

Success Stories . . .

Mildred Berry Center



Incredible Years Success Story

Jenny and her husband Matt began the Incredible Years class in July 2008. They have one child, Kyle, who is 3 ½ years old. During our first class Jenny stated that her goal for the class was to “better understand my child” and for her and Matt to be on the same page with their parenting approach. Jenny shared that she worked part time and that Kyle had been having trouble at daycare. Also, she felt there was a lot of stress in the home due to Kyle being difficult to redirect, throwing tantrums, and the lack of consistency between her and Matt’s discipline. Jenny was concerned that Kyle was going to be starting pre-school in the fall and she was worried he’d have trouble there as well. The homework for the first class was for each parent to spend 15 minutes a day playing with their child.

When Jenny came into class for the second session she was beaming. When asked for volunteers to talk about how the homework went, she couldn’t contain her excitement. “When I told Kyle that we were going to play together every day, he was thrilled”, she told the group. She went on to talk about how much fun they’d had playing with various toys like his train sets and Legos. She also mentioned that he had been in a good mood all week and was much more compliant than usual. She stated that she was “amazed that such a little thing could make such a big difference” in their household.

Over the next few weeks, Jenny continued to have more success with each lesson. When we discussed giving children time to follow through on commands, she found that by counting to ten before repeating her instruction, Kyle would often begin to do it on his own by the time she counted to five. This meant she didn’t feel like she had to “nag at him so much”. She set up a potty-training chart when we talked about setting up rewards and was amazed at how few accidents Kyle had that week. And, when we talked about giving praise, she recounted that she’d even been using that technique on Matt – with success!

By then end of group, Jenny says she felt “much more competent in my role as the parent”. Although Matt only attended sessions on occasion, she says that “we worked harder at home to back each other up, since we had a plan to start from that we both agreed with”. And her biggest realization was one she made that second week of class. “That just by changing some of the small things that I do as a parent, we see big changes in the way Kyle behaves which in turn makes the entire family much happier!”

Incredible years is funded in part through a grant from United Way of Rock River Valley. It is a free 12 week class for parents and includes a free meal and free onsite childcare. It is open to the public but does require pre-registration. The course aims to help parents learn new ways to promote their child’s academic success and improve behavior. Parents learn how to play with their child, praise effectively, motivate through rewards, set effective limits, and handle misbehavior.



Community Partner