

## A Message from "Ask Christi"

"Ask Christi" is an electronic technical assistance network for practicing PAT certified parent educators. Daily on-line technical assistance is offered along with a monthly on-line issues forum. If you're not already part of the technical assistance mailing list, just follow these simple instructions to join.

1. Go to the Forum web site at [www.mfcf.org](http://www.mfcf.org)
2. Click on the Peavey Parent Resource Center icon
3. Scroll to the bottom and click on "Online Technical Assistance Mailing List"
4. Complete the form and click "Confirm Subscription"

Our next issues forum will be held on Wednesday, August 21 at 10:00 a.m. with the topic "Using the First and Early Visits". We will discuss how to properly prepare for and conduct the first and early visits compared to the regular monthly PAT curriculum visits. I sincerely hope you will join us.

-Christi

Christi McCafferty



# the PAT+ PARENT!

Mississippi Forum On Children & Families  
Peavey Parent Center • 737 North President Street • Jackson, MS 39202

Spring/Summer 2002

## Lawrence County Superintendent Receives Award

John Bull, Superintendent of the Lawrence County School District, received the Forum's 2002 Alyce Clark Award for Leadership in Family Support. Bull's selection recognizes his eight-year effort to build a countywide system of services that support families and increase parental involvement.

The award was presented at the Forum's annual Awards Luncheon held this year in conjunction with the March *Raising the Bar* conference.

After spending several years looking for ways to establish a foundation for these programs, the District elected to start a *Parents as Teachers* program in 1997. The Certified PAT Parent Educator hired by the District split her time between delivering PAT services and developing a parent center.

Currently, the Lawrence County School District employs ten PAT Certified Parent Educators, including two that serve as school nurses. The District also operates parent centers at three sites.

Jane Boykin, President of the Forum on Children and Families, said the success of John Bull is a direct result of his tireless effort. "I am constantly amazed at what he has been able to create from little more than sheer will," Boykin said. "He had a vision of what it would take to meet the needs of children and families in Lawrence County and he didn't let a lack of funding stand in his way, he simply dug in his heels. In 1997, when the Forum was able to provide \$30,000 in start-up funds from our US Department of Education Parental Assistance grant, he totally redefined "start up" by using those dollars to build what I believe is the most comprehensive parental involvement program in the state."



John Bull is pictured here receiving the award from Jane Boykin, Forum President, along with the staff of the Lawrence County Parent Center.

## Calendar of Events

### PAT In-Service Trainings

October 9	Denver II Grenada
November 4	Functional Screening Hattiesburg
November 6	Functional Screening Grenada

### Annual Conference

November 20-22 Jackson

### Online Technical Assistance - "Ask Christi"

August 21	Using the First and Early Visits
September 25	Handling Questions that are Out of Your Field
October 16	Handling Dangerous Situations
November 13	Making Outside Referrals

## The Carter Library Resources and Websites

### Figure This Math Challenge

<http://www.figurethis.org/index.html>

Visit this site for exciting math challenges that the whole family can participate in. Email the site for a free *Figure This Math Challenge* problem book.

### Federal Resources for Educational Assistance

[www.ed.gov/free](http://www.ed.gov/free)

This federal site gives a list of subjects ranging from foreign skills and art to math and science where educators can pull resource guides and get new teaching ideas.

### Head Start Information and Publication Center

[www.hskids-tmssc.org](http://www.hskids-tmssc.org)

This site is a great place to get free publications and materials that focus on a variety of topics. The site also gives conference dates and other valuable information on Head Start programs across the United States.



The Mississippi Forum on Children and Families  
737 North President Street  
Jackson, MS 39202

## **PAT Annual Program Renewal and Parent Educator Re-certifications**

If you missed the June 20th renewal date, the cost for late renewal is \$60 per parent educator.

Call Kim Halford in the Forum office for more information.

## Scenes from the *Raising the Bar* Conference



"Elvis" wins the heart of one Parent Bingo player. The King (Senator Tim Johnson) is pictured here with Helen Wall of the Lawrence County Families First Resource Center.



The "Make Room for Daddy" featured presentation included guest panelists (left to right) Capitol policeman, Eddie Washington; Secretary of State, Eric Clark; Senator Rob Smith. The panel enlightened conference participants on how they have made their roles as father a high priority.



Keynote speaker, Joy Rouse, spoke to conference participants (pictured above) about the importance of a child's environment and how it impacts his/her learning. Joy also spoke about enriching children's environments with age appropriate toys, learning materials, and quality books that should be read to children.



Phil Hardwick, vice-president of MS Valley Gas, is pictured above receiving the Bill Jones Award for Leadership in Corporate Support. Hardwick has long touted the importance of corporate investment in family support programs for employees.

### ATTENTION PARENT EDUCATORS

- # All *Parents As Teachers* material is copyright protected and may only be used by a PAT Certified Parent Educator to deliver PAT service according to an approved site implementation plan or a PAT Site Administrator in the supervision of PAT service delivery by a PAT Certified Parent Educator.
- # Use of the material in a service other than PAT, as well as reproduction (photocopy) and dissemination for purposes other than serving families enrolled in PAT, is restricted by the copyright.
- # PAT training can only be provided by individuals certified as a trainer by the PAT National Center.

*The Parent* is produced by the Mississippi Forum on Children and Families  
737 North President Street · Jackson, MS 39202 601-355-4911 · Fax: 601-355-4813 · www.mfcf.org

## Forum Opens Employee Childcare Center PAT Incorporated

Working parents often miss the opportunity to participate in *Parents as Teachers*.

With a newly released adaptation of PAT, this will no longer be the case. The PAT *Supporting Care Providers* model reaches parents through their child care center.

Employees of the Forum will be the first working Mississippi parents to participate. The Forum recently started an on-site childcare center for employees. The childcare center, located at the Forum's Jackson office, began operation on April 15, 2002.

The idea to open the model center at the office came to Jane Boykin, Forum President, upon inquiring of several employees who were looking for quality childcare in the downtown area. "Several of my employees were faced with the dilemma of having nowhere to care for their children while they were at work," Boykin said. "We just decided that we

could do it—and we did."

The childcare center was established as a model so that parent educators and childcare directors could visit the center and see first-hand how quality childcare can easily be established with hard work, dedication from staff, and a willingness to achieve a better environment for their children.

The center director is Sabrena Thomas of Jackson. She received her AA degree in Early Childhood Development from Hinds Community College. Before coming on board at the Forum, Sabrena had previous experience in childcare centers and in the Jackson Public School system.

"I think it's a blessing to be able to work with children in this sort of setting," Thomas said. "It's hard to find quality childcare

these days and it's comforting for parents to have our children so close."



Thomas is pictured here in the model center with (left to right), Kelsey Thomas, McKenzie Davidson, and Mary Allyn Eastland.

### Could It Be?

A parent educator discovering an article of interest in a publication should add the article to the parent education program's parent resource library. Articles in both professional and non-professional publications should be included. If possible, the parent educator should write a brief summary of the article such as the one that follows written by Christi McCafferty.

Title of Article: "We Cured Our Son's Autism"  
Publication: *Parents Magazine*, February 2000  
Summary Prepared By: Christi McCafferty, MSW, Certified PAT Parent Educator

The National Institutes of Health estimates that as many as 1 in 500 children in the United States are affected by autism, a developmental disability thought to be caused by an anomaly in the brain. But according to many recent studies, the incidence is rapidly rising.

Finally there is research to back what many parents have been saying for 20 years: dairy and wheat products exacerbate the symptoms of autism. Researchers from Norway and England have validated these parents' reports. It is theorized that a subtype of children with autism break down milk protein (casein) into peptides that affect the brain in the same way that hallucinogenic drugs do. Scientists had discovered compounds containing opiates – a class of substances including opium and heroin – in the urine of autistic children.

The other type of protein being broken down into a toxic form was gluten – found in wheat, oats, rye and barley, and commonly added to thousands of packaged foods.

*In addition to her role operating the "Ask Christi" On-line Technical Assistance Service, Christi McCafferty is also the aunt of an autistic adolescent.*

### Book Recommendations from the Peavey Parent Center Staff

*A Framework for Understanding Poverty*  
by Dr. Ruby Payne

This book will help you become more aware of the reasons why certain things happen in the classroom and how you can better respond to the situations.

To purchase your own copy call toll free 1-800-424-9484 or log onto the website [www.ahaprocess.com](http://www.ahaprocess.com).

*Eager to Learn: Educating our Preschoolers*  
National Research Council

This book was recommended by keynote speaker, Joy Rouse, at the *Raising the Bar* conference. The book focuses on early education and care for children aged two to five. Most intriguing, it shows how very early in life learning really begins. Order online at [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu) and receive a 20% discount.