Outcomes of Participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension Parenting A Second Time Around Programs, 2010-2012

By Eliza Cook and Rachel Dunifon

Parenting A Second Time Around (PASTA) is a Cornell Cooperative Extension program designed for caregivers who are not the biological parents of the child in their care. PASTA consists of several sessions which focus on topics including child development, discipline and guidance, caring for yourself as a caregiver, rebuilding a family, living with teens, legal issues, and advocacy. This brief presents the results of an evaluation of two PASTA programs that took place between 2010 and 2012.

Demographics of Participants:

In total, 27 people took part in the 2010 and 2012 PASTA sessions, in Orange County, New York. Of the 27 participants, 81% were female and 19% were male. In addition, twenty-four individuals completed both the pre and post tests, two only completed the pre test, and one only the post test. The average age of participants was 58 years of age, with a majority of participants between the ages 50 and 59.

![Age of Participants Chart]

- 30-39: 4%
- 40-49: 4%
- 50-59: 7%
- 60-69: 29%
- 70-79: 52%
- 80-89: 4%
Most of the participants had one child in their care (78%), 11% cared for two children and the remaining 11% with three children in their care. The majority of children’s ages were between the ages of two and five.

The participants’ relationship to the children varied, with the majority of caregivers being grandparents (82%).

Fourty-three percent of participants had been raising the child(ren) in their care for more than five years.
**Results of the workshop:**

The study used a pre- and post-test evaluation, in which the participants were asked to fill out the same questionnaire during the first session and after the completion of the workshop. The survey consisted of 23 questions using a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. This study design allows researchers to see if attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge change over time before and after taking part in the workshop. A causal relationship cannot be established, because changes could occur for other reasons outside of the workshop. However, the significant changes may have resulted from the program.

Ten of the 23 measures tested showed statistically significant changes. Participants showed that the program was helping in becoming aware of the resources available to kinship caregivers, increasing comfort in asking for help from community resources, increasing confidence in the network of supports available, taking time to care for self as a caregiver, increasing confidence in guiding child(ren) behavior, knowing how to find an answer to a child’s problem, increasing capabilities in meeting the emotional needs of the child(ren), making rules that take child’s individual needs into consideration, understanding legal rights as a kinship caregiver and understanding the different types of custody and care arrangements available.

A p-value generated from a t-test was used as a statistical measure for significance. A p-value of .10 or less was considered statistically significant (this means that we can be at least 90% sure that the change in responses from the pre- to the post-test was an actual change, and not due to chance).

In comparing participants’ pre- and post-test survey results, the following question showed statistically significant changes at the 1% level.
I am aware of the resources available to me as a kinship caregiver.

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<tr>
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<th>Pre</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.44</td>
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I feel comfortable asking for help from community resources.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.44</td>
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I have a good network of supports available to me as a kinship caregiver.

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</table>
I take the time to care for myself as a caregiver.

Pre: 3.48
Post: 3.84

I know how to guide the behavior of the child(ren) in my care.

Pre: 3.74
Post: 4.28

If anyone can find the answer to what is troubling my child(ren), I can.

Pre: 3.15
Post: 3.84
In comparing participants’ pre- and post-test survey results, the following four questions showed statistically significant changes at the 5% level.

I know how to meet the emotional needs of the child(ren) in my care.

Pre: 3.85
Post: 4.36

I try to make rules that take my child(ren)’s individual needs into consideration.

Pre: 4.07
Post: 4.48
I understand the different types of custody and care arrangements that are available to me as a caregiver.

- Pre: 3.50
- Post: 4.00

I understand my legal rights as a kinship caregiver.

- Pre: 3.42
- Post: 4.00

These results indicate that ten out of twenty-three measures improved significantly from the pre- to the post-test, highlighting areas in which Parenting A Second Time Around programs may have had a positive impact on their participants.
Visit the Parenting in Context project at:

http://www.human.cornell.edu/pam/outreach/parenting/

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