



Happy Spring!

April 2009

I thought previous years were exciting! Here are a few highlights from the last three months:

- There is overwhelming community response to *¡Celebrando Familias!* – the Spanish version of *Celebrating Families!* At EMQ-Families First's site, 126 participants enrolled the first night. Now, there are 156 participants! *¡Celebrando Familias!* has three pilot sites: EMQ Families First, MACSA and Community Solutions in Gilroy, and the Latino Community Development Agency in Oklahoma City. In addition, El Bohio in Argentina is using the materials, thanks to an EMQ-FF employee that has an internship there.
- We have trained organizations in Sacramento, El Dorado, and Mariposa counties in California plus Oklahoma City (both English and Spanish versions) and Billings, Montana – made the main paper's headlines in Billings!
- *New Times* (NCADD's Addiction & Recovery paper) published my article on *Can Families Break the Cycle of Addiction?* - copy attached. They have requested continuing articles.
- At the state level, Steve Hornberger (*CF!* program manager at NACoA) and I met with Renee Zito (Director California Alcohol & Drug Programs), Dave Nielson (Deputy Director) and Marjorie McKisson (Assistant Deputy Director-Treatment Programs) to discuss State assistance in disseminating *Celebrating Families!*. The State is interested as *CF!*:
 - Reduces the probability of parental relapse, family and children's risk factors - including those related to abuse and neglect (75% of child abuse and neglect cases are alcohol or drug related)², and the likelihood of adolescent trouble with the law.³
 - Addresses prevention of future addiction of children, Learning Disabilities and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.
 - Increases Development Assets for families and children.
- A panel of Santa Clara County sites presented at the Child Abuse Symposium, with Sonya Garcia – a parent who attended *Celebrating Families!* and now works for EMQ:

I was three years sober and broken – broken – broken. I knew two things were going to happen" I was going to snap and go into a mental institution, giving up my daughter for adoption or I was going to beat my kid, go to prison for the rest of my life and no one would ever know or care about what I was dealing with. These were the only options I knew. *Celebrating Families!* taught me a whole new way of life – simple things, like

- Having a meal together. My Mom didn't cook for us. She cooked dinner for her boyfriend, we had cereal.
- How to breathe when I am feeling overwhelmed. Once when I was driving the car and hysterically crying, my daughter said "Mom it's OK, breathe, 1- 2-3, just breathe." This little girl at 5 was helping me remember something we both learned in *Celebrating Families!*
- How to set goals, "I had dreams but when you live a life like I had, they are just thoughts. I opened up and shared what I wanted. The group leaders allowed me to voice my dreams and showed me the path."

¹ All evaluation reports available at www.celebratingfamilies.net/evaluation_reports.htm.

² "No Safe Haven", National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, 1999.

³ Jeremy Prichard and Jason Payne Research and public policy series. No. 67: Alcohol, drugs and crime: a study of juveniles in detention. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology: 2005.



***Celebrating Families! changed my life.
It gave me hope and self-esteem.***

There is a lot of information available on the website at www.celebratingfamilies.net, including all evaluation studies. Steve Hornberger, *Celebrating Families!* Project Director at NACoA, or I are always happy to talk with you regarding possible implementation and training (shornberger@nacoa.org, 888-554-2627 or rstisch@aol.com or 408-406-0467).

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Attachment: New Times article: "Can Families Break the Cycle of Addiction?"