Talk to parents who are rearing teenagers and you're likely to hear comments about their many challenges. Those of us who have come of age tend to think back on our own teenage years and wonder why it's taking today's adolescents so long to come around.

*We weren't like that. When our parents told us to do something we did it. If kids would just listen, they could avoid a lot of mistakes. We have already been where they are trying to go.*

This probably sounds familiar. But have we really been there and have we really done that? Can life two or three decades ago really be compared to what youth are facing in the twenty-first century? What are some of the real youth development issues? What are some of the social and emotional consequences associated with these issues? Can we offer solutions that will help youth respond positively to life's situations? And what are the key programming areas where youth-serving agencies might focus their time and resources?

Reviews of recent studies on youth development issues confirm that some of the factors that placed youth at risk in the 90s have improved. However, statistics on many of these factors continue to linger at levels that are much too high. For example, teen stress, sexual health, youth violence, and physical health and wellness are still real issues that youth face, particularly those growing up in America’s inner cities.

**Teenage Stress**

We don't generally associate feelings of stress with youth, but as teens make the physical and emotional transition from youth to adulthood, they do experience stressful situations that test their coping skills. Characteristically, youth want to display a sense of control in stressful situations, but their behavior may not always represent their true feelings. The 911 attacks, for example, were a devastating blow to our country. We can accurately classify it as an event unmatched by many of our American tragedies. Needless to say, it was also disturbing for the youth population. While the behaviors of our teens may have portrayed a sense of control and assurance, many of them experienced emotional difficulties as well. Threats of attacks and rumors of wars persist and validate programs that foster building coping skills and resiliency.

**Youth & STDs**

Sexual health issues also create very serious concerns and pose parenting challenges. Studies show that approximately 20 percent of teens in the United States are having sex before they reach 15 years-of-age. Statistics further indicate that only about a third of the parents of sexually active
In the words of Wally "Famous Amos," the opening keynote speaker at the 2003 Urban Extension Conference held in Chicago in May of this year, "There's nothing normal in Alabama!"

Amos, who had spoken with Extension Specialist Dr. Dony Gapasin earlier, lightheartedly joked about the place called Normal, Alabama, home of Alabama A&M University (AAMU) and the Alabama Cooperative Extension's System's Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs unit. But what was evident at the conference is that Extension, the outreach arm of AAMU and Auburn Universities, is indeed anything but normal in developing urban Extension programs.

"Conference participants were quite impressed with the programs that are coming out of Alabama," said Extension Assistant Director Dr. Jannie Carter.

Perhaps participants were surprised at the programming efforts because the state of Alabama often ranks at the bottom in national percentages when it comes to education, poverty, or health. But Alabama can be proud of the fact that its Extension System is being recognized as a national leader in developing model programs for Alabama citizens. Several Urban Affairs programming initiatives were featured at the national conference such as the Relatives as Parents Program.

"Relatives face a variety of legal, social, financial, emotional and/or physical health problems in their efforts to parent a grandchild, niece, nephew, or other relative. The magnitude of this problem requires Extension to develop and design programming to address the needs of these diverse families," said Dr. Wilma Ruffin, Extension family development specialist.

Other featured programming efforts included LegalEase, Dogs as Companion Animals, and the Spanish-language website [Programación en Español]. (Visit www.aces.edu/urban for more information.)

Over 500 Extension administrators, agents, and staff attended the 2003 Urban Extension Conference Meeting the Challenge of a Changing America. Conference events were designed to help participants better understand America's changing urban population, the social issues arising from this change, and the need to create Extension programs that appeal to a diverse urban audience.

Other keynote speakers included Roger Ulrich from Texas A&M University who addressed the interrelations of people and plants in national and international urban settings; Dirk Ficca, Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, who spoke on Making a World of Difference; and Dr. Gary Weaver, American University who closed the conference with a presentation on The New Face of America: The Challenge That Lies Ahead.

The University of Minnesota Extension will host the next (biannual) Urban Extension Conference in 2005.
youth are aware of the fact that their children are sexually active. Estimates reveal that about 20 percent of the people who live in the United States have a sexually transmitted disease (STD), and 25 percent of all new cases of STDs are among teens. AIDS, one of medical history's most fatal STDs, surfaced in the United States over 20 years ago. Current statistics reveal that since that time over 20 million people worldwide have died as a result of AIDS-related illnesses and over 42 million now live with the disease. About half of all new HIV infections in the United States occur in people under 25 years of age and thousands of teens become infected each year. Many teens are not fully aware of the consequences of their sexual behavior. They need to be educated and prepared to avoid some lessons that are best not learned through experience.

### Youth Violence

Youth violence statistics have dropped over the past decade, but still exist at alarming levels. Statistic from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2001) reveal that more than 400,000 youth ages 10 to 19 were injured as a result of violence in the year 2000. And homicide was the second leading cause of death for people ages 10 to 19 overall.

### Youth Obesity

Obesity in youth reigns as a major national health problem with more than 20 percent of U.S. children being categorized as overweight. The problem is attributed to fast food, lack of physical exercise, and a number of other factors. Some associated consequences for young Americans are early heart disease and increased cases of diabetes.

It goes without saying that all statistics on youth do not reflect negative behavior, but the disturbing facts are the ones that need attention. These should prompt parents, educators, and communities to actions and activities that have positive outcomes.

Some youth manage to succeed in spite of adverse situations. They have been characterized as having positive self-esteem, a sense of control over their surroundings, meaningful interactions with mature adults, confidence in adults as role models, and a cooperative spirit. These characteristics must be nurtured over time and are fostered through mentoring, teen leadership, and other programs that provide opportunities for youth to be involved, build self-confidence, and make a difference in their communities. Educators and significant others can begin the process by being there to listen and provide responses that will steer teens in the right direction.

### References


What has been consistent at every national Extension meeting that I attended in the past two years is that Extension is being redefined. The focus is to break out of the traditional mode of thinking or way of doing things. Extension is being advised to take risks, to embrace the new, or to consider the nontraditional. Administrators at the Alabama Cooperative Extension System are working to restructure the organization, while trying to successfully launch a marketing campaign to inform the general public about who we are and what we do. As a relative newcomer to Extension, I suppose my question is what challenges lie ahead as the organization strives to redefine itself? Such a question was answered at the 2003 Urban Extension Conference in Chicago earlier this year.

In February 2002, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) published a report titled The Extension System: A Vision for the 21st Century. The Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) developed the report in response to Returning to our Roots: The Engaged Institution. This is a document developed by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities (Kellogg Commission) that focuses on how state and land-grant institutions might engage individuals, organizations, and communities in ways that are mutually beneficial. The underpinning of each report was echoed throughout the 2003 Urban Extension Conference Meeting the Challenge of a Changing America.

Former Kansas City Mayor Emanuel Cleaver II opened the Urban Pre-conference session urging Extension administrators to "take risks" in developing urban programs. He challenged the crowd to find out what the people want and to use contemporary methods to reach them. University of Illinois Specialist Jane Scherer also shared Cleaver's sentiments in her Marketing, Resource Development and Accountability workshop. Scherer advised participants to meet the needs of their clients, while making programs "relevant, timely, accurate, understandable, and accountable."

The general idea is to create programs that adequately meet the needs of America's changing and diverse populations. Such demographic challenges are being met in the Relatives as Parents Program developed by Family Development Specialist Dr. Wilma Ruffin or in the Spanish-language website developed by Communications Specialist Jean Hall-Dwyer and Animal Scientist Julio E. Correa. (Both projects were featured at the 2003 Urban Extension Conference.)

While conference proceedings centered on diversity, it also challenged participants to look inward and to change the way they think or respond to people and situations. This was clear in the motivational address Renewing Your Commitment to Helping People delivered by Wally "Famous Amos," founder of the cookie company that bears his name. Amos cited familiar insights such as "together everyone achieves more" through the art of storytelling. In addition, conference speaker and Hartford College Professor Dr. Allan Johnson spoke on the issues of privilege and power. While there are variations of privilege and power, Johnson specifically spoke on white privilege.

According to the author of Privilege, Power and Difference, racism is no longer an issue. In its place is a system called privilege. Dr. Johnson stated that each one of us subscribes to this system in our own way and that white privilege is perceived as being normal and deserved. Essentially, privilege occurs when the dominant population believes that it has the authority to determine what is normal or the right way to act, think, or even look in society. And those outside the dominant population are expected to assimilate.

Although Johnson is a white male, he urged all participants to examine our relationship to this system. This form of privilege is a concrete example as to why diversity or the acceptance and appreciation of people, cultures, customs, and what they have to offer must be integrated into Extension's programming efforts as stated in the ECOP report. Furthermore, respecting what people or partners bring to the table, speaks to the Kellogg Commission's definition of an engaged institution.

The engaged institution knows how to integrate research and expertise to help solve community problems. Does this sound familiar? It should because it is the very heart of Extension. However, according to the Kellogg Commission, true institutional engagement involves a seven-step process.

True engagement is making sure that we listen to the communities we serve and adequately meet their needs. It's about respecting those partnerships, learning how to remain neutral if research and the needs of the public clash, and being accessible to the public. It involves integrating scholarship with the mission of our institutions, and making sure that departments or units are in concert with
one another. And it's about determining whether there are adequate resources to implement engagement. In short, it is similar to a self-study, a way in which institutions examine strengths, weaknesses, and resources in order to effectively meet the needs of their constituents when the winds of change begin to blow.

I imagine that a similar process is taking place among committees charged with the task of restructuring Extension. But as the face of America becomes more diverse and farmlands turn into urban sprawl, there should be no doubt that urban or nontraditional programs are meeting the needs of populations across the nation and certainly, here in Alabama. The challenge now rests in expanding the development of Extension programs to further engage communities in symbiotic relationships. This requires nothing short of the ability to transition to the second power.

References


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Negative Peer Pressure and Youth Drug Use
by Peace Dunu

Young people are often described as the leaders of tomorrow through whom today's values will be transmitted to the next generation. It is equally important to know that this "perfect kid," who just months/years ago was the master of the universe and the envy of younger schoolmates, could change to "that bad kid" in such a short period of time because of societal pressures. This pressure comes from different angles, especially from peers, which is not a bad thing in itself. After all, it helps define who we are and how we feel about various subjects in our lives. However, it is how we choose to react to peer pressure that defines who we are as individuals. Our peers can negatively and positively influence us. Peer pressure only becomes bad when we allow it to influence us negatively.

As children grow older, the parent's influence over them diminishes and the influence of the friends that surround them gains ground. A healthy part of every child's development is involvement with his peers. The worrisome aspect of the peer pressure is the negative influences and their outcomes on youth such as drug abuse, shoplifting, teen pregnancies, teen chat rooms, and alcohol abuse to mention a few. This is especially true during the adolescence period as teenagers develop a sense of independence from their parents. It is during this period in their lives that the urge to try new things or to explore the world around them is the greatest.

In such an environment, teens may be confronted daily with decisions about drug use. The truth is when kids make the leap from elementary school to junior high, their exposure to drugs increases dramatically. Recent studies reveal that 1 in 13 sixth graders have smoked marijuana. The figure jumps to an even more alarming 1 in 5 by the seventh grade. This is an increase of nearly 300 percent.

Since most teenagers have a strong desire to conform to their peer groups, parents are encouraged to control the friends that surround them. If the

(continued on next page)
adolescent is hanging out with a group of teens that are involved in sports, and then meets someone who is into drugs, his opinion of that teen will most likely be "he is stupid." Why? Partly because he will embrace the opinion of the teens closest to him. The problem is that the reverse is also true. What then does this mean for parents of budding teens? While many parents have had "the talk" with their teenagers, others have yet to discuss the dangers of drugs with their teens. As a parent, you do make a difference in your child's decision about the right choices throughout the teenage years.

Here are some tips for parents who want to help their adolescent children stay drug free, courtesy of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign:

- Make clear rules for your teens and enforce them consistently.
- Tell your kids you don't want them using drugs ever.
- Know where your teens are at all times, who they're spending time with, how to reach them, and when they will be home.
- Praise their positive behavior.
- Help your child learn ways to say no to drugs so that when drugs are offered to them they will know how to reject them.
- Spend some quality time with each child individually at least once a week.
- Open an ongoing dialogue about the risks of drug abuse, and the benefits of living a drug-free life.
- Let teens know the immediate effects of drug use such as doing poorly in school or disappointing the family.
- Model the behavior you want your teens to learn. Teens pay as much attention to your actions as they do your words. Your own drug use, including alcohol and tobacco has an impact on your kids.

This enormous task of keeping teenagers off drugs should not be left to the parents alone. After all, it takes a whole village to raise a child. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System has many youth programs in place to channel the energy and leisure time of youth into productive activities that help them build their self-esteem, develop their potential and leadership skills, and above all else, develop as good and well-informed citizens of the community, state, and nation.

References


Tips for Youth: Getting a Handle on Life and a Grip on Leadership
by Dr. Jannie Carter

Never accept anything less than the best that you can be.

Prioritize, prioritize, and prioritize! Know what's important.

Success is achieving what you set out to do. Set realistic goals for yourself and work to achieve them.

Take charge of your own life and be a good example. You have to be going somewhere if you want others to follow you.

Inspire someone else to make a difference.

Sometimes permission to lead doesn't come. You have to step up to the plate.

Understand that there are situations greater than you.

Work to change the things you can.

Make every day count and have a purpose in what you do.

Be flexible and embrace change. Change is inevitable and the forerunner to progress.

Worry only about those things that you can change for the better. Then go ahead and change them.

Have a positive spirit and a sense of humor. Laughter is good for physical and emotional well-being.

Be careful what you do, where you go, and what you say.

Be well informed.
Know what's going on around you.

Climb your mountains and learn from life's experiences.

Use common sense!
It can happen to you.
What Kids Should Know About Money
by Dr. Bernice Wilson

No one can argue that children should be taught the value of money. In fact, they should be exposed to educational activities that will encourage them to learn about money at an early age. Experts will also agree that children should be taught how to save money and that saving money should be emphasized as children learn more about money concepts.

Parents can start by identifying an affordable allowance for a child. Instill into the child why this allowance should be spent using a budget, and help the child understand why it is important to stay within a given budget.

Perhaps a parent may wonder at what age should a child be introduced to money concepts. You may find these age guidelines helpful as you teach children about money.

Age 3: A child should know how to identify coins and the amounts of dollar bills.

Age 4: A child should know how many cents a coin is worth.

Age 5: A child should know coins that are comparable in worth.

Age 6: A child should know how to make simple change and to count large amounts of coins.

Age 7: A child should be able to read price tags and identify sale items.

Age 8: A child should learn how to make money by doing extra jobs.

Age 9: A child should be able to make a simple spending plan for the week.

Age 10: A child should be able to save a small amount each week for a large expense, and be aware of how peer pressure affects buying decisions.

Age 11: A child should be able to look for facts about products, etc.

American teens spent an average of $104 per week in 2001 according to a Teen Research Unlimited study. Approximately $172 billion passes through the hands of youth annually, or an average of $3,000 each year. You might wonder where they spend their money. Following is a list of merchandise or goods that teens often purchase:

- 1.9 billion on toys, games, and crafts
- $700 million on clothing
- $600 million on movies, spectator sports, and live entertainment
- $486 million on video-arcade games
- $264 million on "other" expenditures such as stereos, telephones, fragrances, cosmetics, cassettes, and compact discs

Decide with your child in advance how much of their money (earned or allowance) should be saved. If your children have a summer job, they could make more money than they should spend. Also, set an achievable goal to be reached with the savings, i.e. trip, clothing, books.

References


Reading is the foundation for all learning. Yet extensive research indicates that the reading skills of children, particularly those in low-income communities, decrease during the summer months. Furthermore, 88 percent of children who have difficulty reading at the end of the first grade display similar difficulties at the end of the fourth grade (Juel, 1998). A child's school success is greatly diminished if they cannot read well by the end of the third grade. Poor readers at the end of the fourth grade comprise an overwhelming percentage of school dropouts, juvenile delinquents, and prison inmates (Kingery, 1999).

Access to quality reading material should continue throughout a child's school years; however, this becomes a challenge for many children in low-income communities. For this reason and others, there is an enormous need for summer programs that focus on reading, while involving parents in the child's learning process.

To address this concern, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Urban Affairs and Nontraditional Programs unit is piloting a summer reading program in Huntsville's public housing communities called Bucks for Books. This project is being conducted in collaboration with the Family Life Center (FLC), the Huntsville Housing Authority, the Boys and Girls Club, and Girls, Inc. The goal is to instill a love of reading among children in Huntsville's underserved population.

Bucks for Books is available to children entering grades 1 - 7 during the 2003 school year. Each participant can read a maximum of five books per week from a recommended reading list. Every week the child visits the community center to give oral presentations and to submit written reports on each book read to a volunteer. Participants are then awarded $3.00 per book (up to $60.00) that is presented at a special ceremony at the end of the program.

For more information, please call Dr. Wilma Ruffin, FLC Coordinator at 372-4960, Alison Couch at 372-4584, or Cynarra Moore, FLC Program Assistant at 533-6076.

References


The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is known for its programming efforts in serving Alabama families. This event offers thought-provoking keynote speakers, workshops, theme plays, exhibits, and networking opportunities to help participants address cutting-edge issues facing today's traditional and nontraditional families. The theme "Strengthening Family-Centered Communities" will deal with how economics affects families and their communities. So, come join us – register today!

October 15, 2003
Von Braun Civic Center
North Hall
Downtown - Huntsville, AL
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Registration Information
• $45 Early-Bird Registration Fee received on or before August 15, 2003.
• $50 Registration Fee received August 16 through October 3, 2003.
• After October 3, 2003 – NO MAIL-IN REGISTRATION ACCEPTED! (Fees include lunch & refreshments)

For a copy of the registration form, visit us online at www.aces.edu/urban.
Feelings of uncertainty abound relative to who they are; many times their self-identity is wrapped up in being identified with the "right" group. To a large degree they look to their peers, their idols, and to advertising for the "right" look, the "right" products, and for the "right" way to conduct themselves.

Additionally, Generation Y has easy access to shopping and are taking advantage of this access. They are a prime Internet audience as one of the fastest growing group of computer users. It is estimated that 62 percent log on from home for at least four hours a week. The Wired Generation is expected to spend $1.2 billion online in one year, and retail firms understand and are marketing via Web sites and other high tech venues. Retailers also understand that many in this group own credit cards in their own name, or have access to a parent’s card. Both retailers and parents realize the advantages and disadvantages of credit access to youth. And to counteract parents’ concern, many creative forms of start-up accounts are available from digital wallets to prepaid pocket cards and/or gift cards. These techniques have proved appealing to retailers and to parents; however, it is a win-win situation for Generation Y.

What are they buying?
Most teens and young adults are avid consumers of products related to appearance and personal entertainment. According to a market research report of youth purchases, 34 percent bought clothing, 22 percent bought entertainment items, including computers, and food accounted for 15 percent of their purchases. Another 8 percent was spent on cosmetics and personal care items; sporting goods and related clothing accounted for another 6 percent; 3 percent was spent on reading materials; and another 11 percent was spent on other items. (Note: percentages will not add up to 100 percent because of rounding).

Today's marketplace for today's youth abounds in a multiplicity of forms. In an informal discussion recently held with several young adults, it was related that they expect super customer service, big discounts, high-speed e-trading, speedy deliveries, and excellent return policies.

So there you have it!!!

References


Youth & the law: Changing Times
by Kevin H. Crenshaw

"Young boy opens fire in the classroom..." More and more it seems that America's youth are making headlines as juvenile crime increases. Scenes like Columbine and the young sniper in D.C. opened the nation's eyes to a harsh reality facing our children today. Many of us fear for the safety of our children and the general public as it becomes clear that these are more than isolated incidences of violence. We are reminded in a painful way that there are many issues and concerns that need to be addressed in our society. The juvenile delinquency problems manifest themselves in extreme ways as mentioned previously; however, there are many ways in which the youth encounter the law.

The approach by which the law engages our youth is rooted in a history of moral and judicial philosophy. Juveniles were perceived as being cognitively and morally incapable of committing crimes before they were separated out of the adult criminal system. However, by 1825 there were signs that juvenile crime was a growing problem, and soon many larger cities developed their own juvenile jails. Due to the conditions and frequency of abuse in these places, the states stepped in to take on that responsibility. The first juvenile court in the country was established in 1899 in Cook County, Illinois.

Since inception, juvenile courts were different from the adult court system. The significance of this fact is that the state based their intervention and treatment of young people in the legal system on the judicial principal of the state as parent. This gave the state the right to intervene with children even though they were not of the age to be granted full legal rights. Even today juvenile law is created with the intent to protect children in addition to punishment.

This philosophy leads to key differences between the juvenile system and the criminal system. Specific laws vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction; however, there are common trends. Each system holds public safety as a primary concern and violations of the law must be punished. But rehabilitation is the focus in the juvenile justice system whereas in the criminal system, punishment is dictated by offense and the goal is deterrence. Each system targets educational crime prevention, but prevention for a juvenile is addressed by other factors that precipitate crime such as families, schools, and the community.

With regard to law enforcement, both systems are based on constitutional rights, yet some levels of intervention are extended to juveniles such as truancy, runaways, and curfews. Also, the information of youth offenders is more highly protected. Juveniles are also prosecuted in a slightly different manner than adults. The legal action taken against a youth offender is determined by legal facts as well as social factors and age. Juvenile courts are generally confidential and there is no right to a jury in most states. If prosecuted, a juvenile is detained in a separate facility than that of adult incarceration.

Youth and the law have experienced a tenuous relationship in the past few decades. More recently, there has been a concerted effort to focus the juvenile justice system on the offender rather than the offense, with an increase in prevention efforts. However, the effectiveness of the system has come under question again since the early 90s when the country experienced an increase in violent crimes among juveniles. There was an outcry for legislative "crackdowns" and greater offender accountability. Alabama is among most states that made their juvenile justice systems more punitive. This included the addition of transfer provisions that made it easier to transfer juveniles to the criminal system. Also, confidentiality laws were modified to make records and proceedings more open.

The debate surrounding youth and the law is a difficult one. While the numbers indicate a rise in juvenile offenses, there is also significant research documenting educational gaps and shortfalls, rising numbers of children in poverty, and the influx of handguns into our streets. These variables cannot be ignored and the law alone cannot adequately deal with juvenile delinquency.

For these reasons, more efforts need to be made on behalf of youth and our communities to ensure that the issues of the youth and the law are being handled in a comprehensive and sensitive manner.

References:


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Juventud Con Poder De Compra
Autorizado
Por Patricia Henderson

La juventud de hoy día y la generación en los veinte y algo nacieron en una época de adelantos tecnológicos la cual les permite acceso ilimitado a mercados de consumo.

¿Porqué Están Comprando?

La necesidad de ser aceptados por su grupo generacional y la belleza física está entre sus mayores prioridades. En adición, esta generación es uno de los grupos de mayor uso de computadoras y acceso al Internet. Las tiendas de venta al detalle lo saben y están mercadeando via sitios web y otros lugares de alta tecnología. Detallistas también saben que muchos en este grupo generacional tienen tarjetas de crédito a su nombre o tienen acceso a las tarjetas de sus padres.

¿Que Están Comprando?

La mayoría de los adolescentes y adultos jóvenes son consumidores ávidos de productos relacionados con la apariencia física y el entretenimiento personal. Un estudio de mercado sobre los hábitos de compra de la juventud reportó que un 34 por ciento compró ropa, 22 por ciento compró artículos de entretenimiento (incluyendo computadoras), y la comida representó un 15 por ciento de sus compras. Otro 8 por ciento gastó en cosméticos y artículos de cuidado personal; mercancía y ropa deportiva representó otro 6 por ciento; 3 por ciento gastó en materiales de lectura; y otro 11 por ciento gastó en otros artículos.

Dólares Por Libros
Por Alison Couch

El acceso a materiales de lectura debe de continuar a través de los años escolares del niño. Sin embargo, para muchos niños en comunidades de bajos ingresos esto es un reto. Por esta y otras razones, hay una necesidad enorme de programas de verano enfocados hacia la lectura, mientras envuelven a los padres en el aprendizaje de los niños.

Para enfrentar esta preocupación, la Unidad de Asuntos Urbanos y Programas No Tradicionales del Sistema Cooperativo de Extensión de Alabama está llevando a la práctica en verano un programa piloto de lectura llamado "Dólares por Libros" (Bucks for Books, nombre en inglés). Este proyecto es llevado a cabo en colaboración con el Family Life Center, Huntsville Housing Authority, Boys and Girls Club, y Girls, Inc. (nombres en inglés). La meta es infundir entre los niños de bajo nivel en Huntsville el amor por la lectura.

Dólares por Libros está disponible durante el año escolar 2003 para niños entre los grados primero y séptimo. Cada participante puede leer, de una lista previamente aprobada, un máximo de cinco libros por semana. Cada semana el niño se reúne con un voluntario del centro comunal para dar una presentación oral y someter un reporte por cada libro leído. En una ceremonia especial al final del programa, a cada participante se le otorga $3.00 por libro presentado (hasta un máximo de $60.00).
**Consejos Para Tomar Control De La Vida y Del Liderato**
Por Jannie Carter, Ph.D.

- Siempre haz lo mejor que puedas.
- Da prioridades.
- Establece metas realistas y trabaja hacia lograrlas.
- Toma control de tu propia vida y da el ejemplo.
- Inspira a otros a que hagan la diferencia.
- Hecha hacia adelante.
- Trabaja hacia cambiar cosas que puedes cambiar.
- Haz que cada día cuente y ten un propósito en lo que haces.
- Se flexible y acepta el cambio.
- Preocúpate solamente por aquellas cosas que puedes cambiar.
- Ten un espíritu positivo y un buen sentido del humor.
- Ten cuidado con lo que haces, hacia donde vas, y lo que dices.
- Mantente bien informado.
- Aprende de las experiencias de la vida.
- Usa el sentido común.

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**Transición**
Por Wendi A. Williams

En todas las conferencias que yo he asistido en los pasados dos años, lo que ha sido consistente es que Extensión se está volviendo a definir. A Extensión se le está aconsejando que tome riesgos, acepte lo nuevo, o considere lo no tradicional.

La idea general es crear programas que satisfactoriamente puedan cumplir con las necesidades de la población cambiante y diversa de los Estados Unidos. Tales retos demográficos se están cumpliendo en el programa "Parientes Sirviendo de Padres", desarrollado por la Dra. Wilma Ruffin, o en el sitio web en Español, desarrollado por Jean Hall Dwyer y Julio Correa.

A medida que los Estados Unidos se convierte en un país más diverso y las tierras de labranza se convierten en extensiones urbanas, no cabe la menor duda de que los programas urbanos no tradicionales están cumpliendo con las necesidades de la población a través de toda la nación y ciertamente aquí en Alabama.

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**La Juventud Y la Ley: los Tiempos Están Cambiando**
Por Kevin H. Crenshaw, Abogado

Aparentemente la juventud norteamericana está en los titulares cada día más y más a medida que el crimen juvenil aumenta. La juventud y la ley han tenido una relación floja en las últimas décadas. Recientemente, con un aumento en los esfuerzos preventivos, el sistema judicial juvenil ha enfocado sus esfuerzos más hacia el delincuente que al delito. Sin embargo, cuando el país tuvo un aumento en los crímenes violentos entre jóvenes a principios de los años 90, la efectividad del sistema se cuestionó una vez más. Hubo protestas para una ofensiva legislativa y más responsabilidad para el delincuente. Entre los estados que hizo su sistema judicial juvenil más punitivo está Alabama.

Mientras los números demuestran un alza en los delitos juveniles, hay documentación que también demuestra un hueco y déficit educacional, alza en el número de niños en pobreza, y afluencia de pistolas en nuestras calles. Estas variables no se pueden ignorar y la ley por sí sola no puede satisfactoriamente resolver la delincuencia juvenil.

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**Lo Que los Niños Deben De Saber Acerca Del Dinero**
Por Bernice Wilson, Ph.D.

Nadie puede argumentar de que a los niños se le debe de enseñar el valor del dinero. La pregunta es, a que edad debe un niño aprender sobre conceptos monetarios. Las siguientes edades le pueden servir de guía a medida que educa a sus hijos sobre el dinero:

- **3 años:** El niño debe de saber identificar monedas y las cantidades de billetes.
- **4 años:** El niño debe de saber cuantos centavos vale cada moneda.
- **5 años:** El niño debe de saber que monedas comparan en valor.
- **6 años:** El niño debe de saber cómo hacer un cambio sencillo y contar grandes cantidades de monedas.
- **7 años:** El niño debe de poder leer las etiquetas de precio e identificar artículos en especial.
- **8 años:** El niño debe de aprender cómo hacer dinero por medio de trabajos adicionales.
- **9 años:** El niño debe de saber cómo hacer un plan de gasto semanal.
- **10 años:** El niño debe de poder ahorrar una cantidad pequeña cada semana para un gasto grande, y estar consciente de cómo la presión generacional afecta las desiciones de compra.
- **11 años:** El niño debe de poder buscar los hechos sobre los productos, etc.
Presión Generacional Negativa Y Uso De Drogas Entre Jóvenes
Por Peace Dunu

El grupo generacional al que uno pertenece nos puede influenciar negativa y positivamente. Sin embargo, la presión generacional es mala solo cuando permitimos que tenga una influencia negativa.

A medida que los niños crecen, la influencia de los padres disminuye mientras que la influencia de las amistades que los rodea gana terreno. Lo que es de preocupar sobre la presión generacional en la juventud son las influencias negativas y resultados tales como el abuso de drogas, robo en tiendas, embarazo en adolescentes, y abuso de alcohol.

El National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign (nombre en inglés) ofrece los siguientes consejos para padres que desean ayudar a sus adolescentes a mantenerse fuera de las drogas:

- Hágale claro a sus adolescentes cuáles son las reglas y aplíquelas consis tentemente.
- Dígale a sus hijos que usted no desea que usen drogas.
- Sepa en todo momento en donde se encuentran sus adolescentes, con quién andan, cómo conseguirlos, y cuando van a estar de regreso en la casa.
- Haga elogios por comportamiento positivo.
- Ayude a su niño a aprender medios de decir que no a las drogas.
- Dedique tiempo a cada niño por lo menos una vez a la semana.
- Mantenga siempre abierto el diálogo sobre los riesgos del abuso de drogas y los beneficios de una vida libre de drogas.
- Deje saber a sus adolescentes sobre los efectos inmediatos del uso de drogas.
- Sirva de ejemplo en el comportamiento que usted desea que sus adolescentes aprendan.
Adolescentes 2003: ¿Habremos Nosotros Verdad Pasado Por Lo Mismo? 
Por Jannie Carter, Ph.D.

¿Podría uno comparar la vida de hace dos o tres décadas atrás con la vida que la juventud está enfrentando en el siglo 21? ¿Podemos ofrecer soluciones que ayuden a la juventud a responder positivamente a las situaciones de la vida hoy en día? Por ejemplo, estrés en la adolescencia, salud sexual, violencia juvenil, y salud y bienestar físico.

911

Típicamente, la juventud quiere demostrar un sentido de control en situaciones de estrés, pero su comportamiento no siempre representa sus verdaderos sentimientos. Aunque el comportamiento de nuestros adolescentes represente un sentido de control y seguridad, muchos de ellos también tienen dificultades emocionales. Amenazas con ataques y rumores de guerra continúan y dan validez a programas que alberguen el fomento de destrezas de hacer frente y poder de recuperación.

Jóvenes Y STDs

Los problemas de salud sexual también ocasionan serias preocupaciones y representan retos para los padres. Se estima que aproximadamente un 20 por ciento de las personas que viven en los Estados Unidos padece de algún tipo de enfermedad transmitida sexualmente (STD, siglas en inglés), y el 25 por ciento de los casos recientes ocurre entre adolescentes. Más aún, la mitad de los casos recientes de VIH en Estados Unidos ocurren en las personas menores de 25 años de edad. Muchos adolescentes no saben las consecuencias que puede tener su comportamiento sexual. Por lo tanto, necesitan ser educados y preparados para evadir ciertas experiencias.

Violencia Juvenil

Estadísticas del National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (nombre en inglés) revelan que en el año 2000 más de 400,000 jóvenes entre las edades de 10 a 19 años fueron heridos como resultado de actos de violencia. Más aún, la segunda causa de muerte para personas entre los 10 y 19 años de edad fue el homicidio.

Obesidad Juvenil

La obesidad en la juventud está considerada como un problema nacional de salud. Más del 20 por ciento de los niños
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