



## BACKGROUND OF PARENTS PLUS

In 1990 the United Way Neenah/Menasha commissioned a survey with St. Norbert College Survey Center to study child care in the Fox Cities. As a result of the survey, it was found that there were gaps in services to parents that were outside the realm of child care. One of the gaps was home visiting for all parents.

The board of directors for the Child Care Initiative (then an initiative of United Way Neenah/Menasha) and the initiative's director, Sue Werley, met and came up with a home visiting model. After researching different models they decided that Parents as Teachers would be the model they would implement. Werley began to look for money for the pilot. At about the same time The Child Care Initiative of the Fox Cities became their own 501(c)(3) agency and Werley was the director.

Werley wrote for and got a grant from the Community Foundation to fund a small pilot program for 30 families. Then Werley wrote a Learning Assistance grant with the WI Department of Public Instruction and got another \$30,000 to visit families in Neenah-Menasha school districts. The money ran out in June 1995. At the same time, United Health, which was brand new after the merging of several entities, took the initiative under their wing until more money was found. It became necessary to lay off the parent educators for lack of funding.

Werley had been following the Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) money for about a year with Parents as Teachers National Center informing her of the status of the legislation. Eric Smith, Mary Jo Tittl and Werley met in Beaver Dam in June to map out strategy. Mary Jo and Sue only knew Eric a little, as he had done a workshop for the Learning Assistance Grants. As soon as the request for proposals was announced, the team began to write. Parents Plus was one of 28 PIRCs funded in the first round. They had

anticipated funding 45, but only 28 met the standards. Thus Parents Plus of Wisconsin was begun.

Parents Plus had applied for the United States Department of Education grant under the fiscal agent of United Health Group in Appleton in 1995 and ThedaCare (formerly United Health Group) in 1999. As their priorities changed, ThedaCare would no longer support Parents Plus as a community program. A new fiscal agent would be solicited when applying in 2003.

In 2003 Parents Plus applied for the U.S Dept. of Education grant with Community Advocates in Milwaukee as the fiscal agent. With the emphasis of this grant being No Child Left Behind and a number of the schools in Milwaukee "in need of improvement" Milwaukee seemed the logical choice. In 2005, Parents Plus was told that Community Advocates could no longer be the fiscal agent. Thus, it seemed time to become independent and with the help of Anick and Associates Parents Plus pursued nonprofit status.

In August, 2005 Parents Plus of Wisconsin applied for a nonprofit status as Parents Plus, Inc., formed a Board of Directors and adopted bylaws with the fiscal year being October - September. Employees continued on Community Advocates health insurance until January when Parents Plus policy would begin.

In October, 2005 Susan Werley resigned as director but stayed on part-time as a consultant until the end of December. Susan Rodriguez was named director by the Board of Directors in November.

### **United States Department of Education Parental Assistance Program Grant**

1995 - Sue Werley, Parents Plus of WI director, with the help of Mary Jo Tittl, and Eric Smith wrote and received \$468,000 United States Department of Education Parental Assistance Program federal grant under United Health Group as the fiscal agent. The focus was early childhood development. Pilot sites included: Sheboygan, CESA #9 Tomahawk, Milwaukee Rosalie Manor and the Fox Valley Family Resource Centers (FRCs).

1999 - Sue Werley, Parents Plus of WI director, and staff, along with Eric Smith applied for \$745,000 United States Department of Education

Parental Information and Resource Centers grant under ThedaCare (formerly United Health Group) as the fiscal agent. The focus of this grant was to work with schools to develop School Action Teams. Parents Plus collaborated with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to train Action Teams through out the state. A pilot project was developed to train Action Teams in CESA #7 (Green Bay, Plymouth, and Sheboygan). Continued with the Parents as Teachers early childhood focus and added two family resource centers to include seven FRC partners: Sheboygan, Lincoln County (formed two sites in CESA #9, Tomahawk & Wausau), Milwaukee Rosalie Manor, Fox Cities, Eau Claire and Fond du Lac.

2003 - Sue Werley, Parents Plus of WI director, and staff, along with Eric Smith applied for \$707,000 United States Department of Education Parental Information and Resource Centers grant under Community Advocates as the fiscal agent. The focus of this grant was No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and to work with schools identified for improvement (SIFI). Parents Plus continued with the Parents as Teachers early childhood focus. Contracts for Rosalie Manor (Milwaukee) and CESA #9 (Tomahawk) were discontinued while La Causa and St. Vincent Family Resource Centers were contracted as new partners in Milwaukee. The seven FRC partners were Sheboygan, Lincoln County (Wausau), Fox Cities, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, La Causa and St. Vincent.

Other contracted partners were:

- WI Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, and Support to distribute educational information about special needs issues.
- Milwaukee Black Alliance for Educational Options to disseminate information on public school choice, supplemental educational services
- Institute for the Transformation of Learning (Marquette University) to perform school audits and internal school self-assessment.

2006 - Susan Rodriguez, Parents Plus Inc. director, and staff, along with Eric Smith reapplied for the United States Department of Education Parental Information and Resource Centers grant as our own nonprofit. Parents Plus was awarded \$664,109 with increased funding during the 5 year grant cycle. The focus of this cycle was to work primarily with Title I schools to increase parental involvement. Parents Plus continued with

the Parents as Teachers early childhood focus. The six FRC partners are Sheboygan, Lincoln County (Wausau), Fox Cities, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, and La Causa Family Resource Center.

Other contracted partners were:

- Great Lakes Intertribal Council to distribute educational information about special needs issues.
- UW Milwaukee Center for Urban Initiatives and Research for database development.

**Children's Hospital Child Abuse Prevention The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project.**

2001 - Grant allocation of \$24,000 for November 2001 - November 2002 from Children's Hospital Child Abuse Prevention to administer The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project. Another \$3,000 was awarded by Children's Trust Fund to assist in funding this project. This is flow through money.

2002 - Grant allocation of \$53,100 for November 2002 - December 2003 from Children's Hospital Child Abuse Prevention to administer The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project. This is flow through money.

2004 - Grant allocation of \$39,547 for January - December 2004 (changed the grant cycle to January) from Children's Hospital Child Abuse Prevention to administer The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project. This is flow through money.

2005 - Grant allocation of \$41,000 for January - December 2005 from Children's Hospital Child Abuse Prevention to administer The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project. This is flow through money.

2006 - Grant allocation of \$27,488 for January - September 2006 from Children's Hospital Child Abuse Prevention Fund to administer The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project. This is flow through money. Parents Plus receives a 5% administrative fee. An additional contract covered the remainder of the year.

2007 - Grant allocation of for January - December 2007 from Children's Hospital Child Abuse Prevention Fund to administer The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project. This is flow through money. Parents Plus receives a 10% administrative fee.

#### **Brighter Futures Best Friends/Best Men Grant**

2004 - Grant allocation of \$26,433 for January - December 2004 from MPS, Center for Self Sufficiency to administer the Brighter Futures Best Friends/Best Men and the SIG/FAST grant.

#### **Parents Are Key**

2005 - In the fall of 2005, COA Youth and Family Services (COA) and Parents Plus, Inc. began piloting an integrated model which combined two early childhood programs recommended by the U.S. Department of Education in hopes of future funding. These programs are Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPPY), both evidence-based, highly effective home visitation models which advocate parents as their child's first and best teacher.

2006 - In July, The Greater Milwaukee Foundation funded Parents Are Key for \$180,000 over two years. Parents Plus is the lead agency and partners with COA and La Causa Family Resource Center on this project. Later in 2006 additional awards of \$50,000, \$1,000 and \$25,000 were granted by the Foundation. This program is also funded by the U.S. Department of Education and United Way Milwaukee.

#### **Wisconsin Alliance for Healthy Marriage**

2006 - In June, Susan Rodriguez and Dawn Groshek of Rosalie Manor Community and Family Services applied to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families for a Promoting Healthy Marriages grant. The overall purpose of this project is to prepare low income expectant/new parents with the tools to form and sustain healthy marriages and to expand and strengthen parents' knowledge of early childhood development. In October Parents Plus as lead agency was awarded \$549,629. Parents Plus continued with the Parents as Teachers early childhood focus in this grant. The six FRC partners are Sheboygan, Fox Cities, Spanish Centers of Racine/Kenosha,

Fond du Lac, La Causa Family Resource Center and the Family Resource Center of Sherman Park.

Other contracted partners were:

- Rosalie Manor Community and Family Services to provide marriage education, home-based early childhood education, jobs skills training and financial literacy.
- Jericho Resources for advertising and materials development.
- Policy Studies, Inc. for evaluation