

TOUCHPOINTS COMES TO RACINE

Sustainability begins at home. Providing young families with the skills to raise the next generation of adults with promising futures is the goal of a special project underwritten by the SC Johnson Wax Fund in Racine.

Since 1995, Children's Hospital of Boston has worked with 16 communities around the nation to incorporate the Touchpoints model.

coordinator with Child Care Resource and Referral Services of Greater Racine and Kenosha, Inc.; and Beverlee Baker, family life agent with the Racine County University of Wisconsin-Extension.

These professionals represent health care, child care, family preservation and adolescent pregnancy prevention—areas that will benefit most from Touchpoints' emphasis on prevention through developing relationships between parents and providers.

As children interact with their environments, they move through predictable periods of development. From birth to eight months old, a young infant recognizes voices and is more relaxed with familiar people. A child from eight to eighteen months old learns language and begins using "me," "I" and "mine." Eighteen months to three years old is the period when a child becomes more aware of other children and can tell who is missing from a group.

These are just a sampling of stages in a young child's life. Each provides opportunities for health care practitioners and allied professionals to discuss with parents their child's growth. These childhood stages are known as touchpoints and are fundamental to the Touchpoints Project developed by Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, founder of the Child Development Unit at Boston Children's Hospital.

"With initial training completed," reported Reva Holmes, vice president and executive director of the SC Johnson Wax Fund, "the team's task is to bring what it learned back to the Racine community." Various community resources will then begin developing different methods of outreach depending on their distinct needs. Touchpoints can be the bridge that connects these resources with the young so that everyone's future holds promise.

Touchpoints' philosophy of empowering the family as it cares for its young children is a natural fit in the process of creating a sustainable Racine. The SC Johnson Wax Fund has underwritten Touchpoints training for three Racine participants: Dr. Michelle Snyderman-Platt, pediatrician at All Saints Healthcare System; Rita Klinkhammer, community services and special projects



Racine representatives participating in Touchpoints training visit the Brazelton home in Boston. From left: Rita Klinkhammer, Dr. Michelle Snyderman-Platt, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton and Beverlee Baker.