

Born Learning

United Way provides leadership, resources and focus to change lives in our community by creating sustainable improvements in education, income and health. United Way of Northeast Florida is a leader in ensuring:

- *Children enter kindergarten ready to succeed and students stay in school through graduation*
- *Individuals and families have the opportunity to achieve financial stability*
- *People have the opportunity to lead healthy and engaged lives*

In addition, United Way ensures that families in need have accurate, helpful information about social services through United Way 2-1-1.

WHAT: Born Learning is a parent engagement and education program designed to provide simple easy to understand everyday tips and parenting information. This program is especially helpful to low literacy level parents and caregivers, and is provided in convenient locations throughout the community.

WHY: To ensure every parent has access to quality information regarding child growth and development which will enable them to provide a solid foundation for their child's healthy growth and development and success in school and in life.

Since children don't come with instruction manuals, many parents struggle to understand their role and responsibilities as their child's primary caregiver and first teacher. Born Learning provides information parents can use daily about providing a safe, happy and healthy environment for their children.

RESULTS: During the 2010-11 program year we provided Born Learning parenting education and information to 2,694 parents and caregivers. 100% reported that the workshop was useful, and 90 days after participating in a Born Learning workshop, 96% of participants continued to use what they learned. Parents tell us this is the first parenting program where they felt respected and safe, to share and learn.

In 2008 Born Learning was certified as an approved parenting class by Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the 4th Circuit family court. After participating in the Born Learning class series, 77% of parents regained custody of their children where they remain and thrive.

SUCCESS STORY: In January 2009 both parents of two small children ages four months and 20 months enrolled in the BornLearning parenting classes. Their children had been removed from their custody and placed in foster care. During weekly supervised visits the observer noted that each week both parents demonstrated more effective parenting techniques. Two months after completing the class both parents were allowed unsupervised visits, and both children were reunified with their parents in November 2009. As of June 2011 both children remain in their parents' custody and they have had no further contact with DCF since their case closed December 2009. Both parents stated BornLearning gave them simple easy-to-do parenting techniques, and reassured them they could be loving parents. The information they received reduced their stress and allowed them to feel sure of their parenting ability and to be more reassuring with their children now ages 2 and 5.