ECCPASA’s Graduates of the Strengthening Families Program Find Success

The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse has been running the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) for the past 20 years. The evidence-based program aims to work with high-risk families to strengthen parental/child relationships.

Over the years, the Strengthening Families Program has seen hundreds of graduates. Our graduates have demonstrated varying degrees of success, however, we would like to share the stories of two of our recent graduates who have worked hard to get to great places in their lives.

Latonia Burdett completed SFP in 2015 with her two youngest daughters. Although she has officially graduated from the program, Latonia still attends many of the SFP booster sessions and events the program offers; including the weekly women’s group, the semi-annual clothing drive, and Family Fun Day. She says that she feels “at home” when attending the SFP and it “gives her and the kids something positive to do.” Latonia says she learned a lot from the program, including how to be a better parent and a better listener. She says that SFP provides great lessons and resources, but she states, to truly be a successful graduate, “You’ve got to want better for yourself.”

Latonia credits her new found success as a sauté cook and fryer at the Buffalo Yacht Club to the Strengthening Families Program and the support of its two facilitators, Mary Carroll and Karen Owens. Mary and Karen helped Latonia get started in the culinary program at St. Mary’s School for the Deaf, which she attended for six months. She now has a full-time position at the Buffalo Yacht Club, which she obtained through an internship. Latonia says she has learned to cook all types of different foods, but her favorites are seafood dishes including clams, lobster, and shrimp.

Shirley Jett is another successful SFP graduate. Shirley completed the program in December of 2014 with her children. She too, continues to attend the SFP booster sessions and events, although these days she’s a bit busier. Shirley recently completed her Master’s Degree at Medaille College, where she studied criminal justice. She is currently in the process of interviewing for a position with the FBI in their Criminal Intelligence Analysis unit. Shirley believes that her time in SFP “definitely helped bring her family together.”

We are so very proud of Latonia and Shirley, and all of our SFP graduates!
Letter from the Executive Director
Robin Mann

As 2016 comes to an end, it’s a time to reflect on the past events of this year, and this edition of AwareNews does just that! It features the accomplishments of two of our many Strengthening Families graduates, reviews our educational, yet fun-filled summer camp, and highlights the other community-based activities in which ECCPASA participated.

We have also expanded our school-based programming this school year. ECCPASA is in several new schools, we have added additional classes in our current schools, and have had new opportunities to provide various types of prevention programming throughout the community.

In addition to all of that, ECCPASA has been working in conjunction with the Mental Health Association of Erie County (MHA) on the Just Tell One campaign. Just Tell One is funded by New York State as part of the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP). Its purpose is to promote mental, emotional and behavioral health throughout the eight counties of Western New York. Help spread the word and encourage individuals to visit JustTellOne.org for information and resources in their community.

ECCPASA wishes you all a healthy and happy holiday season and we look forward to seeing you in 2017!

Robin

Just Tell One campaign: A campaign to decrease stigma and encourage young people to seek help for addiction and mental illness

Resources and Contacts:

Adult Children of Alcoholics - c/o ECCPASA 716.831.2298
Al-Anon & Alateen - 716.856.2520 www.aiswny.org
Alcoholics Anonymous - 716.853.0388 www.aa.org
Crisis Services - 716.834.3131 www.crisisservices.org Kids Helpline - 716.834.1144
Erie County Sheriff’s Office Underage Drinking Hotline - 1.800.851.1932
Gamblers Anonymous & Gam-Anon - 716.879.0555 www.gamblersanonymous.org
Nar-Anon - 716.875.0548 www.nar-anon.org
Narcotics Anonymous - 716.878.2316 www.na.org
National Association for Children of Alcoholics - www.nacoa.org
Save Our Selves - Non-religious support for twelve-step recovery www.cfiwest.org/sos/index.htm
Western New York 211 Health and Human Services - 211 www.211wny.org
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COMING SOON

Winter 2017 Community Education Calendar coming soon!

Keep an eye out for trainings coming in early 2017. Dates to be determined.

Registration will begin at 8:30 am. Training will begin promptly at 9:00 am.
Trainings held at the Harlem Road Community Center
4255 Harlem Rd. ~ Amherst ~ NY ~ 14226
CASAC/CPP/CPS credits upon approval

Understanding Our Refugee Population

By: Staff from Jewish Family Services

Staff from Jewish Family Services’ resettlement and survivors of torture programs will provide an overview of the refugee population in the Buffalo area. This training will be a cultural competence training of sorts. It will help those who work with any refugee individual or family be more understanding and effective when working with, and providing services to the refugee population.

Domestic Violence: Understand the Cycle

Join us for an intriguing training about domestic violence. Presenters will discuss domestic violence causes, and its effects on both the victim and the family unit. One presenter will speak on behalf of the victim, while the other will discuss his 30 years of experience working with male perpetrators. Each do the work that they do with the hope of ending the cycle of domestic violence.

Celebrating Red Ribbon Week at Dodge Elementary

For the past three years ECCPASA’s Prevention Educators have visited Dodge Elementary School in Williamsville to celebrate Red Ribbon Week. This year, educators, Megan Dumpleton, Lauren Duncan, Mark Fenz, Teresa Harris, and Ashley Perry, visited the classrooms to discuss the importance of making healthy choices. They also implemented lessons from our social skills programs with the students.

Prevention Educators: Megan Dumpleton, Ashely Perry, Lauren Duncan, and Teresa Harris (Mark Fenz not pictured).
This summer, ECCPASA went “Around the World” with our Tomorrow’s Leaders Camp (TLC). The two-week camp “visited” a different continent each day. While visiting each continent, the Campers and staff participated in activities corresponding with the culture, climate, and customs of the day’s location. Campers also showed off their leadership skills by researching and sharing interesting facts about each continent on the day the continent was celebrated.

After an introductory day to the camp and the different continents around the world, we jumped right into North America. The Campers participated in a scavenger hunt that ended with gold mining, an activity that brought many people out west during America’s Gold Rush. Campers also learned the history of, and made their own dream catchers, a tradition of many Native American cultures. Lastly, the Campers acted as pioneer people and made their own butter, which they enjoyed for snack with crackers.

On Wednesday, we celebrated Antarctica by visiting the Buffalo Zoo. The Campers spent the day exploring the new Arctic Edge exhibit, “meeting” the polar bears, and searching to identify as many animals native to Antarctica as they could find. Back at camp, we continued the Arctic tradition, and served up ice cream for snack.

The following day, we visited Asia and embraced the many Asian cultures. Campers started their morning learning martial arts from the fantastic volunteers of Master Khechen’s Martial Arts Academy. Next, the campers participated in several stations where they continued to learn about Asian traditions including learning to make origami, making their own non-edible fortune cookies, writing their name in Chinese, and learning to use chopsticks for the first time. The Campers ended their day with snack, a Nutella and banana “sushi roll.”

On Friday, TLC went to Europe. Campers embraced their inner Shakespeare and participated in theater games. They also learned about the art of the Renaissance, more specifically, stained glass, which was an extremely popular painting method during that time period. Campers had the opportunity to paint their own piece of stained glass. Lastly, keeping with the Renaissance theme, the Campers took part in Medieval game stations where they participated in activities including a make-shift javelin throw; a traditional game of throwing (foam) hammers; ring toss; and a Medieval relay race, during which Campers had to dress up in their suits of armor and ride their inflatable horse around the relay course.

After taking time off to celebrate Independence Day, TLC was back at it, visiting Africa. While in Africa, Campers learned the importance of trade to the African people. They also participated in traditional African games such as Mancala and Dara. They learned how to make their own kazoo, and also took part in an African drumming circle.

On Wednesday, TLC went to the beach in honor of Australia. We took a bus to Beaver Island, where the Campers swam in the lake, played in the sand, and enjoyed a hot dog lunch.

Lastly, we “visited” South America on Thursday. Campers participated in a game where they learned about animals of the rainforest. They also learned a bit of Spanish, South America’s native language, with a game of Spanish BINGO.

On our last day of camp, we wrapped up everything that was learned about each continent over the two weeks. We ended with a buffet lunch that featured different foods from around the world, including BBQ pulled chicken to celebrate North America’s southern culture; queso, a native treat to South America; teriyaki meatballs, which are enjoyed in parts of Asia; pasta and sauce, an Italian favorite; chocolate crackles, a native Australian dessert; an African Black-Eyed Pea salad; and snow cones in honor of Antarctica’s cold climate.

We truly had an exceptional group of campers this year and can’t thank them enough for being the wonderful kids that they all are! We also are so thankful for each of our presenters who came in and shared their time with us and for all the businesses who provided donations to our camp. We want to thank the Richard W. Rupp foundation and Tops Friendly Markets for their generous donations. We also want to thank St. Mary’s School for the Deaf for once again generously donating their space to our camp.

We are already looking forward to TLC 2017!
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Welcoming New Faces to ECCPASA

Lauren Duncan – Lauren Duncan joined the ECCPASA team in early fall. She will be splitting her time at the agency, working as both a Prevention Educator, providing school-based and community programming, and Counselor for the Student Assistance Prevention Counseling team. Lauren received her bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University at Buffalo and is hoping to go back for her master’s degree in school counseling. Lauren has past experience working in both prevention and treatment. She was previously a Prevention Specialist at Native American Community Services and prior to that, a Resident Counselor for Transitional Services. She also has teaching experience in the Buffalo Public schools and worked as a Research Assistant at UB’s Alcohol Research Laboratory. Lauren is passionate about making a difference in the lives of others and is excited to do that here at ECCPASA.

Ashley Perry – Ashley attended Medaille College where she obtained both her undergraduate degree in Psychology and her graduate degree in Elementary Education. After teaching in multiple districts for the past three years, Ashley has decided to step outside of teaching and become a Community Educator at ECCPASA. She chose to pursue this position because she feels she can make a difference in children’s social, emotional, and mental health. Ashley is very excited to have started programming in our various schools around Erie County. She is looking forward to using ECCPASA’s Social Skills Programs and working with children to teach them about prevention and resiliency skills as well as the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.

ECCPASA is Hiring, Join our Team!

We are hiring for the following positions.

**Director of Data Management**  
**Position Summary:** The Director of Data Management is responsible for the oversight of all program data including system management, collection, reporting and analysis. This person assists in the development of the annual ECCPASA OASAS workplan and assures compliance with all governmental and Agency regulations and policies related to data collection and management. The Director of Data Management directly reports to the ECCPASA Executive Director.

**Community Educator**  
**Position Summary:** Plans and implements alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) education and training programs regarding ATOD use, abuse, prevention, intervention, as well as other health and wellness programs, including women’s health. The educator will focus on substance abuse prevention issues and will plan and coordinate presentations and trainings, facilitate evidence-based programs in communities and schools throughout Erie County.

**Community Educator/Program Facilitator**  
**Position Summary:** Implements an evidence-based program, providing a one-on-one intervention with women of childbearing age to reduce the amount of alcohol-exposed pregnancies in Erie County. Topics presented in the program include contraceptive use, alcohol consumption, and comprehensive reproductive health. This position also entails spending time in the community doing presentations, attending health fairs, and recruiting program participants at various locations throughout the community. Strong communication skills and the ability to work independently is essential. This is a grant funded program.

Please send resume and cover letter to jobs@eccpasa.org.  
NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE
ECCPASA Staff Out and About

ECCPASA staff was very busy this summer! Staff have held and attended several events throughout the community:

Many of our staff kicked off the summer by attending Px21’s Prevention Staff Retreat at Chestnut Ridge Park, where they learned about working with the media to spread prevention messages. Staff were also able to enjoy some fun and relaxing outdoor activities.

Parent Program’s Coordinator, Sally Yageric, attended an Opiate Task Force Resource Fair at St. Gregory the Great in Amherst, NY. Sally also tabled at the well-attended Family Health Fair, that is put on annually by New York State Senator Michael Ranzenhofer.

Several ECCPASA staff assisted with the Jolly Boys of Williamsville’s annual golf tournament in early August, which happens to be a fundraiser for many local charities and non-profits, including ECCPASA!

Lancaster Depew Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition hosted a Town Hall Meeting/Family Night, also in early August, that focused on underage drinking prevention. Several of ECCPASA’s Community Educators assisted with the event, where there were many family-fun activities, educational resources for parents, and even an outdoor movie showing of Kung Fu Panda 3.

Our Strengthening Families Program staff and Project CHOICES program staff tabled at the River Side Black Rock Community Days in mid-August.

The Strengthen Families Program also held their annual Family Fun Day at St. Mary’s School for the Deaf in mid-August. Families were able to participate in many fun activities such as carnival games, sack races, a drum circle, and even received a visit from Elroy the Elk.
Under contract with the Erie County Department of Mental Health. Funded by the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, school districts and municipalities throughout Erie County, individuals, corporations and community service organizations. Member agency of the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County.