Press Release for the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program

From "Hooey" to Helpful: Pickens Parents Find Triple P Positive
By: Candace Chellew

(Easley, SC) - When Craig Ross heard about the Triple P - Positive Parenting Program, he thought it would be "a bunch of hooey."

"There are so many programs out there with all different ideas about raising children. I came from the old school of being spanked, and that's all I really knew. I came here and thought it would be another one of those things, but I thought I'd give it a shot," Ross said.

He's very glad that he did. After attending just one of the three seminars on Triple P, presented in Pickens County at Easley First Baptist Church by Pastoral Counseling of Palmetto Health, Ross put what he learned that evening into practice when he picked up his children.

The ride home from daycare had become a nightmare, with the two 5-year-olds and the 2-year-old vying for the front seat next to Daddy. Finally, Ross told them, "I'm taking the front seat out! There's not going to be a front seat!" But this didn't end the bickering from the back; he had to endure it all the way home.

But after learning about the finer points of Triple P, Ross said the results were amazing.

"When I picked them up, before we even got in the car, I reminded them that nobody sits in the front," he said. "So, we got in, and they all got in the back. I asked them, 'How was your day?' and they all started talking at once, and I said, 'Wait, let's take turns.'"

Instead of fighting on the way home, Ross said he had a peaceful ride, listening to the details of his kids' day.

"I was driving down the road thinking, 'Are these the right children?' because everybody was happy and there was no argument about who got the front seat, so I thought maybe there's something to this after all," Ross said.

He was back the next day, ready to learn more about Triple P and how it could help his family.

Triple P offers suggestions and ideas to help parents build positive relationships with their children. The program also teaches several core principles, including how to create a safe, interesting, and positive environment for children, how to use assertive discipline, and how parents can take care of themselves so they can better care for their children.

One of the event organizers, Kathy Chamlee, a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist with the pastoral counseling service, said most of the nearly 30 parents who attended the seminar praised the program and said they would try it with their children.

"People are really hungry to hear about new ways to improve their parenting skills. I think the people appreciated being exposed to this level of dialogue about parenting," she said.

Ross was not the only parent at the seminar who was originally skeptical of Triple P's effectiveness.

Scott Larson and his wife Annette parent three children aged 10, 2 and 1. He thought the 25 years of research that went into developing Triple P made it out of date. Instead, Larson discovered that Triple P has given new life to time-honored parenting ideas like being consistent in discipline, praising children for good behavior, and showing parents how to work more effectively as a team.

"It's encouraging me as a dad and a husband that my wife and I come together on the same page and direct our focus to our children in a more positive manner," he said.

Jay Santora, father to three boys aged 6, 8 and 10, said he understood Triple P's teaching of using your voice effectively when giving children instructions.

"You don't have to yell at a child," he said.

Ross said he used the tip offered by Triple P Training Consultant and seminar presenter Mary Echols to stay a step ahead of his children and let them know what's expected in any given situation to head off misbehavior before it starts.

"Instead of reacting to the situation where they want to sit in the front seat, I got ahead of it," Ross said. "I set an expectation before we got to the car. I told them what would happen, and that's what happened, so they knew what to expect. I paid attention to each of them as we went down the road. I didn't raise my voice; I didn't have to yell. I didn't have to pull over. It was amazing. I was stunned because it has been a power struggle."

Ross said he understands that although Triple P won't immediately solve all of his problems, the program has given him and his wife Tammy "some tools to work with now. If it continues to make a difference like it did with this one event, and I know it won't every time, but maybe we can get a foothold now and start making progress."