

# Tucson LINKS Letter

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## NEWS FLASH

Keep up with Tucson LINKS news on TV with twice weekly stories on the news broadcasts on KGUN-TV, Channel 9.

Two different stories about LINKS programs air each week. The schedule for the news shows on which Tucson LINKS stories are aired is changing. So please make a note of these times.

LINKS stories are now broadcast during the 10 p.m. news show Sundays and during the 4:30 p.m. show on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Stay tuned!

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## *Winter and Resiliency*

### Seasonal activities offer many opportunities for families to foster resiliency in children

The arrival of the winter months, the closing of the year and a break from school for children offer renewed opportunities for families to draw together and experience the growth that comes from being resilient.

Researcher Nan Henderson has identified six important themes for fostering resiliency. Here are some ways each can be applied during winter.

#### **Provide opportunities for meaningful participation.**

Many are the chances at this time of year to share the meanings behind the traditions and rituals of one's culture with your children. Younger family members also can help in food preparation or decorating the home, adding value to their seasonal experience. This way, they feel part of a tradition.

**Maintain high, supported expectations.** When they are given significant roles, appropriate to their ages, in seasonal observances, children learn that they are integral parts of the family and the world at large. Good cheer and positive messages help children learn to have faith in themselves and their resources.

**Show caring and support.** Seasonal gatherings are ideal for communicating to children that they are loved, that their practical and emotional needs are understood and every effort is made to see that they are met. Older family members can express confidence and support,

creating a nurturing environment.

**Develop pro-social bonding.** The family presents children with an invaluable opportunity for establishing and building bonds across generations — parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, older siblings, cousins, spiritual leaders. Experiencing the richness of intergenerational activity is not only rewarding, but it helps illustrate healthy models for interacting among the different social groups they will encounter in later life.

**Set clear and consistent boundaries.** Throughout life, boundaries clearly mark limits on and consequences for the actions of individuals. When groups of people gather, or when families attend specialized community functions, the time is right for communicating behavioral norms. Limits make kids feel safe and help them to know what to expect as a result of their actions.

**Teach life skills.** Family gatherings also can be the occasion for parents and grandparents to set examples for kids: displaying empathy and understanding; volunteering; setting realistic goals; accomplishing tasks in a timely fashion; solving problems and being organized; cooperating and resolving conflict in positive ways. Such skills help prepare young people for later life and reduce the obstacles that may get in the way of appreciating the warmth and joy of this time of year.



# Customized, two-tiered support teams at Picture Rocks offer deeper approach for teacher and student help

*“Some of our big interventions are intensive after-school tutoring programs, one of which is supported by LINKS mini-grant. LINKS has come in and done training with our mentors. LINKS also has given us the training to assist with interventions.”*

— Patricia Cadigan, Picture Rocks Principal

When Patricia Cadigan came aboard as principal last year at Picture Rocks Intermediate School, in the Marana district, she determined that the school’s Teacher Support Team (TST) could serve students more fully.

Like some other schools, Picture Rocks now employs a tiered system of support and assistance. Initially, students are referred by classroom teachers to the TST, which recommends strategies to help the student and teacher in question.

If the issue is academics and the strategies employed require further adaptation or more in-depth consideration, the student is referred to a Child Study Team (CST), which works more closely on academic issues. If the issue is behavioral, the TST can refer the case on to a Behavioral Support Team (BST), which consults with professionals in terms of behavior evaluation and possibly develops a functional behavioral plan for the child.

The Picture Rocks BST includes the school psychologist, a counselor and special education teacher, as well as Cadigan.

“Now that we have more teams that can meet more frequently with more students we can stay on top on the situations more readily.”

This means implementation of interventions and evaluation of them is handled in a more timely fashion. It used to be several months before the Picture Rocks TST got back to a case. Now, it can return to cases in as little time as a month, Cadigan says.

Tucson LINKS is directly involved in the process, too.

Diana Iglesias, a LINKS behavioral health outreach coordinator, is invited to and attends many meetings of the BST. She also provides assistance identifying community resources for behavioral treatment, Cadigan says.

Iglesias called the Picture Rocks TST process “very organized, structured and effective.”

Cadigan appreciates her input. “I always pick Diana’s brain. I can just at the drop of the hat call somebody in LINKS and say we need some ideas for interventions, and usually they can hook me up with somebody right away.”



## Student Assistance Teams help remove barriers to success

They can be called Student Assistance Teams (SATs), or Family Support Teams, Teacher Support Teams, Teacher Assistance Teams, Behavioral Support Teams, Student Support Teams.

No matter the names, these school committees exist as an important resource for addressing learning and behavioral challenges.

“It’s a way for classroom teachers to present special needs or problems to a group of specialized professionals who are peers in their own building and receive support and resources from them,” says Diana Iglesias, a LINKS behavioral health outreach coordinator.

Among Iglesias’ duties are helping schools form these teams, offering advice during the process and identifying resources that can be tapped when necessary.

SATs (or TATs, etc.) provide much needed input to teachers, Iglesias says. “They come up with reasonable and supportive interventions

and strategies that the teacher is willing to utilize,” she says. “It leaves it open to the teacher’s choice.”

These teams most often include classroom teachers, along with other professionals such as psychologists, resource teachers, principals, curriculum specialists, social workers and/or counselors.

In some cases, professionals from outside the school also are invited. That’s the case at Picture Rocks Intermediate School, where Iglesias and others have been involved in the team process (*see article above*).

The teams exist to assist teachers in determining the needs of individual students and developing classroom intervention, says Dr. Kay Aldridge, LINKS project coordinator.

When more intensive services are needed, the teams can also refer cases to other school or outside resources.

*“The value, to me, of the SAT process is that it is a direct resource for classroom teachers to address specific challenges in teaching certain students.”*

— Diana Iglesias, Tucson LINKS Behavioral Health Outreach Coordinator

# Using “I” statements avoids putting kids on defensive

*Derived from A Family Guide to Keeping Youth Mentally Healthy & Drug Free, on the Website of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).*

## Parenting Tips

Healthy communication is critical to relationships, but is especially important between parents and children. Is your child listening? Does she understand you? Is your message really getting through? Showing your child how to communicate is part of parenting, but it becomes especially difficult when navigating the world of conflict resolution.

One successful way to communicate with your child is by using feeling language or “I” statements — a way of expressing how you feel about a situation without placing blame or drawing a defensive response from your child. Saying “you did this wrong” or “you did that bad thing” often makes people feel hostile.

“I” statements can help you communicate your feelings to your child in a way that makes him likely to respond with respect. “I” statements also provide children with clear, direct messages and help them

understand that their actions have effects on other people. Here are a few examples:

- *I feel mad and tired when you don't pick up your toys, because then I have to pick them up myself.*
- *I feel upset when you scream loudly, because it hurts my ears.*
- *I feel annoyed when you try to talk to me when I am on the phone, because then I have to try to listen to more than one person.*

“I” statements also can be used to express positive feelings:

- *When you are nice to your brother, I feel happy because I like to see you getting along with others.*
- *When you do your homework, I feel proud because I think that school is important.*
- *When you pick up your toys, I feel happy because it shows me that you are listening when I ask you to do something.*

Using “I” statements may feel awkward at first, but with a little practice, it will become a regular part of your communication style.

*For more parenting tips, go to <http://family.samhsa.gov/>*

## LINKS overview workshop essential for new partner schools

Several new schools have joined the Tucson LINKS roster, bringing the initiative close to its current capacity of 55 schools.

All new LINKS schools, as well as those being recruited, are asked to send a team of representatives to the LINKS overview workshop.

The next overview is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2004, at the Girl Scout Resource Center, 4300 E. Broadway. It will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Those who attend will earn five professional development hours.

The overview workshop is designed to introduce the

structure of the LINKS grant; its underlying foundational concepts and research; and the procedures and process of establishing and maintaining a partnership with LINKS.

Topics include resiliency in the schools; Protective School factors; strength-based approaches and process; evidence-based programs and strategies; accessing and using LINKS funds.

Each school is encouraged to send a team of three to five people. This should include those who will be involved in implementing, monitoring or supporting the school's activities with LINKS.

Ideally, the team sent to

the overview would include an administrator, teachers and possibly support or behavioral health staff.

This workshop is essential in that it introduces incoming schools to the purpose, processes and limitations of the LINKS initiative, providing for a more effective and timely incorporation of LINKS into a school's community.

Don't delay! Call 626-4964 today to register for this and any other LINKS workshops. See list at right for more January choices.

### January Trainings

**Reducing Truancy**  
Jan. 20, 4:00-6:15 p.m.  
South\*

**Strengthening Parent-School Partnerships**  
Jan. 22, 4:00-6:15 p.m.  
Central\*

**Strategic Tutoring**  
Jan. 22, 3:00-6:30 p.m.  
Central\*

**Building Family-School Partnerships: Effective 2-Way Communication**  
Jan. 27, 2:00-6:00 p.m.  
Central\*

**Enhancing Parent-Teacher Conferences**  
Jan. 29, 4:00-6:15 p.m.  
Northwest\*

\*Specific locations TBA.

**Linking Intervention  
Networks for Kids in Schools**

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We welcome story ideas, contributions or comments. Contact the Tucson LINKS Letter editor at [gene.armstrong@tusd.k12.az.us](mailto:gene.armstrong@tusd.k12.az.us) or 520-225-4776.

Check out Tucson LINKS on the Internet:  
[www.tucsonlinks.org](http://www.tucsonlinks.org)

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*Workshop Information/Registration*

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- **Amphitheater Public Schools**  
[www.amphi.com](http://www.amphi.com)  
Dr. Vicki Balentine, Superintendent
- **Flowing Wells School District**  
[www.flowingwells.k12.az.us](http://www.flowingwells.k12.az.us)  
Dr. John Pedicone, Superintendent
- **Marana Unified School District**  
[www.maranausd.org](http://www.maranausd.org)  
Richard Lesko, Superintendent
- **Sunnyside Unified School District**  
[www.sunnysideud.k12.az.us](http://www.sunnysideud.k12.az.us)  
Dr. Raúl Bejarano, Superintendent
- **Tucson Unified School District**  
[www.tusd.k12.az.us](http://www.tusd.k12.az.us)  
Dr. Estanislado Paz, Superintendent
- **City of Tucson**  
[www.ed.arizona.edu](http://www.ed.arizona.edu)  
Bob Walkup, Mayor
- **The Community Partnership of Southern Arizona**  
[www.cpsa-rbha.org/Index.shtml](http://www.cpsa-rbha.org/Index.shtml)  
Neal Cash, Chief Executive Officer
- **Family Advocacy Resource & Wellness Centers**  
[www.tucsonlinks.org/partners/fwc.cfm](http://www.tucsonlinks.org/partners/fwc.cfm)  
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[www.cityoftucson.org/mec](http://www.cityoftucson.org/mec)  
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[www.pire.org](http://www.pire.org)  
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- **Pima County Attorney's Office**  
[www.pcao.co.pima.az.us/index.shtml](http://www.pcao.co.pima.az.us/index.shtml)  
Barbara LaWall, Pima County Attorney
- **Pima County Board of Supervisors**  
[www.co.pima.az.us/bos/bos1.html](http://www.co.pima.az.us/bos/bos1.html)  
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- **Pima County Sheriff's Department**  
[www.pimasheriff.org/](http://www.pimasheriff.org/)  
Clarence W. Dupnick, Sheriff
- **St. Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic**  
[www.ccs-soaz.org/saint\\_e.htm](http://www.ccs-soaz.org/saint_e.htm)  
Sister Barbara Anne Stowasser, Executive Director
- **Tucson Police Department**  
[www.ci.tucson.az.us/police/](http://www.ci.tucson.az.us/police/)  
Richard Miranda, Chief of Police
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- **University of Arizona College of Education**  
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Dr. Ronald W. Marx, Dean

**Tucson LINKS Community Partners**



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