

Family Support NEWS BRIEF

A publication of



CENTER FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES



Mental Health and the Holidays

We've entered the holiday season, but not everyone is celebrating. The holidays can be a tough time for a lot of individuals, especially those who already struggle with mental illness. Most experts agree that the best way to support those who may struggle during the holidays is to plan ahead.¹ Identify who may be struggling during the holiday season, think about what might be done to help them, and then talk with that person.

Identify people in your life who may have a mental illness, have experienced trauma that may be triggered or may experience stress

during the holidays.² Think of those that are alone, had a recent loss, or are just generally overwhelmed. Don't forget about yourself. When planning ahead, also consider the impact of the holidays on you.

Once you've identified those individuals in your life that may have difficulties during the holidays, start thinking of ways you might help them during this time.³ Ask them for their input. Should you invite them to your holiday gathering or facilitate their participation in a holiday event, offer to help them with tasks that might be difficult or overwhelming, make changes to your holiday traditions or gathering

to be more sensitive to their needs, talk with them about their feelings, or create special traditions for them? There is not one right answer because everyone's circumstances are different.

Once you've decided what you think might help, talk with others who are involved who might be affected to make sure your plans won't cause hardship for someone else. For example, adding another person to your holiday gathering may put a burden on those who are making the food; is there enough space for additional people at the event. Will changing a tradition cause stress to someone else?

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Again, don't forget about the ways you may be affected. Consider how all the issues that might make the holidays harder for others may make them harder for you. How might helping others put extra stress on you? This is a good time to consider setting boundaries, limiting social media use and seeking the help you may need.⁴

Once you have determined what you might do, the next step is talking with the person or persons you are trying to help. Offer support and be kind. Sometimes saying less can be more. Listening is powerful. Just being in the room together can demonstrate support. Let them know about any changes you might be planning. Ask for their input, if appropriate, but try not to add stress by requiring a decision.

There is no perfect one-size fits all solution. However, by consulting some trusted sources such as those listed at the end of this article, trying to consider all those involved, and approaching the situation with empathy, there is a good chance you can help to make the holiday season more positive for everyone involved.

Sources

1 Tips for coping with holiday stress. (n.d.). Mayo Clinic. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>

2 Coping_with_the_Holidays_Page_Order.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2022, from http://namimd.org/uploaded_files/863/Coping_with_the_Holidays_Page_Order.pdf

3 Holiday Depression: Statistics & How to Deal. (2012, March 29). Healthline. <https://www.healthline.com/health/depression/holidays>

4 Dealing With Holiday Depression and Stress. (2021, November 19). Cleveland Clinic. <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/holiday-depression-and-stress/>

Introducing the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) Registration Database

You may have noticed a new way to register for our events! We have begun to transition registration for some of our events to the CSIU Registration Database. There are benefits for you using this system, including having a record of all events you have attended in one place and the ability to access public events offered by CSIU. Center for Schools and Communities is a division of CSIU.

To use this database, you must first create a user profile. To make registration for future events more efficient, we encourage you to set up an account now. To do so, follow the directions below.

Step 1 Navigate to the [CSIU Registration System](#)

Step 2 Set up an account by completing the profile information.


- Please note, the system will ask you to complete information related to dietary needs and ADA accommodations in your profile. You will be able to edit these for each event that you complete registration.
- The system will also ask for a PPID number. If you do not have one, you can leave this field blank.
- Be sure to make note of your username and password as you will need it to sign in to register for future events.

When you receive an invitation to register for an event, you will follow the link and be asked to sign in.

Once signed in, your information will pre-populate in the event registration form.

After registering for the event, you will receive a confirmation email with the name of the event in the subject.

If you have any questions about this process, please [email Rijelle Kraft](#).



FAMILY SUPPORT WEBINAR
Self-Care Strategies
Wednesday, Jan. 11
10 to 11:15 a.m. (EST)



PENNSYLVANIA
Parents as Teachers®

Welcome to our monthly article to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Pennsylvania PAT. This month's article examines outcomes related to postpartum depression screening, receipt of evidence-based services and reductions in depressive symptoms among clients of home visiting programs.

Addressing Maternal Depression in Home Visiting: Findings from the Home Visiting Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network

Results revealed that home visiting programs can play an important role in closing gaps in maternal depression identification, referrals, service access, and symptom alleviation.

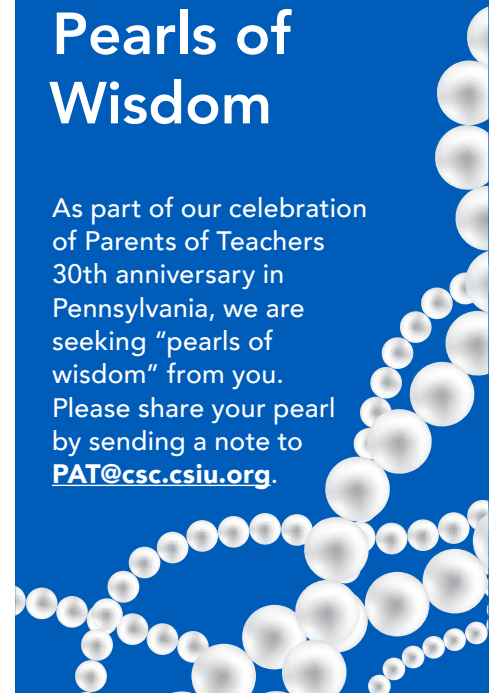
Source: PLOS ONE, April 2020

[Read Addressing Maternal Depression In Home Visiting research article](#)

Pearls of Wisdom

As part of our celebration of Parents of Teachers 30th anniversary in Pennsylvania, we are seeking "pearls of wisdom" from you.

Please share your pearl by sending a note to PAT@csc.csiu.org.



Parents as Teachers Online Courses

Foundational and Model Implementation

For new parent educators and new supervisors of affiliate programs.

Monday, Jan. 23 – Friday, Feb. 3, 2023

Monday, Feb. 6 – Friday, Feb. 17, 2023

Foundational 2: 3 Years Through Kindergarten

Monday, Jan. 9 – Friday, Jan. 13, 2023

Monday, Feb. 21 – Friday, Feb. 24, 2023

Register for courses at the National Parents as Teachers' [training website](#).

Questions regarding registration for PAT trainings?

Contact [Jennifer Esposito](#).

Be Strong Parent Cafés

Be Strong Parent Cafés are a unique and exciting way to engage family members in conversations about the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors.

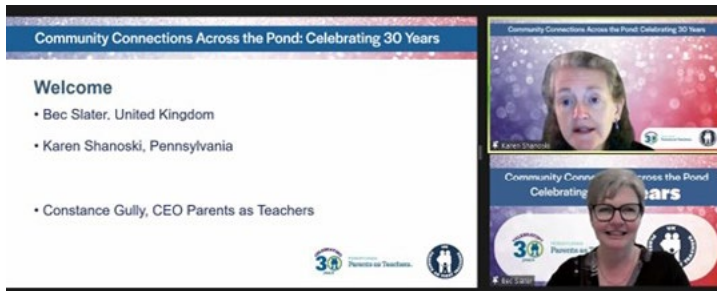
To deliver cafés in your community, you must attend certification training. If your organization would like to begin holding Be Strong Parent Cafés, please email [Rijelle Kraft](#) for more information.

If your team completed certification in the past and is not currently delivering cafés but would like to begin again, please contact Rijelle to determine if additional training would be helpful.

Place-based Parent Café Training Institutes will be held in spring 2023 – look for an announcement in the new year!



Community Connections Across the Pond: Celebrating 30 Years in Pennsylvania and the United Kingdom

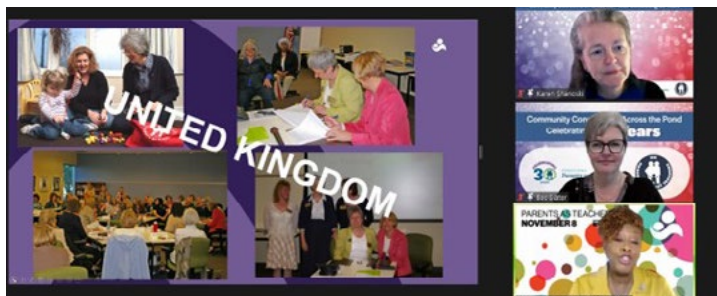


Parents as First Teachers (PAFT) and Parents as Teachers (PAT) gathered virtually on Nov. 8, 2022, to celebrate our 30th anniversaries. This event was an extension of the previous celebrations and events held throughout the year. Our primary focus was providing an opportunity to learn about each other through information sharing, networking and having fun.

More than 80 people logged on from individual devices and gathered spaces. Constance Gully, president/CEO of PAT national, provided the welcome. Janice Saunders shared the origins of PAFT in the United Kingdom, founded by Pam Holtom, who also participated in the event. Karen Shanoski, Family Support and Community Engagement Director of Center for Schools and Communities, outlined the introduction of PAT in Pennsylvania.

Managers from the Monmouthshire and Caerphilly programs in Wales described their communities and families served. Participants enjoyed two opportunities to talk with one another "across the pond".

The event ended with a "One Word" closing that created a word cloud filled with enthusiastic responses to the gathering.



Family Support Team

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities provides training and technical assistance to Parents as Teachers providers, Children's Trust Fund grantees, and the Strengthening Families Leadership Team.

Karen Shanoski

Family Support and Community Engagement Director
(717) 763-1661, ext. 139

Rijelle Kraft

Family Support Managing Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 221

Jennifer Esposito

Family Support Data Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 161

Julia Mallory

Family Support Project Specialist
(717) 763-1661, ext. 169

Alexia Brown

Family Support Technical Assistance Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 146

Christine Felicetti

Family Support Coordinator
717-763-1661, ext. 104

Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers at
Center for Schools and Communities

Children's Trust Fund

Strengthening Families

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities

275 Grandview Avenue
Suite 200, Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 763-1661

centerforschoolsandcommunities.org

Safe Kids Corner

Holidays

It's the holiday season again, a time when we enjoy festive meals with family and friends, deck our halls with colorful decorations and listen to squeals of delight as our children open their brightly wrapped presents. To help ensure your kids have fun and stay safe this holiday, here are a few tips to remember.

Hard Facts about Holiday Safety

- In 2012, 3,270 children ages 19 and under were seen in emergency rooms for injuries caused by nonelectric holiday decorations, like broken ornaments.
- In 2012, an estimated 192,000 children were treated in an emergency room for a toy-related injury.
- That same year, an estimated 136,314 children ages 19 [SS1] and under were injured due to a fire or burn.

Top Tips about Holiday Safety

1. Make sure your tree has plenty of water by checking it regularly. Natural trees look beautiful and smell great, but if they're not watered regularly, needles can dry out and pose a potential fire hazard.
2. Keep lit holiday candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn, and don't forget to blow them out when you leave the room or before you go to sleep.
3. Consider your child's age when purchasing a toy or game this holiday season. It's worth a second to read the instructions to make sure the gift is just right.
4. Keep a special eye on small pieces, including button batteries, that may be included in electronic toys. While these kinds of games are great for older kids, they can pose a potential danger for younger, curious siblings.
5. Prevent burns from hot holiday food or liquid spills. Simply use the back burner of your stove and turn pot handles away from the edge.
6. Move the ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks toward the top of the tree. That makes room at the bottom for the ones that are safer for young kids.



Source: [Safe Kids Worldwide](http://SafeKidsWorldwide.org)