

SRPLN FCS State Report, August 2009

Reporting Institution:

LSU AgCenter, School of Human Ecology, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

Program Highlights of Current Year:

- **Character Critters** continues to be a popular early childhood character education program for early childhood educators and parents to use with their four and five year old children. The program is designed as a story and activity approach to teaching character education to young children and has a parent involvement component. There are educational resource kits for educators and a storybook for parents. This program is being featured and promoted in the new online store for the LSU AgCenter found at <https://store.lsuagcenter.com/c-2-publications-for-sale.aspx>. Additional free *Character Critters* resources can be found at: http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/family_home/family/character_education/.
- The **Parents Preparing for Success Program (PPSP)** provided classes on parenting and financial management to 628 new or expectant mothers referred by DSS, and one third of the participants completed the six-week program. We found significant changes in knowledge of child development as well as financial management. Participant comments indicate that many mothers are learning how to be more attentive and responsive to their children's needs and are implementing some of the strategies shared in class to spend and save more carefully.
- **Saving and Investing for Life (SAIL)** workplace financial education curriculum, funded by the Financial Industries Regulatory Authority, has been piloted with over 500 educators and child care providers. Preliminary long-term program impacts suggest significant increases in net worth, investments, and recommended financial practices. The program is being adapted for expansion to a wide range of audiences and will be available for distribution in November 2009.
- **Charting Your Course to Home Ownership** a comprehensive, 12-hour curriculum addressing post-Katrina home ownership issues has been completed and pilot tested. Follow-up evaluation suggests that 21% of participants have purchased a home. Fifty-seven percent decided to postpone purchase, most often citing that they are working to improve their credit history. Curriculum fact sheets/worksheets are available at www.lsuagcenter.com and <http://eden.lsu.edu/> (EDEN) and <http://mittnet.extension.org> (Mittnet). Comprehensive curriculum CDs will soon be available through the LSU AgCenter on-line store <https://store.lsuagcenter.com>. The curriculum is being translated into Spanish. A dynamic coalition, **Partners for Louisiana Home Ownership Education**, has been organized to support the availability of quality home ownership education throughout Louisiana. CSREES Special Needs Project funding supported project development.

Personnel Update:

State Specialists:

Total State Faculty= 16
Total FTE = 14.8
Child & Family Development = 4.1
Nutrition & Health = 7.6
Family Resource Management = 1.6
Administration = 1.5

FCS Parish Agents:

64 parishes
Full-time, state, fed, local, grant = 49
Total FTE = 47.45
Nutrition agents (EFNEP, FNP, general) = 21.5
Family and Child Development agents = 15.25
Family Resource Management agents = 10

New or Unique Collaborations or Funding Sources:

- ***The Little Bookshelf Program*** has expanded outreach from two parishes to 12 parishes through funding from the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund (\$77,000) and the Junior League of Baton Rouge (\$9,000). During FY 2010, in partnership with local medical staff at parish public health units and a charity pediatric clinic, over 1000 poor families with newborns will receive a small children's bookshelf and 12 children's books (once a month) during the first year of their child's life to encourage parents to read to their babies daily. In the Baton Rouge area, Junior League members will also volunteer their time to help implement the program.
- ***The Louisiana Promise Neighborhood Collaborative.*** Extension faculty on the state and parish levels have worked for the past year to form a collaborative referred to as the Louisiana Promise Neighborhood Collaborative. The LSU AgCenter, along with 17 state and parish civic groups, agencies, faith-based organizations, and other interested and invested parties are working strategically to replicate the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) model in Louisiana. The HCZ model follows an ecological approach to opportunities and resources for families. The LSU AgCenter is contributing its expertise in parenting training for the "cradle to college" portion of the HCZ "pipeline." A proposal for a planning grant targeting the Central City neighborhood in New Orleans is in the development stage. With Central City as the pilot project due to its demographics, assets, and strengths of organizations growing in the communities, this neighborhood is virtually "shovel ready" to implement the HCZ model within the next year. It is also planned that neighborhoods across the state will shadow the Central City collaborative to replicate the success across the state. Outcomes in the short term have been the integration of educational resources. Anticipated long term outcomes include greater success in school for children, stronger families, and resilient communities.

Contact for Additional Information:

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