

# Co-op Community News

From the Parent Advisory Council  
of the North Seattle Community  
College Cooperative Preschool  
Program



January 2008



By Beth Goss, Parent Education Instructor

**S**leep. It seems like new parents never get enough of it. It's hard to problem-solve, let alone have a conversation when you're sleep deprived. A frequent topic of conversation when I work with infant parents is usually "when will my baby sleep through the night?" In fact, when I teach newborn care classes at Swedish that almost always comes up and those folks aren't even parents yet! Most of what I've read tells me that babies can't really be expected to sleep through the night until they are at least 5 months old. Most babies younger than that still need to eat every few hours around the clock. However, "sleeping through the night" at that point would be defined as 6-8 hours straight. That's not "through the night" for me! So, what's a parent to do? Well, first off, it's important to have age appropriate expectations when it comes to sleep.

Here are some guidelines:

## Average Sleep Needs

- 3-4 months 15 hours (10 during the nighttime)
- 9 months 14 hours (11 ¼ during the nighttime)
- 1 year 14 hours (11 ½ during the nighttime)
- 2 years 13 hours (11 ¾ during the nighttime)
- 3 years 12 hours (11 during the nighttime)
- 4 years 11 ½ hours- usually all during the nighttime

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## 2007-08 Calendar

### January

- 9 PAC Lecture with Holly Eckert *see page 4*
- 14 PAC Meeting
- 16 Elizabeth Crary's class begins *see page 4*
- 21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day (no school)

### February

- 11 PAC Meeting
- 18-22 Mid-Winter Break (no school)
- 25-28 In-House Registration

### March

- 10 PAC Meeting
- 10-13 Cross-Over Registration
- 22 Open Registration
- 31-April 4 Spring Break (no school)

### April

- 14 PAC Meeting

### May

- 19 PAC Meeting

The following is adapted from *The Sleep Book for Tired Parents* by Becky Huntley. I've been using this book with families for close to 10 years and have gone to it for my own needs as well. Her basic premise is that there is no "right way" to approach sleep. Do what feels right for your family. A sleep problem in one house may be the happy norm in another!

## Four Basic Approaches to Solving Family Sleep Problems

### Family Bed Approach

*In this approach, several or all family members sleep together in the same bed. The idea behind this is that children's needs do not necessarily diminish at night and some families sleep more comfortably and for longer periods of time when using this approach.*

#### Pros

Easy to feed baby on demand  
 Less disruption of parent's sleep  
 Increased physical contact  
 Coax early risers back to sleep  
 Easy way to meet demands of high-needs children

#### Cons

Decrease in parent's alone time  
 Movement/noise can disrupt sleep  
 Some children have trouble sleeping alone  
 May be difficult to move to sleeping alone

### Cry It Out Approach

*In this approach, parents leave the room after the bedtime ritual and allow the child to cry until he falls asleep. No set length of crying is set. The idea behind this approach is that unwanted behavior, when ignored, will eventually die out.*

#### Pros

Quick results- a few days  
 Least complicated plan  
 Least amount of parental involvement  
 Works for many families

#### Cons

Difficult to listen to crying.  
 May abandon plan  
 Works best in crib  
 Noisy  
 Temptation to check may wreck the plan

### Small Steps Approach

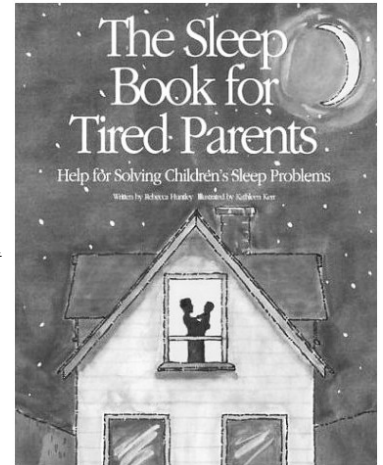
*In this approach, parents leave the room after the bedtime ritual and allow the child to cry for an agreed upon amount of time- usually around 5 minutes. After this amount of time the parent goes in and checks on the child and reassures her. Parent leaves and then waits for 10 minutes before repeating this step. Finally, if the child is still crying, the parent returns 15 minutes later, reassures her, and then leaves. The parent then may return every 15 minutes until the child is asleep or calm. Each day the parent waits a bit longer before entering the room. The idea behind this approach is that children need to learn how to soothe themselves to sleep and will progressively build their own tolerance for being alone.*

#### Pros

Appropriate after child is 5-6 mos  
 Meets the emotional needs of parents and child  
 Parents get to check on child  
 Can be tailored to situation  
 Someone other than parent can put

#### Cons

May take longer than other methods  
 Some children get upset at the sight of their parents  
 May abandon the plan  
 Difficult to listen to crying  
 More parent-oriented



### Living With It Approach

*In this approach, parents decide not to change anything they are currently doing.*

#### Pros

Gives parent time to re-think situation  
 Allows situation to improve on its own  
 Conscious decision decreases feeling of powerlessness  
 Takes pressure off parents to "fix it"

#### Cons

Time doesn't always solve the problem  
 May put off inevitable  
 Sleep deprivation

Adapted from *The Sleep Book for Tired Parents* by Rebecca Huntley

# New Val Donato Award for Parent Ed Prof Development

## Parent Education Program at NSCC

The mission of the Parent Education Program is to promote the development of knowledge and skills for strong and healthy families.

Parent education programs help students become more effective and satisfied in their role by helping them understand their child's behavior, by encouraging them to recognize developmentally appropriate activities, by assisting them in acquiring valuable information in areas which affect the welfare of the "whole child," and by teaching them methods to help their children develop responsible behavior.

## Students' comments about the NSCC Parent Education Program and Val Donato

- "It is a great program! [Parent Education classes] should be required of all new parents – it provides a great opportunity to understand your child's development and be involved in your child's 'school' life in a way that is not as possible once they enter the regular school system. The program helps build confidence as a parent and provides a support network for when you are less than confident. I have enjoyed participating."
- "I don't think I could have quit my career and stayed sane without [Parent Education]."
- "I know I am a better mom because of what I've learned through [Parent Education]!"
- "Val is an exceptional teacher and a proven leader. She has been a tremendous asset. She always knows the right questions to ask, and has helped [us] deal with conflict in a very supportive, yet unassuming way. She has an incredible fund of knowledge, and [is] available for anyone."

## Val Donato

Val Donato graduated from Queens College in New York City with a BA in Education. She moved to Washington DC and then to San Francisco, ending up in Seattle in 1970. She enrolled in Parent Education/Child Study classes at North Seattle Community College and began teaching those classes as a part-timer in 1974. As a student at NSCC, she became active in the leadership of that parent education class, assuming offices of parent coordinator, treasurer, and Advisory Council representative.



*Val Donato with one of "her kids"*

When Val first began in the program, only families of children from three to five years old were served. Val expanded the program to include parents of children beginning at birth. She has at various times taught every class offered by the program. The program now serves 42 preschools and 22 local childcare centers serving over 1000 families per quarter through co-operative classes, on-line classes, short-term classes, and lectures.

In 1997, Val earned a Masters in Human Development with an emphasis on Leadership in Education. She is the coordinator for and a full-time instructor in the program. In her spare time she loves to read fiction, garden, and be a grandparent to two wonderful grandchildren.

## The Val Donato Award

In September, 2007, the Health and Human Services Division at NSCC initiated efforts to create the Val Donato Award to recognize Val and her dedicated, hardworking, and outstanding parent education faculty members. Depending on the amount of funds obtained (a minimum of \$10,000.00 is needed), the annual award will consist of one or more \$500 stipends to be used for professional development to further improve the Parent Education Program. Applicants/nominees will be selected by a committee of Parent Education faculty based upon their embodiment of Val's ideals and of the program itself.

*Contributions to the award fund are 100% tax-deductible; for further details or to make a donation, contact the North Seattle Community College Education Fund at 206 527 3604 / [nsceducationfund@sccd.ctc.edu](mailto:nsceducationfund@sccd.ctc.edu).*

# Bulletin Board

Avoid Emotional Meltdowns: Helping Kids Deal with Disappointment



## Elizabeth Crary

This two credit class is taught by Elizabeth Crary and starts January 16, 7:00-9:30pm, meeting off-campus. This class offers the tools and techniques you need to help children cope, whether you are dealing with toddler tantrums or middle-school meltdowns. For questions, call Elizabeth Crary at (206) 367-6425; to register, call Health and Human Services Division (206) 527-3783.

For location go to:  
[www.parentingpress.com/location](http://www.parentingpress.com/location)

## Preschool Openings Now!

*All age groups, ready when you are:*

[www.northseattlecoops.org](http://www.northseattlecoops.org)

*Planning to stay in co-op next year? Don't forget to schedule tours at the preschools you're considering!*

## Contact

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[www.northseattlecoops.org](http://www.northseattlecoops.org)  
206.527.3783  
(NSCC Parent Ed Office)

The Secret Key To Unlocking Any Family Conflict



## Holly Eckert

- Would you like a way to find more harmony in your relationship with your child?
- A way to show respect for both person's wishes?
- A tool to understand your child's behavior on a deeper level?
- And a reliable process to access your authenticity and self-confidence as a parent?

Gain both inspiration and concrete tools to create the relationship you envision!

Wednesday, January 9, 2008  
7:00-9:00 pm

Faith Lutheran Church – Social Hall  
8208 18th Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA 98115

This lecture is free and open to the public. No RSVP is required. Please call (206) 417-3163 for more information.

Trainer and author Holly Eckert takes great pleasure in supporting families toward more understanding, co-operation and fun. Former Director of Northwest Attachment Parenting, Holly is currently a Certified Trainer with the global Center for Nonviolent Communication and the local Northwest Compassionate Communication. She lives in Seattle with husband Richard, son Manny (10) and daughter Keziah (4).

## Volunteers Needed!

Registration season for the 2008-2009 school year is coming! We'll be spreading the word about North Seattle Community College's cooperative preschool program at the following preschool fairs:

### MOMS Club of Seattle Preschool Fair

Saturday, January 19, 2008  
10:00 am-12:00 pm  
St. Alphonsus Parish School,  
5816 15th Avenue NW  
Seattle, WA 98017

### ParentMap Preschool Preview Night

Wednesday, January 23, 2008  
5:30 pm-8:00 pm  
North Seattle  
Community College  
9600 College Way North  
Seattle, WA 98103

Meet with local families, tell them all about our wonderful preschools, get them started on the enrollment process, and help boost enrollment for your school next year!

**For more information, contact Toby Jarman at:**  
[tobybethj@comcast.net](mailto:tobybethj@comcast.net)