



Metropolitan Family Service

1808 SE Belmont Street
Portland, OR 97214
503.232.0007
Fax: 503.232.9178

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Contact: Pat Kaczmarek,
Marketing & Communications Manager
Metropolitan Family Service
503.232.0007, ext. 170
patk@metfamily.org
www.metfamily.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Social Change Topics Enliven SE Portland Gathering

Portland, Oregon – July 23, 2010– Southeast Portland resident Holly Schoenbeck welcomed 23 guests to her home in June to discuss how healthy parenting, strong families and a healthy environment support child development. Participants included grandparents, parents of young children, and adoptive parents. The event was part of a series entitled **agog**, which is short for ***A Gathering of Good***. The goal is to promote discussion, civic engagement and social change.

The discussion was led by local topic experts that were contacted by Metropolitan Family Service to facilitate the discussions. Mary Louise McClintock, the Early Childhood Program Director at The Oregon Community Foundation and Aphra Katzev, PhD and author and Faculty Research Associate in Oregon State University's Family Policy Program, provided insight into the early social-emotional development of infants and toddlers, and the ways that families build strong connections.

The group discussed ways to help individual families and influence social policy. Some of the suggestions were to: mentor a child or a family and help parents set goals for their families; volunteer in your child's classroom - or at a low-income school; and recommend that parenting education classes be taught in high school.

Metropolitan Family Service developed this discussion series to help build healthy communities. The agency offers parenting classes to reduce the risk of child abuse, teach parents positive discipline skills and how to motivate & support their children.

On Saturday, October 16, 2010, the signature fundraiser for ***A Gathering of Good***, will take place at the Portland Hilton Grand Ballroom. An interactive, entertaining, and inspirational evening is planned to recognize the power within us all to create positive change in our community. Dr. Larry Wallack, the Dean of the College of Urban & Public Affairs at Portland State University, will be the keynote speaker. He is known for his work in 'media

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advocacy,' working with mass media and communities to advance social and public health issues. The second annual *Provocateur* award will be presented to Eileen Brady, the co-founder of New Seasons Market. Ms. Brady serves on the Oregon Health Policy Board and Oregon Business Association Board and speaks regularly on sustainability, building regional food systems, and transforming health care.

Proceeds support Metropolitan Family Service programs that help people facing cultural and economic barriers such as inadequate education, health issues, isolation and poverty. Metropolitan Family Service helps more than 37,000 children, families and older adults each year. Please visit www.agatheringofgood.org to learn more.

Background Information

About **Metropolitan Family Service** (MFS): For sixty years, Metropolitan Family Service been building healthy communities to support children, families, and older adults. We provide services at more than 145 sites, including more than 70 schools. Metropolitan Family Service makes connections that strengthen the lives of 37,000 individuals and families each year.

For more information, contact Pat Kaczmarek, Marketing and Communications Manager, at 503.232.0007 ext.170. You can visit our website at www.metfamily.org.

Through **agog**, Metropolitan Family Service promotes face-to-face conversation, civic engagement and social change. The *Provocateur* award was created in memory of Eileen Johnson, who was an inspiring example of community activism and dedicated to the mission of Metropolitan Family Service. For more information about agog please contact Monica Wirtz, Special Events Coordinator, at 503.232.0007 ext. 201.

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