

# Community Cornerstone

A quarterly newsletter from the Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc.

## Annual Children's Week Features "Something New"



Fall 2003

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A packed amphitheatre of excited children dance and participate in a sing-a-long at the Kick-Off.

Each year in October, The Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc. (ARCCP) presents a weeklong celebration of children filled with information sharing, recreational activities, entertainment and business development. The theme, "Children Today, Leaders Tomorrow" was the guiding premise for this year's Children's Week explains Dr. Robetta McKenzie, executive director of the ARCCP. "Children are a most valuable resource, shaping their lives and motivating them to be our future leaders is cause for celebration," stated Dr. McKenzie. She added that this special week brings together members of the ARCCP and local community venues to provide educational and cultural enrichment for families and to showcase the talents of children throughout the Augusta-Richmond County area.



PBS character Caillou and babysitter Julie perform "Storytime with Caillou" at the Kick-Off Celebration.

This year's Kick-Off Celebration was held on October 3 at the Jessye Norman Amphitheater on the Riverwalk and was attended by Head Start, Pre Kindergarten and preschool students. The main feature-Something New for the Kick-Off Celebration-was a special performance by "Caillou" of the Public Broadcasting System popular children's television series Caillou, courtesy of Georgia Public Broadcasting. The following morning, Funtageous was held for foster care children and their foster parents. This event included a talent show, games, food and activities aimed at developing the children's social skills in a relaxed and caring environment.

On Sunday, the Family Festival/Education Fair offered festival activities, arts and crafts for the children and information regarding the availability of services, careers, colleges and universities to the community at large.

*Please see [Children's Week](#) on page 4*

## A Message From the Executive Director Robetta McKenzie, Ed.D



Robetta D. McKenzie, Ed.D

So many great and exciting things happened during the event-filled days of summer and early fall here in the Augusta-Richmond County community, the ARCCP staff felt the excitement and seized the opportunity to have "fun in the sun" while implementing or supporting implementation of many program initiatives. The seasons of summer and early fall, with all of its energy and festivity, were ideal for promoting

our ongoing theme, "Children Today, Leaders Tomorrow," as we participated in many local, outdoor community fairs to interact with local citizens informing them of the numerous initiatives coordinated by members of the Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc.

Actually, as early as spring, ARCCP representatives were set-up at the Augusta Commons in downtown Augusta in late April, sharing information about the services, programs and assistance that they provide for children and their families. That same weekend, a health workshop entitled "A Healthier Mom Means A Healthier Baby" was presented by a partnering organization, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in conjunction with our local Healthy Start Initiative. Other community outreach efforts recently held included support group meetings for relative caregivers which were three-fold in nature. Specifics included the provision of case management by the ARCCP, counseling by the Family Counseling Center of

*Please see [Executive Director's Message](#) on page 3*

# ARCCP Staff Taking a Break for Unity, Growth and Understanding



Mary Kay Sykes whispers a message in ShDonna's ear during a communication skills exercise.

The Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc.(ARCCP) ventured to Reynolds Plantation this past spring for a staff retreat entitled "Managing for Positive Family and Children Results Through Partnership."

Dr. Robetta McKenzie, ARCCP executive director, began the retreat by explaining how the ARCCP was formed, the roles and responsibilities of the core staff and future plans of the ARCCP. The executive director summed up the expectations of her staff in five words, "...we want to empower people." That strong statement set the stage and the group prepared to hear presentations on family and children related topics from three dynamic speakers: Betty English, University of Georgia Family and Consumer Sciences county agent; Marcell Johnson, Region 7 community facilitator; and Dr. Willie Mazyck, educational consultant.



Betty English explains that brain development begins at conception.

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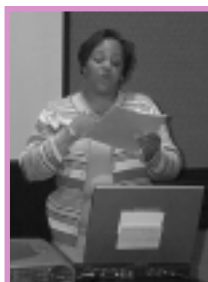
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### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Robetta D. McKenzie, Ed.D.

With a brain replica in hand, Betty English of the Family and Consumer Sciences County Extension Program, demonstrated the frailty of an infant's brain. She explained that at birth a baby's brain cells are already connected to other brain cells. This was only the tip of the iceberg as she continued her presentation on child development. With more information than time, English lectured on Brain Development, Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Nutrition for Children and Adults.

Marcell Johnson of Region 7 Family Connection, addressed the Function of the Family Connection Partnership's relationship to the ARCCP. She explained the beginnings of the ARCCP as a part of the Family Connection. Johnson went on to say, "the Family Connection Partnership is an investment in prevention, local decision making and community economic development," as she explained the supporting role the Family Connection continues to play in various aspects of the ARCCP.



Marcell Johnson gives the history of the ARCCP and the Family Connection.

On day two, the retreat began with a presentation on Strong Families by Dr. Willie Mazyck, educational consultant. Dr. Mazyck covered topics on the types of families, divorce and parenthood and what role the ARCCP plays in each of these areas. Dr. Mazyck's message was carried throughout the remainder of the day as the staff and the various facilitators participated in a team building exercise called "Getting Where We Need to Be." The staff watched a series of clips and discussed the parallels and similarities to their daily operations. From these comparisons, the staff developed a better understanding of their role at the ARCCP and how it impacts the consortium and the community.

Refreshed, energized and focused, the ARCCP staff left Greensboro, GA and returned to Augusta with a formula for success and eagerness to implement the new strategies and information acquired during the staff retreat.



The ARCCP staff pose for the camera on their final day at the staff retreat held at Reynold's Plantation in Greensboro, GA.

## Getting Parents, Teens and the Community to Promote Abstinence

In a brainstorm session, Abstinence Only Committee members think about and discuss ways to get the local community involved in promoting abstinence.

Inside the Department of Health on Laney-Walker Boulevard, the Abstinence Only Education Program Planning Team brainstormed and discussed how various approaches could be used to acquire volunteers and advocates in the community to promote abstinence. This topic of concern stemmed from a brief overview and feedback from Mary Beth Pierucci, Planned Parenthood of Georgia staff, on the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Forum held last May at Augusta State University. Ms. Pierucci, as well as others who attended, commented on the lack of participation/openness and supportive views of using contraceptives by some of the teenagers and parents.

The committee agreed that it must take significant steps to reach youth and instill in them the importance of abstaining from sex. After much discussion, the committee posed the question, “what can we do?” It was obvious to the committee that it must, first, find ways to get parents, teens and the community involved in promoting and supporting abstinence. Dr. Willie Mazyck, educational consultant, suggested holding the Abstinence Only Education

meetings at schools with high pregnancy rates. This would allow nurses, counselors and principals to learn about the Abstinence Only Education Program, address their concerns, make suggestions and get involved with the committee and its mission. The committee also acknowledged the significance of after-school programs. The overall consensus was that after-school programs introduce children to positive activities and information, thus deterring them from becoming involved in negative activities. After-school programs are also a great medium to introduce youth to abstinence and encourage them to abstain from sexual activities. While after-school programs reach elementary and middle school aged children, another approach was introduced to involve teens. Keeping in mind that teens often relate better to things presented by their peers, it was suggested to train a group of teens to act as ambassadors to promote abstinence only throughout the community at various school events.

Dr. Robetta McKenzie, ARCCP executive director, began her closing remarks with the statement, “Our children have a lot of problems, which means we all have problems.” She went on to reiterate the steps the committee will take to bring parents, teens and the community with the efforts of the Abstinence Only Program. The committee will begin by researching local after-target audience, what each program entails and how to create programs that work to create healthy,



*Continued from page 1*

ous partners and sponsorship of our second annual forum on teen pregnancy prevention presented by Planned Parenthood of Georgia. Much appreciation is extended to the Youth Development Task Force and co-sponsoring agencies and organizations that coordinated this year’s Teen Pregnancy Prevention Forum. We also presented a Baby Fest, where health screenings were conducted, clothes and child booster seats were given away, and recreational activities and other special programming were offered at no cost to area residents.

Our spring and summer month activities continued during the Mother’s Day and Father’s Day weekends. For the Moms, a day of pampering, nutrition, exercise and beauty clinics was held, and for the Dads, a morning of breakfast, information on men’s health, presentation on the role of males during pregnancy, awards and incentives. Yes, we have been busy collaborating to improve the lives of children and families.

As the summer has come to closure and we are in the midst of fall, the work of the ARCCP continues to make a favorable impact on the Augusta-Richmond County community. All of our varied programs are making inroads by alleviating many of the challenges confronting our local population: teen pregnancy; infant mortality; illness and disease; crime, particularly violence; substance abuse and child abuse; poverty; inadequate educational performance and other issues. It gives me great satisfaction to report that our combined efforts have reduced the rate of low birth-weight babies and the infant mortality rate. The number of teenagers becoming pregnant is also on the decline in Augusta-Richmond County and the number of arrests made of our youth has also recently decreased. There is even more to **shout about!** The grip of poverty around our children is loosening—the rate of children living with insufficient means is also declining. We can attest to great strides being made in our local school system: more kindergartners have passed the GKAP; more students are graduating from high school on time; and more students are now participating in Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten programs.

Hats off to our 96 partners who have made all of these successes possible. We look forward to making even greater accomplishments as we implement our agenda for children and families throughout the remainder of this year.

## Annual Mother's Day Salute

Pampered, energized and informed describes how the women who attended the Mother's Day Salute returned home. Thursday, May 8, 2003 at Minnick Park, the Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc. (ARCCP) held a three hour event celebrating mothers. From 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. mothers and expectant mothers enjoyed cosmetic makeovers, yoga demonstrations and a delicious lunch. Although the event was geared toward mothers, a number of fathers and children attended as well. The ARCCP took special care to entertain the children with various outdoor activities.

The special event for moms kicked off with Darling Sue Lee, a personal trainer with Fitness Success. She began by introducing the ladies to and giving instructions on yoga. With the lights turned down low, soft music playing and a candle lit, Lee first explained the benefits of yoga. She then asked everyone to stand up and take part in some stretching exercises. From stretching to using the resist-a-ball, she demonstrated various movements suitable for all women, including those who are pregnant. She also commented on the importance of exercise and stressed that pregnant women should perform fitness walks two or three times a week for their cardiovascular system to benefit their heart and overall health.

At noon, Jeanesta Moody presented a beauty segment, featuring Mary Kay cosmetics. Moody focused on the importance of taking care of two special body parts- the lips and hands. Starting with the lips, the ladies followed Moody through a four step process that included exfoliating and moisturizing. She went on to talk about the business opportunity of becoming a Mary Kay consultant, and held a drawing for a tote bag of Mary Kay products.

Outside the children took part in various activities supervised by ARCCP case managers. The children were able to play on the play ground, get their faces painted and personalize Mother's Day poems with their hand prints. Before retiring and joining their mothers indoors, the children participated in an interactive session of storytelling with Karen Gross, head of Children Services with the East Central Georgia Regional Library.

Following lunch, participants were able to select clothes for themselves and their babies donated by VF Playware. Prior to leaving, each participant received a gift bag from the ARCCP.



Rosa Smith, ARCCP staff helps children personalize their Mother's Day poems

### *Children's Week continued from page 1*

In addition to the Family Festival/Education Fair, the traditional parade with a contest for the best float, vehicle, cheerleading team, drill team and step team was held. Other activities which occurred during Children's Week were as follows:

- Children's Story Time facilitated by the East Central Regional Library and Lutheran Ministries at the Augusta Museum of History.
- The Student's Who Care Luncheon where four scholarships were awarded by International Paper, the Augusta Rotary Club and the ARCCP.

Finally, the business portion of the week's program was conducted at the Legislative Breakfast where representatives of the ARCCP shared their concerns regarding health, safety, education and family security with our legislators to include Senator Don Cheeks, Senator Joey Brush, Senator Randy Hall, Representative Henry Howard, Representative Sue Burmeister, Representative Ben Harbin and Representative Quincy Murphy. This event was sponsored by the Medical College of Georgia Children's Medical Center.

The sponsors for this exciting week-to whom we give much appreciation is extended to the Medical College of Georgia Children's Medical Center, Exchange Club of Augusta, Augusta-Richmond County Consolidated Government, International Paper, Papa John's Pizza, GoldMech, First Bank, SunTrust, South Trust, Wachovia, Savannah River Site National Management Association, Rotary Club of Augusta, Johnson, Laschober & Associates, P.C., Stevens Creek Community Church, Georgia Bank & Trust Company, Bank of America, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Georgia Psychological Services and Center for Pediatric Dentistry-Dr. Lee Baker.



The Glenn Hills Junior Spartans compete for the best step team trophy during the Family Festival/Education Fair.

## Youth Council Urges Peer Group to Avoid Drug Use

The Youth Advisory Council of The Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc. encouraged fellow youth to keep drug and other addictive substances out of their lives. At a recent **Drug Free Communities** program, "Keeping Youth Drug Free," members of the Youth Advisory Council performed a skit about not giving in to the peer pressure of "following the crowd" in using illegal drugs, smoking or drinking alcohol.

The **Drug Free Communities** program was held on September 13, 2003 at the May Park Community Center and featured Craig Boogy of WPRW FM (Power 107) as the master of ceremony. Approximately 50 youth attended the event, where they heard remarks on avoiding and preventing substance abuse given by Weldon Burton a recovering drug addict with the VA Substance Abuse Program and Eva Cooper of the Richmond County Sheriff's Department DARE Unit. The program also included a special performance by the Nubian Princess Step Team and ended with recognition of youth and adults who participated in the **Drug Free Communities** PSAs and refreshments.



Members of the Youth Advisory Council perform "Omnipotent Decisions," a skit they produced, during the Drug Free Communities event, "Keeping Youth Drug Free".

Dr. Robetta McKenzie, executive director of the ARCCP, who welcomed guests to the **Drug Free Communities** program, also explained that the Youth Advisory Council provides a voice to the unique concerns, ideas, and solutions of the young people in the Augusta-Richmond County Community. The Council is comprised of students in elementary, middle and high school who meet regularly and present special program events periodically.



Again members of the Youth Advisory Council perform "Omnipotent Decisions" as a part of the "Youth to Youth for Youth" program.

In the late summer, the Youth Advisory Council also collaborated with several partnering organizations to present the "Youth to Youth for Youth Program" which offered workshops to inform students on how to make the right choices in their lifestyles to prevent dire consequences. The Council was joined by the Barton Village Weed and Seed Initiative, and the McDuffie Woods Recreation Center Summer Camp Program in presenting this program.

"Youth to Youth for Youth" program coordinators expressed that the overall objective of the program was to have youth create a program for their benefit that promoted health and wellness in the Barton Chapel community. The primary focus of this youth led event was to urge young people in this community to not smoke or do drugs, to learn skills needed for solving social problems, and to promote sexual abstinence.

James Elam, a recovering drug addict, affiliated with the VA Substance Abuse Program, shared a personal testimony about the perils of drug abuse and warned the youth not to get involved with the downfall of substance abuse. The program wrapped up with Radio personality Sly Tay of WFXA FM (Foxie 103) facilitating a session on lessons learned by the youth at this event. The participants were advised to listen closely throughout the earlier workshops, so that they would have the right answers to questions raised by the popular radio announcer. All youth answering questions correctly received a Tee-shirt, compliments of the ARCCP.

Other organizations and individuals who supported the "Youth to Youth for Youth" program were Communities in Schools, VA Substance Abuse Program, McDuffie Woods Recreation Center Camp Teen Counselors, Commissioner Bobby Hankerson, Radio Station WFXA (Foxie 103), KDO, 100 Black Men of Augusta, John Ramirez, The Augusta Links and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Alicia Sanchez is the ARCCP staff liaison who works with the Youth Advisory Council.

The "Youth to Youth for Youth" program culminated with a basketball game played with local celebrities, program facilitators and youth.



Youth, local celebrities and program facilitators begin the Young vs. Old basketball game with a jump off.

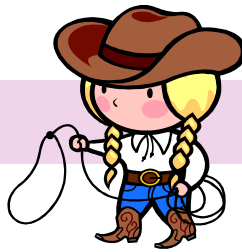
# Making the Grade This School Year: How Parents Can Help Their Children



The new school year has gotten off to a promising start for the children and parents in the local area. As advocated by the Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc., collaboration between the local school system and the community will result in success for the students. Just as the students are studying hard to make good grades in their studies, parents are also striving to make the grade. Here's a list of suggestions to assist parents in guiding their children and themselves to achieving a great school year and making a passing grade. 😊

- **Learn who is in charge at your child's school**  
Automatically, you will desire to get to know your child's teacher and teacher aide. But, in addition to them, learn who the principal, bus driver, cafeteria workers, coaches, crossing guards, or anyone else who is instrumental in your child's education. The more you understand about how the school operates, the more productive and effective you can be in your child's education.
- **Create a designated study area in your home**  
Your child needs a specific area in your home to do homework assignments. That place may be at the kitchen table or at a desk in the child's bedroom. The study area needs to be well lit and offer orderly space. Everyone in the household should be quiet and not create distractions, as well as respect the student's study time for completing homework.
- **Set a regular study time**  
Require that your child has a regular study time; whether it's right after school, before dinner, or immediately following dinner set a regular study time to complete homework. If your child completes homework at an after-school program or away from home, use the regular study time at home for you to review the assignment. Also, if the homework is done in an after-school program, have the student read or review challenging material.
- **Turn the television off and READ**  
The television does offer some stimulating and educational programming, but turn it off and let the role of reading co-star in your family's life. Research indicates that children who are read to in their early years do better in school. Reading can be contagious. Set aside approximately 20 to 30 minutes each day or evening to read to your child. If your child is learning to read, have him read to you. For older children, set aside 30 minutes to an hour on designated days throughout the week for "family reading together time." Stock your home with plenty of reading materials like magazines, newspapers, and books Demonstrate to your kids that reading is an enjoyable activity and they are more than likely to make it a habit too.
- **Build confidence in your child**  
As the parent(s), you are the most important person in your child's life. What you say to them and how you say it to them matters tremendously. To learn and achieve their academic goals, children must believe in themselves. You have the task of being their "head cheerleader"—encourage your child, give them praise and positive feedback regularly. Your encouragement will play a great role in building their self-esteem and confidence.
- **Attend Parent-Teacher Conferences**  
Meet with your child's teacher at the Parent-Teacher Conferences, and be prepared to ask the right questions. Talk with your child before the conference and make a note of his concerns. Make a list of your concerns and questions to find out about your child's progress. Ask the teacher how student progress is measured. Expect to see work of your child at this conference. And, most importantly, ask the teacher how the two of you can work together to help your child succeed.
- **Schools + Communities = Success**  
At the Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc. we encourage parents, community residents, and local organizations to support area schools. To be effective in educating children, schools need the assistance and involvement of parents and other stakeholders. It is strongly recommended that parents attend major programs and assemblies held at their child's school, volunteer at the school, join the Parent Teacher Association, and talk with the principal or teacher about what special project needs to be accomplished by parents, such as fund raising, beautification, etc.

**Resource used to compile this listing: National Education Association website.**



### Second Annual Teen Pregnancy Prevention Forum A Success!

The second annual Teen Pregnancy Prevention Forum took place in the evening on Monday, May 12, 2003 at Augusta State University. Approximately 90 people, including many teens, showed up to discuss the issue with a panel of speakers representing the school system, Health Department, faith community, youth programs, teens, and parents. Our very own Dr. Robetta McKenzie, executive director of the ARCCP shared her wisdom and expertise as a panelist. Barbara Dawson of WJBF Newschannel 6 facilitated the panel discussion.

The panel and audience discussed the issue of teen pregnancy in Augusta-Richmond County and the effects it has on our youth, families, and community. The merits of abstinence-only versus comprehensive sexuality education were thoroughly discussed by advocates for both. Some of the resources available to teens and parents were announced and both the audience and panel tried to answer questions about how to get parents more involved and how to help youth find positive things to do in their free time. Those in attendance were encouraged to take advantage of the resources and activities already available to them while agencies and organizations continue to strive to answer the needs of the community.

The Youth Development Task Force, a group of local agencies that collaborates to hold community education events like the forum, organized the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Forum. The agencies involved in planning this year's forum were Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc., Augusta-Richmond County Department of Family and Children's Services, Augusta State University, East Central Health District, Girls, Inc. of the CSRA, Good Hope Baptist Church, Planned Parenthood, and Richmond County Health Department's Health and Development Program and RIMTACC Program. Please contact Chris Morfaw at (706) 729-2052 if you would like to get involved in the Youth Development Task Force.

Submitted by:  
Paula Hotard, Public Affairs Project Coordinator  
Planned Parenthood of Georgia

### 2003 Tobacco Free Jamboree

National Kick Butts Day, celebrated on April 2, 2003, was a time when thousands of teenagers and children across the country joined together to spread awareness about the hazards of using tobacco products. As part of the national initiative, children in the Augusta-Richmond County community participated in a Tobacco Free Jamboree on Wednesday, April 2, 2003, from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. at the Dogwood Terrace Boys and Girls Club.

The theme of the Jamboree was "Say No to Tobacco and Yes To a Healthy Life". Although, the event was designed to be fun, its message was very serious. The participants (both youth and adults) learned that "Tobacco use, particularly cigarette smoking, is the leading cause of preventable death in Georgia" and that "more than 10,000 Georgian's die each year from tobacco-related illnesses." Kids are constantly exposed to advertisements that do not show the real images of tobacco use. There aren't any advertisements that mention cigarettes contain over 4,000 chemicals or any ads showing people dying from lung cancer.

Over 200 kids from the CSRA participated in the 2003 jamboree. They were exposed to information such as the ingredients in a cigarette, healthy lungs vs. smokers lungs, tobacco industry's deceptive marketing tactics, and a host of other display booths and activities. Entertainment was provided by the Barton Village Youth Advisory Board (skit), Johnson Youth Organization Drill Team (dance) and Augusta Urban Ministries: Community Kids Connection (chant). The kids also had a chance to add a personal message to a wall of memories that gave their perception of tobacco use. Aside from the tobacco information, there was other "healthy lifestyle" information distributed as well.

Special thanks to all of the sponsors and donors who helped to ensure the success of the jamboree. To be a part of next years Tobacco Free Jamboree contact Onnie Payne at 706-667-4297.

Submitted by:  
Onnie Payne, Tobacco Use Prevention  
Youth Educator  
East Central Health District

### Breastmilk is the Gold Standard

Breastfeeding is the most natural way to provide the best nutrition and nurturing for infants. Providing breastmilk is the key to achieving the best possible infant and child health. Artificial baby milk (formula) cannot compete with breastmilk in providing enzymes, growth factors, hormones, and disease protection properties or in supporting the infant's growth and development. Therefore, breastmilk is not only viewed as more beneficial than formula, but it sets the standard for infant feeding.

In Celebration of World Breastfeeding Week, August 1-7, 2003, the CSRA Breastfeeding Coalition sponsored activities and programs to promote the theme "Breastmilk is the Gold Standard." Breastfeeding mothers were given luggage tags with a gold ribbon logo to attach to diaper bags, strollers or their purse in support of breastfeeding as the gold standard for infant feeding. If you see a mother with one of these gold ribbon tags, show your support for breastfeeding by congratulating her for choosing breastmilk as the best nutrition for her baby. The coalition also encouraged everyone who supports breastfeeding as the gold standard for infant nutrition, to wear a gold ribbon in celebration of World Breastfeeding Week.

In addition to the gold ribbon campaign, the CSRA Breastfeeding Coalition sponsored a Lunch and Learn at St. Joseph Hospital. Amy Spangler, RN, MN, IBCLC, spoke on the topic "Breastfeeding and the Media." Ms. Spangler currently serves as chairwoman of the United States Breastfeeding Committee. She is also the past president of the International Lactation Consultant Association, author of three books for breastfeeding mothers, and editor of a web based newsletter for parents and breastfeeding advocates. Ms. Spangler discussed a national breastfeeding awareness media campaign, sponsored by the Ad Council, which will be launched this fall. For more information about the CSRA Breastfeeding Coalition please call Donna Wilson (706) 667-4705 or Nancy Hoehn at (706) 481-7207.

Submitted by:  
Dorothy H. Hart  
Nutritionist and DHR Dietetic Intern

## Making It A Safe Ride: Your Child Must Be Properly Restrained in the Car

When your children joins you on that quick ride to the grocery store or a stop at the mall or anywhere that you may drive, make it your standard practice to restrain them properly in their car seat or seat belt. Don't let your family become a figure in the alarming statistics on kids in car crashes. Automobile accidents are the leading cause of unintentional injury (accident) related deaths among children age 14 and under, as reported by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. In reports released in Year 2000, a total of 1, 654 children under age 14 died in car accidents and in 2001 an estimated 228,000 were injured.

Sometimes parents do not restrain their children in the car for various inexcusable reasons. You may hear statements: "He'll stop crying if I hold him on my lap." Or "we're just driving around the corner." Or the child may even express: "I'm too old to be in that car seat." Some parents even think that their careful driving will make the difference if they fail to strap their children in seat belts or car seats. Parents and drivers can't control the driving of others or eliminate the possibility of being involved in an automobile accident.



Yet, there are several safety measures that can be practiced to protect children traveling in motor vehicles. First and foremost, make sure that kids are restrained properly in car seats and seat belts. Consult a child safety fitting station in your local community to ensure that your car seats are properly installed; refer to list at the end of this article for stations in Augusta. Reports show that four out of five car seats are improperly installed. It is strongly recommended that car seats over six years old not be used and that second hand car seats not be used. The National SAFE KIDS Campaign indicates that car seats over six years old and second hand seats may have been comprised in some way without the current owner knowing if the seat was involved in an accident or if it has become weakened by inappropriate use. Also, all original parts, instructions and labels may not be present and in good condition on second hand car seats. If a seat has a safety recall and the number is missing, the parent will not know to turn in that particular car seat.

The **Georgia State Occupant Protection Law** mandates that the following are Child Safety Laws and Regulations:

- Georgia law requires children ages 15 and under to be restrained in some manner regardless of seating position.
- Children ages four and under in all seating positions must be properly restrained in an appropriate child safety seat.
- Children ages five to eight can be restrained like adults in a safety belt alone.
- When Georgia does mandate restraint use, it requires the driver to secure both the child safety seat and the child properly.
- Safety belt law covers all occupants in front seating positions.

### **Enforcement of Georgia Occupant Protection Law**

- Driver fined maximum \$50 and one point (first offense), maximum \$100 and two points (subsequent offenses) for child restraint violations.
- Driver fined maximum \$25 for safety belt violation by occupants ages 15-17.
- Offender fined maximum \$15 for safety belt violation if 18 or older.

In Georgia, the law requires an education campaign about its law and the benefits of child safety seats. Unfortunately, there are no funds allocated to support this initiative. The National SAFE KIDS Campaign urges the Georgia government and citizens to take action by establishing an appropriate public fund to support the state's public safety education initiative and to consider creating a child safety loaner-giveaway program for families in need. The SAFE KIDS campaign also calls for establishing a child occupant protection class for violators and adding a well-crafted back seat mandate for its child passengers. Additionally, the safety campaign encourages the Georgia legislature to require that children age five to eight years old be properly restrained in a child safety seat or booster seat, whichever is appropriate. How does this sound? In conjunction with Georgia law, Raine Hopkins, SAFE KIDS of East Central Georgia coordinator, recommends putting children less than 4'9" or weighing a minimum of 40 pounds in a child safety seat or booster seat, whichever is appropriate. She also recommends that parents use their best judgement and refer to their vehicle owner manual and car seat instructions. For more information on car seat safety, you may contact Raine Hopkins at 706-721-7606.

### **Car Seat Recalls**

In the past year, there have been several manufacturer recalls on car seats. If you own one of the following models, please contact the manufacturer to return it. Evenflo Company, Inc. is offering a free safety upgrade kit to owners of certain Evenflo Triumph\* car seats because it has discovered that two components of the harness system manufactured by an Evenflo supplier may not meet performance specifications. The upgrade kit is for all Triumph\* car seats manufactured between October 20, 2001 and January 31, 2002. The car seats should have model numbers beginning with the three digits 264; the model number and date manufactured may be found on a white label on the lower backside of the car seat. Call the Evenflo Company at 800-425-1967 or register via the Internet [www.triumphcarseat.com](http://www.triumphcarseat.com).

See *Making It A Safe Ride* on page 9

# Building the Augusta-Richmond County Children and Families Agenda

The Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc. (ARCCP) corralled its 90+ partners together for its Membership Council meeting at Craig-Houghton Elementary School on Tuesday, May 27, 2003. This meeting, however, was different from previous meetings. This meeting allowed ARCCP partners and the public to voice their opinion on local issues affecting the welfare of children and families. In other words, this meeting formed the Augusta-Richmond County Children and Families Agenda for 2004.

Those in attendance heard from various partners regarding their organizations progress and new programs. Barbara Thurmond, Executive Director of Blacks Against Black Crimes, Inc. gave some steering facts on crime, social retardation and teenage pregnancy. She commented that the first step to solving a problem is recognizing and acknowledging a problem exists. The issues she presented and her words underlined the purpose of building the Augusta-Richmond County Children and Families Agenda. The message continued through out the meeting as attendees heard from Tara Johnson, executive director of Johnson Youth Organization; Hudarpus Hardnett, ARCCP Youth Council Advisory Board member; Betty English, Family and Children Services county agent with the University of Georgia Extension Service; Kim Lee, community resource specialist with the Richmond County Department of Family and Children Services.

After lunch the group reconvened to build the Augusta-Richmond County Children and Families Agenda for 2004. Under the direction of Marcell Johnson, Region 7 Community Facilitator, the process the group would follow to build the agenda was explained and the floor was opened for participants to voice their opinions on problem areas in the local community. Over twenty issues were presented and listed on a flip chart under the categories of safety, health, education and family security. The group then voted by placing stickers on one issue from each category he/she felt was significant in the well being of children and families in the local area.



Barbara Pignotti, ARCCP staff, and Amy Judson, MHDDAD regional prevention specialist, think about the issue in front of them before casting their vote.

The ARCCP will take the top votes from each category, compile them on a ballot and send them to all partners and other key persons in the community. From this final vote, the top four or five issues will be presented to the local legislatures at the Legislative Breakfast in October.

If you or your organization are interested in joining or would like to learn more about the Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, please call 706-721-1869.

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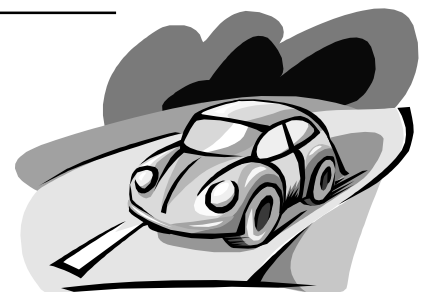
*Making It A Safe Ride* continued from page 8

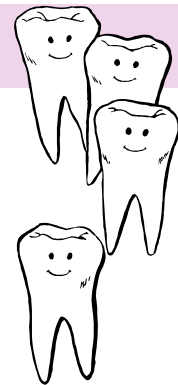
#### **Other car seat recalls:**

- As of August 13, 2003 Graco announced the recall of Snugride Infant Child Restraints
- As of June 25, 2003 Dorel Juvenile Group, Inc. announced extended recall of infant car seat carriers

#### **Child Safety Fitting Stations in the Augusta-Richmond County Area**

- Milton Ruben JEEP Car Dealer, 3518 Washington Road, Augusta, GA 706-650-6390
- Richmond County Health Department, 3496 Wrightsboro Road, Augusta, GA 706-667-4241
- University of Georgia Occupant Safety Program, 602 Greene Street, Augusta, GA 706-821-2349
- Walton Rehabilitation Hospital, 1335 Independence Drive, Augusta, GA 706-926-5846
- Medical College of Georgia Children's Medical Center offers seat inspections the first Friday of every month; call 706-721-KIDS to make an appointment.





### Taking Care of Your Baby's Teeth

Making it a habit to have healthy teeth should start as early as infancy. Yes, parents should begin taking care of their child's teeth or gums while they are babies in diapers. Good dental hygiene begins at this very early stage in life, and having healthy teeth is important to a child's overall health and well-being.

At a Healthy Start seminar presented by a member of the Augusta-Richmond County Community Partnership for Children and Families, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, young mothers were informed about how to care for a baby's teeth and that a major concern should be preventing baby bottle tooth decay. An infant's teeth can be damaged when they are fed from a bottle for long periods of time.

Many parents don't realize the harm they are creating when they put a child in bed with a bottle or when they let a child feed from a bottle for long periods of time throughout the day or night. Feeding for long stretches of time from a bottle can cause decay of baby teeth, problems with permanent teeth such as decay, crowding, coming in crooked, and gum infection. It was also explained that tooth decay is also a concern for babies who are breastfed, though the risk is not as great.

Baby bottle tooth decay is primarily created by the sugars in milk, baby formula, fruit juices, and in sugars found in breast milk. These sugars, combined with the plaque and bacteria in the baby's mouth, turn into acid which creates cavities and tooth decay. Signs of tooth decay will appear as chalky white spots around the gum line, brown stains on or behind the upper front teeth, or softening of the teeth.

#### Here are a few ideas to help protect your baby's teeth:

- Check your baby's teeth often; as soon as they appear, they are at risk for decay. The first tooth usually appears around six months of age. By the time decay can be seen, the problem has become serious. See a dentist immediately. If there is no decay seen, the American Dental Association recommends a baby's first dental exam should take place at the age of 1.
- Avoid putting your baby to bed with a bottle. This can become a harmful habit because of the amount of sugar being consumed by the baby and because drinking while lying down can cause liquid to back up into your baby's middle ear, resulting in painful ear infections.
- Do not give your baby a bottle to soothe teething pain. Offer a clean, rubber teething ring instead. Or rub the baby's gums gently with a clean finger or wet gauze.
- Clean your baby's teeth before bedtime and after every feeding.

### HIV and AIDS Cases Increase Among Women

The face of AIDS is changing in America. It is no longer a disease affecting only the homosexual community and intravenous drug users. The disease is rising among African American women and their children. Minorities, mainly African Americans and Hispanics, now comprise 57 percent of the more than 600,000 AIDS cases reported since the epidemic began in 1981. The state of Georgia ranks ninth in the nation with cases of HIV and AIDS.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), AIDS affects six times more African Americans than Whites and three times more Hispanics than Whites. The key to improving these dismal statistics is to promote prevention—teaching men, women and children how to prevent the spread of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) disease.

The first step in preventing the disease is to understand what it is. HIV-AIDS is a disease that destroys the body's ability to protect itself from getting sick by weakening the body's immune system. HIV is the name of the virus that causes AIDS. AIDS is a combination of symptoms that can cause death. One way HIV-AIDS is spread is when the blood of an infected person enters another's bloodstream, such as when drug users share needles. HIV-AIDS can also be spread through sexual intercourse with a person who has

HIV-AIDS. This includes sex between partners of either gender, whether they engage in vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse. A mother who is HIV-positive can transmit the disease to her unborn child. However, medical treatment during pregnancy can significantly diminish this risk. There is also a small percentage of people who are being infected with HIV from blood products.

Early protection and prevention of HIV increases the quality of life. Persons are encouraged to get tested, so they can be treated if infected and so that they will not spread the virus to others. Engaging in safe-sex by using condoms or practicing abstinence is at the top of the list for preventing HIV-AIDS. Take the quiz below to determine how much you know about HIV-AIDS. If you get more than one answer wrong, contact your local health department or other appropriate agency to obtain informational material so that you will become better informed.

**HIV-AIDS Quiz (circle the correct answer)**

1. **True or False** AIDS is a disease without a cure spread mainly by unprotected sex or sharing needles with someone who has HIV.
2. If you were infected with HIV, you might show symptoms...
  - A. within a few weeks
  - B. within a year
  - C. in 10 or more year
  - D. any of the above
3. **True or False** New HIV-AIDS drug treatments have lowered the number of AIDS-related deaths in the United States.
4. **True or False** If you are HIV positive and pregnant, there are medicines you can take that can greatly decrease the chances of your baby having HIV.
5. **HIV is not present in...**
  - A. semen and vaginal secretions
  - B. sweat
  - C. blood
  - D. breast milk
6. **True or False** Only drug users and gay men need to worry about becoming infected with HIV.
7. **You can become infected with HIV by...**
  - A. sharing utensils with or drinking from the same cup as someone with HIV
  - B. mosquito bites
  - C. hugging someone with HIV
  - D. none of the above
8. **True or False** Using protection such as a latex barrier when performing sex (vaginal, oral or anal) lowers the risk of HIV transmission.
9. **True or False** Women will not get HIV if they use birth control pills and/or a diaphragm.
10. **How many people worldwide are newly infected with HIV each day**
  - A. less than 500
  - B. 1,000
  - C. more than 5,000
  - D. more than 15,000

Answers: 1=T; 2=D; 3=T; 4=T; 5=B; 6=F; 7=D; 8=T; 9=F; 10=D





353 Telfair Street, Augusta, Georgia 30901

## Mark Your Calendars

**November 20**  
Adopt-a-Smoker Campaign  
in recognition of Great American  
Smoke Out Day. For more information  
contact Amy Judson 706-667-4948.

**November 28, 29**  
Thanksgiving Holiday  
Offices closed

**December 4, 11:00 AM-2:00 PM**  
Parent Support Group Meeting  
on Child Support Recovery and Infant  
Care. Held at the Richmond County  
Health Department -Laney Walker. For  
more information contact Betty Kemp  
at 706-721-7417.

**December 9, 12:00 PM-2:00 PM**  
Annual Meeting  
Held at the Sheraton Hotel. For more  
information contact Sharon Davis at  
706-721-4900.

**December , 12:00 PM-2:00 PM**  
Lucy C. Laney 12th Annual Health  
Fair  
Held in the Lucy C. Laney High School  
Gym. For more information contact  
Dorothy Johnson at 706-823-6900.

**December 25, 26**  
Christmas  
Offices Closed

**Perinatal Focus Group Meeting**  
TBA  
For more information contact Alicia  
Sanchez at 706-721-4907.

Visit us at [www.ARCCP.net](http://www.ARCCP.net) for a  
complete listing of upcoming events  
and meetings!



## Special Requests from the ARCCP....

### VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Volunteers and interns are always welcome at the ARCCP. We need help in various areas such as data entry, event coordinating, and other administrative tasks. For more information, call us at 706-721-1040.

### ADOPT A FAMILY

Would you like to adopt a family? There are many families in Richmond County that are in need of food, clothing, blankets and other essential items. By providing a family with items they need, you are helping them get through a difficult time in their lives. For more information, please contact Katrina Aaron at 706-721-4884.

Questions, comments or submissions\* should be directed to:  
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Tel. (706) 721-1869 Fax. (706) 721-1048 Email. [cglover@arccp.org](mailto:cglover@arccp.org)  
\*For the next issue, please submit articles and events by December 5, 2003.

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