

**PROSPER
PARTNERSHIPS**

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- **Community Videos to promote PROSPER!**
- **Last chance to register for the 2005 Statewide Meeting!**

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PROSPER Partnerships

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

Community Videos will Promote PROSPER

We are preparing promotional videos for each of the community PROSPER teams. Staff from the university is working with your team leaders to take video footage of team leaders, team members, parents, SFP facilitators, or teachers, talking about the PROSPER programs in your communities. There will be some footage in each video that is common to all of the videos—explaining what PROSPER is and how it is a partnership with the univer-



sity. Most of the footage will be unique to each community. We hope that several of these videos will be available to show at the

statewide meeting. If you come to the statewide meeting, you may be able to see yourself or others from your community on your local video. You may also be able to see the videos from the other communities. The purpose of these videos is to give you a tool to promote your local PROSPER team and prevention programs with community groups.

Last Chance to Register for the 2005 PROSPER Statewide Meeting!

Although the official registration date has passed, it's not too late to register for the 2005 PROSPER Statewide Meeting. The statewide meeting for all PROSPER team members is May 12 and 13 at the Arrowwood Resort in Okoboji. The meeting starts at noon on Thursday, May 12 and ends with lunch on Friday, May 13. PROSPER will pay for your travel expenses, your meals, and overnight lodging at the resort. If you need to travel the night before, PROSPER will pay for your overnight lodging on Wednesday May 11, as well. The Arrowwood Resort has many recreational facilities including indoor tennis courts, an indoor pool, racquetball courts, workout equipment, and a putting green. Bring casual clothes

so that you can take advantage of these facilities in the evening.

The focus of the meeting is sustainability. The research is now focused on how teams sustain the prevention programs they have been implementing for the past few years. You will have the opportunity to share what has worked for your team and learn from other teams. The keynote speaker will be Mo Dana, director of the Des Moines Arts Festival, who will be talking to us about acquiring funding. Several of us have heard her speak and agree that she is a dynamic and interesting speaker who will inspire your team.

On the evaluation forms you

filled out at the end of last year's statewide meeting, you indicated that having the meeting close to a weekend would give you the opportunity to stay over and enjoy the resorts on Okoboji on Saturday and Sunday. One team has indicated that it would like to stay an extra day and work on team development issues and PROSPER will pay for an extra night's lodging to make that possible. If your team has a similar request, please let us know.

If you want to register for the conference or have questions about the conference, contact Catherine Webb at 515-294-1426 or email cwebb@iastate.edu. We hope to see you there!



Katie Hegland is a member of the Hampton-Dumont PROSPER team

"I think its a good program for families to be involved in. I also think it's a great team to be a part of."

New
PROSPER
PC
Eugenia
Hanlon

PROSPER Youth Leader Interview

Katie Hegland (Junior, Hampton-Dumont). Date: January 26, 2005

What activities are you involved in at school and in the community?

I am in volleyball. I am in band and jazz band. I am also a part of the Hampton-Dumont Prosper team and a Local Arranger for our SFP sessions.

What are your favorite subjects in school? What do you want to do in the future?

My favorite subject is Chemistry and I hope to someday go into the Optometry field.

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy hanging out with friends, going to movies, and taking pictures.

What is your favorite book or magazine?

I have a lot of favorite books, I can't choose just one.

What is your favorite music?

country

What is your favorite pigout food?

cereal

Who has influenced you the most in your life?

my mom

How did you get involved with

PROSPER? What motivated you to get involved?

My mom has been a facilitator since the program began and so I just babysat at the SFP sessions at first. I also knew Justin and he was already a part of the team so both my mom and Justin got me started. Then the team just asked me to join.

What are your thoughts on PROSPER?

I think it is a great program and I think its a good program for families to be involved in. I also think it's a great team to be a part of.

What do you like or not like about being a part of PROSPER?

I like that even though I am younger than a lot of the people on my team, they still make me feel like I am a part of them. I also like that they are flexible with everyone's schedules and try to fit meetings in so they work for everybody.

How do you see PROSPER working in your community's future?

I think that we will get help from our community to keep the program going. I also think that we will come up with new

recruiting ideas to keep the families coming to the sessions.

What advice would you give to adults?

Try to have fun and don't be so serious all the time.

If you could change anything about the PROSPER project what would you change?

Don't limit it just to 6th grade families. There are a lot of other families that need help out there.

How has PROSPER changed your life, especially in regard to your relationships with peers and family?

I sit in on most of the SFP sessions and Ive learned a few things about how to deal with stress and stuff like that. My mom is also a facilitator and my brother has gone through the program so there are a few people in my family who know what it's all about.

Do you have any other general comments or is there something you would like to say to everyone on the PROSPER Project across Iowa?

I think PROSPER is a great program!

New PROSPER PC



Eugenia Hanlon is the newest Prevention Coordinator on the PROSPER project. Eugenia is a Family life field specialist for ISU Extension, housed in Calhoun county Iowa. In addition to her PROSPER PC role, she serves half time in a 9 county area, working with parenting, child care, and aging and stress education. Eugenia has been with Extension for 8 1/2 years. Welcome to PROSPER, Eugenia!

Jane Ann Stout Celebrates 30 years

Congratulations to JaneAnn Stout as she celebrates 30 years of working in extension. JaneAnn is a co-investigator on the PROSPER project. She is an associate dean in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences and is program leader for ISU Extension to Families. In this picture, JaneAnn is on the left and her secretary, Barb Negri, is on the right.



*Jane Ann Stout
and her
Secretary,
Barb Negri*

Data Collection 2005

As spring quickly approaches, so do the data collection activities for 2005. Here's a quick overview.

In-school Assessments: This year we will be conducting the in-school surveys with seventh and eighth graders – a whopping 6500 students in Iowa alone! Like before, we have to be cautious of intervention and booster session timelines – the programs must be completed before we can collect that school's data. So don't be surprised if you hear from someone asking about "end dates" later this month. Letters will go out to the families in March as we plan to start the in-school data collection in April.

In-home Interviews: The in-home interview contains two written questionnaires and a videotaped exercise. Originally, we set out to interview a sub-sample of 600 families in Iowa. For the **pretest**, we interviewed 597 families. Approximately six months later (and after all community based interventions were completed) we began our post-test interview – *and re-*

tained 86% of our original sample! We were ecstatic to get such a high retention rate, especially since tracking families over time can prove to be difficult. For example, when a family in our sample moves to a new community, we still attempt to interview them. 2004's **post-test** took us out-of-state – following families to Michigan and Georgia, to name a few. This spring, we will begin the "**one year follow up**" with the seventh graders and their families that have participated in the pre and post-test in-

"We were ecstatic to get such a high retention rate, especially since tracking families over time can prove to be difficult."

home interviews. Again, we need to make sure that the in-school programming (Project Alert, All Stars and Life Skills Training) has been completed at the school before we begin the in-home interviews. We are planning to start in April and have the data collection continue through the summer.

As part of the in-home interview, we

obtain permission from the student and his/her parent/guardian to gather additional school related data. We request information such as grade point averages, attendance, and basic skills scores. In addition, we ask a core subject teacher (math, English, science, etc) to fill out a brief survey about each student. This provides crucial insights to us about the social and academic adjustment of these students.

Community Interviews/Process

Evaluations: Thanks to your cooperation, we have completed the computer assisted personal interviews that most of you participate in with a 98% retention rate! We are slated to begin these interviews again in October/November. Currently, we interview approximately 150 people in Iowa, covering both intervention and control communities.

We look forward to seeing you all in Okoboji for the State Meeting in May!

In the meantime, if you have any data collection questions feel free to call Jen Ensley at 1-877-251-6516 or Jessica Clem at 1-866-277-5570.

Holle Smith Recognized



In November, the Project Family Partnership Award was awarded to Holle Smith, Emmet County Extension Education Director and leader of the Estherville PROSPER team. Holle's award was based on her leadership of the PROSPER team in Estherville in collaboration with Estherville Lincoln Central School.

project due to Holle's leadership.

The PROSPER project has been embraced in the community and is seen as a wonderful opportunity for the youth, families, and community. Funds have been secured to sustain the offering of the Strengthening Families program again.

The youth and adults on the PROSPER team have exhibited exemplary leadership skills in the PROSPER

In this picture from Iowa's 4th Learning Community meeting, Holle discusses team functions with other Extension personnel,

Holle Smith is Emmet County Extension Education Director and leader of the Estherville PROSPER TEAM

Doug Thompson Retires



"We thank Doug for his leadership of the PROSPER team during the past three years."

Doug Thompson, the extension team co-leader of the Winterset PROSPER team, has announced his retirement effective April 30, 2004. We thank Doug for his leadership of the

PROSPER team during the past three years. Doug is the County Extension and Education Director in Madison County. In this picture, Doug is on the right and extension co-leader Jeff

Macomber is on the left. Doug will be retiring in Wisconsin and has accepted a part-time position with the extension service there. Enjoy your retirement, Doug!

From the Parents of Fort Dodge Youth

The following letters to the editor were written by parents of Fort Dodge PROSPER youth, and appeared in the *Fort Dodge Messenger*.

To the editor,

We recently attended "strengthening families," a program which is offered to parents of sixth-graders in our community. What a wonderful experience this was. We had heard about this program before but always assumed it was only for families with a "troubled" child. When our son brought the sign-up

sheet home from school and wanted to attend, we gladly agreed, even though we have no issues with him beyond sibling rivalry.

This program brought us closer together with him and our other children. We now have a weekly family meeting time where we can talk freely about things that may be bothering one or all of us without being critical. The parent's session was also good for us. We saw that other parents have the same issues as us with sibling rivalry, stress, chores, time management, etc. We

strongly encourage families to attend if this program is offered in the future. A big "thank you" to our wonderful teachers and the cook for the delicious meals provided. A very special "thank you" to the sponsors because without you opening your hearts and pockets, this program wouldn't have been offered to so many families. What a wonderful contribution you have all given to our community.

Duane and Mary Dornath
Fort Dodge

"We now have a weekly family meeting time where we can talk freely about things that may be bothering one or all of us without being critical."

To the editor,

Recently, my daughter and I had the opportunity and privilege to attend a class offered to sixth graders called Strengthening Families. What a valuable way to spend our time. We had great meals, met lots of new friends, learned parenting

skills, and the teachers were outstanding. The kids were offered an incentive when attending the class. After the first night my daughter said she would attend even if there was no incentive. She had such a great time. I would like to thank all who donated to make this wonderful class possible and to all who

taught the classes. We encourage you to take the class if it is offered to you. It is a learning experience. Thank you.

Carla and Ciera Van Alstine Schreier
Fort Dodge

Learning From Others: The PROSPER Learning Community

Sharing problems, solutions, and brainstorming ideas. Having the opportunity to learn from others. Listening to how others are handling the same issues you are facing. Understanding the big picture and connecting to all those involved.

These are some of the comments from PROSPER team leaders who are participants in the PROSPER Learning Community. Bringing people together to share ideas and listening to how others solve problems is the essence of a learning community. As one team leader put it, "realizing you are not sitting out there by yourself, but are connected to a larger effort," is critical to making the program more effective.

As PROSPER moves into the final years of federal funding, it is critical that the teams begin to learn from each other and from everyone's experiences. Therefore, PROSPER

has created a learning community. As Ron Miller states in his article *Philosophies of Learning Communities*, "...the learning community approach is rooted in the belief that there are many legitimate ways to learn..." and "...the recognition of diverse ways of learning reflects a belief that education and other social institutions need to be responsive to people's experience and understanding...".

This is exactly the intent of the PROSPER learning community. With just two learning community sessions complete, it is evident from the comments of the team leaders that a learning community environment is being achieved.

The first learning community session was held October 14, 2004 and focused on PROSPER accomplishments, barriers to those accomplishments, and future activities

planned. The second learning community session, held December 6, 2004, focused on tips for implementing the "Strengthening Families Program" and how to share the impact and benefits of PROSPER within the community. The third learning community session was held on February 23. This session focused on team member roles and expectations, the relationship with the schools and the school co-leaders, and using data. A fourth meeting is being planned for this summer.

With the first three sessions, the foundation has been laid for a strong PROSPER learning community. An environment of comfortable sharing and learning has been created, thus enabling participants to learn from everyone's experience. To read more about the Iowa PROSPER learning community check out the PROSPER website:

<http://prosperr.ppsi.iastate.edu/>



Special Section

On April 6th, Fort Dodge PROSPER Team Leaders and Facilitators met to share PROSPER success stories, and to recognize a year of accomplishment.

“They get to help make up the rules, and that applies in life as well, and at home. When the kids help make up the rules, they have ownership of them.”



Fort Dodge Team Leader Paulelda Gilbert thanks the team for a successful year.



“Strengthening Families helps to reinforce their right to make their own choices... and not to follow blindly.”



Sheila Stumph, at-risk coordinator at St. Edmond’s School, shares highlights of the SFP in-school sessions.

“The group of adults that we had did not want to end”

Liddy Hora

Thanks to Strengthening Families Program Supporters



“It only costs about \$4,000 dollars a year to educate a kid, and it costs \$18,000 a year to keep them in prison”

Strengthening Families Program funders receive recognition and thanks from the teams

Local businesses and community agencies contributed over \$20,000 to keep the Strengthening Families Program going in Fort Dodge.

Contributors include:

Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities

Community Action Network

Fort Dodge School Foundation

First Presbyterian Church

Fort Dodge Animal Health

Interfaith Forum Ministries

Webster County Farm Bureau

Hy-Vee/Drug Town

Sertoma Sundowners

Optics Plus

Steve and Kelley Roe

A-1 Home Health care

Fort Dodge Ford, Lincoln, Mercury, Toyota

Nestle Purina Pet Care

Ted Huggins

Jim Patton

Noon Kiwanis.



Liddy Hora and Ryan Reisner Share success stories with the team





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The Pennsylvania State University
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PROSPER is a cooperative project of Iowa State University and Penn State University, investigating ways to build networks with schools, state extension services, universities, and community members, to provide life-skills-enhancing training for youth and families.

"Partnering for Capable Youth and Families"



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