Hungry for Connection

An immigrant from Ethiopia, Abebe was not used to too much food being a problem. But in America, the media was always sounding the alarm about obesity. She worried that her son, Adnan, was eating too much, and money was tight anyway, so she limited his food. When she realized he was sneaking food and hiding it under his bed, she began to suspect he had an eating disorder.

She didn’t know what to do, so when Adnan’s school offered the new Families First workshops Parenting Preteens, she attended. The Parenting Educator was dynamic and knowledgeable, but when it came to her concerns about her son, Abebe learned almost as much from the other parents.

As she told more and more details about the situation—that Adnan is an athlete, that he is growing, that it was apples and other healthy foods he was sneaking—her peers offered support and shared knowledge from their own experience. They testified that being hungry constantly was normal for a boy Adnan’s age. And, without judgment, they helped Abebe understand how damaging shaming kids about eating can be.

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Our Family is Growing!

Thanks to your support, right now is an exciting time at Families First. As we implement the strategic plan approved last spring, we are growing! We’ve welcomed three new staff members to new positions since the fiscal year began. In the new Grants Specialist position, Jill Brevik adds crucial fundraising capacity. Dawn Shearer-Coren provides rich, dynamic trainings for our Parenting Educators as Training Coordinator. As FUSE Coordinator, Sherra Cates works on developing partner relationships and scheduling activities with schools.

And we’re not done yet. We are hiring for two additional positions: the open Special Events & Annual Fund Coordinator position and our first Evaluation Manager (a key position as we implement our strategic plan). Full bios can be found on the website.

Giving Runs in the Family

Meryl Kessler has been involved with Families First for 13 years. She served on the Board of Directors from 2003 to 2010 (Chair, 2006 – 2008) and remains active. She was selected Nan Kay Volunteer of the Year in 2013, and last year was a valued participant in our strategic planning process. Since Meryl’s relationship with Families First is long and deep, it’s only fitting that recently her family got into the act. In honor of Meryl and her husband Scott Oran’s 27th wedding anniversary, her in-laws made a donation to Families First—at the suggestion of their granddaughter! We are grateful to Meryl and her in-laws for their generosity.

To make a donation in honor of a loved one, visit www.families-first.org

Fathers’ Breakfast Upcoming

The 13th Annual Fathers’ Breakfast is fast approaching! Join us on Thurs, October 30, from 7:30 – 9am at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel as we celebrate fathers.

The keynote will be given by nationally known researcher Dr. Laurence Steinberg, who will share insights on parenting and educating teens from his new book, The Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence.

For more information, visit: www.bit.ly/fathersbreakfast

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