

How to Promote Your Child's Creativity

These days, television, computers, cell phones and other electronic devices permeate our lives. These entertainment media can influence the way we think, feel and react especially when we are exposed to them as children. Psychologist Susan Linn advises parents to actively promote creative thinking and free play and limit children's exposure to screens. Research tells us that the more children watch television, the more they are at risk for childhood obesity, high blood pressure, doing less well in school, and engaging less in creative play—the foundation of learning, creativity, and the capacity to wrestle with life to make it meaningful. Dr. Linn is the Associate Director of the Media Center at Judge Baker Children's Center as well as Director of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood. She is also author of the 2008 book *The Case for Make Believe*.



Susan Linn, Ed.D.

Allowing children to devote most of their leisure time to television, video games and online activities may keep children engaged; however, they limit imaginative growth. "When screens dominate children's lives- regardless of content- they are a threat, not an enhancement, to creative play, and make believe," noted Dr. Linn. Powering down the television, computer and car DVD player will encourage your children to create their own entertainment. Play enables children to express their feelings, explore their dreams and help them gain a sense of competence in a complicated world.

Creative play provides children with opportunities for exploration, transformation, constructive problem solving and for bringing toys to life. Children are deprived of creative play when they see their favorite films and TV programs repeatedly, especially when most of their toys are either linked to what they see on the screen, embedded with computer chips, or both. Then their play becomes imitative rather than creative. "I've come to think of electronic media in the same way that I think about candy or junk food. Consuming it can be pleasurable, but too much of it isn't good for you," stated Dr. Linn.

When summer ends and the temperature drops, moving children indoors makes nurturing creative play more challenging. The goal is to engage your kids in toys and games that cultivate imagination—those that don't walk, talk, or do back flips at the push of a button.

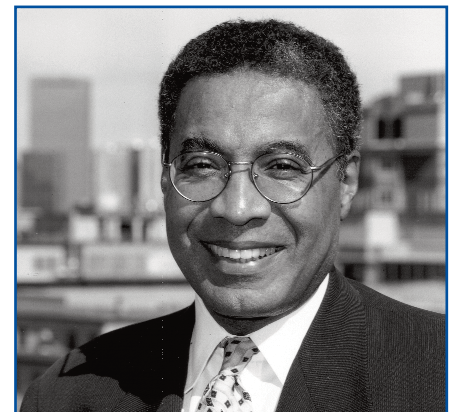
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ONE MAN MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Judge Baker Children's Center has chosen Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint as the 2010 recipient of the Camille O. Cosby World of Children Award, a very special lifetime achievement award to recognize Dr. Poussaint's many years of commitment to the education and well-being of children. The award will be presented to Dr. Poussaint at the Baker's World of Children Award Celebration on Saturday evening, March 13, 2010, at the Boston Seaport Hotel.

An internationally known psychiatrist, Dr. Poussaint is Director of the Media Center at Judge Baker Children's Center and Professor of Psychiatry and Faculty Associate Dean for Student Affairs at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Poussaint is a long-time advocate for civil rights and social justice. He led the Medical Committee for Human Rights in Mississippi during the struggle to end segregation in the 1960s and was recruited by Harvard to provide support and guidance to minority medical school students as the color barrier was broken in the 1970s.

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Alvin F. Poussaint, MD

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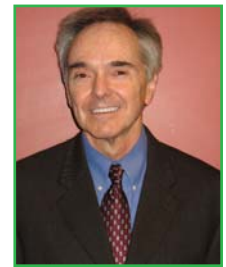
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Getting Evidence-Based Practice to the Children Who Need It

Nine year-old Lianna has a new fear almost every day. She avoids social situations, has never slept over at a friend's house, and is even too fearful to go to school some days. She has seen two therapists. They both talked with her about why she was afraid, but all the talking didn't change a thing. Eleven year-old Evan is disobedient and disrespectful at home and destructive in school. His angry outbursts and flying fists have gotten him suspended from school three times this year. Evan's parents took him to the neighborhood mental health clinic for counseling, but his behavior didn't change. Evan's parents, like Lianna's parents, are worried sick and stumped.



John R. Weisz, Ph.D., ABPP
President / CEO

Stories like these are common. Decades of research have shown that anxiety disorders in children like Lianna are not best treated by talking about why the child is fearful, but instead through cognitive behavioral therapy with "graduated exposure"—i.e., arranging for children to take gradual steps toward doing the things they need to do but find scary. Research has also shown that the most effective way to treat child conduct problems is not child counseling but teaching effective behavior management skills to teachers and parents.

Treatments like graduated exposure and behavioral training for adults are examples of Evidence-Based Practices—interventions that have been tested scientifically (in randomized clinical trials, for example) and found to be effective. While many experts agree that evidence-based practices work and can make a real difference for children and families, these practices have not spread very far into the world of everyday clinical care. To learn to use the practices effectively, clinicians must have extensive professional training plus ongoing case consultation. Training and consultation require time and money, and most practitioners and clinics have little of either to spare. As a result, most evidence-based practices have not made their way into community treatment.

At the Baker we are addressing this problem through research, training, and direct service. We conduct research designed to identify best practices for children, and strategies for disseminating those practices into the community. We apply what we have learned through training and case consultation programs to help community practitioners build evidence-based practice skills—in Massachusetts and others states, as far away as Washington and Hawaii. We are also continually training our own staff in evidence-based practices, and we have implemented a summer treatment program for children with disruptive behavior disorders, a program growing out of 25 years of research on effective practices for children. In these and other ways, we support children and families by helping them access what works best.

Parenting Advice (Continued from page 1)

The toys that best promote creative play are those that lie there until children invest them with meaning. Blocks, puppets, art supplies, dolls, stuffed animals, sand, water, and little figurines that are not based on media characters all nurture imagination. And you can make a great difference by simply 'powering down' and not relying on television or video games to keep your children occupied.

What you can do encourage free play:

- Remember that a good toy is 90% child and only 10% toy. Avoid purchasing toys based on media characters. When children play with a toy based on a television character, they play less creatively, especially right after they have watched a program.
- Provide your children with building toys and art supplies that allow children to create what they want. Avoid kits that are designed only to make one thing in a particular way.
- Encourage your children to transform items that can be found outside, or around the house, into playthings such as sticks, pots and pans, pillows, sheets and your cast off clothes.

For more information on this topic please visit www.jbcc.harvard.edu, and follow the link to the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood's website or the link to purchase Dr. Susan Linn's book, *The Case for Make Believe*.

Judge Baker Children's Center Research Scientist, Sarah Kate Bearman, Ph.D. has spent a great deal of her career working with "evidence based treatments," treatments that have been researched and proven effective. Using evidence based treatment methods may lead to shorter durations of treatment as well as reduced costs for therapy. Dr. Bearman's work has also allowed her to study the treatment of adolescent depression. The majority of children who receive mental health treatment receive treatment from a mental health practitioner in their school. However, little systematic research has been conducted within schools and there is a lack of information regarding the type of treatments used in this setting. With each mental health practitioner using their own preferred method of treatment, the question of which treatment works best becomes difficult to answer, and important lessons about effective practices may be lost. This is what Sarah Kate Bearman, Ph.D. plans to examine in her study, Practice Based Evidence: Enhancing the Evidence Base for Adolescent Depression.

The Practice Based Evidence study analyzes current methods of treatment by watching recorded therapy sessions of adolescents with depression treated by school practitioners. Each of the treatment methods Dr. Bearman observes is categorized with a behavioral code. This coding system will help identify specific procedures that lead to clinical improvement. Once this information is gathered and interviews are conducted with both adolescents and mental health practitioners, this knowledge will assist in developing new treatments for depression. These new treatments will be tested in a pilot study to prove their effectiveness on depression as well as gain feedback from practitioners on their likelihood to be implemented in real practice.

The new treatment approach generated through this study will be developed with input from clinicians, practitioners and patients. "Historically there is a large divide between practitioners and researchers," stated Dr. Bearman. "This study will allow us to work together in a more conversational way and learn from each other to create successful treatments for children. This will be a knowledge exchange as a means to advance children's mental health."

The Practice Based Evidence study may unveil some very innovative treatments currently used to effectively treat adolescent depression. This study is being funded by the National Institutes of Mental Health K99-R00 grant, which is a relatively new funding mechanism to help younger researchers receive grant funding.

TRUSTEE UPDATE



Andrew R. Knowland, Jr.
(Drew)

Judge Baker Children's Center is pleased to introduce Drew Knowland as the newest member of the Board of Trustees. Drew offers a unique perspective as a Trustee. He has eight years of personal experience as a Manville School parent. For Drew, joining the Baker's Board of Trustees in May of 2009 was a way to give back for the positive impact the Manville School had on his son Andrew's life. "Manville made all the difference in the world for our family and for other families who have children with special needs," said Drew. "We were very lucky to have had Manville."

The Knowland family was introduced to the Manville School after their public school system suggested finding an alternate school program for their son. The public school teachers were uncertain how to keep young Andrew under control. As a result, Andrew spent most of his days reading alone in the classroom so that he would not disturb other children's learning. "Once we came to Manville we noticed a difference right away. Andrew was happier and more engaged," stated Drew. "There is a very high level of commitment throughout the Baker to help kids who are struggling."

As a Trustee, Drew will serve as a liaison between Manville's parent groups and the Board of Trustees. He will bring a parent's perspective to the Board as well as insight about the programs he experienced first hand. "I am very excited for my son's future. We will always be grateful to the Manville teachers and staff. This is such a wonderful, caring organization, and I am privileged to continue to be a part of it in a new way."

Drew works in investment management at Foster Dykema Cabot & Co., Inc. and resides in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Fundraising Updates

This summer and fall you helped make a difference by golfing, cycling and volunteering for the Baker. The fourth annual Cadillac Invitational Tournament and the 19th annual Rodman Ride for Kids were both great successes thanks to you, our participants, donors and corporate sponsors. Together your contributions helped raise over \$130,000 for the programs of Judge Baker Children's Center.

Our Cadillac Invitational Tournament took place on Monday, June 15th at Blue Hill Country Club. With 118 golfers on the course and some enticing live auction items, this event raised \$77,550! Thank you to everyone who made this tournament such a huge success. Your efforts and contributions are making a difference in the lives of the children and families we serve at the Baker.

On Saturday, September 26th cyclists and volunteers for the Baker took part in the Rodman Ride for Kids in Foxboro, MA. This was the Baker's fourth year participating in the Ride. There were 43 riders on "Team Baker," as well as 23 volunteers and 20 virtual riders! With the help of our corporate sponsors, including Beacon Equity Partners, we hope to surpass our goal of \$75,000 and receive our additional 15% match from the Rodman Ride Organization. Donations will be accepted until November 20th, just log on to www.jbcc.harvard.edu and follow the links to the Rodman Ride donation page.



"Team Baker" cyclists. Left to right: Kathy Cade, Fred Miller, Doug Hase, Claire Stern.



Golf Foursome Left to right: Paul Chervinsky, Elaine Chervinsky, Debbie Moll, Jonathan Moll.

Taking Time to Make New Friends



Harvard Medical Student Aswin Sekar and his Manville mentee Clayton.

Students at Harvard Medical School are always busy attending classes and filling any free time studying. Despite their demanding schedules many first year medical students choose to be a part of the Harvard-Manville Mentoring Program. As a mentor, medical students are paired with a same-gender student in the Baker's Manville School. Program Coordinator Brina Einstein matches mentor and mentee using common interests and complementary personality traits.

Second year Harvard Medical School student, Cyndie Seraphin, was recently the mentor to a 9-year old Manville student. "Coming to Manville and spending time with my mentee was the one thing I looked forward to all week," Cyndie said smiling. "Our personalities were very similar. We both loved to do arts and crafts. We would have dance parties and make up imaginary games together. It really was a lot of fun."

The mentoring program provides Manville students with a friend and a positive influence in their life, while medical students have a first hand experience with the disorders they learn about in class. "You are able to place a face and a personality to the disorders described in textbooks. The books are so dry; they do not capture the social dynamics that teachers, clinicians and parents have to deal with every day," said Cyndie.

"Being a mentor through the Harvard-Manville Mentoring Program exposed me to experiences that I wouldn't have normally had in the first year of medical school," stated Harvard Medical student and Manville mentor, Aswin Sekar. "These experiences were both instructive and gratifying. I feel like I was able to make a difference for my mentee, and it was very rewarding to watch him make progress." Aswin, who is now in his second year of medical school, still keeps in touch with his mentee through virtual conversations. "My mentee is very computer savvy, so we chat through our webcams and keep in touch regularly," said Aswin.

Approximately two dozen Harvard Medical School students take part in the Harvard-Manville Mentoring Program each year. They spend Friday afternoons together with their mentee doing a variety of activities both on the Baker campus as well as on special field trips. Although the Harvard Medical Students receive course credit for taking part in this program, they participate more for the experience than for the credit. "This is a program that people are passionate about; some pairs are closer than others but in the end everyone benefits from this experience," said Cyndie.

Charitable Giving Through Estate Planning

Estate Planning is more than a Will. It is a business plan for life with the proper instruments in place to ensure all of your wishes are satisfied. Estate Planning means you are prepared to pass on all your assets to your loved ones and favorite charitable organizations. You are prepared to go into a hospital and have your wishes met regarding the medical service you want to receive. You have a succession plan in place for your business, the appropriate life insurance and if you become incapacitated, there is someone named who can legally act on your behalf. Generally, a basic Estate Plan includes a Will, Revocable Trust, Durable Power of Attorney, Health Care Proxy and Living Will. If you have a need for life insurance, it should be owned in an Irrevocable Life Insurance Trust.

A Will is a valuable legal document. If an individual dies without a Will, the assets are distributed to the decedent's heirs according to the laws where the decedent legally resided. This may not be the desired outcome. The Will names the person to take care of all the paperwork – the executor - who also ensures that your last debts and any taxes due are paid, your personal property is distributed to your named loved ones and administration costs of your estate are handled. Further, if you have minor children, the Will is the only instrument that may name a guardian.

The Revocable Trust is the instrument that sets forth the plan of how you would like your assets distributed. This is a creative instrument that can help you take advantage of certain tax benefits that the government provides. It protects the assets from creditors when passed on to your loved ones and can create a nest egg that may last for three generations.

The Durable Power of Attorney names the individual who will take care of your financial needs. This instrument goes into effect should you become incapacitated or are unable to take care of your finances. The Health Care Proxy names the individual who will make medical decisions if you are unable to communicate with a doctor. This individual ensures that you receive only the medical treatment you want versus what the medical profession is required to provide. The Living Will is the instrument that allows you to set forth medical treatment that you find acceptable.

The Irrevocable Life Insurance Trust, if structured properly, allows your life insurance to benefit your family, yet not be included in either your taxable or probate estate. A life insurance trust also provides your heirs with immediate liquidity to take care of whatever needs the estate may have.

How assets are titled is just as important as having an Estate Plan. If assets are titled jointly, they automatically pass to the joint owner irrespective of what you have written in your estate plan. For example, the named beneficiary on retirement plans and life insurance policies is the person who is entitled to those assets irrespective of what you have provided for in your estate plan.

In conclusion, Estate Planning is about taking the next step to ensure that upon your death, your intentions are followed and your assets go to your intended beneficiaries including your favorite charities. By taking just a few extra measures, you will provide peace of mind for your loved ones and ensure that your wishes are carried out in the manner you designate.

One Man Making a Difference (Continued from page 1)

He continues to be an outspoken and effective advocate for poor and minority children, and is frequently called upon as a consultant to the media on a wide range of social issues. Under Dr. Poussaint's leadership, the Baker's Media Center manages the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood and the Camille Cosby Girls Program.

"Throughout his career, our colleague Dr. Poussaint has inspired and shaped the movement for social justice in America," remarked Dr. John Weisz, President and CEO of the Judge Baker Children's Center. "His eloquence has very often made him the public voice of social justice, as well. He has led a remarkable array of initiatives to make the world a better and fairer place for children and families. His work has improved education, health care, legislation, and corporate practices, and he has led the charge to make media a force for good in society. We are delighted to recognize these remarkable contributions by awarding Dr. Poussaint this lifetime achievement award."

Since 1988, the Baker's World of Children Award Celebration has been an event to recognize those who have committed themselves to improving the world for children. Nominees are chosen from the academic, business, medical, entertainment and media fields. For more information on the 2010 World of Children Award Celebration to honor Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint, please call (617) 278-4281.



Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint with his wife Dr. Tina Young Poussaint at the 2007 World of Children Celebration.

After 18 years, Raymond J. Chin, Ph.D., a child and family clinical psychologist, decided to make a unique addition to his practice, a Black Lab-Golden Retriever mix named Plato. Since 2004, Dr. Chin has partnered with Plato, a certified therapy dog, to help him treat children who struggle with mental challenges.

Dr. Chin trained Plato, who is certified by Therapy Dog International, AKC (Canine Good Citizen), and Paws for Reading. He accompanies Dr. Chin on clinical visits with children in schools and hospitals. Therapy dogs are commonly used in conjunction with clinical treatment to help people of all ages who struggle with disabilities and illnesses. These specially trained dogs are known to help reduce anxiety, depression and loneliness while eliciting engagement and social interaction.

Dr. Chin expected Plato to help break the ice with difficult children, but soon learned that he had more unique talents. Plato has the ability to calm children with his uniquely gentle nature and natural affection. His presence puts children at ease and reduces their fear of being judged or criticized. Plato works especially well with aggressive children who want to “train” him by yelling and pushing him. Plato ignores them until Dr. Chin teaches the children how to use positive reinforcement.

Plato is also trained to listen while children who suffer from learning and anxiety disorders read to him. He has often been the catalyst for children up to nine-years-old to read aloud for the first time. By working with Plato, autistic children learn to read facial expressions and make eye contact with a less threatening subject. After children have worked with Plato they are encouraged to use their new skills as they interact with people.

Dr. Chin is president of Deer Creek Psychological Associates, a multi-disciplinary group practice offering a variety of psychological and medical services to children, adults and families in New Hampshire and Vermont. He spends much of his time providing school and child agency consultations for children with neurological, neurodevelopmental and trauma disorders.

In 2007 Dr. Chin was invited to Tokyo, Japan to train counselors and special educators of the American schools of the Pacific Rim. Topics included “Neuropsychology for Teachers: Training Brains to become Minds” and “Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Teachers.” During these trainings, Dr. Chin focused on how the brain functions, specifically the process of memory and learning. He introduced trainees to brain-based teaching approaches that educators could incorporate into their curriculums.

Dr. Chin trained at Judge Baker Children's Center from 1985 to 1986, where he met many esteemed professionals in the field of mental health, many of whom he remembers as “setting the mark for competency and collegiality.” He received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University in 1986 after earning his Masters of Fine Arts from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1975. He was an Adjunct Assistant Professor in Pediatrics and Psychiatry at Dartmouth Medical School from 1987 through 1998.

Raymond J. Chin, Ph.D.
1985-1986



Raymond J. Chin, Ph.D. with Plato,
a certified therapy dog.

** The Alumni Corner serves as a tool to inform all of the Baker community on the success stories that this Center has helped to create.*

Looking for additional information that was not included in this newsletter?

Please visit our website for further details on Judge Baker Children's Center, The Manville School,
The Media Center and all of our research projects! www.jbcc.harvard.edu



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