

## In house child care not just for big companies

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOUNT PLEASANT, Mich. — Child care in the United States did not become a national issue until "Rosie the Riveter" and her counterparts entered the work force en masse in the 1940s.

With so many women working away from the home and so many men away at war, finding a place to leave the kids became a dilemma. Child care as we know it today was born.

Since then, employers have found it necessary to create child care centers at the office or at least provide financial alternatives that make the costs more affordable for employees.

But smaller employers often have to come up with more creative, less expensive alternatives.

When Tracy Ames, an Oil City resident and employee at Clark Manufactured Homes in Mount Pleasant, told her boss she was going to need some time off when her baby was born, he said he couldn't afford to lose her that long. He asked if she would be willing to take two weeks off, then keep the baby at the office until it was a year old. Ames agreed.

Her daughter, Alexandra, was born June 22 and Ames was at home for her agreed two weeks. During her maternity leave, though, some of her co-workers did something unexpected.

"They called me and told me to come up to the office," Ames said.

When she arrived, she found a bassinet and all the extras that would make keeping Alexandra at work a little easier. They had all pitched in and purchased the office nursery equipment for her.

Mount Pleasant veterinarian Cathy Lindstrand found herself in a similar position before she gave birth to her son, Clay, in May.

Lindstrand works at the Mount Pleasant Animal Clinic, another clinic in Clare and at the equine practice she owns with her husband. With her busy schedule and need to nurse Clay during the day, she decided to keep him with her and found a baby sitter who would accommodate her schedule.

"I hate the thought of someone else spending more time with my son than I do," Lindstrand said. "It's hard to leave them, because you feel like you're missing out on the little things."

Lindstrand said she keeps Clay at the office in the mornings, where the baby sitter stays with him while she sees patients. In the afternoon, she takes him to another baby sitter.

"It just sort of worked out that way," Lindstrand said, saying neither baby sitter could keep Clay all day.

Sometimes Lindstrand doesn't need a baby sitter at all. She can leave Clay in his bassinet and, because employees at the clinics pitch in, can check in on him between patients.

Lindstrand said she would probably have to cut back her work hours if she was not able to keep Clay at work. "I probably wouldn't practice as much," she said. "I'll have to slow down eventually, though, when I have more kids."

Some large employers do provide day care for their employees' children, including Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant and the Michigan Masonic Home in Alma.

Brigid Daly, manager of the Human Growth and Development Lab at CMU, said a half-day preschool program is provided to the community as well as CMU employees. She said about half of the students are the children of employees.

In Alma, the Masonic Home provides full-day child care for employees of the home, Alma College, Bank of Alma and Gratiot Community Hospital.

Nancy Stoewsand, director of child care at the Masonic Home, said home employees pay 25 percent less than employees of other businesses. "They pay a higher amount, but it's market rate," she said.

The center provides child care Monday through Friday from 5:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Stoewsand said about 50 children attend the center regularly, but emergency care is available when there is room.

## Kids without bias possible for the diligent



PHOTOS/SUE ANN JOHNSON

A group of children share a puppy at a local park. From left Felicia Tyson, 7, shares her puppy Savannah with Almeshia Torrence, 7, and Jasmine Wilson, 2. Non racist children are possible, new book shows.

By Jeri Young  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Few African Americans can deny the pervasiveness of racial issues.

Recent studies have shown that the high instance of hypertension in African Americans can in part be attributed to the stress caused by racial dissension.

Studies also show that racism can keep young African Americans from achieving, both socially and academically.

Mary Ann French is well aware of this. For her, there is an even simpler reason to teach children, both black and white about the ramifications of race.

"There is no reason for racism," she said. "It can not be numerically justified for one culture to dominate. There is no such thing as a dominant culture. We will need to be position for us all to be on equal footing."

In her new work with co-author Barbara Mathias, French suggests ways to raise children that are non racist and culturally sensitive.

"All African Americans think about race relations," she said. "Motherhood made me even more thoughtful — wanting a better world for my child."

French and Mathias, both journalists with The Washington Post, discuss race and its ramifications in "40 Ways to Raise a Nonracist

Child."

"I don't think any one of ways is more important than any of the others," she said. "It simply boils down to a matter of respect. All of them are golden."

Their suggestions are simple, many simply encouraging parents to think more about the images of ethnic groups they present to their children.

"All minorities are multi-cultural," said French. "You have to know your culture and you have to know the majority culture to survive. It begins at birth. The book is about how we can take a small step to create a better world."

French and Mathias encourage parents, both black and white, to look deeply at them-

selves and discuss their feeling about people of different cultures. It also reprimands those who subscribe to cultural tourism—the practice of skimming other cultures, seeing only a few practices.

"Cultural tourism is widely used term among people who work with putting together anti-bias literature for preschool children," she said. "It just doesn't really work. It gives a limited view."

French says she tries to live by her principles daily, but is the first to admit it is difficult.

"It is something that can not be accomplished through a program," she said. "All of us have to be involved in it every day."

## Author offers tips for raising balanced children

Tips for raising a non racist child:

- Make friends across racial lines. Remember, not every person you meet will be a friend. Just look at people objectively.
- Trace your family's history

of racial prejudices. Ask yourself where your ideas came from.

- Do not present slaves as helpless victims. Let children know that slaves did resist on many levels and in many ways.

- Know who your child's role models are and why. Encourage respect for people of other races.

- Help broaden your child's social circle. Encourage them to play with someone they normally wouldn't.

- Expose racism in entertainment and sports. Watch television with your child. Try to imagine what they are seeing.
- Select diverse schools.
- Don't use or allow your children to use racism as a crutch.

## Aids rampage not over

By Tara Meyer  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — The number of people with AIDS rose in 1995, but the government says the killer seems to be slowing its pace.

Now, health officials want to loosen the disease's hold on women and blacks, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday.

The latest figures, for 1995, show that AIDS is still growing, only slower. There were 62,600 cases of AIDS diagnosed in 1995, up 2 percent from 61,500 cases the year before. The number of cases grew 5 percent between 1993 and 1994.

But growth in AIDS among women has remained steady each year since 1992. The CDC said 11,500 women had AIDS last year, up 9 percent from 10,500 in 1994.

That's about the same percentage jump between 1992 and 1993 and between 1993 and 1994.

"The rates of increase of AIDS among women have outpaced

that of men," said Dr. John Ward, chief of the CDC's AIDS surveillance branch.

The CDC said 50,500 men were diagnosed with AIDS last year, up less than 1 percent from the 50,300 men in 1994. The cases grew by 4 percent between 1993 and 1994, after falling 1 percent between 1992 and 1993.

There were 25,000 cases of AIDS among whites last year, down 2 percent from 25,600 in 1994. That's about the same drop between 1993 to 1994, after falling 4 percent between 1992 and 1993.

There were 25,100 cases of AIDS among blacks in 1995, up 5.5 percent from 23,800 in 1994. The number of cases grew 8 percent between 1993 and 1994 and 6 percent in 1992 and 1993.

AIDS loosened its grip on children in 1995. The CDC said there were 650 cases of AIDS among children under age 13, a 19 percent drop from 800 cases in 1994. The CDC has received 548,102 reports of AIDS in the United States since 1981.

## Sigma Gamma Rho says "thanks" to five

SPECIAL TO THE POST

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority will celebrate its 74th anniversary by saying thanks to some of Charlotte's most dedicated individuals.

On Sunday the group will honor five Charlotteans in

its "Thanks to People Who Care" Program.

"We wanted to go beyond the sorority," said chapter basileus Helen Bourne Moore. "We wanted to recognize the achievements of others in community service."

Honorees were chosen by committees for their service

to the community and achievements.

Among those to be honored are Mattie Caldwell, of the Black Women Caucus, Isaiah Tidwell of Wachovia, independent photographer Willie Bullock, Madie Simpson of the AME Zion Church, businessman Ron

Goodwin and Afro American Cultural Center executive director Wanda Montgomery.

The group will also present the "Sigma of the Year Award" to Betty Harris Jackson. Jackson is a past recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the state's highest honor.

## Policy makers wrong; welfare dads in home

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOSTON — Fathers with children on welfare are more involved parents than is commonly believed, according to a six-year study released recently.

The federally funded study found that 70 percent of welfare fathers have had contact with their children during the past year, and 35 percent visit once a month or more.

In the 436 families surveyed,

those children who did maintain contact with their fathers found them as important emotionally as their mothers.

"Welfare policy has always assumed that the father is nowhere to be found," said Ellen Bassuk, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School who lead the investigation. "In fact, many of these men are trying to be involved in their children's lives, and their children value this contact."

The study was conducted by the University of Massachusetts Medical Center and the Better Homes Fund, a national non-profit organization that promotes policies to benefit low-income families. It was scheduled to be published this month in the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry.

Bassuk said the results show that policy makers should consider the importance of fathers as well as mothers in

developing welfare programs.

The study also showed that 60 percent of the fathers were unemployed. Those fathers without jobs were more than twice as likely to be in jail or on probation as those with jobs. They were four times as likely to experience health problems and more likely to be violent toward women.

"That may seem obvious, but it's an important point," said John Kellogg, a spokesman for

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