



FAST NATIONAL Training & Evaluation Center

FAST NEWS

Your way to stay in touch!

"We can grow helping each other, cooperating side-by-side. Families And Schools Together, reaching for the skies..."

Families And Schools Together



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FAST News is a product of
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FAST NATIONAL STATEWIDE ADVISORY BOARD

In 2004, FAST National set out to create a statewide advisory board that could guide the work of FAST in the state of Wisconsin. Members on the statewide advisory board are gatekeepers who want to see children succeed, and parents be the primary prevention agents for their children. Because FAST has a proven track record of influencing these outcomes, partnering with our state's gatekeepers will help realize these goals and be a win-win situation.

Developing a comprehensive vision statement was the first priority for the group. In September 2004, the group unanimously adopted the following vision statement:

The Statewide Advisory Board serves as a catalyst to increase awareness & promote addressing family needs through collaboration, expansion, & advocating for adequate funding.

In the coming months, the board will develop a work plan for how to meet its goals under the broader categories of collaboration, expansion, and adequate funding, as laid out in the vision statement.

We sincerely appreciate the service of our board members, and value their partnership and feedback. The founding members and/or current members on the Statewide Advisory Board (in alphabetical order) are: Sharon Amos, FAST Parent Graduate; Bob Beglinger, AFT-Wisconsin; Mark Campbell, Department of Health and Human Services; Jessica Clark, Governor's Office; Charity Eleson, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families; John Forester, School Administrator's Alliance; Luz Gomez, FAST Parent Graduate; John Grace, Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies; Joyce Johnson, FAST Parent Graduate; Melanie McIntosh, Office of Justice Assistance; Nancy Nusbaum, Department of Justice; Lou Oppor, Department of Health and Family Services; Shirley Robinson, Milwaukee FAST Program Coordinator; Sharon Schulz, Next Door Foundation; Carolyn Stanford Taylor, Department of Public Instruction; Barbara White, Milwaukee Brighter Futures; and Tara Williams, FAST Parent Graduate.

Shared governance is not only a core component of all FAST programs, but also a central idea of the Statewide Advisory Board. Parent graduates of FAST serve as full members of our board, as do representatives from a number of government agencies and departments, and non-profit organizations. Our board is best equipped to work together for families in Wisconsin when all concerned parties are at the table.

We encourage FAST communities in other states to develop an advisory board, with shared governance, to better meet the needs of children and families. If you'd like suggestions about how to invite members and create an advisory board, please contact us. If your community already has an advisory board in place, please let us know.

UPDATES

Wisconsin: **Lady Pitts High School**, in collaboration with the **Milwaukee FAST** office, celebrated the graduation of families from their first Baby FAST cycle. Graduate families are made up of a baby, a new mother, a new grandmother (or support person), and often include the new father. Supported by funds from the Office of Justice Assistance and a Wisconsin State Incentive Grant, ten families graduated from the Fall 2004 cycle. Congratulations! We applaud your work "for the sake of the baby."

North Carolina: The **FASTWORKS** in **Charlotte** is truly on the fast-track. Pearlie Campbell, the FASTWORKS Coordinator, reports that their parents have been very productive! One parent hopes to complete the GED in the spring, but in the mean time she is very active in her children's school. She makes time to read to other children in school as a volunteer, and to go on field trips as a chaperone. She also attends activities with her special child, who placed 2nd in a track event in the Special Olympics last summer. Other parents have not only made time to drive a bus for an after school program, but also to serve as co-leaders for FW. One FW parent is the PTA president at her children's school. A special kudos to other FW parents that continue to meet monthly! Their big project for 2004 was providing games that promote family togetherness to neighborhood families. A big thank you to The Family Center for donating the games and supporting FASTWORKS. Way to go, Charlotte FASTWORKS parents!

Illinois: FAST in **Lyons Township** has been nominated for an award from Voices for Illinois Children because of their focus on mental health and children. This nomination results from an invitation for **Dale Schaefer**, the FAST Coordinator for Lyons Township, to serve on the Family Involvement Committee of the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership. This partnership will formalize a Strategic Plan for Building a Comprehensive Children's Mental Health System in Illinois. You can read about the strategic plan at www.ivpa.org. Congratulations, Dale, FAST schools in Lyons Township, and partner agencies!

Missouri: FAST was recently featured at the **Missouri State Health Conference**, held on March 9. Presenters at the conference included FAST graduates and parent partners **Connie Daoust** and **Donna House**, and FAST Team member **Rick Jackson** from Bryant Caring Communities in Independence, Missouri. **Tim Decker**, FAST Trainer with the Local Investment Commission (LINC) in Kansas City, Missouri also participated. FAST was show-cased as a model evidenced-based community intervention to strengthen families at the Schools and Public Health: Connecting for Healthier Communities Conference in Osage Beach, Missouri. The conference provided a statewide forum for school nurses, health educators, school counselors, social workers, teachers, and public health professionals to enhance educational outcomes and address public health issues. Thanks for representing FAST in Missouri!

U.S Senator Herb Kohl's support of FAST is invaluable. We sincerely appreciate your commitment to the prevention of juvenile delinquency, violence, substance abuse, and school failure. Over the years, Senator Kohl's office has given generously to FAST research at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, housed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Pictured from left to right: Lynn McDonald, Senator Herb Kohl, Ishmael Rodriguez, and Pat Davenport.

Would you like to share your FAST news & updates? Just e-mail your contact information and story (attached as a Word document) to cjohnson@fastnational.org. Questions? Call Carol (608) 663-2382 x303.

Requirements for stories:

- Maximum of 500 words
- Tell the story of a real person (pseudonyms are OK)
- Encourage the FAST network

WHAT YOU ARE SAYING ABOUT FAST

Dear FAST Community,

This letter is in regards to the five-day Pre-Certification Seminar (PCS) that I recently attended in Florida. I had concerns prior to attending this seminar, due to the recent change from FAST Alliance to FAST National. Our hospital, "Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Hospital" in Binghamton, New York has successfully implemented FAST since 1997 under the Alliance. The main concern I had was what information I would gain from attending PCS, and would this information out-weight the expense of the PCS. After attending, I would like to say that I have benefited from the PCS and that the PCS was well worth the cost. I would recommend that any former Alliance members attend the full five-day PCS, if their budget allows. My understanding is that some Alliance members have completed a two-hour teleconference update. I would not recommend the teleconference over the PCS. I know that it is hard to justify this expense within a grant-funded program, however the experience of listening to Pat Davenport and Dr. Lynn McDonald speak is magnificent. Their passion and knowledge is amazing. I have gained numerous tools from their dynamic presentation throughout the five-day seminar. Their enthusiasm for FAST has renewed my excitement for this program.



I would like again recommend Alliance members to make every effort to attend a Pre-Certification Seminar through FAST National. There is a benefit for attending this seminar not just for yourself, but also for your FAST program.

Sincerely,

Patrick C. Basile, LMSW
Family Support Program Manager
(letter printed with author's permission)

Dear Hawaii Department of Education,

This letter is in regards to the FAST program at Waiialua Elementary School. The program is a great success dealing with education and community functions. The lessons we learned gained our attention towards our ability to communicate with our child in this day of change. The leadership, supervision, and effort we received from the staff were outstanding. The staff was very professional in every aspect regarding the program. They provided a welcome and open atmosphere from the first day to the very last.

To my understanding the program is funded by the DOE. It would be devastating to see the FAST program be dismissed from our community, due to lack of funding. Please consider continuing this program at Waiialua Elementary School and at other locations throughout the islands. We think it is a great success that shows positive results for parents, staff, and children. Being a parent, we wished a FAST program such as this, could have happened earlier during our time as children. Once again, thank you for an educational experience with Families and Schools Together.

Sincerely,

Rollin J. Cannon, FAST Parent Graduate
(letter printed with author's permission)



Christmas tree ornaments and a tree skirt created by FAST families from Alderman, Johnson, and Snipes Elementary Schools in Wilmington, NC. A big thank you to Pam Johnson, FAST Coordinator, for the pictures!

FAST NEWS

Introducing Parents to FAST at the 21st Annual Parent Training Conference

Dr. Bettina Friese, Director of Evaluation at FAST National, and Frankie Bleidorn, FAST team member and AODA specialist at the Dane County Parent Council, Inc. were presenters at the National Head Start Association's conference in December in Salt Lake City, Utah. The conference is for teachers and Head Start parents and focuses on enhancing parent involvement in their children's lives.

The presentation covered Early Childhood FAST and Baby FAST, especially focusing on how FAST has collaborated with Head Start and Early Head Start and how a collaborative effort can be beneficial for all involved. FAST was very well received by the attendees, and parents were eager to learn more about bringing FAST to their communities and schools. Here are some of the things parents said about FAST: "Fair program that teaches parents to strengthen their family;" "These programs teach parents and family members to support the target child with knowledge from experts advice;" "How it brings parent and child, and parent and parent together. Hope we can get this in our schools."

Baby FAST Research Poster Presented at the 18th Annual Research & Training Center for Children's Mental Health Conference

Michelle Szabo, Associate Director at FAST National, presented a poster entitled "Baby FAST: Reducing Risk Factors and Building Resiliency by Bringing Families Together" at this conference in March in Tampa, Florida. The conference's theme was "A System of Care of Children's Mental Health: Expanding the Research Base." The conference was attended by over 500 individuals, and is a nationally recognized forum to explore contemporary, empirical research on systems of care that promote the emotional and behavioral well-being of children and their families.

The poster described aggregate results of Baby FAST cycles run from 2002 to 2004. Among the notable findings are a 7% decrease in *total parenting stress* experienced by new mothers, a 4% increase in new mothers' *relationship with their baby*, a 12% decrease in *family conflict* as reported by grandmothers, and an 11% improvement in *total family relationships* as reported by grandparents.

FAST Presented at the 2005 National Forum of the Coalition for Community Schools; "Community Schools: The Time is Now!"

Dale Schaefer, FAST Coordinator for Lyons Township in Illinois, collaborated with FAST National to present information about how FAST can bring parents, schools, and community agencies together. The National Forum of the Coalition for Community Schools Conference, which took place in March in Chicago, Illinois, was sponsored by the Institute for Educational Leadership, and was for schools and communities to strategically unite to help their children succeed. The conference provided a forum to create a more exciting and enriching learning environment. Approximately 40 people attended the session lead by Dale.

You may wonder what a community school is. Dale describes it with the following comments: "What happens outside the classroom and school day is every bit as important as what happens inside it. A community-school is not just another program being imposed on schools. It is a way of thinking and acting that recognizes the historic central roles of schools in our communities - and the power of an entire community working together to utilize the facility as a family-support center to strengthen our families and communities so that they, in turn, can help make schools even stronger and our children more successful."

Feedback from attendees at this workshop indicates that the definition of community school was crystallized, and 82% said that the conference peaked their interests in the field of community schools.

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Baby FAST Father Partner Honored by First Lady

Damon Rimmer, who is serving as the father partner on the Rosalie Manor and Aurora Family Services Baby FAST teams in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was honored for his active parenting on March 8, 2005 by, Laura Bush. The first lady visited Milwaukee to discuss the "Helping America's Youth" initiative. She highlighted Rosalie Manor as an organization that addresses young men's needs. Congratulations, Damon!

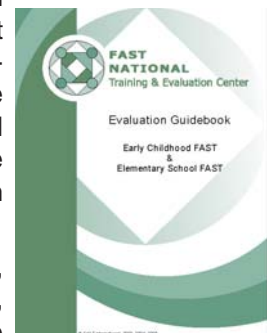
Dear FAST Certified Trainers:

This is a friendly reminder that if you attended a Pre-Certification Seminar (PCS) in June 2003 or earlier, your recertification time is quickly approaching. Please make sure you check our News & Events webpage at www.fastnational.org/news.asp for the information about our June 20-24 PCS, which will be held in Madison, Wisconsin. I look forward to seeing those of you that will receive your recertification to continue working with FAST, both locally and nationally. ~LaSonda

New Evaluation Guidebook

On January 1, 2005 we introduced an updated Evaluation Guidebook for Team Members. This new version includes updated forms for team members and does not include some older forms that we are no longer using. You'll notice that the new guidebook does not include the Quality of Implementation survey or Family Benefits Outcome survey. We are no longer requiring team members to complete these forms, and we will not be analyzing the data. Sites can still choose to complete these forms, and they are available on our website. These forms may still be a useful self-monitoring tool for team members or trainers; however, we are not requiring teams to complete these forms.

The new Evaluation Guidebooks have a cover like the one pictured to the right. If you, or your team, are using an Evaluation Guidebook with a cover that does not look like this, please contact us right away so we can replace it with the updated version. Contact the evaluation department with questions or to receive a new copy at (608) 663-2382 x308, or by e-mail at evaluation@fastnational.org.



Do You Know What Your Cycle Registration Fee Covers?

We have heard from parents, team members, trainers, and the FAST community how, overtime, FAST sites may not look like what they are intended to look like, and that many sites would start up again and not obtain clearance for using FAST, which is intellectual property. In response to this concern, a registration process was instituted for the purpose of quality assurance. Registration assures that sites starting new cycles meet readiness criteria, which are outlined in the Agreement for Accreditation and Evaluation Services, and are:

1. Does the team have the minimum core team members? Is the team ethnically and culturally representative of the FAST families?
2. Are 75% of the originally certified team members intact, or did the certified team lose two out of four team members? Is there a collaborative represented by two different community organizations, a recent FAST parent graduate from the school to be served, and a school partner from the school to be served?
3. Is the parent partner compensated for his or her work?
4. Does the site have an active FASTWORKS program?
5. Was the previous cycle evaluated, and is there an evaluation report ordered for the new cycle?

The \$25.00 registration fee covers the costs incurred to (1) review the readiness criteria, (2) grant authorization to use the name of FAST for that particular cycle, and (3) publish registered sites in the newsletter. This type of fee is not uncommon. For example, it's just like the non-refundable registration fee one pays when signing up for coursework at a college. It covers the costs incurred to verify that you're ready to take the class, or, in regards to FAST, that you're ready start a new FAST cycle. Please contact us if you have questions about the registration fee.

RESOURCES

Activity Kit for Middle Schools

VERB and Weekly Reader have partnered to produce the "Play Without Borders" activity kit specially designed for middle schools. The free kit is available on-line at www.cdc.gov/VERB (click on Materials). Each kit contains a guide that helps teachers introduce students to games from around the world and includes Playports for students that can be stamped when students try new games and create their own play - without borders.

FAST Featured in Family Involvement Article

The Winter '04/'05 edition of *The Evaluation Exchange*, published by the Harvard Family Research Project, featured an article entitled "Co-Constructing Family Involvement" which relied on information about the FAST program. After reviewing five programs that promote family involvement, Ms. Lopez, Ms. Kreider, and Ms. Caspe, created a list of keys to understanding and promoting relationships between families and schools. One of these keys is responsiveness to the needs and interests of families. The authors site FAST as a program that addresses the needs of parents and schools. Because FAST is responsive, the FAST program successfully recruits and retains parents for the duration of the program. You can read the article in its entirety online at :

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue28/>

Did You Know?

- For Middle School FAST, the Family Connections Board Game and Scribbles can be used interchangeably? The goals for the family game are taking turns, laughter, and talking together. Both of these activities can be successful when used repeatedly with middle schoolers.
- Elementary School FAST is one of the 54 SAMHSA model programs, with randomized control trails and proven, peer reviewed efficacy.
- Of the 54 Model programs, FAST has many distinctions. First is the 80% retention rate of low-income, minority parents. Second is the best quality assurance structure for replication of an evidence-based program with over 800 replications in 45 states and 5 countries. Third, FAST has been identified by Native American leaders as one of three SAMHSA Model programs that are sensitive to their culture. FAST is seen as culturally sensitive because it (1) is based on relationships, not curriculum; (2) is adaptable (60% adaptable and 40% core component); (3) values shared governance with consumers and parents as partners; and (4) has a team that is culturally representative of the families served.

FAST NEWS Information

Subscriptions

FAST News is funded by FAST National. Because of this, we can offer FAST News at no cost.

To subscribe and receive free issues at your home or office, send your name, mailing address, and whether you are a graduate, team member, trainer, principal, or FAST friend to:

FAST National Training & Evaluation Center
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Email: fast@fastnational.org

Do you need extra copies for a graduation or fundraiser? If so, call the FAST National office. There may be a charge for copies in excess of 10.

Submissions

FAST News is published 4 times a year. Deadlines are:

Issue: Deadline
March: February 15
June: May 15
September: August 15
December: November 15

Interested parties should submit stories or articles to cjohnson@fastnational.org. Articles should not be longer than one page in length and there is no minimum size. All articles and stories will be edited for spelling, grammar and space and become the property of FAST National. Originals will not be returned unless specifically requested at the time of submission. Photos will be printed as space allows.

GRANTS

Safe Schools / Healthy Students

The Department of Education is offering funds to local educational agencies (LEAs) to implement an intergrated, comprehensive community-wide plan designed to create safe and drug-free schools, and promote prosocial skills and healthy childhood development in youth. Funding for Safe Schools / Healthy Students (SS / HS) has been used to implement FAST in a number of communities around the nation. FAST is a great fit with the mission of this funding. Depending on the size of your school district, awards range from one million to three million per year. There is approximately \$74.8 million available, which will be awarded to about 40 grantees. The deadline for applicaitons is April 29, 2005. You can find the grant announcement online at: www.ed.gov/news/fedregister/announce/index.html

If you are planning on applying for this grant, please let us know so we can provide you with sample budgets for training and evaluation. In addition, you can also reference our website at www.fastnational.org for program information. Please also visit www.fastprogram.org, the website for the FAST Program, the office where FAST founder, Dr. McDonald is housed. Research articles and plans for expansion and sustainability are available on the FAST Program website.

How Funding Trends Affect You

As service providers who often depend on grant money, we have to be aware of funding trends. For example, the proposed cuts in federal funding have the potential to affect funding for your FAST program. Most of us hear about changes in federal funding, but changes in foundation funding are not as well publicized.

In 2001, foundations spent about \$4.5 billion to benefit children and youth, that is more than double the amount spent in 1996. The largest share is spent on human service activities, including youth development, child abuse prevention, healthcare, mental health, recreation and sports. In particular, specific programs or projects were more likely to be funded than requests for capital support, research or general operating support. One in three foundation grants directed to youth and children were specifically for economically disadvantaged children. One-in-eight were given for ethnic or racial minorities.

Source: The Foundation Center, www.fdncenter.org

RECIPES

PIZZA HOT DISH

~Submitted by Debbie Crary-Klade, FAST National

1 bag egg noodles
1 lb. hamburger
2 cans tomato soup, pizza sauce, or spaghetti sauce
salt
pepper
oregano
grated Cheddar cheese

Boil egg noodles. Brown hamburger, add tomato soup (or pizza sauce or spaghetti sauce), salt pepper, and oregano. Simmer 10 minutes. Put egg noodles in bottom of 9x13 cake pan. Put hamberger mixture on top, then top with grated cheese. Bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

PRESENTATIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS

April 18 - 23 Boston, Massachusetts

- Lynn McDonald and Pat Davenport will speak at the National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. See <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/profess/conferences/index.cfm> for conference details.

June 27, 2005 Madison, Wisconsin

- A day-long celebration of the Baby FAST project in Wisconsin. For more information, please contact the FAST Program office at (608) 263-4244.

TRAINING SEMINARS

April 18 - 22, 2005 Cleveland, Ohio

- Pre-Certification, Secondary Certification, Recertification, & administrator training.
- Elementary School & Middle School tracks.

June 20 - 24, 2005 Madison, Wisconsin

- Pre-Certification, Secondary Certification, Recertification, & administrator training.
- Baby FAST, Early Childhood, Elementary School, Middle School, & administrator tracks.

Trainings are presented by:
FAST National Training & Evaluation Center, an affiliate of:
Edgewood College Graduate Program In Family Therapy, &
University of Wisconsin-Madison: Wisconsin Center for Education Research

Instructed By:
Dr. Lynn McDonald - FAST Founder
Pat Davenport - CEO