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A PARENTING SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR SINGLE
PARENTS OF AT RISK YOUTHS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education:
Career and Technical Education

by
Connie Francis Hensley

June 2004

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Approved by:


Joseph Scarcella, Ph.D., First Reader

5/13/04
Date


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ABSTRACT

This thesis project entails a curriculum targeted at helping improve the parenting skills of single parents that have children who are considered "at risk" by societal standards. This curriculum is the survival kit for the single parent. Learning the skills provided in this curriculum, the single parent will discover that parenting their "at risk" youth on a positive realm will become a fundamental standard for their lives.

According to a review of the literature, a child that is raised in a single parent household is at risk of jeopardizing their potential for a successful future. Significantly, the majority of single parents can benefit from improving their parenting abilities by learning essential communication skills, money management, safety and proper nutrition guidelines, academic and networking skills, and researching and utilizing community resources available at the city, county, state, and federal levels. With these abilities, the single parent will be able to augment the time spent with their child, effectively communicate with them, and essentially, be able to overcome the hurdles that many single parents encumbered by. Single parent households are one of the most

significant family and social issues facing America today,
and this project responds to this problem.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Joseph Scarcella for his dedication to the students of the Vocational Education Department at California State University, San Bernardino. Dr. Scarcella spent numerous hours reading theses, responding to questions, providing guidance and encouragement. Thank you for not giving up on me.

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It is because of the direction and support of Dr. Scarcella, Dr. Pendleton, Timothy Thelander, and Kristi Burnette, that I will graduate with a Master's Degree. Thank you all.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis project and curriculum to the entire single parent population who have dedicated themselves to becoming the best parent they can. I hope this project brings valuable parenting skills to all of you. Countless hours and heart-warming thoughts were put into this project.

I am a single parent of two and wish that a curriculum like this was available when I was faced with the most difficult challenges of being a single parent.

Good Luck

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Introduction

The Contents of Chapter One presents an overview of the project entailing a curriculum targeted at helping improve the parenting skills of single parents that have children who are considered "at risk" by societal standards (Engber & Klungness, 2000). This thesis will begin by discussing the purpose of the project, the contexts of the problem in regard to the lack of parenting skills of single parents, the significance of the project, and finally the assumptions as they pertain to the project. Next, the limitations and delimitations that apply to the project are reviewed. It concludes with the definitions of terms presented and references.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project was to develop a parenting skills curriculum for single parents of "at risk" youths. Specifically, this curriculum was designed to provide a solid foundation in which to build upon an instructor's professional development. The curriculum includes various lesson plans and activities that will enhance the instructor's abilities to teach the single parent

communication skills, financial budgeting, safety and nutrition, academic and networking skills, and how to utilize city, county, state and federal resources. This curriculum will be the survival kit for the single parent. With all these skills the single parent will discover that parenting their "at risk" youth will make positive changes in their lives.

Context of the Problem

The context of the problem was to address the parental skills of a single parent that has a child who is at risk. The majority of single parents are overwhelmed with trying to provide for themselves as well as for their children. With respect to this problem the single parent lacks the time and the ability in building a positive relationship with their child, therefore, this child declines in many areas; school, relationships, and the importance to their specific responsibilities of daily life. Too often, the single parent spends most of their time outside the home placing their child in a vulnerable state. This vulnerability creates additional issues for the single parent. For example, boys are more likely to become involved in criminal behavior the female is at a higher risk of becoming and/or using drugs. In addition,

too much of a single parents' time is spent outside the home which leaves the child alone too frequently. This causes a decrease of parent/child time interacting together, which can result in the breakdown of the parent-child relationship. The time spent outside the home by the single parent restricts their ability to oversee their child's activities, and to set boundaries and behavioral expectations. Because most single parents need to work, the child is left to be "raised" by a non-family, or extended family member. This person(s) may not have the time or motivation to ensure that the child learns the important life lessons that are so essential in building a successful life. Additionally, too often the television and videos become a major source of "babysitting," which CANNOT teach children the necessary skills needed to succeed in school and social settings and especially how to treat people with respect. In fact, too often, they teach children how to be cruel and not accepting of others. Children need specific parental guidance in the area of manners, respect and acceptable social behavior.

Significantly, the majority of single parents can benefit from improving their parenting abilities by learning communication skills, financial budgeting, network skills and researching the city, county, state and

federal resources available. With these abilities, the single parent can find out how to augment their time spent with their child; how to effectively communicate with them, and essentially, how to overcome the hurdles encumber many that single parents. In addition, the single parent will learn how to set boundaries and rules in the home and be given tips on how to enforce the rules, be consistent, involve the children in household chores, and how to reward their child for positive attitude and behavior.

Significance of the Project

The significance of the project was that most educational programs target the dual parenting families. By definition, the traditional family has been characterized as a husband and wife team and their offspring sharing a common dwelling (Carter, 2002). Unlike the traditional concept of two parents, 2.5 children and a pet, today's family exists in a variety of forms. In fact, Carter explains how nontraditional families are currently becoming the norm. Single parent families are perhaps the most recognized form of the nontraditional family. The single parent is generally female, because the single parent (father) was characterized as the "forgotten

contributor to child development" (Beckert, Griswold, Strom, Strom, & Strom, 2002, p. 2).

"Across the nation some 30-60% of youth in urban school districts lives with caregivers who are not their biological parents" (Carter, 2002). More than half of all children will experience this family form at some point in their lives. Single parent families are usually created by divorce. Projections are that 1 out of 10 children will go through at least two divorces before they reach the age of 16 (Carter, 2002). Obviously, these nontraditional families do not fit the traditional "American" mold of mom, dad, 2.5 kids and a dog living in a home surrounded by a white picket fence. Approximately 72.2% of the United States single parent populations are families headed by a single mother (Virginia Department of Health, 1998). There are 4 out of 10 U.S. children today grow up without their father at home; "In fact, 30% of families in the U.S. are headed by a single parent-more than any other country in the world" (Virginia Department of Health, 1998, p. 1). This is the most significant family or social problem facing America.

Nontraditional families have specific needs. They are quite different from those of the traditional family as described above. In general, nontraditional families

desire the same outcomes of most traditional families: healthy relationships with their children based on love, trust, and respect. Recognizing the uniqueness of the nontraditional family and offering workable solutions may address their needs and help them cope with their realities.

This curriculum provides the recommended parental training standards skills: Effective communication skills, money management, academic and networking skills, safety and nutrition and available resources at the city, county, state and federal levels. The single parents that combine modern ideas with respective parenting skills and family traditions will find that single parenting can become a fulfilling life experience that both parent and child will thrive on. For example, using the internet to keep in touch with out of state family via email, posting pictures and instant messaging can connect family tradition with modern technology. Ultimately, this project becomes the survival kit, which can trigger the single parents' success.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made regarding the project:

1. That the instructors are comprehensible with the needs of all single parents.
2. Single parents are choosing to attend and wanting to improve their relationship with their children.
3. Marketing is aimed at encouraging the single parent from all socio-economic backgrounds to attend, even if they view themselves as "good" parents.
4. Some single parents will be mandated by court to attend a parenting course.
5. Attendees will be required by Social Services to attend a parenting class to improve their skills.
6. This curriculum respects all cultural values.

Limitations and Delimitations

During the development of the project, a number of limitations and delimitations were noted. These limitations and delimitations are presented in the next section.

Limitations

The following limitations apply to the project:

1. This curriculum is directly targeted for the single parent population.
2. This curriculum was designed to be taught in a 10-week quarter system format.
3. This curriculum was created and designed to meet the standards of a community college.

Delimitations

The following delimitations apply to the project:

1. With specified modifications, this project can be offered to a dual-parent household.
2. This curriculum can be expanded or condensed as the class curriculum mandates.
3. This curriculum can be modified in order to be taught in different settings; such as a church, high school, court ordered class as required to fulfill probation/parole requirements, and (Regional Occupational Program), ROP.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they apply to the project.

At-Risk Youth - A child who is at "risk" of jeopardizing their potential for a successful future (Keller & McDade, 2000; Schumacher, 1999).

Culture - The ideas, customs, skills and arts of a group (Anges, 2001).

Curriculum - A fixed series of studies required, as in a college, for graduation, qualification in a major field of study (Anges, 2001).

Extended Family - Nontraditional families may be foster parents, multiracial parents, and grandparents and same-sex parents (Carter, 2002).

Instructor - One, who instructs, teaches and trains (Anges, 2001).

Latchkey - From the door key carried by such a child designating, of, or having to do with a child or children who receive no supervision at home after school hours, because their parents are away working (Anges, 2001).

Networking - The developing of contacts or exchanging of information with others in an informal network, as to further a career (Anges, 2001).

Non-Family - Foster parents, child care and friends (Keller & McDade, 2000).

Single Parent - Nontraditional families with children headed by single parents (Carter, 2002).

Tradition - Handing down, beliefs, customs, principles (Anges, 2001).

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis portion of the project was divided into four chapters. Chapter One provides an introduction to the context of the problem, purpose of the project, significance of the project, limitations, delimitations and definitions of terms. Chapter Two consists of a review of relevant literature. Chapter Three documents the steps used in developing the project. Chapter Four presents conclusions and recommendations drawn from the development of the project. The Single Parenting Skills curriculum located in the Appendix. Finally, the project references.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Chapter Two consists of relevant literature read assessed and researched in order to design the curriculum. Specifically, research was done through literature and internet websites in order to gather information and statistical data. The uncovered information and data reflected the need to educate the single parent on ways in which to improve their parenting skills and build solid relationships with their children. In turn, this may keep them from falling further into risk of becoming an unsuccessful member of society.

Furthermore, this thesis presents an overview of the project which designs a curriculum targeting and the parenting skills of single parents that have children who are considered "at risk" by societal standards. This thesis will also clearly outline specific parenting techniques, including effective communication skills; build trustful relationships and ways to establish boundaries within the home. After school/academic programs, governmental programs, and independent resources will be added to the curriculum as a means to help the

single parent take responsibility for their own learning and evolving into a triumphant parent.

Finally, single parents are encouraged to expand upon their parenting knowledge in the following five areas:

(1) Effective Communication Skills, (2) Money Management, (3) Academic and Networking Skills, (4) Safety and Nutrition, and (5) Community Resources, in order to become productive and successful single parents.

Single parenting has become the norm and is the most recognized form of a nontraditional family (Carter, 2002). Single parenting falls into four categories:

- (1) mothers having babies out of wedlock, who are abandoned and left to raise the child on their own or who choose to do so,
- (2) becoming a single parent through death of a spouse and/or significant other,
- (3) divorce, and
- (4) military deployment of one parent for long periods of time (ie: one year or longer).

Communication Skills

Communication is a vital tool needed in any parents' survival kit. However, despite the textbook form of communication, many single parents are challenged in this

area because of the limited time spent with their child. Realistically, there are only three forms of nonverbal communication and one form of verbal communication. The three forms of nonverbal communication are:

- (1) kinesics-movements- posture, body gestures, and facial expressions.
- (2) paralinguistic-nonverbal aspects of vocal delivery, such as, pitch tone, response or onset time, and duration of message, an example or nervous, high pitch voice.
- (3) proxemics- "The study of how people use and structure space or spatial arrangements in work, personal relations" (Agnes, 2001, p. 1156).

Open and frequent communication between a parent and child promotes effective communication skills, which requires a substantial amount of *talking* and *listening* by both persons involved. A child needs love from a parent, clear communication, and discipline. Basic ethics and values determine the goals and standards of behavior that is set for a child. Reward for positive behavior and disciplining negative behavior passes a message to the child that unacceptable behavior is not accepted. Single parents must clarify such goals and set realistic expectations for the child's behavior. Single parents may

struggle during decision making which leads them to their own opinion (Lansky, 1992). Understandably, dual-parents have the opportunity to lean on each other and solicit each others opinions in decision making. Since single parents do not have the luxuries of a second parent "they will not even try to communicate because they are afraid that they will sound foolish or inadequate" (Lambie, 2000, p. 2).

Learning effective communication skills allow single parents to share personal beliefs and values with their child while they learn what concerns and priorities they have. It is also important to listen to their child's beliefs and allow them to share their own ideas. Reciprocal communication and openness of a parent and child shows that each other's feelings and opinions are equally valued.

When a single parent becomes single due to the death of a spouse many new feelings may arise. It is natural for children to feel a flood of emotions when one parent dies. Many feelings can flow through a child: shock, anger, numbness, helplessness and fear. A child may act as though the second parent was still alive. This is called a defense (Bratman, 1992). Communication between the parent and child is essential when a death occurs, especially

when the dominate parent passes. Some children tend to treat themselves differently following a death of a parent; they begin drink, miss school and act defiant. Children do these things to get away from their feelings of sadness, due to lack of understanding their feelings, and it is easier to run away from them. Some children get so angry that they lash out. Children become extremely sad which may lead them to thoughts of suicide; believing that they are better off with the deceased parent. In times like these, it is most important for the single parent to seek counseling for the child. Single parents need to recognize these feelings in their child and seek crisis counseling for both parent and child (Bratman, 1992).

Single parents can benefit from general information when communicating with their child; however they can not substitute this information for truly getting to know their child as an individual. Single parents need to remain strong when guiding their child through the grieving process. It is important that parents inform their child's educators and those who they associate with about the child's mental state.

Too often, there is a difference between the information a teenager seeks, from a non-related adult, then from which they seek from their parent. This makes it

highly important for the single parent to precisely communicate with their child. Communication also means learning the child's facial expressions, (kinesics), such as gesture slips, and subtle signs in speech. If a parent can manage a child's kinesics then they can have the ability to detect deceit from their own child and "The ability to accurately detect deceit is real" (Sullivan, 1999, p. 2).

Communication can be defined in many ways, such as touching (in ways of hugs), personal expressions-crazy hair and dress behavior, to the type of music a child listens to. United States teenagers, especially boys, do not receive much affection by their parents. When society withholds affection, it withholds a form of basic communication. Studies show that it takes 12 hugs a day to promote maximum emotional health in a person. There are many acceptable ways to touch affectionately: hair tousling, a hand resting on a shoulder, a playful punch in the arm, a shoulder or back rub, a foot massage, a kiss on the cheek, even a handshake or hand-on-hand slap (Anderson, 1990).

A single parent may find it difficult to listen attentively to their child. There are often large discrepancies between single parents and their children.

For instance, the single parent may need to call home numerous times to connect with their child where as a second parent would most likely be home with the child decreasing the phone calls. Due to the single parent calls to the home, a child can misunderstand the reasons for the phone calls, which at times lead to increased tension, conflict, or alienation. When a parent sets rules and boundaries, they are encouraged to let the child participate when making or modifying these rules and boundaries. If the child helps to set a rule, then they are more likely to follow it and less likely to resent it. Children need to know which of their behaviors are acceptable. A parent with a child who chooses not to follow the rules is often unable to give clear, emphatic instructions or commands to their child (Clark, 1996).

All children need discipline and love from a parent. Discipline means teaching children self-control and setting boundaries for expected behavior. A child learns self-respect and self-control by receiving both love and discipline from the parent. Parents discipline their child because they love them and they want to teach them responsibility so they may grow into successful adults.

A parent that is hesitant in disciplining their child may find their child to be reluctant to follow rules,

including those in school. A parent can not change their child's behavior if they do not change their own. A parent who is unable to confront their child's behavior may experience future unacceptable behavior, therefore placing the child in an "at risk" position. Rules and boundaries need to be set by the parent and consistently enforced in order to be effective.

Most frequently, conflict between parent and child begins once the child reaches adolescence. The level of stress, confusion, and frustration experienced by single parents usually increases as their child exerts independence and expresses feelings and opinions that differ significantly from those of their parent. Children learn to express their feelings at a very young age. A young single parent remembers how they were punished for their misdeeds, so they know no other way to handle their child except to punish. Most single parents, especially those who are young never had a chance to learn self-control (Anderson, 1990). Their own parents had tried to control their lives by punishing them; therefore, educating a young single parent about the difference between punishment and discipline can be critical when their own child misbehaves. Experts in the field suggest

that single parents, need to understand that discipline means to educate (Anderson, 1990).

Another factor that can increase frustration from the single parent is a rebellious attitude from their child from whom the parent seeks guidance. The single parent becomes the troubled parent due to financial problems and other difficult life situations that sometimes become a heavy burden for a parent. Because of the single parenthood and lack of help by a second parent this parent lacks sufficient energy, time, and motivation to help their child.

Parent education is most beneficial when knowledge is provided about age appropriate behavior, how to communicate, set rules and boundaries with that particular behavior. Parent and child gender deserves consideration as well. One rule to consider is that as long as it is not life threatening or to someone else, or violate any moral standards set forth for the child at home, they should feel free to experiment. If a child confines their experimentation only to dress, hair and dance, then feel lucky, but remember to have the child remain within the boundaries of that experiment.

Most single parents with college degrees may not see themselves as better parents, but it is suggested that

single parents from all backgrounds should be encouraged to participate in parent programs, in order to attain a greater success within the family (Clark, 1996).

Money Management

Single parents are typically categorized in the lower income level (Keller & McDade, 2000). The first category typically includes teenage girls as single parents. This category has a higher number of mothers living below the poverty level, low educational levels, are prone to periods of unemployment, and have cultural and language barriers that limit the resources available to this group of single parent. "Eighty percent of teenage girls who are single parents will live below the poverty level" (Keller & McDade, 2000 p. 285). If a single parent in this category has not achieved a high school education level and is constrained to language and cultural barriers; usually results in unemployment and living under the poverty level. In order to survive, this single parent may need to work more than one job. Doing this takes them out of the home for many hours of the day, leaving someone else to watch over and possibly "raise" their child. In turn, this results in inconsistency in the home and who the primary caregiver is. Additionally, this parent is

most likely overstressed and overworked and too exhausted to parent properly with the time and effort it takes to raise a child.

If one parent finds themselves single by means of death of a spouse or divorce and they are used to budgeting with two incomes, one specific area that must be adjusted is their living expenses. They will have to learn how to lower their cost of living expenses and budget with one salary. At this point, they will have to make some critical decisions about what is essential to living and what can be eliminated if necessary. Minimal living conditions, lack of experience of being a single parent, lack of resources and not being able to provide a safe environment for their child during after-school hours, becomes challenging for the single parent. This disposition enables their children to acquire the basic competency which places the children in the "at risk" position for a productive and successful future (Engber & Klungness, 2000).

A single parent may want to stay home with their child, especially when they are a toddler or beginning preschool, however the single parent may find it impossible to stay home due to financial strain. Welfare is not an attractive option for most single parents;

however there have been single parents who have succeeded and who are succeeding in raising their children on welfare checks. The Women, Infant, and Children Program (WIC) is a program that is administered and maintained by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), which is a Federal agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This program provides help by means of coupons that are to be spent on certain milk and cereal products. Another assistance program is the Emergency Food Assistance Program. This program provides much-needed food on an emergency basis to low to no-income households and individuals. This program also provides meals to county feeding sites, such as soup kitchens. Regardless, of child support from an ex-spouse, supporting children as a single parent becomes difficult. Single parent women who feel the need to stay home with their children find ways to do so. They are willing to live in subsidizing housing, forego vacations and spend very little money on entertainment.

Living with parents is rarely a satisfactory long-term solution. But for the short term, it can be an opportunity for the single parent to save some money to put down on an apartment or to pay off some bills (Anderson, 1990).

a pattern for them to be intimate with their own families when they are adults. There are many single mothers groups, such as the one Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. This particular group, Single Mothers Group, offers many activities that are inexpensive or free. For instance, many libraries have story telling hours and pet stories, which is similar to having a zoo on site.

A single parent can share family time with friends who also share the same interests. Finding groups that share common interests and goals can help a single parent gain confidence and support. Single parents who participate with the larger groups, for example, church groups are generally more involved with their children. With these groups they can play together, worship together and do volunteer work together (Anderson, 1990).

After becoming single, single mothers find that they reach out to people and community groups that they didn't have time for while married. It is often wise to build a network of friends away from the workplace. Within the network of friends it is important to be selective when disclosing intimate details of ones life; as such information can be used negatively through the political gains that tend to infest the work place. Likely places to

find new friends are clubs and organizations. There are art, dance, music, sewing and professional development courses that are available within community centers and museums. Singles groups established for social purposes usually include elements of both friendship and romance as a part of their operation. Be resourceful, surely one can come up with interesting personal development options.

Safety and Nutritional Guidelines

Single parents can be extremely safety conscious. It is important to be knowledgeable in basic first aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). This will help establish a plan of action when a child gets injured or sick. Knowing how to respond to minor accidents can empower the single parent ahead of time, such as what to do for minor injuries that do not require a doctor's immediate attention, will give a single parent a sense of control. It is also comforting for the single parent to know how to handle a situation by remaining calm and keeping the child calm. It is recommended that all single parents take a CPR class. For a single parent concerned about money, CPR and first aid classes are generally offered through a community center and usually inexpensive. A good first aid booklet and a book or two on

home medical care are recommended. Additionally, placing relevant medical information in different areas of the house can prove to be life saving. Accidents can be frightening to a single parent, such as not having help from the other parent or not clear on how to react, with regards to this the child may also become frightened, but if the single parent was prepared both child and single parent can express their feelings and the single parent will regain control without any further worries (Lansky, 1992).

There are items that need to be kept in the single parent household:

1. Ice popsicles in the freezer, good for the wound that can also be pleasurable for the child.
2. A bag of vegetables that can be used for ice packs.
3. Old teething rings that can be used to go in the mouth.
4. A fresh bottle of water and Tylenol.

Single parents tend to act as healers, counselors, and companions to their sick children. It is important for a single parent to be attentive to their child's health (Lansky, 1992, p. 84). Most medical insurance policies

provide Well-Checkup Visits, which mainly pertain to the care of infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to childproof a home 100%; however one can get down on the floor on their hands and knees and crawl through the house to see what a child is exposed to at their level. It is vital to ensure that children are not able to pick up items that they can choke on. Exercising these safety rules will decrease the accidents. The two most dangerous spots in the house are the kitchen and the bathroom. Single parenting can be difficult when it is time to cook a meal and supervise a child, but what is suggested by those who have single handily parented a child, lock up the rooms that are not in use during meal time, therefore eliminating accidents. For example, lock up the restroom during meal preparation because there are many dangerous items in the restroom. A child may find the restroom to be entertaining; toilet-tissue, lotions, powders, but dangerous items are also located in the restroom, such as Listerine and Scope. It maybe useful for a single parent to have a drawer full of Tupperware that a child can venture into during meal preparation time, therefore the child will be safely entertained rather than finding the child in the restroom endangering himself.

Nutrition along with exercise becomes an important asset to a family. It is known that low-intensity, "aerobic exercise for 45 minutes or more releases tranquilizers equated with morphine. These are endorphins, naturally produced chemicals, and they work to counteract depression" (Anderson, 1990, p. 152). To improve physical and mental health, one should exercise six or more times per week. Most fitness clubs offer child-care services, which include activities for both the single parent and child. If it becomes difficult to leave the home to visit a gym then seek out videos that target excises with children.

Proper nutrition is important for all family members. Caffeine in large amounts causes an anxiety response, such as jitters, nervousness, and depression (Anderson, 1990). Single parents can easily neglect meals for themselves, because they are busy with their children. For example, they make dinner for the children, but make nothing for themselves. Eating habits start with the parent and end with the child. What a parent eats usually the child eats, also children need to eat a balanced diet that includes all five food groups: "Vegetables, grains, fruit, meat and poultry and dairy" (Anderson, 1990, p. 248). "Fresh vegetables and cooking from scratch may taste better than

fixing prepared foods, but no single parent will need to feel guilty about relying heavily on prepared foods" (Anderson, 1990, p. 247). As long as the children are being served three meals a day and a snack at night, nutrition is complete. But remember good nutrition starts in the morning with breakfast, which is the most important meal of the day (Lansky, 1992).

Academic and Networking Skills

Single parents must actively participate in their children's academics and after-school programs. Reinforcing and strengthening their children's academic skills and encouraging them to participate in after-school programs will help them accelerate in school, learn to develop peer relationships, and how to respect adult role models (Fletcher, 1999). Single parents who participate with their children in after-school programs, such as sports can model good sportsmanship, positive competition and especially the ability to work well within a team setting.

It is unfortunate that too many old-fashioned and ultraconservative people believe that child-care causes children irreparable damage. It is not damaging when the child has the opportunity to paint, draw, play, count,

sing, take field trips, and acquire social skills. Learning to interact with others and learn conflict resolution can only benefit a child now and in the future. Experts say that a quality child-care center can actually help a child get a head start on learning to live in the real world (Engber & Klungness, 2000).

Single parents, who play educational games, read with their child and help them with homework, actually improve their academic skills (Fletcher, 1999).

"With welfare reform, more children aged 5 to 12 spend their after-school hours in unsupervised, often unsafe settings, where little if any positive learning occurs" (Fletcher, 1999, p. 1). The time spent in front of the television forfeits the time spent in group activities that help build social, emotional, and cognitive development. During the hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., children are more likely to engage in risk-taking behavior, including drugs and alcohol use and are more often the victims of accidents, crime, and abuse (Fletcher, 1999). "Cognitive and emotional changes are believed to be the reasons adolescents seem overly sensitive to criticism from adults, inclined to misinterpret parent remarks, eager to gain privacy, and

less willing to share feelings than when they were younger" (Beckert et al., 2002, p. 2).

One of the greatest challenges for a single parent is to ensure that their child receives every possible benefit from the educational opportunities available, more so a child with special educational needs. The parent needs to ensure that their child's special needs are being addressed while in school. Despite the fact that there are more than 11 million single parent families, many schools continue to stereotype the children from these families as being "at risk" (Engber & Klungness, 2000).

"A single parent who has a child with special needs will find that there are many after school tutoring classes that are offered at low cost" (Fletcher, 1999, p. 2). In Los Angeles County there are over 10,000 students who attend educational tutoring, three hours a day, five days a week, at 56 elementary school sites. These programs are part of the After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program and the federal After School Education and Safety Act (Fletcher, 1999). "Children in the Los Angeles County area can participate free, at a cost to their respective partnerships of less than \$5 per child per day" (Fletcher, 1999, p. 2).

After-school programs hold considerable promise for children by providing opportunities in developing and strengthening their academics, communication, and relationship skills. These programs have proven to be successful for children that are growing up in a single parent household. These after-school programs provide a secure learning environment that the single parent may not be able to provide.

What is unique about these after-school programs? They tend to target the "at risk" population that exists in the community. Approximately 95% of these families qualify for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Food and Nutrition (FN) to provide free and reduced-price meal programs that also coincides with the after-school programs (Fletcher, 1999).

In addition, after school programs are usually provided for free or at a low cost, which is beneficial to a parent that has difficulties in helping their child with homework. These after-school programs include homework and tutoring assistance at the K-12 grade level. They are specifically geared to literacy components aligned with states standardized curriculum.

What are the indirect benefits of these programs? They provide stress reduction for the single parent and

they can be assured that their child is safe while they are at work. This also translates to a productive job performance by the single parent because they do not have to worry so much (Fletcher, 1999).

Single parents may become challenged when researching and locating an appropriate after school child-care, therefore the child remains at home. The rules of the home should be strictly expressed by the single parent, because they are giving the child sole responsibility of the household during after school hours. "Self-care arrangements do not meet the developmental needs of all school-age children. Because some of these children are still struggling to move from childhood to adolescence, they need opportunities to make friends, play, develop skills and initiative, and receive attention and appreciation from caring adults" (Engber & Klungness, 2000, p. 222).

Community Resources

Parenting can be complex, financially stressful, and demanding. In this regard, utilizing community resources may lessen the high degree of stress that most single parents must cope with. For example, taking a parenting class offered by the local community, perhaps at a church

or recreation center can benefit a single parent. Also, this class may expose a parent to additional resources that they can take advantage of; such as medical services, family counseling, and legal services to name a few, furthermore, it is helpful for parents to seek out books, internet sites, for added support and information.

Social support networks become an essential part of parenting skills. Support networks may reduce the number of stressful events experienced by the single parent. The support networks may teach single parents how to facilitate better coping skills when dealing with the demands of their children on a routine basis.

The single parent and child, then, can benefit from support, but all types of support are not to be perceived as being helpful to the single parent. Many single parents may not seek help from mental health/social service agencies, or schools, due to lack of trust (Keller & McDade, 2000).

It is important for the single parent to understand that children, especially teenagers, require firm boundaries. Teenagers will secretly appreciate the love and concern that is demonstrated by setting and enforcing such limits, one example maybe in setting a curfew for the child and enforcing it by staying awake until the child

returns home. This will send a clear message to the child that rules and boundaries need to be adhered to.

Regardless of a single parent's situation, children need to be aware of past mistakes that both parents made. So hopefully, the same mistakes will not be repeated by the child. Even during the most difficult times, it is imperative to encourage the child to participate in group activities and sports so that undesirable activities do not become the exclusive focus of his free time.

Single parents must also realize that family tradition is still important. Most families have traditions that evolve around Christmas. For a new single parent just out of a divorce or loss of a spouse should seek new family traditions for the family. During the special seasons, such as Christmas, there can be sadness, a sense of loss, when family traditions change due to divorce or loss of a spouse. But it may be time to change some of the traditions to suit the needs of the new family structure. A single parent has complete freedom to design new traditions using food, family, friends, and decorations. Including the entire family in the decision making of new traditions will empower the children to get involved. Whatever heightens joy within the family and life, "Do it!"

Summary

The important literature to this project was presented in Chapter Two. The purpose of this literature review was to gather information on the importance of identifying the strengths and learning needs of single parents to "at-risk" youths. For a single parent, children are a double burden of responsibility, since the partner is no longer on site to help with the children. It is usually the mother who has full custody of the children and whose inner resources are stretched to the limit. The needs of her children and herself are overwhelming. Through education, the single parent can learn 1) effective communication 2) money management 3) academic and networking 4) safety and nutrition and 5) community resources, and essential parenting skills will have success with their child.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter Three documents the steps used in developing this program. Specifically, the population served was discussed. Next, the curriculum development process including curriculum resources and content validation was presented. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Population Served

The curriculum was developed to increase understanding of basic Parenting Skills for the single parent. This parenting curriculum will give the single parent a number of basic principles they need to raise their children with confidence. All students in this course will be single parents. The range of students will include teens and adults, who are parenting alone. There will be both males and females in the class, however, more female students are anticipated. Motivation is expected to be high because the students are voluntarily taking the course. Students will learn through a variety of strategies with the most common including visual, auditory, inter/intrapersonal and kinetics. In addition,

student involvement and participation is expected by all students and will be integrated into their academic grade.

Curriculum Development

The next section of the project provides an overview of the curriculum development process. Specifically, the curriculum structure and content validation process are reviewed.

Curriculum Resources and Content Validation

The content of this curriculum was completed according to the Curriculum and Instructors Committee, Board of Psychology Department and Human Development Advisory Committee through Citrus Community College Standards within the Department of General Studies. These committees are comprised of senior instructors, faculty members and Administration within Citrus Community College. As stated in Chapter One the need for single parent curriculums has been identified by the committee as a need, due to the rise in non-traditional family structures. Through this curriculum the single parents will find valuable information needed to raise their children. The resource text that was used was "The Complete Single Mother" (Engber & Klungness, 2000) and videos from the Video Library, as provided by the company

named: Active Parenting Now will be used to supplement the lessons. This will provide information and strategies to the parents on how to build confidence, self-esteem, responsibility, cooperation, and respect.

Curriculum Design

The contents of the curriculum were developed in accordance to the Curriculum and Instructors Committee through Citrus Community College standards within the Department of General Studies. The guidelines of Parenting Skills will align with the standards of all community colleges. According to the percentage of single parent population it is agreed that educating single parents is needed. As stated in chapters one and two, the need for single parent education has been recognized by the literature. Through research of the Citrus Community College this curriculum in the General Studies is obviously needed. It has been identified by current educators within the curriculum field of General Studies and Human Development that a curriculum program is necessary due to the growing trend of single parenthood. The students enrolled in the curriculum will be required to attend a 10-week session, which will be credited toward General Studies. There are no pre-requisites courses prior to enrollment, but is recommended that the student be a

single parent. To enroll in this course it is recommended that the student be a single parent and willing to share experiences. The next section of the project provides an overview of the curriculum development process. Specifically, the curriculum structure and content validation process are reviewed.

The curriculum outline consists of the following parts: Need for the course; description; expected student outcome, curriculum content; methods of instruction; typical assignments; methods of evaluation; texts; and other supplies required of the students. Through this development single parents will be able to acknowledge the basic concept of parenting through the developmental process. This curriculum will cover multidisciplinary perspectives, responsibilities of the parent and the responsibilities of their children. Primarily, this curriculum will serve as a stepping-stone to positive parenthood. Also this curriculum will meet its objectives by using real life situations and live interaction. This curriculum is appropriate for use in General Studies.

Curriculum Content

This curriculum content was created in order to meet the standards of General Studies within the Community

Colleges. The textbook used, The Complete Single Mother also the Video Library - Active Parenting Now will be used within the curriculum.

Parenting Skills (10 Weeks of Lesson Plans)

1. Orientation
 - a. Course Goals and Objectives
 - i. Course syllabus
 - ii. Instructor's introduction
 - iii. Student's introduction
 - b. Communication Skills
 - i. Effective communication
 - ii. Verbal vs. Non-Verbal
 1. Kinesics
 2. Paralinguistic
 3. Proxemics
 - iii. Avoiding Power Struggles
 - iv. Rules and Boundaries
2. Communication Skills Continued
 - a. Household Rules/Contracts
 - i. Starting young
 - ii. Setting limits
 - iii. Bedtimes
 - b. Reward and Discipline
 - i. Balancing love and discipline

- ii. Open Communication
 - iii. Rewarding without food
 - 1. Small toys
 - 2. Books
 - 3. Outings
 - iv. Reasonable discipline
 - 1. Non-physical discipline
 - 2. Taking privileges away
 - 3. Remaining calm/patience
 - c. Household Chores/privileges
 - i. Outline expectations
 - ii. Making a chart
 - iii. Age appropriate privileges
 - iv. Dollar limit of privileges
- 3. Money Management
 - a. Preparing a budget
 - b. Wise Spending
 - i. Expense Record
 - ii. Coupons/bargain shopping
 - c. Banking
 - i. Debits vs. Credits
 - ii. Learning how to save
 - d. Necessary Expenditures
 - i. Medical/Dental

- ii. Groceries
 - iii. Rent/Mortgage
 - iv. Child-care
 - e. Review/Quiz
- 4. Developing Learning Skills
 - a. Reading/learning activities at home
 - b. Playtime = Learning time
 - c. Child Development
 - i. Newborn
 - ii. Toddler Age
 - iii. Ages 4-12
 - iv. Teenage years
 - d. Getting involved in child's school
 - i. Parent/Teacher Conferences
 - ii. Special Education
- 5. Networking Skills
 - a. Parent's continuing education
 - b. Planning for the future
 - i. Career Counseling
 - ii. Learning to interview
 - c. Job Searching
 - i. Resources
 - ii. Resume
 - iii. Childcare

- d. Networking
 - i. Co-ops
 - ii. Sharing info about resources
 - iii. Making contacts
- 6. Safety Guidelines
 - a. Child-proofing your home
 - i. Securing chemicals
 - 1. Keeping pertinent phone numbers handy
 - b. Accident-proofing your home
 - i. Take a crawling tour
 - ii. Don't forget the yard
 - iii. Accident examples and solutions
 - iv. Fencing around the swimming pool
 - v. Review/Quiz
- 7. Safety Guidelines Continued
 - a. Safety and health
 - i. Guarding child's health and safety
 - 1. Bicycle helmets
 - 2. Safety gear
 - 3. Car seats
 - 4. Air bags
 - ii. CPR Resources
 - iii. First Aid

- iv. When to call 911
 - b. Being safe during outings
 - i. Discussing the "leash"
 - ii. Identify rally point
 - iii. Planning activities
 - c. Knowing your surroundings
 - i. Getting to know neighbors
 - ii. Know child's friends
 - iii. Megan's Law
- 8. Nutritional/Health Standards
 - a. Basic Four food groups
 - i. Healthy vs. junk food
 - ii. Daily requirements
 - iii. Improving child's diet
 - 1. Food Stamps
 - 2. WIC-Women, Infant and Children
 - 3. Emergency Food Assistance Program
 - b. Mealtimes
 - i. Expectations
 - ii. Time "around the table"
 - 1. Take advantage of mealtime
 - 2. Open discussions
 - 3. No TV during mealtime
 - 4. No playing at the table

5. Manners at the table

9. Community Resources

- a. City/County
 - i. Speaker (s)
 - ii. Pamphlets
- b. State/Federal
 - i. Speaker (s)
 - ii. Pamphlets
- c. Connecting to the Community
- d. Internet searches
- e. Meeting Parent's Needs
 - i. Child-Support from absent parent
 - ii. Both parents sharing responsibilities
- f. Community vs. Single parent expectations
- f. Review/Quiz

10. Review and Follow-up

- a. Fill in learning gaps
- b. Finish projects
- c. Final Test
- d. Evaluation

Summary

The steps used to develop this project were outlined.
The target populations for this course are single parents

ranging in different ages according to the atmosphere. The curriculum development process including curriculum structure and content was presented. Upon completion, this curriculum guideline is appropriate for use in any single parent course or program in the State of California since it was developed in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Curriculum and Instructors Committee, Board of Psychology Department and Human Development Advisory Committee.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Included in Chapter Four was a presentation of the conclusion as a result of completing the project. Further, the recommendations extracted from the project are presented. Lastly, the Chapter concludes with a summary.

Conclusions

The conclusions extracted from the project follows.

1. Despite the fact that there are more than 11 million single parent families, there are only a limited amount of courses that concentrate solely on teaching parenting skills to single parents.
2. The literature review, and recommendations from the committees, indicated the need for single parent curricula.

Recommendations

The recommendations resulting from the project follow.

1. To offer this curriculum in all settings
 - i. Community Colleges
 - ii. Churches

- iii. Extended educations/ROP
- iv. High Schools
- 2. Remain focused on single parents
 - i. Remain updated on resources, curriculum and current methods of parenting
 - ii. Remain updated on current trends
 - iii. Administration and Faculty recommendations

Summary

Chapter Four reviewed the conclusions extracted from the project. They were determined from the review of literature; the opinions from the Curriculum and Instructors Committee; Board of Psychology Department; and the Human Development Advisory Committee.

Lastly, the recommendations derived from the project were presented. The recommendations were formed through the committees; as a result of reviewing the related literature; and examining existing curriculums for teaching single parents parenting skills.

APPENDIX
SINGLE PARENTING SKILLS

Single Parenting Skills

Curriculum



Summary

This curriculum was created to educate single parents so as to prepare their children to survive and thrive in society. Giving the child choices and responsibilities that are age appropriate will find that days will run smoothly.

Through this course the single parent will achieve the goal they seek out, how to instill in their children the five key qualities:

- **Courage-Confidence** to take a known risk for a known purpose.
- **Self-Esteem**-Having a high opinion of his/her self and confidence in their ability to succeed.
- **Responsibility**-The ability to make decisions and accept the outcome of those decisions.
- **Cooperation**-The ability to work together with others toward a common goal.
- **Respect**-Appreciating the worthwhile qualities in his/her self and others and demonstrating this through actions as well as attitude (Popkin, 2004).

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Syllabus

Instructor: Connie F. Hensley

Single parenting Skills

Office hours: MW 10:00-11:00, 3:00-4:00p.m. And by appt.

Course Description

This course is designed to teach single parents of at-risk children parenting skills. Parents will speak openly about their experiences and discuss the challenges of raising their children as a single parent. Parents will learn the importance of good behavior, household rules, discipline options, time out for both kids and parents, and more. Meet other single parents and share the importance of healthy activities such as sports, daily chores, and family fun time. This course meets General Study's core requirements.

Requirements

The Portfolio requirements are as follows: Throughout the course each student will be gathering information and complete assignments which will be placed in the Portfolio for their future reference. The Portfolio will be assessed at the end of the course, at the beginning of the last week and will be returned the day of the final. The instructor reserves the right to make changes in course requirements at any time. Regular attendance is expected of students, the instructor may penalize students for excessive unauthorized absences.

Weekly assignments	20 percent
Quizzes	20 percent
Class Participation	20 percent
Portfolio	15 percent
Final Examinations	25 percent

Objectives

This course will focus on the continuing education for the single parent.

Through this course the single parent will build their self-esteem, communication skills, ways to discipline their children; concentrate on their child's school success as well as reaching the needs of both the parent and child.

Grading

Final grades will be determined based upon the final criteria.

93-100%	A	80-82%	B-	67-69%	D+
90-92%	A-	77-79%	C+	63-66%	D
87-89%	B+	73-76%	C	60-62%	D-
83-86%	B	70-72%	C-	Below 60%	F

Text

Engber, A. & Klunness, L. (2000). The Complete Single Mother. Avon, Massachusetts: Adams Media Corporation. Video Library-Active Parenting Now

Our Goal

To teach the parent to prepare their children to survive and thrive in the society in which they live.

Single parenting Skills

Tentative schedule

Week One	Introductory comments/Course syllabus/Goals and Objectives/Introductions/In-class assignment/Contract
Week Two	In-class assignment-How do you Discipline your child? Basic Steps for initially Using Time- Out-Take home assignment.
Week Three	Budgeting Makes a Difference/Tighten up that Budget
Week Four	How is your child's behavior-In class assignment/Parent, Teacher, Child/Take home assignment
Week Five	Network! Network! Network! /In-class assignment Building a Resume/Take home assignment
Week Six	Knowing your Chemicals/In-class assignment Checklist: Emergency Numbers
Week Seven	Knowing your areas/In-class assignment Where are the children? /Take home assignment
Week Eight	"We are what we eat? /In-class assignment Do you know your county Welfare Department?
Week Nine	Guess speaker from Olive Crest Group Treatment Centers/Guess speaker from Planned Parenthood
Week Ten	Return Portfolio to students/Final Examination

Week 1

Instructor and Student Introduction

Goal

Students and instructor will be formally participating in an introduction.

Activity Description

The instructor will introduce him/herself to the classroom and give a touch of background as well as credentials. Following the instructor's introduction each student, one person at a time, will give marital status, number of children and age level. The instructor will group those who are similar. Each group will then introduce themselves and disclose their greatest battle as being a single parent. Direction on portfolio will be given.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Markers

Objectives

The students will be able to disclose information without feeling uncomfortable. Each student state their purpose for taking the course and find that it becomes useful in their daily struggles as a single parent.

Evaluation

The instructor will further assess the students' progress throughout the lesson by observing their group participation, social skills, and completion of the required work.

Effective Communication

Goal

Instructor will discuss different types of communications, including the three forms of nonverbal communication. Also, the instructor will discuss Verbal vs. Nonverbal communication, avoiding power struggles, rules and boundaries, household rules, contracts and what age is appropriate to each situation.

Activity Description

The students will answer 10 questions that cover all areas of the course. This assignment will be completed in the class. The instructor will also hand out a contract that will be used by each student. If the parent's child is not age appropriate for this particular assignment, then the student will locate an age appropriate child who will agree to participate. Please get the parents consent. This contract will be due at the end of Week 2. Make a copy and place in Portfolio.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Handouts

Markers

Pencils

Objectives

Each student will be able to answer the question fully and honestly.

Each student will be able to complete the contract fully and honestly.

Evaluation

The instructor will collect all handouts and assess for completion and well for participation. The instructor will further assess the students' progress throughout the lesson by observing their group participation, social skills, and completion of the required work.

“How well do you know your child and self?”

1. What are the three forms of nonverbal communication?
2. What form of nonverbal communication is used most?
3. How can you teach your child to say “Thank you” and “Please?”
4. What is the main lesson a child learns from being hit?
5. How do you cope with your baby’s crying?
6. Describe two things you should NOT do when your child has a tantrum.
7. Explain the idea of “playing with your child at his/her level.”
8. Define PTA. Are you a member? Why?
9. Define WIC. What is the purpose of this program?
10. Give your definition of a child that is “at risk.”

CONTRACT

I, _____, agree to: _____

I, Mother and/or Father, agree to: _____

Date contract begins: _____

Date contract ends: _____

Date contract signed: _____

Agreed to by:

(Child's Signature)

(Mother)

(Father)

Week 2

How do you Discipline your child?

Goal

The instructor will review last assignment with class before lecture. The instructor will discuss different types of discipline. Discussion between instructor and class will take place.

Activity Description

The class will write a one page, single space essay describing the goals they hope to accomplish when disciplining their child. Also, within the essay they will describe the methods used to discipline their child. This activity is an in-class assignment. Keep in mind age appropriate disciplines.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Markers

Pencils

Lined paper

Objectives

Each student will be able to complete a one page essay describing their accomplishments. Also, each student will speak openly about accomplishments.

Evaluation

The essays will be collected by the instructor and read for content and assessed for progress. The instructor will further assess the student's progress observing each student as they participate in the in-class activity.

Basic Steps for Using Time-Out

Goal

All students must be able to give clear, effective instructions to their child, but if they are not successful then using the following rules to Time-Out maybe needed. All students will take a copy of the Time-Out rules home and use when needed.

Activity Description

Each student will be given the correct steps to using Time-Out. There are 9 steps to Time-Out. Each step must be used. Next to each step, describe how your child reacted. After completing time-out, the student will explain shortly if Time-Out was useful to them or would they prefer to use another form of discipline. Make a copy of the completed contract and place in Portfolio. This assignment will be due at the end of Week 3.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Markers

Hand-outs

Objectives

Each student will complete this assignment within the time aloud. The students will learn to communicate effectively to their child and also use patience while disciplining.

Evaluation

The instructor will follow up with questions and concerns about the assignment. The instructor will also obtain feed back from those who have used the time-out and note the out come of each situation.

Basic Steps for Using Time-Out

Parent's Check List

_____ Steps to Follow:

- _____ 1. Select one target behavior on which to use Time-out.
- _____ 2. Count how often this target behavior occurs.
- _____ 3. Pick out a boring place for time-out.
- _____ 4. Explain time-out to your child.
- _____ 5. Wait patiently for the target behavior to occur.

TARGET BEHAVIOR OCCURS

- _____ 6. Place your child in the time-out place and use no more than 10 words and 10 seconds.
- _____ 7. Get the portable timer, set it to ring in _____ minutes, and place it within hearing distance of your child.
- _____ 8. Wait for the timer to ring _____ then remove all attention from your child while she waits for the timer to ring.
- _____ 9. Ask your child, after the timer rings, why she was sent to time-out (Clark, L. 1996, p. 218).

Week 3

Budgeting Makes a Difference!

Goal

Students are given amount of money to see if they can figure out a budget and compare and contrast what life is like now as a single parent with a child or two! What would life be like if they were to loose 40% of their (use to be income)? This assignment is to be completed in-class.

Activity Description

Students review what is necessary to maintain a house with a family on a single income, including child-support. All students will be given \$1,500.00/monthly regardless of the number of family members. The students will prepare a hand written list of expenses and calculate. The class will then present their calculations to the instructor.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Markers

Pencils

Lined Paper

Objectives

Each student will be able to calculate a realistic budget. As a class all students will participate in Networking. The students will share information regarding bargains and sales.

Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate by observing participation among the students. The instructor will assess the student's progress throughout the lesson by observing their group participation, social skills, and completion of the required work.

Quiz

Question 1: Name three forms of nonverbal communication, then give an example of each form and when it is to be used with your child.

Question 2: What is the complete name for IEHP? Name two objectives of IEHP. Where do they get their funding?

This should not be less than two pages, single space and hand written.

Tighten up that Budget!

Goal

Each student is given \$25.00 per person in a single parent house hold. The student will then write out a 7-day menu using all the five food groups. Each day should include: breakfast, lunch and dinner and one evening snack.

Activity Description

Each student will be given \$25.00 per person in a single parent household. The student needs to put together 7-day menu comprising of the five food groups. Shop were-ever needed, but document the cost and the coupons used. The more you validate the better the grade.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Food ads

Coupons

Objectives

Each student will learn to budget small funds given. Learn to search for ads, coupons and savings. Each student will practice computer skills, math skills and creative skills.

Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate through the completed assignment. Also, obtain feedback through the students on what they have learned and by doing so asking questions about how the assignment was.

Week 4

How is your child's behavior?

Goal

The instructor will hand out a Parent-Teacher-Child Record Form and discuss how it is to be used. The students will be able to take it home, look it over with child and schedule a conference with at least one teacher, whether it is via in person or by phone. Extra credit will be available to those who also attend a PTA meeting.

Activity Description

Each student will be given a Parent-Teacher-Child Record Form to be taken home and discussed with child. This form is about behavior, whether it is to be good or bad. For 5 days contact a teacher and discuss what type of behavior the child has had during that day then have the teacher initial, after the parent will initial and discuss with child and the child will initial if able. Keep in mind; if the child of the student is too young for this assignment then the student needs to be creative.

The student can use another child.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Markers

Parent-Teacher-Child Record Form

Objectives

The student will learn to get involved with their child's school activities. Also, during this assignment the student will learn about their child's development whether it will be Reading Skills, Math Skills or Social Skills. Getting involved and remaining involved with their child's school life is what the objective is. Place in portfolio and make two entries involving the method you used and the out-come.

Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate through the completed assignment. Also, the instructor will ask questions and get feed back on the assignment. The instructor will also assess the student through participation.

Record of _____ Target Behavior
(Child's name)

Description of target behavior to be increased or decreased:

Week of: _____

	M	T	W	Th	F
Target behavior: (Teacher records, yes or no, each day if the target behavior occurs.)					
Teacher's initials: (Teacher signs each day)					
Child's initials: (Child signs each day)					
Parent's initials: (Parent signs each evening)					

Plan: _____

Week 5

Network! Network! Network!

Goal

The instructor will discuss the importance of Networking Skills. Each student will join in by sharing information such as Web Sites, job fliers, child-care issues.

Activity Description

Each student will provide information to the classroom such as child-care issues, employment issues, discrimination at the employment due to single parenthood etc. The instructor will provide an article of choice to the class, for example Women's News (Downturn Pushing Single Mothers out of Work Force) and (Working fathers rise to the challenge of raising kids) by Sherrill Nixon and Lisa Pryor. The students will read and write one page, single place essay on what their opinions are to the article.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint
Articles
Lined-paper
Pencils

Objectives

Students will learn and see both sides, fathers with children or mothers with children. The student will discuss openly on the difficulties of being a single parent and managing a home, career and a life.

Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate each student on participation and completed activity. The instructor will also observe and assess by social skills and openness.

Building a Resume

Goal

Each student will build a resume and bring it in to class and compare it to others. Discuss the methods of building a resume.

Activity Description

Each student and instructor will move to the computer lab and look up formats on "How to build a Resume." The instructor will assist any student who has no computer knowledge. Those who finish building a resume or have a current resume completed may search for necessary articles or web sites needed for future use. Please insert all materials into Portfolio.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Markers

Computer Lab

Re-Write Disk-provided by the student

Objectives

The students will learn to build a necessary resume for future use; also they will learn basic computer skills and computer language. Students will also be able to search for necessary web sites and obtain any information that will be useful to them in the future.

Evaluation

The instructor will assess and evaluate by completed resumes and class participation. The instructor will further assess the student's progress throughout by checking each individual student while they work on the computer.

Week 6

Know your Chemicals

Goal

The students will participate in an in-class assignment pertaining to dangerous chemicals, household chemicals, basic hygiene products and plants that can harm a child. There will be a review for the Quiz.

Activity Description

The instructor will break up the class into 4 groups. Each group will take an area: The kitchen, bathroom, garage and yard and list what can be harmful to a child. Each student will obtain their own list for their Portfolio. Be sure to make one copy for the instructor with all students names.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Lined paper

Pencils

Objectives

The students will receive a copy from the other groups. Each list will have items that are located in that particular area that can harm a child. Also, each student will gain knowledge of products, which they may have not thought of such as Scope or Listerine. These products have enough alcohol to damage a child's brain even kill a child, according to Poison Control 1-800-222-1222.

Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate and assess by completion of lists provided by each group. The instructor will also observe participation and communication skills among each individual within each group.

Checklist: Emergency Numbers

Goal

Emergency names and numbers will be filled in by each student. This assignment will be taken home and completed by each student. There is a Quiz today.

Activity Description

Each student will be provided with a Checklist for Emergency Numbers. Each student will fill in the blanks and make three copies, one for the refrigerator, one for the portfolio and one for the teacher. This assignment is due the next class meeting. On the checklist, the number to poison control is already provided. Make sure you have at least one neighbor but know the names of those around you. This information will be needed for another assignment.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Checklist: For Emergency Numbers

Objectives

The students will have numbers accessible in case of emergency. Most students may have one available, therefore transfer the numbers to the new list provided. Each student will then find if some numbers need to be updated.

Evaluation

The instructor will assess each student by the completed Emergency Check list. During this time the instructor will check Portfolios for completed assignments.

Quiz

Question 1: Describe Megan's Law and when did it start.

Question 2: What does PTA stand for? Describe two of their objectives.

Question 3: Name one plant that is deadly to children if eaten and one personal hygiene product that is also dangerous to a child if swallowed. This should not be less than 3 pages, single space and hand written.

Checklist: Emergency Numbers

	Name:	Phone:	Address:
Doctor:			
Hospital:			
Poison Control Center:			
Police:			
Emergency:			
Parent (home):			
Parent(work):			
Parent (Work):			
Other family member:			
Other family member:			
Neighbor:			
Neighbor:			

Week 7

Knowing your area

Goal

The instructor and class will move to the computer lab and complete an in-class assignment. This assignment will consist of researching the Local Police Station and Megan's Law.

Activity Description

Each student will be provided a computer in the computer lab. They will search for their nearest Police Station using Map Quest and also, research Megan's Law and ways to prevent sexual abuse toward children.

Each student will then type out 2 pages, doubled space essay about what they have found and what it means to them.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Computer Lab

Objectives

By the end of this assignment each student will be able to research information regarding their Local Police Department and the importance of Megan's Law. Each student will learn aware of their surroundings.

Evaluation

The instructor will assess each student by checking their progress and assisting any questions about the use of the computer. The instructor will further assess the students' progress throughout the lesson by observing participation as well as completion of the required work.

"Where are the children?"

Goal

This assignment requires a list of numbers where your children usually "hang-out." If you have a young toddler than the list will include numbers of who baby sits. Include all numbers of family members, neighbors and daycare so it can be easily reached.

Activity Description

Each student will create a list of names where their child hangs-out, such as family members, neighbors, and boyfriend/girlfriend. Please put both cell/home number. The student with a toddler will list all numbers of those who baby-sit, such as child-care, family, friends or neighbors. Please specify if the person is a neighbor or friend, etc. The student can hand write, but a computer will be preferred. Information will be placed in the Portfolio by the student.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Paper

Computer-if available at home

Objectives

Each student will learn awareness. They will be able to know who is around their teenager and their toddler at all times. It is also important for those who are around your child to know that you are aware of your surroundings. The objective is parent awareness.

Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate by completed assignment. The instructor will further assess by participation and social skills, which are needed to obtain the information, especially from the neighbors.

Week 8

"We are what we eat?"

Goal

The instructor will discuss the Women, Infant and Children Program, which is known by WIC Program. The students will learn about nutrition and the five basic food groups.

Activity Description

The instructor will introduce the purpose of the WIC program and what it has to offer. The instructor will also summarize the five basic food groups. The students will then put together meals on paper with the products the WIC has to offer using the five basic food groups. The students will put together all three meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner using only what the WIC program has to offer. This will be completed in-class. All information will be placed in the student's Portfolio by the student.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint
A list of all WIC products
A food group pyramid
Lined-paper
Pencils
Colored Pencils-provided by instructor

Objectives

The students will learn to create meals with very little products offered. The students will learn the five basic food groups and the importance of nutrition.

Evaluation

The lessons will be collected at the end of the class and evaluated for creativeness. The instructor will further assess the student's progress throughout the lesson by observing their group participation, social skills, and completion of the required work.

Do You Know Your County Welfare Department?

Goal

The students will be introduced to the Social Services Department, known as the Welfare Department.

The instructor will discuss the Welfare's objectives and reasons why people turn to the Welfare Department.

Activity Description

Each student will research the Social Service Department that is nearest to them. This research can be done via Web Site, visiting the Social Services for necessary materials or the public library. The public library will assist the student if they are not familiar with the computer system. Most Public Libraries have convenient hours. Assignment is due the following class. Make a copy of the information to place in the Portfolio.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Markers

Objectives

Each student will become aware of the services the county provides. Also, the student will understand the Welfare Departments objectives as well as how important it is to those in need.

Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate on completion of required work. The instructor will further assess the student's with questions and comments.

Week 9

Olive Crest Group Treatment Centers **Guest Speaker**

Goal

The instructor will invite a guest speaker from Olive Crest Group Treatment Centers. The guest speaker will share information about Olive Crest and their objectives. The instructor will notify the students that the Portfolio is due at the beginning of next week and will be returned on the day of the Final with a grade that is worth up to 15% of their grade.

Activity Description

The students will participate in a group discussion with the guest speaker from Olive Crest. They will be educated on the objectives of Olive Crest also be provided with information on employment opportunities.

Materials/Preparation

Guest Speaker from Olive Crest

Objectives

The students will be able to understand the importance of Olive Crest. The students will also discover new programs and how important these programs are to children. The students will be able to give full attention to the speaker.

Evaluation

The instructor will assess the student's progress by observing their group participation, social skills and attention that needs to be given while the speaker is present.

Planned Parenthood **Guest Speaker**

Goal

The instructor will invite a speaker from Planned Parenthood. The speaker from Planned Parenthood will educate the students about their program and who they respond to.

Activity Description

The students will listen attentively and asked questions when it is time. The students will be able to give the speaker their full attention at all times.

Materials/Preparation

Guest Speaker from Planned Parenthood

Objectives

The students will learn about Planned Parenthood and who they reach out too. They will also learn how they stress on birth control and diseases. The students will learn about programs that are available to the communities.

Evaluation

The instructor will observe the students while they listen to the guest speaker. The instructor will further assess the student's progress as they participate in the group discussion following the information the speaker provides.

Week 10

Review and Follow-up

Goal

The instructor will review the last 9 weeks and prepare for the final.

The instructor will also collect the Portfolios in order to assess the completed work done by the students. All Portfolios will be returned on the day of the Final Examination.

Activity Description

The students will take notes and ask questions pertaining to the final.

The instructor will provide any other information by request.

Materials/Preparation

PowerPoint

Objectives

To educate each student on the importance of raising a child and that there are many single parents out there to Network with. That each student takes what information was obtained and use it. If there is information that does not pertain to them at this time, in hopes that they will save any information for future reference.

Evaluation

The instructor will assess the required completed work that is located in the Portfolio of each student. The student will evaluate by past participation, social skills demonstrated by the student and over all attendance.

Final Test

Goal

To hand back all Portfolios to the students. The students will take a test that consists of 5 questions.

Activity Description

The students will be given a Final Test that consists of five questions. Each question consists of 2 parts and will pertain to the information covered.

Materials/Preparation

Final Examination

Objectives

During the final examination each student will show adequate knowledge by answering each question to their fullest abilities. Following the examination the instructor will discuss different answers given by the students, therefore sharing the information with others.

Evaluation

The instructor will grade the Final Examination and assess the proper grade for each student.

Final Examination

This final consist of 5 questions with 2 parts. Please read the question thoroughly and answer both sections. Please write clearly, single space and no less than five pages. You may use the entire class time to complete the examination. Keep in mind that answers will vary so count on no one but you're self! This final will count for 20% of your grade.

Question 1: Why is it a good idea to leave one bookshelf for baby's books?

Why should a single parent have at least one kitchen drawer in which he/she can explore?

Question 2: Explain the idea of "playing with your child at his/her level."

Include an example in your explanation.

Question 3: Parents and children have a difficult time adjusting to a single parent home, name three difficult situations children experience while in a single parent home. Explain how you become a single parent.

Question 4: It is difficult being a single parent, but there are some positives about the situation, name 3 positives that come out of being a single parent and unfortunately there are negatives about being a single parent, name 3 negative situations of being a single parent.

Question 5: There are 4 primarily areas that were talked about, where there are dangerous items, name the 4 areas, second give one item that is usually located there.

Resources

Anderson, J. (1990). The single mother's book. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers, LTD.

Lofas, J. (1998). Helping stepfamilies and single parents build happy homes. New York, NY: Kensington Publishing Corp.

Popkin, M. (2004). Active Parenting Now. Kennesaw, GA: Active Parenting Publishers.

Slide 1

Single-parent Parenting Skills



Week One

- Course syllabus
- Course goals and objectives
- Instructor's introduction
- Student's introduction
- Course schedule

Communication Skills

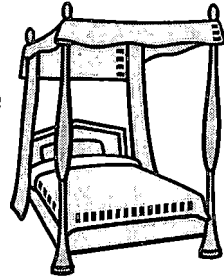
- Effective Communication
 - Language of Encouragement
- Verbal vs. Non-Verbal Communication
- Avoiding Power Struggles
- Rules and Boundaries
- Household Rules/Contracts
- Starting Young

Communicating with your young



Communication by

- Consistent bedtimes
 - age appropriate
- Things to do before bedtime
 - Use the restroom
 - Short readings to your child

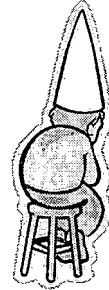


Week Two

- Types of punishments
 - Using time-outs
 - » Age appropriate
 - » Timing-out toys and other objects
 - » Time-outs with the child
 - Restrictions (grounding)
 - Taking away items for a period of time
 - Taking privileges away for a period of time

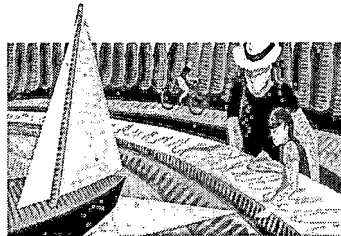
Balancing love and discipline

- Non-physical
- Not disciplining from a distance
- Remaining calm during disagreements
- Not embarrassing your child
- Remembering that you are the parent



Rewarding your child

- Reward without food
- Reward without candy
 - Small Toys
 - Books
 - Outings
- Token rewards
 - age appropriate



Household Chores/privileges

- Parent's expectations
 - TV/phone time
 - Computer games
- Making a chart with scheduled chores
- Age appropriate chores
- Age appropriate privileges
- Weekly Allowances
 - Extra monies for extra chores
- Dollar limit of privileges

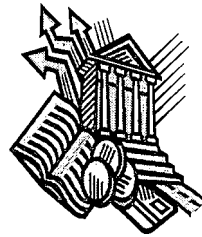
Week Three



- Preparing a budget
- Wise Spending
- Expense Record
- Coupons/bargain shopping

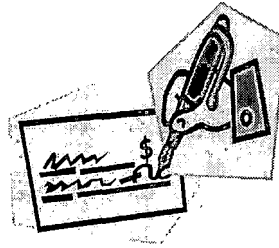
Money Management

- Internet-shop
- Internet-coupons
- Referring to
Newspaper ads
- Low budget stores
99 cent store



Banking

- Savings account
- Checking account
- Debits vs. Credits
- Recording all spending
- Necessary expenditures



Medical and Dental

- Personal medical and dental plans
 - Blue-Cross
 - Kaiser
- Medical and dental through the county
- IEHP-for low income



Rent and Mortgage

- Remaining within your means
- Reasonable housing
- Living with family members
- Sharing a home with another single parent



Child-care

- Licensed child-care
- Child-care through the family
- Pre-schools
- Co-ops



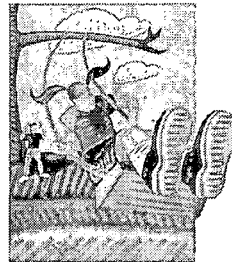
Week Four

- Developing Learning Skills
- Reading/learning activities at home
- Playtime = Learning



Child Development

- Newborn
- Toddler Age
- Ages 4-12
- Teenage years



Getting involved

- Parent/teacher conferences
- Knowing your teachers
- PTA
- Get involved with your child and their sports activities
- Helping with homework

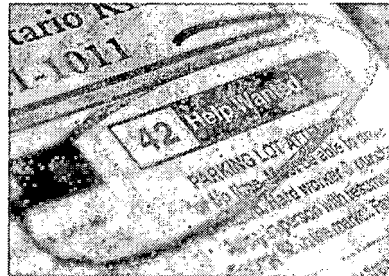


Week Five

- Networking skills
- Parent's continuing education
- Planning for the family future
- Counseling
- Learning to interview
- Out of the home-into a job

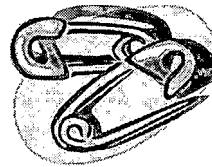
Job Searching

- Resources-making contacts
- Resumes
- Childcare-Co-ops
- Preparing for new employment
- Using the newspaper and internet to find employment



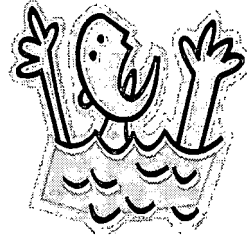
Week Six

- Child proofing your home
- Securing chemicals
- Personal hygiene items
 - Scope/Listerine
- Keeping pertinent phone numbers handy
- Knowing 911
- Out-door signs for protection



Accident-proofing your home

- Take a crawling tour
- Do not forget your yard
- Accident examples and solutions
- Fencing the pool
- High-chairs/car seats
- Airbags in vehicles
- Bicycle helmets



Week Seven Safety Guidelines.....More

- Getting to know your neighbors
- Know your child's friends
- Resources through the local police department
- Megan's Law

Special Needs

- Special parking needs
- Counseling needs
- Medications
- Knowing CPR
- First Aid
- When to call 911

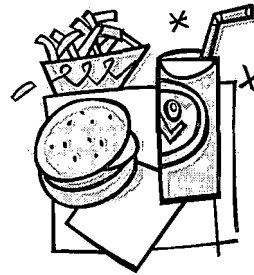


Being safe during outings

- Do not talk to strangers
- Yelling “Fire!” and Why?
- Discussing the “wrist leash”
- Identify rally points
- Planning exits for emergencies

Week Eight

- Basic Five food groups
- Healthy vs. junk food
- Daily requirements
- Improving child's diet
- Fast food dining



Mealtimes

- Expectations during meals
- Preparing and clean-up- involve the children
- Take advantage of mealtime
- No Television
- No playing during mealtime
- Manners during mealtime



Week Nine Community Resources

- City/County
 - Scheduled speaker
 - Pamphlets
- State/Federal
 - Scheduled speaker
 - Pamphlets

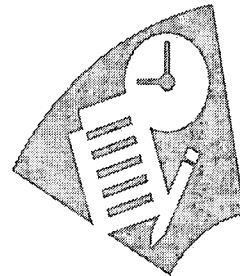


Connecting with the Community

- Internet searches
- Meeting Parent's Needs
 - Child-Support from absent parent
 - Both parents sharing responsibilities
- Community expectations vs. Single-parent expectations
- Individual expectations and needs

Week Ten Review and Follow-up

- Course Completion
- Fill in learning gaps
- Finish projects
- Final Test
- Evaluation by the students



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