

Parent pulse

Parents **U**niting **L**ong-term for **S**cholar **E**xcellence

Upcoming

Please mark your calendar:

Training

CLASS 1- PARENTS

Parents Spring Break

No Parent Meeting in March

CLASS 1-SCHOLAR/PARENT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Saturday, April 22, 2006

CLASS 2- PARENTS

Parents Spring Break

No Parent Meeting in March

CLASS 2- PARENTS

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Donnelly College (Chapel)

Thursday, April 6, 2006

Penn Valley Community College
(Room CC-503)

Upcoming Scholar Activities and Events

Monday, April 3, 2006

After School Enrichment Academy
Cancelled

Parent/Scholar Conference

Destination: College

Saturday, May 20, 2006

Scholar Talent Show

Saturday, April 29, 2006

Class 1-Scholar/Parent Community Service Project

Saturday, April 22, 2006

Determined Mom and Scholar Persevere after Fire Destroys Home

October 12th, 2005 is a day Gloria Graham and her godson Juan Sanchez will never forget. It is the day fire ravaged their home in Kansas City, Kansas, and they lost nearly everything.

"We're not sure what started it," said Gloria. "The firemen think it may have been a candle. Whatever it was, we had lots of damage. Everything, except for two rooms, was destroyed. Juan lost all of his belongings, including his books and materials from Kauffman Scholars. I was really worried about how it would affect his progress in the program."

Gloria and Juan turned to family and friends for help. The Salvation Army provided shelter and food for about three days; then, the two of them went to stay with Gloria's son in Mission, Kansas.

While Gloria was grateful for the lodging, she was concerned that the temporary move from KCK might endanger Juan's participation in the Scholars program. She borrowed her son's Suburban to take Juan to school every day, so his enrollment at F.L. Schlagle wouldn't be terminated. And she kept everyone at Kauffman Scholars informed about the situation.

"Everyone at Scholars was really concerned," Gloria said. "The other parents in the program were very caring too, and asked if there was anything they could do to help. It made me feel good, like the Scholars program is really a big family."

Gloria finds that she and Juan communicate better with each other since they've been



involved in Kauffman Scholars activities. "We have better conversations since we've been going to these meetings," she observed. "I think that when the kids come home, parents should talk with them about what took place at the Scholars meeting, and tell them about what happened at the parents meeting. It makes for healthier communication all the way around."

Juan has shared with Gloria how he feels about his participation in the Scholars program so far, through thoughts he put down on paper. "I want to be in the program because it will help me be what I want to be in life – it will help me be successful," wrote Juan. "I am looking forward to going to college and learning about being an architect...the Kauffman Scholars program is a once-in-a-lifetime deal."



Preparing for college is a journey of self-discovery, and one of the important paths along that journey involves the exploration of individual creativity. On April 29, 2006, at Argentine High School, Kauffman Scholars will present our first talent show, celebrating the creative self-expression of our Scholars.

We know the importance of achievement in math, science, and language arts in realizing the goal of becoming a college graduate, but we also know that students expand their cognitive abilities through flexing the muscles of their imagination. The study of the arts informs understanding of other cultures, personal history, and the languages of both verbal and non-verbal symbols.

Parents can provide important voices of encouragement as their child explores his or her artistic interests. Creativity is often engaged through activities that are fun and confidence-building, yet it is also a resource that enhances intellectual pursuits. Participation in dramatic plays or poetry presentations builds language skills; learning musical chords may help trigger a new receptivity to the language of complex math. It has been documented that student participation in creative endeavors can provide valuable intellectual and personal growth, resulting in higher college test scores. A study by the College Board, Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers, reported, "Because the arts

are closely associated with important ideas and events in history, students who have a good background in the arts are likely to have a richer source of information and insight to draw upon, compared to those who do not study the arts."

Exploring artistic expression builds student confidence by offering the opportunity to put individual talent to work in imaginative and intellectually engaging ways. Working in a play, a dance performance, a band, or an arts group develops team-building skills while it also builds confidence and self-esteem. Support and appreciation from parents and family enhance those positive outcomes.

What we can only imagine today may be the promise of tomorrow. Historian Eugene Ferguson wrote, "Pyramids, cathedrals, and rockets exist not because of geometry, theories of structures or thermodynamics, but because they were first a picture – literally a vision – in the minds of those who built them."

Regards,

R. Stephen Green
 R. Stephen Green, Ed.D
 President & CEO



Pam Harris
 Parent Engagement
 Specialist

Parent Engagement Specialist: *Thought for the Month*

Teens and Power Struggles

Recently I was researching information about teens and came across this article. It caught my attention and I just had to share it with you. It was entitled "Teens and Power Struggles" written by Denise Witmer of the Parenting the Adolescents Organization. I hope as you read the article you will enjoy it as much as I did. This will be a two-part series....so enjoy.

Understand Them (Part-1)

Power struggles tend to come as a shock to a parent who is raising a teenager. With this shock comes a lot of emotion. You will get angry, and your teenager will get angry. Then you will feel guilty and worried. You will wonder where your sweet child went - maybe even where you went wrong. So let me put your mind at ease. This is normal behavior. These are normal feelings. When someone is angry with you, it is normal to be angry back with him or her. It does not matter if you understand adolescent development inside and out, or if you use every parenting skill given to you. You will have angry and hurt feelings.

The trick is to learn what positive things to do in power struggle situations while you're feeling angry and hurt.

There are many reasons that you will begin to see an increase in power struggles when your child becomes a teenager.

Here are the main three:

- 1. Hormones is the number one reason you will see an increase in power struggles with your teenager.** It is as simple—or as complicated—as that. Generally this starts as much as two years earlier in girls than in boys. Puberty is starting it's tap dance on your child, and it will not end for quite a long time. This means that he may not even realize why he is arguing about an issue this week that didn't bother him last week. Mainly because along with his changing voice comes some moodiness. Consequently, there will be times that you will need to kiss the issue up to heaven and not bother doing battle.

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2. **Critical thinking skills begin to develop during puberty**, and no one is quite sure when these skills stop developing. Children entering the teen life stage are now able to think in gray areas. No longer is everything black and white. Combine this with the fact that they still want to hang on to childhood fantasies, and you will begin to understand just how many shades of gray there are in the

color spectrum. Power struggles are going to start because you may never be on the same shade of gray as your teenager.

3. **Teens begin to see parents as fallible human beings. (*OUCH*)** Not only can they see why things are right and wrong, they've learned to project it onto their parents. They will also let parents know what they feel in matters of

opinion. Since you are the stable figure in your teen's life, you are his first target and the one that will be aimed at the most as he practices and develops his own ideas. Power struggles will arise as your teenager pokes and prods at your beliefs in politics, religion, etc.

So, what do you do?

(Continued in the June/July issue)

How Can Parents Support Education at Home?

There are many ways parents can demonstrate to their adolescent children that they are interested in academic success and that they are available to offer support and protection when there are problems.

Here are some suggestions:

- **Talk with your child about what happens at school every day.**

Ask often if there are messages from the school.

- **Spend some relaxed time with your children.**

Share a meal or a snack. Tell them often what you like about them.

- **Listen to them and share their worries.** Support what you believe to be good about the school and offer your help to change any school practices that you believe could be harmful to your child.

- **Avoid scoldings and arguments when your teenagers bring bad news home.**

Listen to their reasons and offer your help to improve the situation.

It helps if your children know you believe they will be successful.

- **Value their education by encouraging homework and reading.**

Help your children choose a good time and place to do their assignments and special projects. Provide the necessary materials and give them your unconditional support.

This article was prepared by ACCESS ERIC, with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

What can you do to prepare your Scholar academically for college?

Make Sure that All Courses Meet High Standards

It is vital that your child not only enrolls in the courses recommended for college-bound students, but also that the material taught in those courses reflect high academic standards and high expectations for what students should know and be able to do. Research indicates that high expectations and high standards improve achievement and positively influence student learning.

Efforts are under way in states and communities across the country to answer the question: "What is it that our children ought to know and be able to do . . . to participate fully in today's and tomorrow's economy?" Many states and local communities have been developing or revising their standards (sometimes called "curriculum frameworks") in core subject areas such as math, science, English, history, geography, foreign languages, civics, and the arts.

Many school districts are taking the initiative in setting higher standards. In many communities, parents, teachers, administrators, business leaders, clergy, college representatives, curriculum experts, and interested citizens are working together to develop or revise standards. In creating their own standards, many states and communities are drawing on model standards developed by national professional associations.

In order to make sure that the curriculum in your child's school meets high academic standards, call the school to find out if state or local standards are being developed. Ask how you can get involved in the standard-setting process. Join with other parents, teachers, and your child's principal and compare your school's standards against the best schools and the best state standards.

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