



Hope & Courage

United Advocates for Children and Families



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Dear Poppy,

Welcome to the first edition of our new monthly digital newsletter! We are always looking for ways we can improve: we appreciate your feedback. If you have any questions and/or comments, please let us know! We look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,
Oscar Wright

CEO, UACF

The Graduates & a Great Lady

foreword by Oscar Wright, CEO

One of my favorite sayings is "Be the change that you want to see in the world." I can think of no better example of this timeless wisdom than the first UACF Parent to Parent Training Program on a school campus. The proud graduates will be walking across the stage at Oakridge Elementary School in Sacramento, CA, April 26, 2010. The class was a 12 week training called Educate, Equip & Support: Building Hope (EES). This curriculum taught the parents how to recognize and cope with the symptoms of mental and/or behavioral challenges in their



From left to right: Steve Lewis, Principal; Cindy Clafin and Vickie Mendoza, UACF Institute; Roseanna Castillo, UACF Parent Partner



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children. This was an unprecedented accomplishment by the UACF Institute for Family and Youth Leadership working in partnership with Equal Start, the premier non-profit service provider at the school. We're expecting upwards of fifty parents and their families to attend this joyous occasion. We applaud these graduating parents for inspiring hope and courage!

One of the graduating parents, a family member of a child having with a mental challenge, has a special story to share with our reading audience. Please [Click Here](#) to read the story in her own words.

Public Policy Updates by Raphael Metzger, Director of Policy and Research



Capitol, Sacramento, CA

I am very pleased to be joining the team at United Advocates for Children and Families (UACF) as Director of Policy and Research. One of the nice things about coming into a new situation is being able to carry in certain external perspectives of the UACF organization. I thought I would share some of my initial impressions of UACF in this introductory article. These are:

California Specialists. Like many non-profit, charitable organizations, UACF is the product of a grassroots movement by a special group of people who have experienced things as they are, and have had the courage to try and create what should be. What seems to distinguish UACF, however, is a conscious decision not to grow and expand for the sake of growth, but to return to a focus on California, the state of its birth.

Consistently Mission Driven. UACF was created by parents, and perhaps this is why I have yet to hear any major discussion or programs or operations that has not deferred to the question, "what is right for California's children and their families?" or "what do California's children and families think about this?". "Subject matter territoriality" is noticeably, and refreshingly, absent.

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Bipolar May Not Be the Right Diagnosis for Some Kids: According to a Panel of Experts with the American Psychiatric Association. by Alix Spiegel

February 10, 2010

Since the mid-1990s, the number of children diagnosed with bipolar disorder has increased a staggering 4,000 percent. And that number has caused a lot of controversy in the world of child psychiatry.

Doctors faced with kids struggling with explosive moods felt the diagnosis was appropriate and said that the bipolar medications they gave to children worked. Research psychiatrists worried that the children were being given a label that wasn't right for them, and saddled with the sentence of a serious mental illness for the rest of their lives.

In a move that could potentially change mental health practice all over America, the American Psychiatric Association has announced that it intends to include a new diagnosis in its upcoming fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual - and hopes that new label will be used by clinicians instead of the bipolar label. The condition will be called temper dysregulation disorder, and it will be seen as a brain or biological dysfunction, but not as a necessarily lifelong condition like bipolar.



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Strategies for Teaching Children to Make Good Choices-from the folks at Sandbox Learning Company

Choice is a big part of people's lives. We decide daily what to wear, what to do, and how to treat people. Teaching children how to make good choices is critical for independence and self-control. This article focuses on a variety of strategies for teaching choice making.



1. Allow Children to Make Choices- Often it is easier to choose for children than allow them to decide for themselves. Unfortunately, lessons learned by making good and bad choices help children become responsible, independent adults. Choice also gives children a sense of ownership in activities. Take time to offer choices, create situations for choice, and reinforce the importance of good choices in your day.

2. Limit Choices- Keep the number and types of choices within reasonable limits. For example, if you let a child pick a snack, give them two or three healthy choices. By providing only allowable choices you reduce opportunities for conflict and create a situation where they succeed at making a good choice.

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