

Economic Development and Quality of Life for People and Communities

Pinal Parent Project

Issue

When families are torn by fighting, abuse, alcohol or drug addictions, with parents too young or too tired to take care of children, they need help. The Pinal Parent Project, sponsored through the Pinal County Cooperative Extension, trains paraprofessionals to teach parenting to high-risk families.

What has been done?

More than 40 paraprofessionals from the Department of Economic Security, Head Start and other agencies are joining with extension volunteers to work one-on-one with at-risk families. The Extension-developed curriculum includes child development, parenting skills, home management techniques, life skills and resource referral. Partnering of families and volunteers works because they can relate to each other. Volunteers range between 16 and 75 years of age, and are of all ethnic backgrounds. They come from the same communities as the family with whom they work.

Impact

During 1999, 1,572 families participated in the Pinal Parent Project. Eighty-nine percent of the participants reported that the discipline they use at home with their children is less harsh and has improved. Ninety-four percent reported that their lives have changed in a positive way as a result of the classes. The program has expanded over the past year to include audiences not previously reached, including court-referred truancy cases, about-to-be-released prisoners, who will be returning to parenting roles, and welfare-to-work (TANF) participants.

Funding

Department of Economic Security
Head Start
Arizona Cooperative Extension

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