2017 International Conference

Registration for the Parents as Teachers 2017 International Conference is Now Open!
The 2017 Parents as Teachers International Conference is coming to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – a great place to make connections matter! This year’s conference is about engaging with families and increasing the impact of our work through knowledge and strengthening connections to families, the communities we serve and each other.

Together We Can Engage.
The 2017 conference will offer more than fifty cutting edge preconference and conference workshops which will inspire, train and add to your professional development toolkit to better engage with families and children. An innovative panel discussion and keynote speaker are sure to provide you with thought provoking awareness and understanding from experienced experts. The Parents as Teachers International Conference will allow you to cultivate lasting peer-to-peer relationships and contacts while at the same time gaining valuable and quality education.

Together We Can Motivate.
Experience a collaboration of worldwide experts and leaders with proven results you can use in your own professional educational programs. Our partnerships continue to grow year after year and will enlighten and coach attendees on the newest ways to be a child’s best first teacher. Discover several different tracks or attend the same track throughout!

(continued on page 3)
Constance Gully, the new President and CEO of Parents as Teachers National Center, was recently welcomed at a reception in St. Louis. Gully was officially introduced to a distinguished audience that included Parents as Teachers board members from across the country and several high-profile leaders in education. Gully was promoted to the position of President and CEO in March, after a rigorous national search.

During the same reception, Tom Melzer was honored as the outgoing chair of the Parents as Teachers Board of Directors. Melzer has been a tireless advocate for children and families and will continue to serve as a vital member of the PAT board. Replacing him is Patricia Kempthorne, the founder and president of the Twiga Foundation and the former First Lady of Idaho.

Parents as Teachers Board Member Steven Rosenblum was recently honored by Washington University in St. Louis for his contributions to the community. Mr. Rosenblum was given the 2017 Gerry and Bob Virgil Ethic of Service Award. This annual honor recognizes a select group of Washington University community members who exemplify a character of service and giving to the St. Louis region. You can read much more about the Gerry and Bob Virgil Ethic of Service Award at the following link: https://gephardtinstitute.wustl.edu/ethic-service-award/
Parent Educator Empowers Mom to Seek Answers

In her eight years as a parent educator, Claudia Williamson has helped dozens of young parents find a path to success. She’s embodies the Parents as Teachers vision, to help all children learn, grow and develop to reach their full potential.

Williamson works for Maine Families of Knox, Lincoln and Sagadahoc counties. The organization is funded by the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program. The federal grant, together with critical funding from the state, serves vulnerable families in every county in Maine. Home visiting provides parents with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful parents, building on family strengths to achieve the best possible outcomes for their children.

“We know parents want to be the best that they can be,” said Williamson. “We’re just here to give them that support.”

Home Visits Reveal Developmental Delays

Williamson says one of her proudest memories is working with a mom named Ashli Bickford. During home visits, it became clear to Williamson that Bickford’s youngest child Cooper was having a difficult time meeting developmental milestones and might have delays that were previously unnoticed.

“It was a very emotional experience,” said Bickford. “His head was large and he wasn’t using one side of his body. So I wanted Claudia to tell me the truth, even if she thought it would hurt my feelings. I asked her point blank, “Claudia, do you think there’s something wrong with my son?”

Claudia supported Ashli’s desire to find answers and recommended she make an appointment that day with her pediatrician. When that doctor was unable to make a diagnosis, Claudia encouraged Ashli to advocate for her four-month-old son’s health and get a second opinion. But after an MRI and a series of screenings, doctors were still stumped.

“A year went by and we couldn’t get any answers,” said Bickford. “By 18 months, Cooper still wasn’t walking and couldn’t even sit up by himself. Claudia said I shouldn’t give up, and urged me to make another appointment.”

Finally, after a round of genetic testing, doctors diagnosed Cooper with an extremely rare condition called 3Q13.31.

International Conference (continued from cover page)

Together We Can Make Connections Matter.

Outcomes based evidence will improve and impact future programs and development. Back by popular demand are sessions on Penelope, a powerful software to deliver consistent, timely and faster critical information to affiliates and program providers. Preconference sessions are once again available to further propel your learning opportunities into the future!

Please visit the following link to learn more about the conference and how to register: http://parentsasteachers.org/attendee-registration.

2017 Conference Guest Speakers

OPENING SESSION PANEL MODERATOR
Kwesi Rollins

CLOSING SESSION KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Alison Gopnik

The 2017 Parents as Teachers Conference will be held November 29-December 1, at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown.
Blue Ribbon Affiliate Spotlight

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is continuing an exciting new way to honor the top PAT affiliates across the country. More than 40 programs over the past two years have been honored as Blue Ribbon Affiliates. These endorsed affiliates have completed the Quality Endorsement and Improvement Process, which recognizes affiliates as high-achieving members in the field of early childhood learning and parent engagement.

In this issue, we are proud to spotlight the Arizona Children’s Association (AzCA), the oldest and largest not-for-profit child welfare and behavioral health agency in Arizona. The AzCA’s PAT programs serve 220 families in three counties, and the organization has proudly provided successful home visitation services for more than 17 years. Shelley Tellez, the director of the Arizona Children’s Association, says being recognized as a Blue Ribbon Affiliate has opened new doors for her program.

“As the first and only Blue Ribbon affiliate so far in Arizona, we believe that we have been able to work with the State of Arizona in ways that have not been afforded to PAT programs in the past,” said Tellez.

Tellez says her program has experienced the incredible impact of the Parents as Teachers evidence-based model on numerous occasions. One Parent Educator used the PAT parent handouts to establish a regular reading routine for a family that didn’t understand the importance of literacy at a young age. Another Parent Educator helped instill confidence in a foster mother after a child was diagnosed with a probable traumatic brain injury.

“It appears to be the result of a loving environment and multiple resources established by our Parent Educator that gave the child a secure place to live,” said Tellez.

Collaborations Help AzCA Flourish

Leaders within Arizona Children’s Association say they’re especially proud of their success with external collaborations throughout the state and region. The organization’s “together we are better” approach has demonstrated its ability to be a leader in supporting families and staff, and has led to success for everyone involved. Fathers also play a huge part in the success of the AzCA’s programs. More than 20 percent of their home visits include fathers or grandfathers, and there is significant participation in groupd connections.

“Our outcomes demonstrate that parents who participate in our programs are more confident in themselves and their parenting, experience improved knowledge of child health and development, increase their capacity for preparedness in children’s school readiness, and feel an enhancement of their abilities to support their children’s development,” said Tellez. We are pretty proud of that!

You can learn much more about the Quality Endorsement and Improvement Process, and find a list of all the Blue Ribbon Affiliates, by visiting this link: parentsasteachers.org/quality-endorsement-and-improvement.

MOPATA Advocacy Retreat

More than 80 program coordinators and parent educators from across Missouri convened at a two-day advocacy retreat for the Missouri Parents as Teachers Association (MOPATA). MOPATA, fashioned after the highly successful Kansas organization – KPATA – formed in June of last year to serve as the advocacy voice for PAT programs in the state, and to provide professional development opportunities for seasoned parent educators. Topics included a state legislative update, information about the MIECHV and CHIP reauthorizations, health reform, tips on building relationships with elected officials and writing success stories. Participants also heard from the founder of KPATA, Nancy Keel, the current KPATA executive director, and Constance Gully, Parents as Teachers National Center President and CEO.

Top: Constance Gully, Angela Gardner, MacKenzie Grayson, Nakeela Ross, Kathy Hall, Ann Young, Kristen Mandrell, Donna Givens, Dana Lewis and Alison Gee.

Right: Group of parent educators and coordinators from across the state of Missouri at table talks.
Philanthropy Spotlight – PNC Grow Up Great

PNC Grow Up Great is a $350 million, multi-year, bilingual initiative of The PNC Financial Services Group that began in 2004 to help prepare children – especially underserved children – from birth to age five for success in school and life. To date, the program has served more than three million children.

Through the program, PNC offers leadership, advocacy, funding, volunteers and educational resources to help families, educators and community partners provide innovative opportunities that enhance children’s learning and development. PNC believes that an investment in children now makes good economic sense and plants the seeds for the dynamic workforce of tomorrow.

To help direct the initiative, PNC Grow Up Great has partnered with some of the nation’s most highly respected early childhood experts and nonprofit organizations to establish school readiness programs in math, science, the arts and financial education.

In addition to PAT Penelope 2.0, we launched Penelope Guided Learning, a powerful learning tool for both new and existing PAT Penelope users. This section of the PAT Portal combines videos, user guides, useful tips and practice exercises to help supervisors and parent educators learn to use Penelope efficiently.

The 2016-2017 Affiliate Performance Report (APR) was launched in May. For Penelope users, this makes the annual end-of-year reporting a snap. Affiliates can review their information, look at detailed information to find data entry errors, and transfer their data with a single click.

Penelope Corner

Parents as Teachers took a huge step forward at the beginning of April with the launch of PAT Penelope 2.0, and the response has been very positive. Incorporating feedback from users, the revised version features several significant improvements:

- More streamlined and user-friendly work flow
- Revised reports are much faster, and include even more useful information
- Additional fields allow for MIECHV reporting

Parents as Teachers would like to thank PNC for its local support of the children and families within the Normandy Schools Collaborative footprint.

Parent Educator Empowers Mom

Micro dilution syndrome. It’s a chromosome deletion disorder that only affects a handful of people in the United States. Bickford says the diagnosis was devastating and she immediately broke down into tears. But a single phone call to her parent educator helped change her perspective.

“Claudia told me I should treat the news as something positive, because we finally have answers,” said Bickford. “I didn’t give up because of her.”

Child Shows Improvement Thanks to Parents as Teachers Support

Thanks to the continued support of Maine Families, Parents as Teachers and the help of an in-home occupational therapist, Cooper is now walking and talking and thriving in preschool. Ashli is now going to school to be an occupational therapist, so she can help other families in similar situations.

“I stand behind Maine Families and the Parents as Teachers program 100 percent,” said Bickford. “It really changed my life and my son’s life forever.”
How to Donate

We invite you to visit parentsasteachers.org to learn more about our evidence-based programs that improve parenting, narrow the achievement gap, prevent child abuse, and detect delays and health problems while saving taxpayers’ money now and in the years to come. Please consider supporting our efforts and advocate with us for the children and families that need us most by making a donation. parentsasteachers.org/donate

Register Now for the 2017 Conference for Early Childhood Professionals!

Family Engagement: Making Connections Matter

Wednesday, November 29 - Friday, December 1, 2017
Philadelphia Marriott Downtown
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

parentsasteachers.org/conference2017-home