled to well paying jobs. More than 43% of workers commute more than 30 miles round trip to work. (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). As of 2005, there are 16,530 children under the age of 14 in the county. (2005 Population Estimates, WI Department of Health and Family Services.) Many of these children spend a great deal of time home alone. HCE members recently identified through their program planning a concern for these children and their parents.

**Intended Outcome 1:
Increasing the use of evidence-based and research-based parent education programs (Strengthening Families 10-14, Positive Parenting) and community support to improve the likelihood of positive outcomes for children and families.**

Long Term Outcome:

1. Each community will have the capacity to provide evidence-based programs for families so all parents in St. Croix Co. will have access to evidence-based & researched based parenting programs
2. Parents, grandparents and other caregivers who participate in evidence-based parenting and other family programs will have more optimal child development outcomes (such as enhanced school success, social responsibility and social competence) and reduced youth and family problems (such as drug use, delinquency and child abuse.)

Indicators: Number of youth and parents who participate in the Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10-14 who report an increase in positive attitudes, skills or behaviors.

Medium Term Outcome:

1. Community partners and volunteers will increase their use of evidence-based programs.
2. Families who participate in evidence-based/research-based parenting programs will improve their parenting practices (such as enhanced communication skills, more effective discipline practices and closer parent-child bonds).
- 3 Children and youth will create strong healthy relationships with parents, adults and peers.

Indicators:

1. Number of evidence-based programs implemented by community organizations.
- 2 .Number of parents, grandparents or other caregivers who participate in the SF-10-14 program and report an increase in use of effective parenting practices.

Short Term Outcome:

1. Parents and youth participating in Strengthening Families 10-14 and Positive Parenting programs will increase their knowledge of positive discipline and communication.
2. Community partners and volunteers will increase their understanding of, awareness of, and access to evidence-based programs.
3. Working with the Family Resource Center, UW-Extension staff and parents will pilot test the parenting curriculum for parents of school-age children chosen by the statewide parenting team.

Indicators:

1. Number of community partners trained.
2. Number of parents and youth who participate in parenting programs.
3. Number of parents who participate in pilot parent education class.

Implementation Plan (inputs/outputs)**Inputs:** (What we invest)

UW-Extension county staff
 UW-Extension State Specialists and District staff
 Iowa State Extension staff & curriculum
 Department of Human Services meth prevention training resources
 Local school district staff
 Family Resource Center staff
 St. Croix Co. Jail staff
 Program evaluation tools and staff
 Donations for refreshments and teaching supplies

Strategy 1: Parent education classes

Outputs: Participation (who we reach)	Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)
Parents, grandparent and other caretakers	<p>Direct face-to face parenting classes and groups will be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two seven week Strengthening Families 10-14 sessions will be held in Somerset and Hudson from January through March. Extension Staff and community/school district staff will co-facilitate each session. • One 4 week Positive Parenting classes will be held at the Family Resource Center of the St. Croix Valley. • The State Parenting Team curriculum for parents of school-age children will be pilot-

Practitioners and volunteers	<p style="text-align: center;">tested</p> <p>Training will be available to local agency and school staff to increase the community capacity to provide both Strengthening Families and Positive Parenting classes using qualified trained volunteers/ contract staff.</p>
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Evaluation of Strategy #1

Post session surveys created by the State Strengthening Families 10-14 Parenting Team and Positive Parenting will be used to measure knowledge, attitudes and skills changed. (Human Subjects protection procedures will be followed for all audiences.) Success stories will also be collected.

A three to five year follow-up evaluation effort will be implemented to determine the number of youth and parents who participated in the Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10-14 who report an increase in positive attitudes, skills or behaviors.

Strategy #2 Parenting Newsletters

<p>Outputs: Participation (who we reach)</p> <p>Expecting parents and parents of children birth-3 years</p>	<p>Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)</p> <p>Obtain grant money and work with local hospitals to coordinate the distribution of the UW-Extension Preparing to Parent and Parenting the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd years newsletters.</p>
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Evaluation of Strategy #2

The number of newsletters distributed will be recorded by local agencies and hospitals and reported to St. Croix Co. Extension.

Intended Outcome 2: Inmates in the county jail will increase the use of nonviolent parenting skills.

Long Term Outcome:

1. Incarcerated parents in St. Croix Co. will have access to researched based parenting programs.
2. Parents who participate in the program will increase their positive parenting practices.

Indicators: Number of parents who continue to use nonviolent parenting practices such as positive discipline, teaching respect, positive parenting styles and descriptive praise.

Medium Term Outcome:

1. Parents who participate in evidence-based/research-based parenting programs in the jail will apply positive parenting knowledge and skills.

Indicators: Number of parents who apply nonviolent parenting knowledge.

Short Term Outcome:

1. Parents participating in Positive Parenting programs will increase their knowledge of nonviolent parenting techniques.

Indicators: Number of participants reached.

Implementation Plan (inputs/outputs)

Inputs: (What we invest)

UW-Extension county staff

UW-Extension State Specialists and District staff

Positive Parenting curriculum

St. Croix Co. Jail staff

Program evaluation tools and staff

Strategy 1: Parenting Education for Incarcerated Parents

Outputs: Participation (who we reach)	Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)
Incarcerated Parents	Positive Parenting classes will be provided 2xs per year.

Evaluation of Strategy 1:

Post session surveys created by the curriculum designers will be used to measure knowledge, attitudes and skills changed. (Human Subjects protection procedures will be followed for all audiences. Jail staff will collect data using their post session evaluation instruments.

Intended Outcome 3: Participants in educational efforts to build family resiliency will learn and practice skills to enhance family functioning.

Long Term Outcome:

1. Families who participate will be better able to practice skills that enhance family resiliency.

Indicators: Number of families who report better family functioning.

Medium Term Outcome:

1. Families who participate will increase their practice of techniques to support themselves and/or their families and to better cope in times of personal difficulty and stress.

2. Youth who participate will learn friendship making skills, self-care skills and recreational reading skills.

Indicators: Number of family members who practice family resiliency skills.

Short Term Outcome:

1. Parents and youth participating will learn knowledge about techniques to support themselves and/or their families and to better cope in times of personal difficulty and stress...

Indicators: Number of family members reached in family resiliency educational efforts.

Implementation Plan (inputs/outputs)

Inputs: (What we invest)

UW-Extension county staff

Positive Parenting curriculum

Camp staff

Library staff

Volunteers including HCE

Program evaluation tools and staff

Strategy 1: Family Camp

<p>Outputs: Participation (who we reach)</p> <p>Parents & children who are low income, single, and/or have mental health or other challenges.</p>	<p>Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)</p> <p>A family camp focusing on parenting, youth development and building family relationships will be implemented each fall for at least 10 families. Grants will be written to find support to fund the camp.</p>
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Evaluation of Strategy #1

End of camp feedback forms will be used to collect data from camp participants. Feedback from the past three years will be studied to determine impact of the camp program.

Strategy # 2 HCE Parent Education Efforts

Outputs: Participation (who we reach)	Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)
Parents & children	<p>Support family literacy activities of HCE including Bookworms® reading program for Head Start children and the new summer reading fair.</p> <p>Work with HCE committee to plan and implement children home alone community service project. Project will focus on helping parents teach self-care skills to pre-adolescent children using UW-Extension Children Home Alone” curriculum.</p>

Evaluation of Strategy #2

Data will be collected regarding number of participants and the number of parents who have increased time spent reading with their children. Post session evaluation will be conducted to determine impact of the children home alone community service project.

Title of Priority Program: Family Economic Security

Situation Analysis/Priority Setting

Characteristics of Family Security in St. Croix Co.: Financial security is defined as an individual's or family's ability to meet its short-term needs and to prepare for its future. For many families and individuals, just one shift in the status quo of financial resources (e.g. loss of job, death of breadwinner, divorce or long-term illness) can be detrimental to financial stability. The farther away families live from the Twin Cities, the less chance they have of finding a job that pays enough to support a family.

It's not uncommon for American's overall to spend more than they make. . During 2005, the U.S. Commerce Department reported that American's spent more than they earned. This is the first time since the Great Depression. In St. Croix Co., the personal bankruptcy rate was 5.19/1000 people compared to 1.76/1000 in 2000. (Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts June, 2006) The number of home foreclosures in 2005 was 212 compared to 42 in 1995. During the first 3 months of 2006, there were a reported 99 foreclosures. (Hudson-Star Observer, St. Croix Co.)

The unemployment rate is 3.2. (Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.) This rate will increase since Andersen Corporation which employs 2600 employees in its' Bayport, MN facility two thirds of which are Wisconsin residents just announced a permanent layoff of 440 employees. The recent 3M layoff of over 1,000 Minnesota jobs may also affect St. Croix co. residents. (MN Public Radio)

Poverty in St. Croix County: About 9% of St. Croix County families make under \$25,000 per year. The poverty rate for families with children under 5 years is 4.8 % in St. Croix County. Many families in St. Croix County commute to the Twin Cities for work, allowing them to earn more money, but those left behind in lower paying jobs are struggling. St. Croix County has one of the highest self-sufficiency wages in WI, \$21.18 for one adult and two children, making it difficult for families who can't find jobs at that level. Coupled with rents and home costs in the price range of the Twin Cities, it is difficult for many families to keep up. In fact, 22.8% of renters are paying 35% or more of their income for rent, a clear sign of financial stress. English is spoken as the sole language in 97% of the households in both counties, but 2995 people speak a primary language other than English. St. Croix County has seen some influx of Hmong people and an even greater increase in Hispanic families, who primarily work in the area dairy farms. St. Croix County has an 82% food stamp participation rate for families in poverty. The participation rate for all children in food stamps is 5.7% in St. Croix County. (Source: St. Croix Co. WNEP Program)

Intended Outcome 1 Families in St. Croix will be financially secure.

Long-term outcome

Families in St. Croix Co. will increase their use of positive financial practices.

Medium Term Outcome:

Families will increase their use of positive financial practices developing spending and savings plans, maintaining good credit and improving bad credit.

Short-term:

Families will increase knowledge of financial concepts and personal financial skills including spending plans, maintaining good credit and improving bad credit.

Implementation Plan (inputs/outputs)

Inputs: (What we invest)

UW-Extension county staff

UW-Extension State Specialists and District staff

St. Croix Co. Jail staff

HCE volunteers

Program evaluation tools and staff

Strategy 1 Jail Classes

<p>Outputs: Participation (who we reach)</p> <p>Inmates in the St. Croix Co. Jail</p>	<p>Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)</p> <p>Teach money management classes 2-3 times per year.</p>
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Evaluation of Strategy #1

Post-test evaluations will be conducted to measure knowledge gained.

Strategy 2 Community classes and One-to-one education

<p>Outputs: Participation (who we reach)</p> <p>Families and individuals</p>	<p>Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)</p> <p>Develop a financial management education program to provide classes and one-to-one education on budgeting, saving, record keeping and credit use. Includes:</p>
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	<p>Meeting with financial institutions and agencies to get referrals and establish class locations. This includes the working closely with St. Croix Co. Child Support.</p> <p>Implement financial education series using the UW-Extension Financial Management Tool Box.</p> <p>Offer one-to-one follow up with financial management volunteers.</p> <p>Become certified to provide pre-bankruptcy education.</p> <p>Teach one HCE leader training on recordkeeping.</p>
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Evaluation of Strategy #2

Pre and post-test evaluations will be conducted to measure knowledge and skills of financial management. One year follow-up evaluations will be completed to determine skills adopted.

Strategy #3 America Saves campaign

Outputs: Participation (who we reach)	Outputs: Strategies & Activities (What we do)
Families and individuals	<p>Explore possibility of implementing an America Saves educational effort with financial institutions. Activities may include a "piggy bank" contest.</p>

Professional Development Plan

Bankruptcy training

UW-Extension Family Living Program conference

National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences National Conference
September – St. Paul, MN

Other responsibilities:

HCE Advisor

Shared Department role- strategic planning, marketing, Responsibility Based Culture representative, WACEC, Community Partnership Advisory Groups

4-H Family Living Events- Foods & Clothing

Serve on 2 statewide Family Living Program Area Teams: Parenting Education & Families in Stress & Transition

Community Coalitions:

Early Childhood Interagency Council

St. Croix Co. Meth Task Force

St. Croix Co. Coordinated Family Services

Family Resource Center Consultant

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