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Special Thank You



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Southwest Human Development
is the Easter Seals affiliate for
central and northern Arizona

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Smart Support for Child Care Centers Across Arizona

We've all seen a child throw a tantrum. Joey's could last thirty minutes, sending his Phoenix-area child care center into an uproar. Joey threw things and screamed, draining the patience of the center's teachers. Finally, they began moves to expel him.

Enter Southwest Human Development's Smart Support, a program that delivers high-quality mental health consultation to child care providers.

Our consultant visited the center, met Joey, and talked with the staff. She immediately saw evidence of Joey's behavioral problems—but her trained eye noticed some other things as well.

She noticed that the center's classrooms had no daily schedule. There were no organized activity areas and no routines or rituals to help children transition from one activity to the next. There was very little interaction between teachers and children.

In fact, the center's sole over-arching protocol seemed to be that all children were required to change activities every fifteen minutes.

The result? The classrooms were noisy and confusing. Children couldn't get deeply engaged in play and tended to be frustrated and irritable. Even the high stress level and dissatisfaction of the staff was obvious. Center employees barely knew each other, and dealt with problems in isolation.

As for Joey, the consultant saw that while he had been identified as the center's problem, he was actually merely a barometer for how the

center was functioning.

The consultant began to develop relationships with the director and the teachers. Step one was addressing their concerns about Joey's tantrums. She worked with the teachers to develop a plan for managing Joey when he began to act out. This gave her credibility with the staff.

Step two was establishing weekly one-hour training sessions for the staff members, with the focus on creating an emotionally supportive classroom environment for the center's children. The staff ultimately embraced the sessions. They began bringing food and sharing their successes and struggles. They began to develop an obvious

camaraderie where previously there was distance.

The consultant, while providing suggestions and encouragement, was careful to allow the teachers to reach their own conclusions about what might improve the classroom atmosphere. For example, the teachers decided to allow, even encourage, longer periods of uninterrupted play. The teachers then saw

first-hand how beneficial it is for children when they are able to become absorbed in an activity of their choosing.

Joey began to settle down. His tantrums became fewer and less intense. The classroom became calmer as activities became more organized and children engaged in play for longer periods.



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Visit Our New Website

We have a new website! Take a look—there are many ways to learn about the wonderful services that benefit children and families in Arizona. One of our newest programs, the Children's Developmental Center, offers comprehensive, coordinated care for young children who have complex developmental and mental health issues with a fully integrated team-based approach.

There are links to agency programs like the Birth to Five Helpline, where parents can speak with an early childhood specialist for free, accessing age-appropriate development information and resources. Now parents can email their questions through the website and a specialist will call back within 24 hours.

Under "Get Help," check out tips for parents!



Our early-childhood professionals offer sound strategies to encourage healthy relationships between children and their families. Then read some of the many success stories to see how Southwest Human Development has transformed children's lives. Visit us at www.swhd.org.

Photo Exhibit Raises Funds for Children

Portraits of Opportunity, held in October, was a great success. More than 200 guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvre and live piano music as they perused the touching stories of some of Southwest Human Development's successes, and admired the extraordinary accompanying portraits by some of the Valley's

most talented photographers.

The event raised \$75,000 for Arizona's most vulnerable children. Thank you to all who participated. If you missed these poignant, moving stories and photos you can view them on our website at <http://www.swhd.org/how-we-help/success-stories>.

Holiday Giving Trees Help Children

We want to thank CVS Pharmacy and Encore Capital Group for helping children in Kinship Care and Adoptions through holiday "giving tree" programs this year. CVS and Encore employees chose paper ornaments from the giving trees with each child's age, gender and information about their interests. This helped company employees purchase gifts appropriate for each child. We are happy to

report that CVS and Encore employee generosity provided gifts for 51 children from 21 families this holiday season.

Our Kinship Care and Adoptions program helps children who have been removed from their home due to abuse and neglect as they move into new, permanent homes with relatives.

Save the Date for Walk With Me 2011

Mark your calendars! Walk With Me 2011 will be held this spring on Saturday, May 7. It's not too early to start forming your team! To register go to www.walkwithme.org/phoenix or contact Southwest's Lindsey Roberts at 602-224-1759 or lroberts@swhd.org. Proceeds will benefit Easter Seals Southwest Human Development's services for children with disabilities. Help us meet our goal to raise \$175,000 this year!



Southwest Staff Co-authors Book

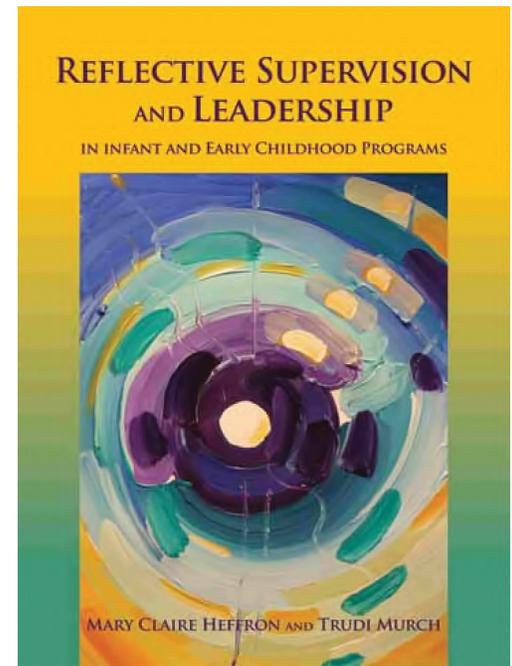
Southwest Human Development congratulates Dr. Trudi Murch, director of our Easter Seals disabilities services, on her newly published book: "Reflective Supervision and Leadership in Infant and Early Childhood Programs."

Dr. Murch, who has a Ph.D in speech-language pathology from the University of Pittsburgh and has been a key part of Southwest's leadership team for over 20 years, co-wrote the book with Dr. Mary Claire Heffron. In it, Dr. Murch shares her insights from many years of pediatric clinical work and oversight of early intervention and other disabilities services. It's an important resource for supervisors overseeing programs for young children. "Our book,"

Dr. Murch writes, "is a practical systematic step-by-step guide for leadership to help staff sustain balance and well-being as they provide quality direct services."

Dr. Murch has provided supervision, training and consultation with programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, Healthy Families, and early intervention, with a deep personal commitment to work with infants, young children and families. Her book is available through the publisher Zero To Three, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, www.zerotothree.org.

Again Southwest Human Development's exemplary staff is leading the way to best practices in the early childhood development profession.



Smart Support *cont. from pg. 1*

Today the consultant reports that the classroom has a "light" feel to it and says that teachers and children are positive and relaxed. As for Joey, he wasn't expelled—and advanced to kindergarten.

This was a wonderful example of mental health consultation solicited to address the challenges of an individual child but artfully broadened by the consultant to help the entire center make changes on behalf of all of its children.

The Smart Support mental health consultants are part of a statewide program funded by First Things First.* Studies have shown that a little mental health consultation will go a long way in reducing problematic behavior in young children.

That preserves the peace in child care, keeps the children in the environment they need to grow and learn—and avoids expulsions, which are increasing at an alarming rate across Arizona and the U.S.

But of course, there's a wide range of potential problems. Here's another case study. Another Phoenix center's focus is care for

homeless children, with a caveat—stays are limited to 90 days. This creates a problematic dynamic: by its very nature, the center sees children already traumatized by their own family difficulties suffering new emotional losses as friends move in and out of the center in short periods of time. Indeed—the departures often came without notice.

Our Smart Support mental health consultant immediately focused on this problem. She worked with the teachers to put rituals in place that welcomed new children into the classrooms, and provided ways to say goodbye to departing friends.

The staff became very involved in coping with the emotional loss taking place in their classrooms, not only for the children, but for them as well.

Children created books about their feelings when friends left the center. Staff created a quiet place for children to retreat to when their emotions became overwhelming. And they set time aside to discuss and reminisce together with the children about their departing friends. Overall, these practices have changed the

emotional climate of this center's classrooms.

Our Smart Support mental health consultants all have master's level training and significant expertise working with children and adults.

Smart Support has been around for just 12 months. In that time, our consultants have supported over 200 centers and reached more than 5,700 children.

Our model for this program is highly regarded around the country, as other states look to establish or expand systems of early childhood mental health consultation. We have collaborated with leaders in several states to consider "what works" with respect to mental health consultation in child care and have contributed to these discussions at conferences and in interviews for national publications.

We are thrilled with this progress as we expand Smart Support to serve children, parents and professional providers across the state.

Other News & Upcoming Events

Southwest Human Development – A Great Place to Work!

Southwest Human Development was voted as one of the “Best Places To Work” for the third year running, ranking number three in the Valley in the category of large organization. The survey is administered independently on behalf of the Phoenix Business Journal and BestCompaniesAZ. The survey looks at employee life, workplace environment, leadership, culture of the organization and management practices. The survey lets everyone in on something our staff already knew—Southwest Human Development is a great place to work!



We would like to extend a special thank you to the following organizations which helped to make our programs a success so far this fiscal year: Ak-Chin Indian Community, the Applied Materials Foundation, Arizona First Advised, Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation through Going Gonzo for Kids, Best Buy Children’s Foundation, The Board of Visitors, Cardinals Charities, The Charro Foundation, CVS Caremark, DMB Associates, Gila River Indian Community, Humana, In-N-Out Burger Foundation, JPMorgan Chase, Larry H. Miller Charities, Life Time Fitness Foundation, Lincoln GIVES, The Steele Foundation, and TJX Foundation.

Southwest Human Development is a non-profit organization.

To make a tax deductible contribution please call 602-266-5976 or visit us online at www.swhd.org.



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