

Family Fun Event Sponsored by Early Childhood Interagency Council

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The St. Croix County Early Childhood Interagency Council works to increase the awareness of the importance of early childhood development, to collaborate on early childhood projects, and to provide information and resources to families of young children. Partners on the council include staff from seven area school districts (including St. Croix Central), community agencies, preschools, and child cares in the county. The council carries out its mission through endeavors such as publication of the Family First newspaper, providing parent support for young children's social-emotional development, and Family Fun Events.

The Family First newspaper provides information and resources to families with young children. The newspaper is published and distributed three times a year in collaboration with Rivertowns Media. Tami Linden is the editor. Newspapers are distributed to school districts, early childhood agencies, preschools, libraries, and clinics.

Support for young children's social-emotional development and prevention of behavioral issues is addressed through Positive Solutions for Families (PSF). PSF are classes for parents that enhance parenting knowledge and skills. School district staff receive training in Positive Solutions and then offer 5-week parent classes. Child activity sessions occur at the same time as the parent classes so child care is not a barrier to parent participation. Parent evaluations of these classes are overwhelmingly positive, showing an increase of parenting skills and favorable perceptions about their ability to enhance the social/emotional/behavioral development of children.

The School District of Baldwin-Woodville and St. Croix Central recently co-sponsored a Family Fun Event. The event included a fun interactive musical performance featuring Tom Pease, sensori-motor activities for children, community resources for parents, and a free meal. Dr. Molly Gerrish and her students from the early childhood program at UW-River Falls planned and facilitated the sensori-motor activities. Parents also received a folder of early childhood information and resources available in the area.

More than 100 children and parents participated in the Family Fun Event which occurred on Thursday, May 4 at the St. Croix Central Middle School. Feedback from parents indicated that their children enjoyed and participated in the sensori-motor activities and musical performance. Comments suggested that the event was well-planned and carried out, and that parents would willingly attend similar events in the future.

The St. Croix County Early Childhood Interagency Council is financially supported by the seven school districts and other agencies from the county. The Council's important work continues to support awareness of early childhood development and strengthens programs and services for young children and families.



