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### Hospital sessions help parents survive, thrive

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#### Submitted by Major Hospital

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Dr. Jennifer Tarbox starts each session of "Surviving and Thriving in Parenthood" that she teaches with a quote from Maya Angelou: "I did what I knew, and when I knew better, I did better."

"I believe all parents want the best for their kids, but sometimes they just don't know what to do. It's hard to sort through all of the information out there to figure out what works best for managing kids' behavior," Tarbox said.

The "Surviving and Thriving in Parenting" workshop, presented in conjunction with Major Pediatrics and Meridian Psychological Associates and funded by the Major Hospital Foundation, provides parents with effective, research-based strategies. It also focuses on strengthening relationships between parent and child.

"The most important thing is consistency," Tarbox said. "The approach is simple, but you have to stick to it. That can be a challenge for busy parents, but if you're consistent, you'll see great results."

The three-hour workshop is monthly on the second Tuesday from 5 to 8 p.m., in the conference room at Benesse Oncology Center. The next session is Tuesday. Registration is required. To register, parents should call Meridian Psychological Associates at (317) 923-2333.

This summer, the workshop will go "on the road" with Family Services and Prevention Programs, the Shelbyville Parks and Recreation Department and the Shelbyville-Shelby County Public Library each hosting a session, but parents should still call the Meridian Psychological Associates number to register.

Workshop size is limited so that everyone has the chance to ask questions and get comfortable. According to Dr. Tarbox, the format is designed to help people feel comfortable.

"Parenting is hard work! I want to provide a relaxed atmosphere where parents can be honest about the problems they're faced with. Chances are, other parents are dealing with the same issues!" she said.

She encourages all of a child's caregivers to attend, including babysitters, grandparents and anyone else who has responsibility for the child on a regular basis.

"The concept of working as a team is helpful in raising children. If the adults in a child's life have consistent expectations for that child, everyone will have an easier time, including the child," Tarbox said.

Dr. Tarbox is a licensed psychologist with Meridian Psychological Associates in Indianapolis. She travels to



Dr. Jennifer Tarbox plays with the son of a Major Hospital employee Tuesday. The licensed psychologist is a family and parenting expert offers a local workshop for parents once a month. The next session is from 5 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Benesse Oncology Center, 2455 Intelliplex Drive. Submitted photo

Major Pediatrics one day a week to provide therapy for the practice's patients.

"I found I was spending a lot of time talking with parents about managing their child's behavior instead of providing therapy to the child," she said, and the idea of the workshop was born.

"Parenting issues are easy to address in a group setting like the workshop," she said, "and the format allows me to reach more people than I can in individual therapy sessions. So many parents are overwhelmed by their child's behavior and not sure where to turn, and I knew I could help them with this workshop."

Angela Gill, executive director of the Major Hospital Foundation said the workshop fits nicely with the foundation's mission and Tarbox's passion for serving children and families.

"This workshop adds to the services Major Health Partners is able to provide to the community, and it fulfills the education component of our mission as well. Dr. Tarbox does a great job presenting, and people really get a lot out of the workshop. It's amazing how a consistent technique settles children and helps their behavior improve."

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