SPOTLIGHT ON CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL OF THE KING’S DAUGHTERS

Written by Joann Grayson, Ph.D.

Children’s Hospital of the King’s Daughters offers an array of prevention programs and support programs for parents. “We want to support parents,” says Michelle Clayton, MD, “and the hospital sponsors many innovative community outreach efforts.”

The effort begins with offering comprehensive and specialized care for newborns through teens. The hospital’s healing environment offers extensive psychosocial resources, including child life specialists, chaplains, schoolteachers, social workers, and parent and patient education programs. Parents can “room in” on the general care units. Child patients can visit the fully equipped playrooms, keep up with schooling in computer-equipped classrooms, and participate in fun activities such as visits from the Buddy Brigade therapy dogs.

Newborns bring joys as well as questions. Along with happiness, parents may have concerns about how to properly care for their child. There are many healthcare professionals to guide parents of newborns. New parents receive a DVD called “The Happiest Baby on the Block” that helps parents navigate the first months.

CHKD offers classes for children, teens, parents, and grandparents. Healthy weight management, injury prevention, baby care, infant massage, breast feeding, and teen behavior are some of the class topics. Parenting classes are varied with titles such as ‘Positive Discipline,’ ‘Stress in the Family,’ ‘Love, Loss, and Healing’ and ‘The Strong-willed Child.’ There are even specialty classes such as one for parents of children with ADHD and another for caretakers of children with autism. Nationally-known speakers such as Dr. Robert Anda from the Centers for Disease Control (featured in the last issue of VCPN) and Dr. Bruce Perry (featured in VCPN, Volume 77) train local professionals. The hospital
distributes handouts and information at community events, within the hospital and on the web site.

There is also a high school forum for several hundred students each year who want to learn about careers in health professions.

CHKD’s Child Abuse Program is headquartered a few blocks from the main hospital. It provides a coordinated response to children who have experienced child maltreatment and brings together a multidisciplinary team to assist the child and family. (For more information on the services, see the article on Child Advocacy Centers, VCPN, volume 88.)

For more information about the programs at CHKD, contact The Community Outreach Department, CHKD, 601 Children’s Lane, Norfolk, VA 23507, (757) 668-9304 or Web site: www.chkd.org/classes

There also is a Hampton Roads Parenting Education Network with information at: www.chkd.org/hrpen and a listing of parenting classes from a variety of agencies is available at Kids Priority One: www.kidspriorityone.org