

PEI **postings**



PEI's Annual Fund-raiser Success

Prevention Education's fifth Annual Dinner/Silent Auction fundraising event was a tremendous success. It was held on March 24, 1996 at the Baldassari Regency in Chambersburg. Chefs from some of Chambersburg's finest restaurants served a feast for those in attendance. The sold out event saw increased support from both individuals and the corporate sector.

More than \$32,000 was raised which will directly benefit PEI's programs for our community's children. The auction items were donated by 83 individuals and businesses in our community. The cornerstone of the auction was a print donated by Trenton State College Professor and local artist Wendell Brooks. The Board of Trustees and the Resource Development Committee would like to extend their gratitude to all those who donated items and those who attended the auction. Executive Director Evelyn Gill commented, "Widespread and broad-based community support and dedicated volunteers are key to the auction's success." »

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Office Expansion Complete

Prevention Education's offices in Lawrenceville have undergone a facelift. The construction and office expansion was precipitated by the decision to add a new Supervised Visitation Room. The agency had outgrown its office space, so the expansion moved employees out of cramped quarters.

The new space houses the expanded Supervised Visitation Program along with the Juvenile, Auto Theft Prevention and Transportation Plus Programs. In addition, there is a new conference room.

All the furnishings and computers were donated by local businesses and individuals. PEI is planning an open house in October, so be on the lookout for an invitation to our "Office Warming" Open House! »



PEI Thanks the following organizations for their financial support:

- * IOLTA Bar Fund
- * James Kerney Foundation
- * Bunbury Company

Children Who Know Too Much

by
Diane Steinberg, M. A.

For many years, it has been the belief of child psychology professionals that all children under the age of ten who demonstrated an advanced knowledge and awareness of sexual behavior or activities were victims of sexual abuse. However, today, a number of these children are identified as "sexualized children." Such children often demonstrate erotic behavior and sexual acts to which they have been exposed.

Where do these children learn such behavior? Unfortunately, it is at their fingertips with the simple switch of the remote control. Simply by turning on the television set in the middle of the afternoon, children may inadvertently observe a steamy bedroom scene on a soap opera. At almost any time of day, children may tune into one of the many talk shows where the host and guest are in a heated discussion relating to any number of sexual issues. If the family subscribes to paid movie channels, the child may have access to other suggestive material far more than the average kiss on the lips. Most cable companies offer a lockbox feature which enables consumers to access certain channels only by code. And in 1998, all new TV sets will be equipped with a V-chip (see article pg.3) which will allow parents to block

certain programs. However this is not enough because almost every form of media promotes sexualized behavior. Sex is the ultimate advertising tool. It is used to entice consumers into buying products, seeing a movie or video, reading a book or magazine. Furthermore, children can easily access phone lines by simply dialing their phones. On-line services offer chat rooms with an unlimited number of sexual topics. Certain internet sites offer on-line sex. Examples abound; sex is virtually

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leaving parents asking the question, "How much is too much?" Many parents believe young children do not understand the sexual themes presented on television, in videos, or in their

discussions. Although children may be too immature to really understand, they will continue to imitate such behavior. It is not enough for parents to shield a child's eyes or fast forward through certain scenes on videos. Furthermore, hiding pornographic material will not prevent the child from looking at it once it is discovered. Children are curious by nature and are always in search of the forbidden--these measures serve to arouse their curiosity more and make them hunger for that which they do not understand. Thus it is necessary for children to be monitored consistently. Their sexual acting out may be

an expression of boredom, curiosity, or the exploration and discovery of their bodies and genitals. Parents can and should guide this energy into more productive and nonsexual activities such as dance, sports, hobbies, and school work. Most children will stop acting out when they are taught their behavior is inappropriate and may result in serious negative consequences. When children continue these behavior patterns after being told "no" several times, parents should become concerned. Scolding is not the solution. Instead a parent must point out that everyone has the right to privacy and we must keep some things personal.

At various ages, some children display interest in sexual activities. Some may touch their genitals or ask where babies come from, or engage in the game of doctor. Parents need to be able to differentiate between appropriate behavior and sexualized behavior. Sexual abuse cannot be ruled out as a variable, but this is not the only answer. Awareness, education and proper supervision will decrease the sexualized child phenomenon and help the child to grow in healthy human sexuality.

Sexualized Child Warning Signs

Ages 0 - 5

- ◆ curiosity becomes obsession
- ◆ re-enactment of specific adult sexual activity
- ◆ coercive behavior towards others
- ◆ behavior which causes injury to themselves

Ages 6 - 10

- ◆ sexual penetration
- ◆ genital kissing
- ◆ oral copulation
- ◆ simulated intercourse

Ages 10 - 12

- ◆ involved in sexual play with younger children

V-chip: parent's Dream or Nightmare

The V-chip or violence chip is a small piece of electronic gadgetry which will allow consumers to block certain programs from coming into their home. The V-chip is one of the major provisions of the 1995 Telecommunications Reform Act, which mandates that all television sets be equipped with the chip beginning in 1998.

The success of the V-chip hinges upon the television industry's ability to frame a workable rating system similar to the one currently used by the motion picture industry. The V-chip will be able to detect programs via rating codes. The chip will block certain programs going beyond a rating limit set by the parent. Using the Motion Picture Association rating as an example, a parent would be able to block all programs, PG-13 and above, from coming into their home.

Proponents say the V-chip will give parents more control over their family's viewing habits. Opponents say the V-chip amounts to censorship and complain about the added cost of \$5 - \$40 per set.

PEI Goes World Wide

Keith Smith, vice president of PEI's Board of Trustees, has been getting lots of exposure as a result of his article, "The On-Line Threat to Children." The article appeared as an early warning to the risk posed to children through on-line chat rooms. It originally appeared in local newspapers last September and is now available on the internet.

Smith posted the article on a Florida based internet web page tying it to a number of keywords including "child abuse" and "sexual assault." Keywords allow people searching the internet to find articles when they type in words related to their topic of interest. As a result, Smith says the article generated 274 inquiries in a six week time frame. In addition to the original web page, Smith says several organizations have sent e-mail to him requesting the article be placed on their web pages.

Keith's affiliation with PEI is detailed in the internet articles, which he says gives worldwide exposure not only to the on-line threat but also to the agency and its mission.

Board President Receives Award

Vince Scozzari, Jr., the

president of PEI's Board of Trustees was among those who earned high



praise from the New Jersey Business and Industry Association. Vince is the vice president of V. J. Scozzari and Sons, Inc. which served as the contractor for Trenton's Waterfront Park. The park received the Association's 36th annual "New Good Neighbor" Award which recognizes a noteworthy community construction project.

Waterfront Park finished its first full year of operation in 1995. The park houses the home ball field of the Trenton Thunder. The team drew a record attendance of 453,915 in 71 games last year. V. J. Scozzari and Sons, Inc was nominated by Edward F. Meara, III, president of the Mercer County Chamber of Commerce. Meara says, "Waterfront Stadium has had the most significant impact on the City of Trenton this century."

Office News

- ◆ Eunice Jadlocki leaves PEI as Assistant Director, but will remain active as a volunteer on the Resource Development Committee.
- ◆ Chris Walsh Donohue was hired as the Assistant Director after two years with PEI doing public relations and CAP facilitating.
- ◆ Juanita Tulloch assumed into the Coordinator position of the Supervised Visitation Program.
- ◆ Scott Gill was hired as the Coordinator of the Transportation Plus Program.

PEI Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday.....8:30 - 6:00
 Wednesday8:30 - 8:00
 Friday8:30 - 5:00
 Saturday9:00 - 2:00

PEI Phone:

609-695-3739

PEI Fax:

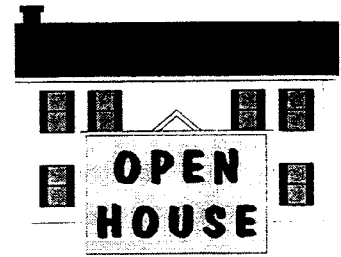
609-695-1116

PEI Programs:

- ◆ Child Assault Prevention Program
- ◆ Crisis Intervention Program for Child Victims of Sexual Assault
- ◆ Juvenile Auto Theft Prevention Program
- ◆ Supervised Visitation Program
- ◆ Transportation Plus Program

Crisis Intervention Sexual Assault Support Groups:

- ◆ Adolescent Victims
- ◆ Victim's Parents
- ◆ Victim's Siblings



**Be on the lookout for
 your invitation to PEI's
 Open House on October
 22 from Noon - 1:30.**



1719 Brunswick Pike
 Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

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