



February 2018

Dear Friends,

Abuse scandals are prevalent in our news; but how are we caring for our children who suffer from such things? Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) has become a catch word for educators as well as medical and legislative groups. I recently attended an ACEs conference in Des Moines with several hundred other professionals mostly from County Health Departments and Human Services Offices of Iowa. Last month I attended a conference in Wisconsin to become certified as a **Sexual Risk Avoidance (SRA)** educator. These two conferences made me realize that our **Powerful Choices** lessons have been written to meet the holistic needs of students. **Holistic** is a concept in medical practice that addresses all aspects of a person's health including their psychological, physical, spiritual and social needs. This concept must be expanded to include considerations for students in our classrooms who may be suffering from ACEs:

- ✓ Past history – abuse?
- ✓ Current realities – unsafe, unstable environment?
- ✓ Future implications – unsafe paths, missed potentials?

Powerful Choices lessons emphasize hope for the future for each student, “No matter what is happening or has happened to you, **You have the Power to Choose!**”

Biblical Applications: Considering the needs of many youths in our church schools, Sunday schools and youth groups, I have completed lessons for the purpose of teaching preteen students life skills using biblical principles. The lessons emphasis how to make powerful choices concerning peers they associate with and a personal commitment to righteous living.

A Connection to Parents: The students have an opportunity to share information with their parents and families. Worksheets and take home materials provide questions for the students to ask their parents each evening. This provides opportunity to increase parent-child connectedness and generate discussions regarding healthy relationships and family values. Our goal is to strengthen family bonds.

There are 10 lessons useful for teachers, youth leaders and parents to study with their preteen(s). Please e-mail us for more information mail@equippingyouth.org.

Our 20th anniversary is May 5. Save the date for our Open House.

Sexual Risk Avoidance (SRA) Education assists youth to eliminate/avoid all risk; to achieve optimal health and well being. SRA education teaches a broad based message of how to stay free of all the encumbrances of the consequences that so often follow youth into their adulthood and through out their life time.

Sexual Risk Reduction (SRR) Education does not agree with SRA teaching that emphasizes abstinence. SRR normalizes and promotes teen sexual activities. Their myth of “every teen will have sex” is **advantage discrimination**. By believing that most teens are hopeless this education leaves teens at high risk of suffering holistic consequences. The activities promoted by SRR keep many teens from reaching their potential goals and successes.

Thank you for caring,

Ruth Anne Eccles BSN MSN

We appreciate your support and want you to remember that your donations to our work make a difference for families, schools and communities

Ruth Anne Eccles

Call our office, talk to a board member, or visit <http://bit.ly/2F8vygh> to purchase your Community Days 2018 Coupon Booklet.

Coupon books are available at the office for you to use to collect donations for Equipping Youth too!



These coupon books make a great insert for any Valentine's Day Card!

Community Days is a fundraising event held twice yearly that benefits local schools and 501c3 nonprofit organizations. \$5 coupon booklets are sold for an event taking place Thursday, March 1 – Saturday, March 3, 2018 and 100% of every \$5 booklet sold will benefit over 7,000 participating organizations.

Donate \$5 and get over \$500 in exclusive coupon savings including:

- \$10 off coupon valid on a purchase of \$10 or more
Up to 30% off shopping pass that can be used over and over throughout the 3-day event
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- 39.97 8-pc. comforter set
- And many more offers throughout the store!

Every dollar collected, when selling our books, goes directly to Equipping Youth's mission. Soon we will be sharing our new curriculum project. Watch the Gazette's Editorial page too! You will see your dollars at work in Eastern Iowa.