



# Wellness@WIC

Spring ❖ 2013



## Learning to Respond without Reacting

Mindful Parenting with Sheri Louis, MA Ed.

This quarter, Wellness@WIC led us down the path of Mindful Parenting. Mindful parenting is a parenting philosophy based on a relationship of respect with a child. It assists adults in learning language to use in helping children move successfully through developmental milestones. It allows adults to discern the difference between disrespectful and typical childhood behavior. Mindful parenting helps adults to communicate to children so they will listen and respond. It gives parents and caregivers the opportunity to teach problem solving skills that seek solutions from a love-based philosophy.

The Mindful Parenting philosophy is relevant to all of us. It builds on brain research which shows its impossible to

reason or problem solve when the brain is in a highly emotional state. When the brain is calm and relaxed, it makes it easier for us to connect with people - children or participants! This emphasizes the importance of taking time to reboot and reconnect with our frontal lobe before attempting to engage with another. To view the presentation that was provided to state staff by Sheri Louis visit the Wellness@WIC website here:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/wic/Pages/wellnessatwic.aspx>



Sheri introduced us to an interesting resource, The Peaceful Parent Institute, which teaches cutting edge relationships skills for parents and educators. Their heart based parenting approach highlights that it's okay not to feel okay. When we increase our mindfulness of our reactions, we can respond with compassion even when our child's (or participants') behavior triggers a highly emotional response. In a recent article entitled **Why we explode and how to prevent it**, Genevieve Simperingham shares how "there's a lot of power in observing the sensations in our body and recognizing the feelings that get activated at these times and where those feelings are held within the body." For the full article, visit:

<http://genevievesimperingham.com/why-we-explode-and-how-to-prevent-it>

## Kudos Korner

### Umatilla-Morrow Head Start



Wellness Day at UMCHS is a day for staff and parents to celebrate healthy lifestyle choices and each other. On April 26, 2013, UMCHS staff and program parents celebrated Wellness Day "Through the Decades," by heading to Riverfront Park in Hermiston for a day of fun. Every UMCHS center planned activities that represented a different decade--ranging from the 1840s through the future--in the areas of nutrition, literacy and physical activity. Teams also participated in a "Healthy Cupcake Challenge," where the treats presented for judging had strict requirements for low sugar and whole grain content. The day wrapped up with a one mile "Poker Walk" and an awards ceremony. A good time was had by all!

*"It was definitely a day to remember for decades!"*

- Angie Treadwell, UMCHS WIC staff

# Reboot & Reconnect

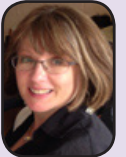
## 4 Stretches to Improve Your Work Day

It's much easier to connect with participants when you're feeling relaxed and refreshed. Taking a few moments to stretch can help relieve some of your stress and reactivate your day.

*Consider taking five minutes of your day to take care of you!*

Click on the link to learn more about 4 stretches you could incorporate into your work day:

<http://blog.innergateacupuncture.com/?p=802>



By Cheryl Alto, RD

## How to Help Others Keep Calm and Carry On

At the 2012 WIC Statewide Meeting, Robin Rose shared with us how we have instant impact. She reminded us that how we treat people in the first 10 seconds impacts them and the quality of our interactions for the next 6-8 hours. Taking the time to think about what pushes our buttons and how our reactions impact those around us can help us be more mindful about the energy we bring into situations.

**Robin Rose teaches people how to bring their best selves forward.** The link below contains handouts from her presentation and will give you the opportunity to consider your triggers and to brainstorm ways to stay calm so you can respond without reacting.

[Click here for Robin's resources.](#)

**Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.**

*~Victor E. Frankl*

## Empathy and Human Connection

**Do you ever wonder** about the lives of the people you pass on the street? Have you been curious about their life story and what experiences have shaped their lives and the person they have become? Approaching others with a sense of curiosity, openness and respect allows us to feel empathy for that other person. When we are in the present moment, our mind can be free of clutter. Only in that space can we consider what another person may be feeling - without judgment, the need to fix, scold, set straight or advise.

Mindful Parenting is based on empathy and the underlying

principles of are very much aligned with the spirit of participant centered services.

This touching video put together by the Cleveland Clinic highlights the compassionate, empathic care approach of asking: "What happened to you", not "What's wrong with you?" By connecting, holding the silence, taking time to fully understand and support one another we can walk alongside the other person, not drag them along or bring them down.

[Click here to watch "Empathy: The Human Connection to Patient Care" on YouTube.](#)

