FOR RELEASE

Parents as Teachers
International Conference in Philadelphia
November 29 - December 1, 2017

- Over 1,200 Leaders in Early Childhood Development Travel from as far away as China, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Cameroon to Convene to Engage Families
- Conference Highlights Worldwide Refugee Crisis with 1,000 square-foot Simulated Resettlement Camp Experience
- Award Given to The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor of Pennsylvania

ST. LOUIS, MO (Nov. 27, 2017) Parents as Teachers, an internationally recognized leader in the early childhood home visiting field, welcomes over 1,200 attendees to its 2017 Annual International Conference in Philadelphia this week from November 29 - December 1. The conference will focus on early childhood development and engaging parents and children through the crucial early years from prenatal through kindergarten, featuring presentations and interaction with early child development experts, educators, researchers, behavioral scientists, healthcare professionals, public policy advocates, and parent educators.

“We are very excited to be hosting the conference in Philadelphia this year, and, for the first time, in the Northeast,” said Constance Gully, President and CEO of Parents as Teachers. “This year’s conference offers attendees multiple opportunities to engage and learn from peers and leaders in the home visiting and early child development fields and the thought-provoking workshops we are offering reflect many of the most important topics in today’s early childhood environment.”

The conference theme, Family Engagement: Making Connections Matter, features 60 workshops showcasing the latest trends, research and data available for those working with families of young children. Attendees will gather from across the U.S. and from countries such as China, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Cameroon. An added component of this year’s conference is an opening panel of experts from various sectors including healthcare, education, housing, tribal communities and the U.S. military who will discuss how family engagement is fundamental to their work and how it helps impact lives for the better.
One of the most unique workshops this year is titled *From Surviving to Thriving*. This workshop is presented by an Atlanta-based refugee resettlement agency that provides 3,500 refugees each year with the tools to rebuild their lives and achieve long-term success. Participants at the conference will be led through a simulated refugee camp built on a 1,000 square-foot workshop space – an experiential simulation or journey as a refugee from a war-torn country transported to a refugee resettlement in the U.S.

Several important awards that will be announced at the annual conference include the Losos Awards for Excellence and Innovation in delivering the Parents as Teachers service model, as well as the coveted Parent Educator of the Year awards. We are also excited to acknowledge the newest Parents as Teachers Blue Ribbon Affiliates. Blue Ribbon Parents as Teachers Affiliates are exemplary programs, delivering the highest quality services to children and families.

Also in special recognition, The Jack Tweedie Human Services and Early Learning Champion Award will be presented to The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor of Pennsylvania, for his unwavering leadership to further the efforts of Home Visiting in his State of Pennsylvania. As an ongoing champion of early learning support, Governor Wolf recently increased the State investment in evidence-based home visiting in his 2017-2018 budget proposal by adding $5 million dollars to family support services designated for home visitation. Because of this commitment, for the first time in decades, programs providing evidence-based home visiting will be able to access the fund through a competitive grant cycle released by the state Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

Other conference highlights include author Alison Gopnik, the closing keynote speaker on Friday, December 1. Ms. Gopnik is a columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*, and a professor of psychology and an affiliate professor of philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley. In an effort to give back and thank our host states Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey, Parents as Teachers is partnering with *First Book* for a book drive to provide programs in these states with books for the families and children they serve.

For more information about the 2017 Parents as Teachers International Conference, go to [https://parentsasteachers.org/conference2017-home](https://parentsasteachers.org/conference2017-home)

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*About Parents as Teachers:* Parents as Teachers National Center, headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, helps to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to learn by matching families with trained parent educators during a child’s earliest years in life. The organization is an internationally recognized evidence-based home visiting model and is backed by 35 years of scientifically-proven outcomes for children and families.
Parents as Teachers currently partners with local organizations in all 50 U.S. states, 113 Tribal organizations, and in five other countries and one U.S. territory to serve over 123,000 families. Parents as Teachers programs operate in various settings, including schools, health departments and non-profit organizations. For more information, visit ParentsAsTeachers.org