



## **CHILDREN'S NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS** **Connecting Community to our Children**



Tarrant County Youth Collaboration

**6707 Brentwood Stair Road, Ste. 620, Fort Worth, Texas 76112**  
**817-496-6099 [info@tcyc4kids.org](mailto:info@tcyc4kids.org)**



## **CHILDREN'S NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS**

### **Connecting Community to our Children**

#### **Statement of the Problem:**

Life for Tarrant County children, particularly young children, is not getting better. Infant mortality rates remain higher than acceptable. Increasing numbers of children 2-5 years old are experiencing behavioral and emotional difficulties. Reports of child abuse and neglect continue to increase. Teachers report that more and more elementary aged children have fewer, and poorer, social skills. And childhood obesity is considered an epidemic.

The current social service system has in large part been designed to fill the void created by the disappearance of two-parent families, extended families, and small-town, neighborhood-level informal support mechanisms. And while this effort to fill a critical void has been admirable, the current social service system has failed to change the conditions through which childhood problems are created.

Despite our best efforts, there is clearly a disconnect between the lives of our children and the desire of the community to better the lives of our children. Tarrant County Youth Collaboration (TCYC) and The Partnership For Children believe that disconnect lies at the intersection between family and the informal support systems that traditionally encircled families: extended family and neighborhood.

#### **What is a Children's Neighborhood Network:**

A CNN is a neighborhood-based, neighborhood-led initiative focusing on the lives of families with young children. Designed to revitalize that sense of community involvement in the lives of families with young children, a CNN will stimulate a vital, sustainable neighborhood level support system for new parents, a support system recognizing that government and non-profit programs cannot replace an active, involved community of caring individuals.

The CNN model is built on the assumption that any neighborhood has some strong, healthy individuals and family units that, with appropriate community support, can be enlisted to serve as a nucleus within that neighborhood through which other individuals and families can find their way to a healthier life.

Neighborhood level initiatives have worked in a number of national and local environments. A CNN is very much like a Crime Watch neighborhood or Neighborhood Association. Only, the topic is young children. A CNN will elect neighborhood leadership, hold regular meetings, decide on activities that they believe will help the young children & their families in the neighborhood.

**What does a Children’s Neighborhood Network do:**

A CNN can invent whatever it decides to do to support the young children in their neighborhood:

- Calling Circle to check in on new parents
- New Mom mentor network
- Babysitting network
- Block play groups with adult monitoring
- Neighborhood fairs for the kids
- Informal sports league for the 6-12 year olds

**How do local social service organizations support a CNN:**

TCYC and The Partnership For Children (PFC) are composed of over 50 community members who have access to a wide range of resources for families and children. A CNN group will meet regularly and decide what the children in their neighborhood need to help them be safe and cared for. TCYC will provide a point person who will stay in touch with each CNN. CNN requests for assistance will be communicated through the TCYC and PFC membership and the TCYC coordinator will link those resources with the CNN.

**Congregational Role:**

Within the faith community today, it is not uncommon for a church can be extremely socially conscious with a wide range of outreach efforts, but have no focus on the neighborhood surrounding the church. As neighborhoods have changed around churches, it is unfortunately very common for a church to become disconnected from the neighborhood surrounding that church. We believe the CNN model can help the faith community address this problem.

Why a faith center as opposed to a community center or a school? For even the unchurched or persons of other faiths, a faith center represents the deeper aspirations of human beings. A faith center represents the need for human beings to connect to one another for a higher purpose.

However, while a CNN can have a “heart” link with a faith community, there should be a clear divide between the faith community members helping get the CNN started and providing some type of ongoing support versus seeing this as an overt opportunity to build the faith community membership.

*There are likely many contributing factors in the reported increases in aggression, under-socialization and anti-social behaviors in young children. One of the least appreciated – and the single one factor of most concern to me – is what I would call poverty of relationships.*

*Simply stated, in our modern world, children are growing up in environments – families, schools, communities – that are materially wealthy but relationally impoverished.*

**- Bruce Perry, M.D., Ph.D.,  
Senior Fellow of the ChildTrauma Academy**

## **Why is Tarrant County Youth Collaboration focusing on neighborhood level initiatives and social capital development?**

Hardwired to Connect, a 2002 report issued by the Commission on Children at Risk and the Institute for American Values, states: *in large measure, what's causing this crisis of American childhood is a lack of connectedness. We mean two kinds of connectedness – close connections to other people, and deep connections to moral and spiritual meaning.*

Further, the report notes: *The idea that the decline in social connectedness is contributing significantly to a range of childhood problems is supported by numerous studies. For instance, a recent analysis of 269 studies, dating back to the 1950s, links steady increases in self-reported anxiety and depression among U.S. young people primarily to the decline of "social connectedness".*

According to the 33 report authors (including Peter Benson from the Search Institute and T. Berry Brazelton from Touchpoints) the solution to this childhood crisis is to create authoritative communities, groups that live out the types of connectedness that our children increasingly lack. On the most basic level, neighborhoods are a natural vehicle for becoming authoritative communities.

The report continues: *In 1999, the prominent sociologist Robert Putnam and his colleagues carried out a small but fascinating experiment reported in Putnam's book, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, to test the hypothesis that higher levels of social connectedness mean better outcomes for children and youth. Putnam and his colleagues developed a list of fourteen leading indicators of social connectedness, which they called the Social Capital Index, and applied it on a state-by-state basis.*

*Putnam then compared the Annie E. Casey Foundation's state rankings on child well being with his own state rankings for social connectedness. He found that: "Statistically, the correlation between high social capital and positive child development is as close to perfect as social scientists ever find in data analyses of this sort." This robust correlation held true even after Putnam controlled for a range of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics.*

[www.americanvalues.org/ExSumm-print.pdf](http://www.americanvalues.org/ExSumm-print.pdf) and [www.americanvalues.org/html/hardwired\\_press\\_release.html](http://www.americanvalues.org/html/hardwired_press_release.html)

**From 1999 – 2003, TCYC embraced the Search Institute developmental assets philosophy**, a philosophy that states that what children need are not new programs – they need the adults in their lives to change their behaviors in relation to children. In essence, the developmental assets approach calls for culture change. In partnership with United Way, TCYC actively promoted the developmental assets philosophy to both social service agencies and ordinary citizens.

In 2004, based upon a 2003 strategic planning process and building upon the 1999-2003 commitment to developmental assets, the TCYC Board of Directors embraced the need to serve as the voice for Tarrant County Children & Youth Social Capital Development.

It is TCYC's belief that if life is going to improve for Tarrant County children, we must begin to stimulate and assist the development of sustainable, replicable, neighborhood-level systems of care that build social capital.

### **What will TCYC do to implement Children's Neighborhood Networks:**

TCYC will collaborate with St. Philip Presbyterian Church and other faith communities to implement 3 Children's Neighborhood Network pilot programs in Arlington, Hurst and Fort Worth between March 1, 2005 – May 31, 2006.

Specifically, TCYC and its partners will (for each of the 3 CNN pilot programs):

- determine a target neighborhood geographic grid with a maximum of 300 families by utilizing a range of demographic information
- cultivate a host site & host leader within that grid
- organize and implement a door-to-door grid walk
- organize and host a CNN Neighborhood Leadership Team (NLT) that will develop strategies for reaching out to pregnant women and parents of infants & toddlers in their neighborhood. TCYC will provide ongoing facilitative support to the NLT for up to 12 months
- organize and host a Parent Support Group (PSG) for pregnant women, parents of infants & toddlers for up to 9 months
- link *Partnership For Children* organization services to the neighborhood organizations

### **Why is St. Philip Presbyterian Church and the faith community hosting the CNN pilots:**

- St. Philip is an example of how a church can be extremely socially conscious with a wide range of outreach efforts, but have no focus on the neighborhood surrounding the church. This disconnect is not unusual in the faith community. As neighborhoods have changed around churches, it is unfortunately very common for a church to become disconnected from the neighborhood surrounding that church. We believe the CNN model can help the faith community address this problem.
- St. Philip is a member of Tarrant Area Community of Churches (TACC). We believe TACC will serve as a distribution system for a replicable, sustainable model.

### **Children's Neighborhood Networks Outcomes:**

**Short-term CNN Outcomes:** By May 31, 2006, there will be three (3) CNN neighborhood projects with a:

- defined, geographical area for the project,
- completed Neighborhood Block Party,
- CNN Neighborhood Leadership Team that meets regularly, has a defined strategy for reaching out to pregnant women and parents of infants & toddlers in their neighborhood, and has an established leadership structure.

**Long-term CNN Outcomes:** By December 31, 2007, the three (3) pilot CNN neighborhoods will experience:

- fewer reported incidents of infant-toddler child abuse
- improved infant mortality rates
- increased number of Medicaid eligible infants-toddlers receiving routine well-baby visits

Setting up the evaluation process to measure these projected long-term outcomes on a neighborhood level will be difficult since most information related to these three outcome domains is maintained on a zip-code level. TCYC will make every effort to develop and implement an effective outcome measurement process with Texas Health Steps, Child Protective Services and the Tarrant County Health Department to measure these three projected outcome domains.

**Building a Children's Neighborhood Network**  
**Start-Up Checklist**

Designating the faith community lead.

Lead and CNN Coordinator generate a draft neighborhood grid of 175-275 homes.

**1<sup>st</sup> Organizing Team meeting:**

Lead and CNN Coordinator convene a meeting of:

- Faith community representatives: other members of congregation
- Elementary school representative: PTA, Parent Liaison, etc.
- Neighborhood Association or Crime Watch representative (if existing)
- Parent Support Group representative
- Partnership For Children representative
- Municipal representative: local children's librarian, parks & rec person
- Police Department representative
- Other neighborhood members if possible

The goals of the meeting are to:

- Be oriented to the CNN process
- Review draft neighborhood grid; make necessary revisions
- Plan Neighborhood Walk: date, time, meeting place, teams, need for bilingual members
- Plan 1<sup>st</sup> Neighborhood Leadership Team (NLT) meeting: date, time, meeting place, speaker, need for bilingual staff

**2<sup>nd</sup> Organizing Team meeting:**

Finalize Neighborhood Walk:

- Orientation meeting agenda
- Maps, street address layouts
- Survey forms (translated if necessary)
- 1<sup>st</sup> NLT meeting flyer (translated),

Finalize 1<sup>st</sup> NLT meeting:

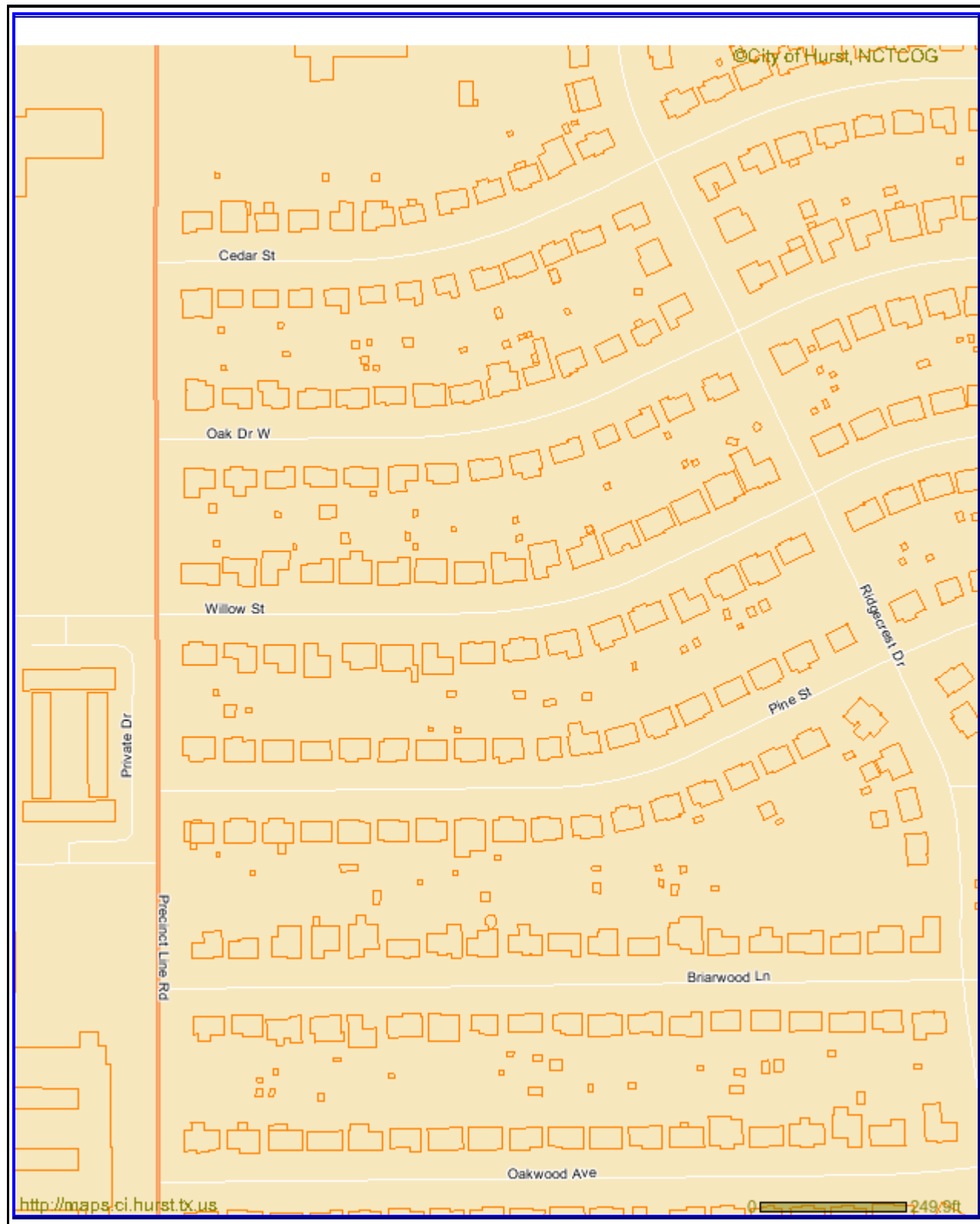
**Neighborhood Walk:**

- Orientation meeting
- Walk
- Review results

**1<sup>st</sup> NLT meeting:**

- Orient neighbors to the CNN concept
- Review the defined neighborhood area and decide if these boundaries are what they want
- Decide on a tentative Neighborhood Block Party date.
- Discuss plans to involve more neighbors in the CNN
- Pick the next meeting time for your CNN
- Create a list of names, phone numbers, addresses for your CNN

**Hurst CNN Neighborhood Grid:**



**Hurst CNN Organizing Team Meeting  
January 19, 2005  
7:00-8:00 p.m.**

- I. Welcome & Introductions: Melinda Veatch,  
St. Philip Presbyterian Church
- II. Children's Neighborhood Network: John Ross,  
Tarrant County Youth Collaboration
  - Overview:
  - Organizing Team task:
  - Target neighborhood:
- III. Discussion & next steps: Organizing Team
- IV. Next meeting: To be decided

**Hurst CNN Organizing Team Meeting  
February 17, 2005  
7:00-8:00 p.m.**

- I. Welcome & Introductions: Melinda Veatch,  
St. Philip Presbyterian Church
- II. Children's Neighborhood Network: John Ross, TCYC  
Organizing Team
  - Neighborhood Walk:
    - Date: April 9
    - What do we need:
  - Neighborhood Leadership Team meeting:
    - Date: April 11-13
    - What do we need:
- III. Discussion & next steps: Organizing Team
- IV. Next meeting: To be decided

**Hurst CNN Organizing Team Meeting  
March 20, 2005  
3:00-4:00 p.m.**

- I. Welcome & Introductions: Melinda Veatch,  
St. Philip Presbyterian Church
- II. Children's Neighborhood Network: John Ross, TCYC  
Organizing Team
  - Neighborhood Walk: April 9
    - Teams:
    - Meeting time & Orientation:
    - refreshments
  - Neighborhood Leadership Team meeting: April 13
    - Hot leads:
    - Agenda:
    - Handout:
    - Child care & refreshments:
    - Next steps:



Do you want to make your neighborhood safe for young children?

Do you want to help young families in your neighborhood?

Do you want to get to know other parents of young children in your neighborhood?

**Then, come join your neighbors at the first meeting of the:**

***CHILDREN'S NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK***

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

7:00-8:00 p.m.

St. Philip Presbyterian Church

745 W. Pipeline Road

(Come to the Church Bell entrance at the East side of the building)

**Snack & Child Care will be provided**

Child care is for 2-12 year old children



*The Children's Neighborhood Network* is supported by:  
St. Philip Presbyterian Church, Touchpoints Fort Worth/Tarrant County, United Way Northeast, The Partnership  
For Children, and Tarrant County Youth Collaboration  
**For more information call:** John Ross, CNN Coordinator, TCYC: 817-437-4383



¿Desea usted hacer que su comunidad sea segura para los niños?

¿Quiere usted ayudar a familias jóvenes en su comunidad?

¿Le gustaría conocer a otros padres de niños en su comunidad?

**Entonces, vengan a unirse con sus vecinos en nuestra primera reunión de:**

### ***LA RED COMUNITARIA PARA LOS NIÑOS (CNN)***

Miércoles, 13 de abril de 2005

7:00-8:00 p.m.

Iglesia Presbiteriana San Felipe (St. Philip Presbyterian Church)

Calle Pipeline 745 (oeste)

Entre por la entrada con la campana en el lado Este de la iglesia.

**Habrá cuido de niños y refrigerios disponibles**



*La Red Comunitaria para los Niños es apoyada por:*

St. Philip Presbyterian Church, Touchpoints Fort Worth/Tarrant County, United Way Northeast, The Partnership For Children,  
y Tarrant County Youth Collaboration

Para más información favor de llamar al John Ross, Coordinador de CNN, TCYC al 817-437- 4383 ó a Frances Villafane –  
Encargada Relaciones Padres / comunidad, Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD al 817-548-9858 Ext. 4484 si necesita ayuda en  
Español

**NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY**  
**Organizing Checklist: June 30, 2005**

<b>Date:</b>	July 30, 2005	<b>Time:</b>	6:00-9:00 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Hurst Community Park: cost \$75	<b>Party Name:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Neighborhood Summer Party
<b>Participants:</b>	100-150	<b>Insurance:</b>	TCYC carrier: cost \$50
<b>Publicity:</b>	Neighborhood Newsletter (The Trees) Ice Cream truck Star Telegram Hurst City Council member Photography	<b>Responsibility:</b>	Stephanie and Sara will handle newsletter Elizabeth has this covered Melinda will contact newspaper Melinda will contact (Anna Holzer?) Faye
<b>Food:</b>	Popcorn/Sno Cones, Poppin Place Hamburgers/hot dogs, chips, cokes 100 Tamales	<b>Responsibility:</b>	Stephanie will handle Melinda & Sara will get the food Stephanie has a neighbor who will make
<b>Entertainment:</b>	Music Clowns	<b>Responsibility:</b>	Frances has secured a DJ Bob has secured Clowns
<b>Registration:</b>	Name tags for leaders Name tags for neighbors Registration table		Alice Alice Carolyn & Tori
<b>Activities:</b>	Scavenger Hunt Baked Goods contest Pick up baked goods on Friday  Goodie Walk Three legged Race Tug of War Water balloon toss Watermelon seed spitting contest Fire Truck appearance Dominos with elderly	<b>Responsibility:</b>	Melinda, Sara, & Frances will develop Tori will organize Stephanie, Carolyn; put in church fridge; Sara will bring to park on Saturday Tori will organize; Faye will help John will organize; Boy Scouts John will organize; Boy Scouts John will organize; Boy Scouts John will organize; Boy Scouts John will organize; Boy Scouts Bob has finalized Fire truck: 6:00 p.m. Elizabeth will organize
<b>Equipment:</b>	Canopy Tables & chairs Charcoal cookers Ice Chests Large igloo for lemonade	<b>Responsibility:</b>	Melinda got 5 canopies from Boy Scouts Church has Tori, John can bring; church? St. Philip has 7 coolers St. Philip has 4 5 gallon
<b>Budget:</b>	\$500 from TCYC grant	<b>Responsibility:</b>	John
<b>Other:</b>	Interpreter Neighborhood Watch booth Parent Support Group booth Saturday pick up for elderly	<b>Responsibility:</b>	Frances will handle Jesse will handle Grace will handle Mid Cities Care Corps is evaluating

**Publicity Plan:**

- As soon as possible: put yard signs around neighborhood: Ross getting signs printed, Faye has sign posts
- Saturday, July 23, 9:30-10:30 a.m.: teams deliver Newsletter door-to-door
- Saturday, July 30: 9:30-10:30 a.m.: teams with face-painted children and a bundle of balloons deliver flyer door-to-door.

### Schedule for Saturday, July 30

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Leader:</b>	<b>Supplies:</b>
9:30-10:30:	Neighborhood Walk: need 6 family teams	open	Balloons, face paint, 200 flyers
3:45:	Load up at the Church		
4:00:	Event set-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canopies</li> <li>• Tables &amp; Chairs</li> <li>• Cooking setup</li> <li>• Contest area setup</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 canopies</li> <li>• Chalk field marker?</li> </ul>
5:30:	Cooking begins	Tori's husband	Gas or charcoal?
6:00:	Registration begins	Carolyn, Tori	Table, markers, name-tags, tickets, flyers, games sign up
6:30:	Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest	John	3 watermelons with seeds, measuring tape (Bob) 1 <sup>st</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> place ribbons
6:30-7:30:	Dinner is served		
6:45-7:00:	Bakery Contest Judging		
7:00:	Welcome & Announcements		
7:30:	Water Balloon Toss	John	20 water balloons; 1 <sup>st</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> place ribbons
7:45:	Goodie Walk	Tori	
7:45-8:30:	Domino instruction	Elizabeth	3 domino boards
8:00:	Three-legged race	John	6-8 Neckerchiefs; 1 <sup>st</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> place ribbons
8:30:	Tug of War contest	John	Tug of war rope; 1 <sup>st</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> place ribbons
9:00:	Event is over; cleanup begins		Garbage bags (Faye)

**Stray Thoughts:**

- Balloons for Saturday morning walk from Tom Thumb or Alberstons: 5 balloons X six teams
- Elizabeth will get face paint
- Flyers need to be created by Stephanie and Sara for handing out on July 30 neighborhood walk, by Elizabeth during the Ice Cream truck route and at the registration table. Flyers should be English one side; Spanish other side. Frances can translate.
- Signs for the event: Registration Table, Field of Games, Food, Domino Gazebo
- We decided to give people food tickets at the registration table to get them to register (Faye has the tickets)

## HURST CNN NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP TEAM

August 2, 2005

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

**Team members present:** Carolyn Arnold, Stephanie Jensen, Elizabeth Rankin, Monica Florida, Melinda Veatch, Sara Skiles du Toit, Faye Beaulieu, Frances Villafane, Jo Ann Stout, David Kaiser

**Staff present:** John Ross, Alice Allison

**Welcome and  
Introductions:**

Carolyn Arnold called the meeting to order at 7:05. Everyone at the table introduced themselves.

**Children's  
Neighborhood Network,  
a brief overview:**

John Ross gave a description of what "The Trees" and CNN is for the newcomers at the table.

**1<sup>st</sup> Annual  
Neighborhood Summer  
Party review:**

Faye Beaulieu provided a photo show of the party for members.

Attendance for the event was estimated to be 125+. Arnold started the discussion with things that went well and everyone liked. List included:

- the children were wonderful with each other
- helping each other and playing well together
- people intermingled, no cliques
- there was good mixing of cultures
- good that city officials, City Council representative Anna Holzer, police and fire department reps, thought it was an event worth coming out for
- the way the cultural differences and needs were addressed
- the D J was great
- enjoyed the clowns

Melinda Veatch noted that the biggest way people came together was through play. The discussion then turned to what could be different, including:

- would have liked to have the police and fire reps closer to the action
- need a better location for domino games and visiting as voices competed with the DJ
- game tables need to be solid for better playing surface
- a main stage would be good
- ways to have more people meet each other: have everyone from each street gather in one area; stake out an area that represents the Trees and have everyone stand in the location of their house.

**What's next:**

Determined it is very important to get a newsletter out right away. It should include pictures and report of the party as well as information on upcoming meeting and plans for future events and projects. Also include information on how to reach the Neighborhood leaders.

Discussion of fund raising projects, but first need to know what projects need to be funded. Talked about building rapport with local business as sources of support. Discussed ways of building trust within the community and building on trust to find opportunities to give help where needed.

Discussion focused on what The Trees could do from September 2005 through August 2006. Members developed a list of 20 various events and projects (*list accompanies notes*). Members each had 3 votes and narrowed the list down to: 3 events: Fall Festival, Festival of Nations and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Neighborhood Summer Party, and 2 projects, Friday night movies, and a Welcome Wagon effort for new neighbors.

**Other:**

Discussion of what agencies are out there and available. Arnold requested that The Partnership For Children membership list be sent to The Trees members. Ross commented that agencies can help, but it has to start at the community level.

Stephanie Jensen asked how much money was left in the initial Trees budget of \$500. Ross stated that as soon as he collected all of the receipts from the Party he could email that information back to the members.

**Next meeting:**

August 25, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., St Philip Presbyterian Church

**2005-2006 Activity Options:**

<b>Activity:</b>	<b># of votes:</b>
Fall Festival	8
Festival of Nations	5
Welcome Wagon for new neighbors (make things)	4
Friday Night Movies (at the churches?)	4
Block Leaders	3
New mom mentor network	2
TAKS care packages for the kids	1
Once a month parents night out	1
Christmas Caroling	0
Safe Houses	0
Yard of the Month	0
Easter Egg Hunt/May baskets	0
Arbor day	0
Neighborhood talent contest for 12-18 year olds	0
Rotating birthday parties by street	0
Calling circle for new parents	0
Babysitting network	0
Block play groups with adult monitoring	0
Parent Resource Center	0

## HURST CNN NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP TEAM

<b>Role:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Organization:</b>	<b>Phone:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Neighborhood Rep	Carolyn Arnold	Neighbor	817-285-9865	<a href="mailto:celebrationcookies@yahoo.com">celebrationcookies@yahoo.com</a>
Neighborhood Rep	Stephanie Jensen	Neighbor	817-285-8094	<a href="mailto:srjej@prodigy.net">srjej@prodigy.net</a>
Neighborhood Rep	Jesse Wilson	Neighbor	817-999-0824	
Neighborhood Rep	Elizabeth Rankin	Neighbor	817-282-1311	<a href="mailto:jher265@earthlink.net">jher265@earthlink.net</a>
Neighborhood Rep	Tori Ott	Neighbor	817-282-4890	<a href="mailto:torilynn1@aol.com">torilynn1@aol.com</a>
Neighborhood Rep	Heidi VanCleave	Neighbor		<a href="mailto:heidivc@charter.net">heidivc@charter.net</a>
Neighborhood Rep	Stella & Bob Urban	Neighbors & St. Philip Presbyterian Church	817-282-0555	<a href="mailto:snorm52@hotmail.com">snorm52@hotmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:rjurban@juno.com">rjurban@juno.com</a>
CNN Lead	Melinda Veatch	St. Philip Presbyterian Church	817-832-7915	<a href="mailto:melindav@stphilippresbyterian.org">melindav@stphilippresbyterian.org</a>
Faith Rep	Rick Patterson	St. Philip Presbyterian Church	817-917-0794	<a href="mailto:rickpatterson1@sbcglobal.net">rickpatterson1@sbcglobal.net</a>
Faith Rep	Sara Skiles duToit	St. Philip Presbyterian Church	817-656-7292	<a href="mailto:saradutoit@yahoo.com">saradutoit@yahoo.com</a>
Faith Rep	Cindy Baren	St. Philip MDO	817-282-0557	<a href="mailto:cindy.baren@charter.net">cindy.baren@charter.net</a>
PFC	Faye Beaulieu	United Way Northeast	817-282-1160	<a href="mailto:fbeaulieu@uwmtc.org">fbeaulieu@uwmtc.org</a>
ISD Rep	Frances Villafane	HEB ISD	817-548-9858 X 4484	<a href="mailto:villafaf@hebisd.edu">villafaf@hebisd.edu</a>
New Parent Rep	Grace White	Touchpoints: ECI	817-569-4157	<a href="mailto:graceew@mhmrtc.org">graceew@mhmrtc.org</a>
Municipal Rep	Beverly Kirkendall	Hurst Public Library	817-788-7302	<a href="mailto:bkirkend@ci.hurst.tx.us">bkirkend@ci.hurst.tx.us</a>
Police Dept. Rep	Tom Miles	Hurst PD	817-788-7375	<a href="mailto:tomm@ci.hurst.tx.us">tomm@ci.hurst.tx.us</a>
CNN Coordinators	John Ross Alice Allison	TCYC TCYC	817-437-4383 817-496-6099	<a href="mailto:johnross@tcyc4kids.org">johnross@tcyc4kids.org</a> <a href="mailto:aliceallison@tcyc4kids.org">aliceallison@tcyc4kids.org</a>

### **Supporting Websites & Articles:**

Community Organizing: Building Social Capital as a Development Strategy  
[www.sagepub.com/book.aspx?pid=3654](http://www.sagepub.com/book.aspx?pid=3654)

Social Capital and Neighborhood Stability  
[www.fanniemaefoundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/hpd\\_0901\\_temkin.pdf](http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/hpd_0901_temkin.pdf)

Ties and Trust: Understanding How Social Capital Operates in Neighborhoods  
[www.oup.org/scholar/Glanville.html](http://www.oup.org/scholar/Glanville.html)

Block By Block: Neighborhood Social Capital Building grant  
[http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Urban-Studies-and-Planning/11-401Fall2003/184B2726-E790-453F-87EB-CA341FB30FB1/0/k\\_a\\_memo1.pdf](http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Urban-Studies-and-Planning/11-401Fall2003/184B2726-E790-453F-87EB-CA341FB30FB1/0/k_a_memo1.pdf)

Creating Block Level Sense of Community in Urban Areas  
[www.fact.msu.edu/Projects/grants2002/block\\_level\\_sense.htm](http://www.fact.msu.edu/Projects/grants2002/block_level_sense.htm)

The Importance of Capacity Building at the Neighborhood Level: Northern California Council for the Community: [www.nccsf.org/NeighborhoodLeader/home\\_nl.htm](http://www.nccsf.org/NeighborhoodLeader/home_nl.htm)

Social Networks and Social Capital as Resources for Neighborhood Revitalization:  
[www.oup.org/scholar/marwell.html](http://www.oup.org/scholar/marwell.html)

Building blocks –Block nurse programs growing in popularity  
[www.wilder.org/goodage/Features/blockn701.html](http://www.wilder.org/goodage/Features/blockn701.html)

Neighborhood Sustainability Indicators Guidebook: How to create neighborhood sustainability indicators in your neighborhood  
[www.moea.state.mn.us/sc/neighborhoodguidebook.cfm](http://www.moea.state.mn.us/sc/neighborhoodguidebook.cfm)

The Prenatal and Early Childhood Nurse Home Visitation Program  
[www.strengtheningfamilies.org/html/model\\_programs\\_1997/mfp\\_pg31.html](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org/html/model_programs_1997/mfp_pg31.html)

Economic Analysis of the Prenatal and Early Childhood Nurse Home Visitation Program:  
[www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/opre/economic.htm](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/opre/economic.htm)

Prenatal and Early Childhood Nurse Visitation: Reducing Risks for the Development of Antisocial Behavior in Childhood  
[www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/172875.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/172875.pdf)

Women's Health After Pregnancy and Child Outcomes at Age 3 Years (behavior problems):  
[www.aiph.org/cqi/content/abstract/92/8/1312](http://www.aiph.org/cqi/content/abstract/92/8/1312)

Hispanic lay health promoter program  
[www.brahec.jmu.edu/promotoras.htm](http://www.brahec.jmu.edu/promotoras.htm)

## **Studies Suggest the Mind Makes, Breaks Its Misery**

***Brain research indicates that people are hard-wired for empathy and that faith affects the experience of their own agony and that of others.***

**By Robert Lee Hotz, *Los Angeles Times*, February 20, 2004**

Pain, like beauty, is in the mind's eye.

It is altered by empathy and tempered by faith, three new brain-imaging studies suggest. The bewitching effect of belief can alter directly how strongly people feel pain, causing measurable changes in brain cells and synapses whether the torment is theirs or a loved one's.

The new findings, made public today by independent research teams at the University of Michigan, Princeton University, UCLA, and University College London, offer the strongest evidence yet of how the brain thinks about pain.

Mapping the neural anatomy of pain, the researchers documented the ways in which the brain created a world of its own from the raw material of physical sensation. Using medical imaging scanners to monitor brain activity, researchers at Michigan, UCLA and Princeton revealed that simple faith in a placebo could alter the neural circuits that process pain, easing the agony.

In a separate experiment, the researchers at University College showed that the brain was a mirror of suffering, reflecting through many of the same neural circuits the pain that others feel, much as if the sensation were its own genuine torment.

Indeed, the brain's ability to share another's response to pain at such a fundamental cellular level may be the key to a sense of empathy, the personality trait that underpins so many human relationships, researchers said.

"These brain regions are critical to the interplay between the outside world and you," said neuropsychologist Helen Mayberg at Emory University in Atlanta.

By directly monitoring mental activity, the researchers showed how expectations and anticipation molded the brain's response to the physical sensation of pain. To a certain degree, pain is an act of imagination. "We are zeroing in on some pathways where our thoughts and beliefs are changing our physical and emotional experience," UCLA psychologist Matthew Lieberman said. "We don't typically think of those as things we can control."

Each team used brain mapping techniques to survey the same neural terrain from three slightly different perspectives. Two of the studies were published today in the journal *Science*. The third will be published next month in *Neuroimaging*.

To better understand pain and empathy, a team led by social psychologist Tania Singer at the Institute of Neurology at University College tested 19 couples who, because they were romantically involved, could be expected to be attuned to each other.

One woman from each pair was monitored with a functional magnetic resonance imaging scanner. Her neural activity was recorded first as researchers gave her a brief electric shock, then as her partner received the same shock.

The researchers discovered that the same critical brain regions involved in processing the physical sensation of pain were activated in each case.

Feelings of empathy for another's pain triggered regions of the brain responsible for processing pain, much as if it were a direct sensation, researchers discovered.

To Singer and her colleagues, it strongly suggested that humans were hard-wired for empathy.

"We are pretty sure that it is a universal mechanism," Singer said. "It is how we can put ourselves emotionally in another's shoes."

To investigate how belief affects the brain's response to pain, Lieberman and his UCLA colleagues conducted brain scans of 14 patients given a placebo to treat their chronic abdominal pain. The experiment revealed that the patients' faith in the substance they were given eased their symptoms and also produced physical changes in areas of the brain that processed pain.

The greater the brain changes, the greater the reduction in pain, the researchers determined. At Michigan and Princeton, researchers produced even more compelling evidence that the expectation of relief caused physical changes in how the brain handled pain.

They tested dozens of volunteers by giving them shocks while monitoring their neural activity in a brain scanner. Then researchers gave all the volunteers a placebo in the form of a harmless cream the patients were told would prevent the pain. Then the scientists conducted another round of shocks. The expectation of relief was enough to cause physical changes in those pain-processing areas of the brain, offering evidence of the placebo effect.

"We actually see physical changes in the brain that correspond closely to changes in symptoms that the patients report," said psychologist Tor Wager, who led the Michigan research team.

The researchers determined that pain depended not only on the actual sensory signals from nerves that the brain received but also on a person's emotional state.

## **Support Groups Help Cut Infant Mortality**

**September 9, 2004**

LONDON (Reuters) - Support groups that discuss health issues during pregnancy and after childbirth can help to reduce infant and maternal deaths in poor countries, researchers said on Friday.

Four million babies less than a month old die each year, most in the developing world. Another four million are stillborn.

But scientists from the Institute of Child Health (ICH) in Britain and MIRA, a research group in Nepal, said simple, low-cost interventions could save infant lives.

"In many developing countries, there is a desperate need for midwifery and obstetric services during the critical childbirth and newborn period," said Anthony Costello, a professor at ICH.

"However, our study shows, even where such care is unavailable, big improvements in survival can be achieved simply by tapping into the self-interest and creativity of poor women."

In a three-year study involving nearly 29,000 women in Nepal, Costello and researchers from MIRA found that infant deaths were reduced by a third when women had access to support groups. There was also a large drop in maternal deaths.

Women in the 42 communities that took part in the study, published in The Lancet medical journal, were able to discuss health issues and share advice with the support groups. Simple changes, such as birth attendants washing their hands, were also adopted.

In West Africa, the lifetime risk of losing a baby in the first month of life is 30 times higher than for a mother in Western Europe or North America.

"Implementing the groups, which involves minimal interventions from outside organizations, is realistic for the developing world," Costello added.

**Enduring Effects of Nurse Home Visitation on Maternal Life Course**  
Journal of the American Medical Association: Volume 283, No. 15, April 19, 2000  
A 3-Year Follow-up of a Randomized Trial

Harriet Kitzman, RN, PhD; David L. Olds, PhD; Kimberly Sidora, MPH; Charles R. Henderson, Jr, MA; Carole Hanks, RN, DrPH; Robert Cole, PhD; Dennis W. Luckey, PhD; Jessica Bondy, MSHA; Kimberly Cole, BS; Judith Glazner, MS

**Context:** A home visitation program using nurses to improve maternal and child outcomes had favorable results in a randomized trial with a primarily white, semirural population. Many of the short-term findings have been replicated with urban blacks, but whether the program will continue to demonstrate effectiveness after its conclusion is uncertain.

**Objective:** To determine the effectiveness of a prenatal and infancy home visitation program on the maternal life course of women in an urban environment 3 years after the program ended.

**Design and Setting:** Three-year follow-up of a randomized controlled trial of women seen consecutively between June 1990 and August 1991 at an obstetrical clinic in Memphis, Tenn, who were enrolled in a visitation program for 2 years after the birth of their first child.

**Participants:** A cohort of 743 women who were primarily black, were pregnant for less than 29 weeks, had no previous live births, and had at least 2 socio-demographic risk factors (unmarried, <12 years of education, or unemployed).

**Intervention:** An average of 7 (range, 0-18) home visits during pregnancy and 26 (range, 0-71) from birth to the child's second birthday.

**Main Outcome Measures:** Rate of subsequent pregnancy, mean interval between first and second birth, and mean number of months of welfare use.

**Results:** Compared with the control group, women who received home visits by nurses had fewer subsequent pregnancies (1.15 vs 1.34;  $P=.03$ ), fewer closely spaced subsequent pregnancies (0.22 vs 0.32;  $P=.03$ ), longer intervals between the birth of the first and second child (30.25 vs 26.60 months;  $P=.004$ ), and fewer months of using Aid to Families with Dependent Children (32.55 vs 36.19;  $P=.01$ ) and food stamps (41.57 vs 45.04;  $P=.005$ ). Compared with the effect of the program while the program was in operation, the effect after it ended was essentially equal for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, greater for food stamps, greater for rates of closely spaced subsequent pregnancies, and smaller for rates of subsequent pregnancy overall.

**Conclusions:** We found enduring effects of a home visitation program on the lives of black women living in an urban setting. While these results were smaller in magnitude than those achieved in a previous trial with white women living in a semirural setting, the direction of the effects was consistent across the 2 studies.

## Long-term Effects of Nurse Home Visitation on Children's Criminal and Antisocial Behavior

Journal of the American Medical Association: Volume 280, No. 14, October 14, 1998

15-Year Follow-up of a Randomized Controlled Trial

David Olds, PhD; Charles R. Henderson, Jr; Robert Cole, PhD; John Eckenrode, PhD; Harriet Kitzman, RN, PhD; Dennis Luckey, PhD; Lisa Pettitt, PhD; Kimberly Sidora, MPH; Pamela Morris; Jane Powers, PhD

**Context:** A program of home visitation by nurses has been shown to affect the rates of maternal welfare dependence, criminality, problems due to use of substances, and child abuse and neglect. However, the long-term effects of this program on children's antisocial behavior have not been examined.

**Objective:** To examine the long-term effects of a program of prenatal and early childhood home visitation by nurses on children's antisocial behavior.

**Design:** Fifteen-year follow-up of a randomized trial. Interviews were conducted with the adolescents and their biological mothers or custodial parents.

**Setting:** Semirural community in New York.

**Participants:** Between April 1978 and September 1980, 500 consecutive pregnant women with no previous live births were recruited, and 400 were enrolled. A total of 315 adolescent offspring participated in a follow-up study when they were 15 years old; 280 (89%) were born to white mothers, 195 (62%) to unmarried mothers, 151 (48%) to mothers younger than 19 years, and 186 (59%) to mothers from households of low socioeconomic status at the time of registration during pregnancy.

**Intervention:** Families in the groups that received home visits had an average of 9 (range, 0-16) home visits during pregnancy and 23 (range, 0-59) home visits from birth through the child's second birthday. The control groups received standard prenatal and well-child care in a clinic.

**Main Outcome Measures:** Children's self-reports of running away, arrests, convictions, being sentenced to youth corrections, initiation of sexual intercourse, number of sex partners, and use of illegal substances; school records of suspensions; teachers' reports of children's disruptive behavior in school; and parents' reports of the children's arrests and behavioral problems related to the children's use of alcohol and other drugs.

**Results:** Adolescents born to women who received nurse visits during pregnancy and postnatally and who were unmarried and from households of low socioeconomic status (risk factors for antisocial behavior), in contrast with those in the comparison groups, reported fewer instances (incidence) of running away (0.24 vs 0.60;  $P=.003$ ), fewer arrests (0.20 vs 0.45;  $P=.03$ ), fewer convictions and violations of probation (0.09 vs 0.47;  $P<.001$ ), fewer lifetime sex partners (0.92 vs 2.48;  $P=.003$ ), fewer cigarettes smoked per day (1.50 vs 2.50;  $P=.10$ ), and fewer days having consumed alcohol in the last 6 months (1.09 vs 2.49;  $P=.03$ ). Parents of nurse-visited children reported that their children had fewer behavioral problems related to use of alcohol and other drugs (0.15 vs 0.34;  $P=.08$ ). There were no program effects on other behavioral problems.

**Conclusions:** This program of prenatal and early childhood home visitation by nurses can reduce reported serious antisocial behavior and emergent use of substances on the part of adolescents born into high-risk families.

## **Anxiety in Pregnancy Ups Kids' Behavioral Problems**

**July 16, 2004**

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - Women who are chronically stressed out during the middle of a pregnancy are more likely to give birth to children who develop behavioral problems later in life, researchers reported Friday.

The investigators found that women who were very anxious between the 12th and 22nd weeks of their pregnancies were more likely to have children who were also anxious and showed symptoms of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

However, anxiety that occurred later in pregnancy did not appear to influence children's behavior.

Study author Dr. Bea R. H. Van den Bergh explained that women who were highly anxious often had trouble coping with the daily stresses and strains of normal life. For instance, some were struggling with interpersonal relations at work, or because they were living with their in-laws, she said.

She cautioned that children were affected when women experienced prolonged bouts of anxiety, and women should not fear that if they feel anxious for one minute during pregnancy, their children will suffer.

"It is not so that every little stress or anxious feeling has an immediate effect; it is the cumulative effect that is bad," she said.

However, to minimize the amount of time pregnant women spend stressed, Van den Bergh recommended that they try to relax as much as possible during stressful situations.

In addition, friends and family should also try to work together to help women stay relaxed, noted the researcher, who is based at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium.

"The partner and larger family and even the society have to take their responsibility," she said. "Stress is not only an individual problem."

Previous research has shown that a mother's stress in pregnancy can influence her child in a variety of ways. For instance, studies have linked anxiety in pregnancy to children's risk of hyperactivity, emotional problems, and sleeping and feeding difficulties.

## **Early Risk Factors Linked to Child Aggression**

**July 16, 2004**

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - The seeds of a child's aggressive behavior may be planted even before birth, according to a new study -- suggesting, researchers say, that interventions to prevent youth violence should begin as early as pregnancy.

The study of 572 families with a 5-month-old baby found that parents' behavior before and during pregnancy was related to the risk of their child becoming a physically aggressive preschooler.

Mothers who smoked during pregnancy, began having children at a young age, or had their own behavioral problems in youth were more likely to have a child who developed a habit of hitting, kicking, biting or bullying others.

In addition, 5-month-olds from dysfunctional families or whose mothers frequently lost their tempers were at greater risk of becoming physically aggressive before the age of 4.

The findings suggest that for such at-risk children, interventions to cut the odds of future aggression should begin as early as possible, said lead author Dr. Richard E. Tremblay of the University of Montreal in Canada. In general, children seem to learn to control physical aggression in the preschool years, yet efforts to curb such behavior are normally targeted at school-age children, whose habits are more ingrained, Tremblay noted in an interview.

Earlier interventions -- such as home visits from nurses to new parents -- may be more effective, according to the researcher. He said the "best model to date" has been an intensive nurse visitation program that in an earlier study cut the risk of child delinquency.

Tremblay and his colleagues are starting a prevention experiment in which nurse home visits with a special focus on curbing physical aggression will begin in pregnancy. Part of the point is to help parents control their own aggressive behavior.

For the current study, reported in the July issue of *Pediatrics*, Tremblay's team interviewed parents of 5-month-old infants about their own school-age behavioral problems, as well as more recent factors such as mothers' smoking and drinking during pregnancy and current family conflicts. Mothers were also asked to rate their infants' temperament and describe their parenting habits.

**Depressed Mothers, Antisocial Fathers Affect Kids**  
**October 13, 2004**

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - Many children of depressed mothers also have antisocial fathers, new study findings show, and both parents' problems are associated with an increased risk of depression and conduct disorder among the children.

"These findings imply that children of depressed mothers frequently experience an additional risk that we were unaware of before: that of having a father who engages in antisocial behavior," study author Dr. Naomi R. Marmorstein of Rutgers University in New Jersey told Reuters Health.

"Thus," she added, "the children's difficulties may be compounded by the norm-violating behavior of their fathers."

Previous studies have found that children of depressed mothers may experience a host of problems including mental and motor impairment in infancy and psychopathology in adolescence, as well as an increased risk for major depression and conduct disorder.

Few researchers, however, have investigated the paternal contribution to the risk of depression and conduct disorder for these children.

To investigate, Marmorstein and her colleagues looked at hundreds of 17-year-old twins along with their mothers and fathers.

They found that twins with a depressed mother had a more than two-fold increased risk of experiencing major depression and a nearly two-fold risk of having a conduct disorder. The risks were similarly increased for those with an antisocial father in comparison to those whose fathers had no history of antisocial behavior.

In general, women with major depression seemed to be more likely than their non-depressed peers to have children with a man whose psychiatric history included antisocial behavior, the researchers report in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

Nearly 50 percent of the men who had children with depressed mothers had a history of antisocial behavior. The same was true for only 37 percent of the men who had children with non-depressed mothers.

"This study shows that adults with psychological problems are often in relationships with partners who are also psychologically troubled but who have problems of a different type," Marmorstein said.

## **Baboon Study: Sociable Moms Have Healthier Young**

*John Roach for National Geographic News, November 13, 2003*

[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/11/1113\\_031113\\_socialbaboons.html#main](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/11/1113_031113_socialbaboons.html#main)

Female baboons that enjoy the close company of others raise more successful offspring than do baboons who lead a more solitary life, according to results from an ongoing, long-term research project in Kenya.

"Social animals actually seem to spend a lot of time forming social bonds. They invest so much [effort] it's hard to imagine that [social bonds] don't matter. But no one had ever shown that they did," said Susan Alberts, a biologist at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, and researcher behind the study.

The finding by Alberts, along with colleagues Joan Silk, an anthropologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Jeanne Altmann, a behavioral ecologist at Princeton University in New Jersey, is described in tomorrow's issue of the journal *Science*.

According to their study, the more social a female baboon is, the more likely her baby is to survive the hardships of infancy and reach the one-year-old mark, the age comparable to that of a five-year-old human. The benchmark signals that a juvenile baboon has a good chance of surviving into adulthood and breeding.

"In evolutionary terms, sociality is good for you," wrote Robin Dunbar, a behavioral ecologist at the University of Liverpool in England, in an accompanying commentary.

The researchers' finding is based on 16 years worth of data collected from observations of wild savannah baboons (*Papio cynocephalus*) in Kenya's Amboseli Basin, a wooded grassland in the shadow of Mount Kilimanjaro.

"To test this hypothesis, we had to begin several decades ago and design a data scheme that would gradually yield the nuggets that led to this finding. No quickie shortcuts here," said Altmann, who co-directs the Amboseli Baboon Research Project with Alberts.

### **Social Behavior**

Observations in the Amboseli have revealed the complexities of baboon social life. Both sexes have several different mates throughout their lives. Females stay in the same baboon group forever, while males may roam from group to group.

When not foraging for food or sleeping, baboons spend social time hanging out together and picking twigs from each other's fur.

"The primary interactions are grooming—the equivalent of giving or receiving a good massage—[and] being in contact," said Altmann.

Female baboons tend to form the tightest bonds with their mothers, aunts, and sisters. The bonds between maternal or paternal sisters are particularly close. Since a male may live in several groups over the course of his life, his bonds are not always as strong. But they, too, are important, according to the researchers.

The team theorized that baboons' social web benefits females and their offspring because it provides a positive environment for raising young, shielding them from harassment and protecting them from predators and infanticidal attacks from dominant adult males new to the group.

### **Sociality Index**

To determine, indeed, whether a rich social life had a direct fitness benefit, the researchers rated a female baboon's social life—the proximity of neighbors and how often she engaged in grooming—and compared her degree of sociality to the survival rate of her offspring.

Observations of these behaviors were grouped together and given a score on what the researchers label the "composite sociality index." A higher score reflected a more social baboon, said Silk, whose research was cosponsored by the National Geographic Society Committee for Research and Exploration.

The composite sociality index correlates to people, those who are surrounded by friends and those who are loners and stay isolated in their homes, Silk said.

While none of the baboons observed could be described as loners, there are certain baboons that are more social than others, said Alberts. "On a day-to-day basis, there are females that are more isolated, more peripheral, that spend less time grooming, and are less likely to have neighbors," she said.

The researchers took a baboon's score on the sociality index and compared it to how many of her offspring survived infancy to age one. According to their results, the higher a baboon scored on the sociality index, the greater were the chances that her infant would survive to maturity. The result was the same when the researchers controlled for the effects of environment and where a female fit within the hierarchy of the baboon group. "Dominance and environment matter a lot for females," said Silk. "This result is another factor that matters."

### **Human Parallel**

The results of the study are of particular interest to the researchers because it conforms to past studies that suggests social support has beneficial effects on human health and well-being.

"They match so nicely this data from humans," said Silk. "There is very good evidence in humans that being part of a social network has positive effects on health and longevity."

For example, studies show that among humans social isolation is correlated with increased risk of disease, accidents, and mental disorders. Among low-income women, those with more extensive social networks give birth to heavier, healthier children.

While further studies are required to determine if social behavior is beneficial in both humans and baboons for the same reasons, "the fact that it is true in humans and baboons suggests that social animals are social for a really good reason," said Alberts.