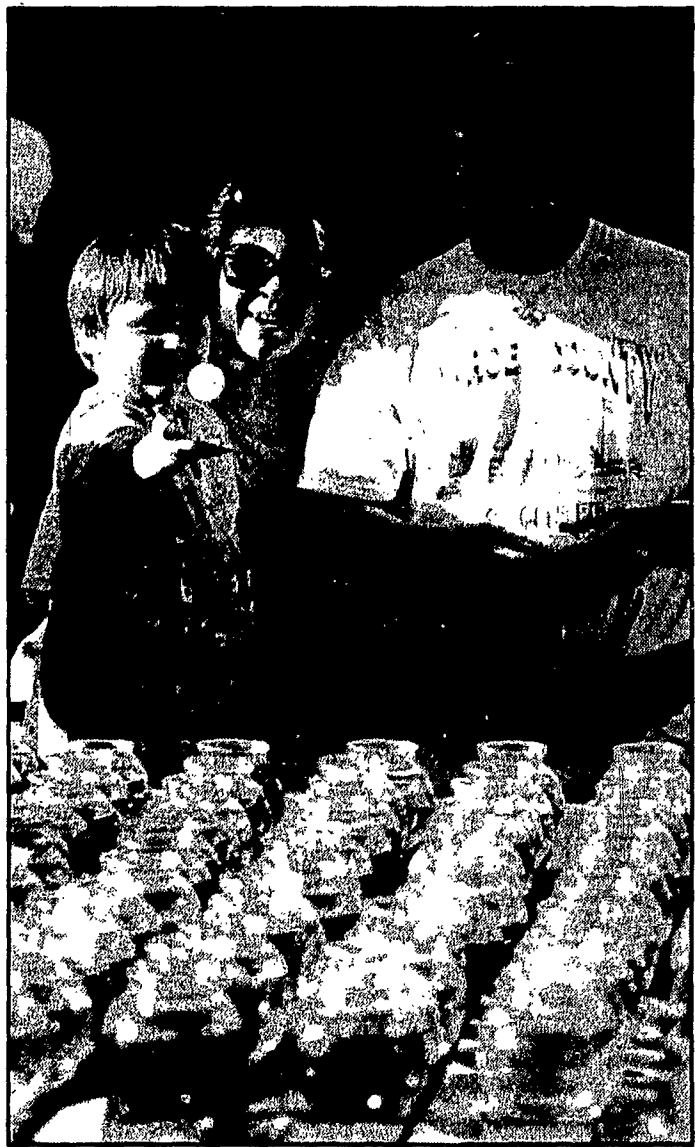


PARENTING

Go for the gold ... fish



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Nina Ronayne, 4, left, tosses a ball in hopes of winning a goldfish at St. Ambrose Church's annual Summer Festival June 4. Parents JoAnne and Mark, parishioners of the Rochester church, look on. Festival proceeds will go towards a new snow-plov for the church parking lot.

Workshop provides methods to assist children with stress

By Lee Strong
Associate editor

Summer is traditionally a time to take vacations, to relax, to go slow — ideal ways to help work out normal stresses.

But parents looking for ways to help their children deal with stress year-round might find a little help at the State University College at Brockport this summer. The college's Child and Adolescent Stress Management Institute is offering stress management workshops for children and parents.

For those who think children don't face stress, just look at the two young men who shot and killed 13 people before taking their own lives in Littleton, Colo., noted Linda Balog, Ph.D., executive director of the Brockport institute.

"There's lots of stress in kids' lives," she said. "What would lead young kids to take other kids' lives?"

In the Littleton case, bullying by other students was cited as a factor that helped to push the two teens to their shooting rampage. But Balog pointed out that children face stress from many sources, including school, activities, academic and sports competition, parental pressure, peer pressure, relationships, the change from childhood to adolescence, and just the hectic pace of modern life.

"We have a very hurried, crazy lifestyle today," Balog said. "Some young children have their lives so highly structured they don't have time just to be kids."

Moreover, the increase in the number of divorces and changing family structures have had a marked impact on children's stress levels, she acknowledged. Children also have to deal with a broad range of fears concerning such contemporary issues as AIDs and child abuse.

"Our society has certainly changed," Balog said.

She is not alone in noting the increased

stress in children's lives. Recent reports — including the cover story in the June 14 issue of *Newsweek* magazine — point out that doctors are seeing more and more physical signs of stress in young patients, including headaches, urinary frequency and abdominal pain.

Balog began to teach about childhood stress in 1980, and to offer the workshops in 1986. This year marks the return of the workshops after a three-year hiatus to spend more time with her own children.

In the workshops, she tries to teach the children breathing and relaxation techniques to deal with stress.

The parents' workshops also include lessons in these techniques.

"Before you help your children manage stress, you have to be able to manage it yourself," Balog explained.

Parents also receive a manual that Balog and her husband Joseph published in 1991, *Stress Management for Children: A Guide for Parents*. The manual grew out of her experience directing the stress workshops.

"One of the best ways to control stress more effectively is to help (children) develop a good sense of self-esteem," she advised. "Parents have to really listen to their kids and watch them closely and see how they are reacting to their environment."

One key, she said, is communication.

"Talk to them," Balog said. "That's something that we sometimes forget to do, to talk to them and to listen."

EDITORS' NOTE: The week-long children's stress workshops will be held June 28 to July 2. Separate sessions will be held for ages 5-7, 8-10 and 11-13. One-day parent workshops will be offered June 28 and July 6. Cost for the children's sessions is \$80 for the first child, \$40 for additional siblings. Cost for the parent workshops is \$45. The registration deadline is June 18. For more information, call 716/395-5475.

Events

© **Summer reunion:** St. Mary's Hospital babies; to celebrate St. Mary's Family Birth Place grand opening; call 716/723-6750 to be added to guest list.

© **SAT, JUNE 19 — Science surprises:** for ages 7-13; 1-3 p.m.; bring old broken appliances that don't contain glass; \$3 per child, accompanying adults free; Science and Discovery Center; Arnot Mall, Big Flats; 607-739-5297.

© **SAT, JUNE 19 — Storytelling series:** Storytelling Guild of Greater Rochester; 1-2 p.m.; Mood Maker Books and Yankee Peddler Bookshop, Village Gate Square, Rochester; free; 716/544-8422.

© **JUNE 19, 20 — Festival:** "Kids-n-Trucks"; Frontier Field; Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; \$4; American Liver Foundation, Western New York Chapter, benefit; 716/271-2859.

© **SUN, JUNE 20 — Cool treat:** free milkshake for dads on Father's Day; Strong Museum, One Manhattan Sq., Rochester; noon-5 p.m.; crafts, treat included in admission; 716/263-2700.

© **SUN, JUNE 20 — One Small Square Explore:** discover the plants and critters beneath your feet; 2-3:30 p.m.; Mendon Ponds Nature Center, 3914 Clover St., Honeoye Falls; \$2 for nonmember individuals, \$6 for nonmember families, \$1 for member individuals, \$3 for member families; 716/334-3780.

© **SUN, JUNE 20 — Storytime:** a visit by Clifford the Big Red Dog, work on Father's Day project; 2 p.m.; Barnes and Noble Book Store, 3349 Monroe Ave., Pittsford; free; 716/586-6020.

© **TUE, JUNE 22 — Strawberry festival:** St. John the Evangelist Church, Parish Hall, 114 Sodus St., Clyde; 6-8 p.m.; advance tickets \$1.50 adults, \$.50 children 6-12; 315/923-3941.

© **WED, JUNE 23, 30 — Storytime:** "Old MacDonald" by Amy Schwartz (June 23), "Hello Shoes" by Joan Blue; 9:30 and 11 a.m.; Barnes & Noble Book Store and Cafe, 3349 Monroe Ave., Pittsford; free; 716/586-6020.

© **JUNE 26, 27 — T.H.E. Gatherer's Timelab:** Opening weekend festivities; "moon walk," challenge courses, performances and activities; free with regular admission (adults \$6, seniors and

students with ID \$5, children 3-17 \$4, children under 3 free, free for museum members); 716/263-2702.

© **SUN, JUNE 27 — Gates Summer Celebration:** Kids activities 6-9 p.m., including music with Bill Mehls and Gary the Happy Pirate, and magic with "Tom Crowl and the Mrs"; Gates Chili High School, 910 Wegman Rd., Gates.

© **SUN, JUNE 27 — Young Naturalists:** discover some critters living in the ponds; 1:30-3 p.m.; Mendon Ponds Nature Center, 3914 Clover St., Honeoye Falls; \$2 for nonmember individuals, \$6 for nonmember families, \$1 for member individuals, \$3 for member families; 716/334-3780.

© **JUNE 28-JULY 16, JULY 19-AUG. 6, AUG. 9-27 — Summer Camp Playhouse:** mask-making, theater games, costumes design, set design, characterization and more; three separate sessions; Rochester Children's Theatre, The School of the Arts, 45 Prince St., Rochester; 716/271-7870.

© **JULY 10, 11 — American Artisans Rendezvous:** meet a weaver, blacksmith, carver, metal worker, take part in Iroquois songs and dances; 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Cumming Nature Center, 647 Gulick Rd., Naples, N.Y. 14512; with regular admission (adults \$4, seniors \$3, students K-12 \$1.50, Rochester Museum and Science Center members/preschoolers free).

© **Summer camps:** Museum Camp (July 12-16, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.), RMSC Day Camp (ages 8-11, July 26-30, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.), RMSC Players' Theatre Camp (ages 9-13, Aug. 2-6, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.), Science Tech Camp (ages 12-16, Aug. 2-6, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.), RMSC Junior Naturalist Camp (ages 7-9, Aug. 9-13, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.); Rochester Museum and Science Center, 657 East Ave., Rochester; rates vary from \$131 to \$139 per person depending on which camp; 716/271-4552, ext. 342.

© **Ecology workshops:** explore ecological communities, learn how to classify flora and fauna; separate sessions for ages 4-5 (June 28-July 2, 9:30-11:30 a.m.) and children in grades one through six (the weeks of July 5, 12, 19, and 26, and Aug. 2 and 9, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.); Tanglewood Nature Center, Runey Education Building, 246 West Hill Rd., Elmira; 607/732-6060.

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