

## *A Healthy-Start Initiative*

Bright Futures is a home-based parenting education program that is a collaborative effort between the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi State University Extension Service. The Extension Service conducts the Bright Futures program.



The program teaches the importance of parenting skills and providing a safe environment where children can grow. Bright Futures focuses on reducing the number of teen births, repeat pregnancies, and cases of child abuse and neglect.

Bright Futures is helping families deal with some of the challenges that put them at risk for poor development. The primary target audience consists of low-birth-weight babies, children living in poverty, and single-parent families. The program promotes family values as well as teaches resource management. Bright Futures provides the educational training needed for individuals to become healthy and productive adults. Training includes the following components:

- Child Development Skills
- Family and Child Nutrition
- Health Education
- Life-Skills Education
- Parenting Skills
- Values Clarification



## *The Vision*

Bright Futures helps families become aware of the importance of family stability and resilience. It explores practical ways of maintaining the health and well-being of individuals and families. The program teaches families the steps needed to help their children become healthy and productive citizens.



## *The Approach*

Bright Futures uses case management teams—

family-life educators and family support workers—to provide contact with at-risk families in their homes.



Each family completes an educational survey and is asked what it wants to learn in the areas of family and child development. The case management team documents the goals and develops an individualized family plan.

A major objective of the program is to get mothers to value their children. The case management team works together to provide a link of services for these at-risk families.

## *The Goals*

The Bright Futures Program provides educational programs and parent-mentor services through home visits and case management to strengthen the lives of families and children in Mississippi.



The goals of the program are

- to provide pregnancy prevention programming to teens to reduce the number of births and repeat pregnancies.
- to provide programs to help parents develop positive parenting skills and reduce the number of child abuse/neglect cases.
- to provide training for basic job skills/readiness to assist at-risk families in securing jobs.
- to conduct educational programs to strengthen the role of fathers and help them become more aware of family responsibilities and the needs of their children.
- to help parents develop life skills in order to improve their quality of life and strengthen family stability.

For additional information about the Bright Futures Program, contact one of the following Mississippi State University Extension Service offices:

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Hattiesburg, MS 39401  
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P.O. Box 330  
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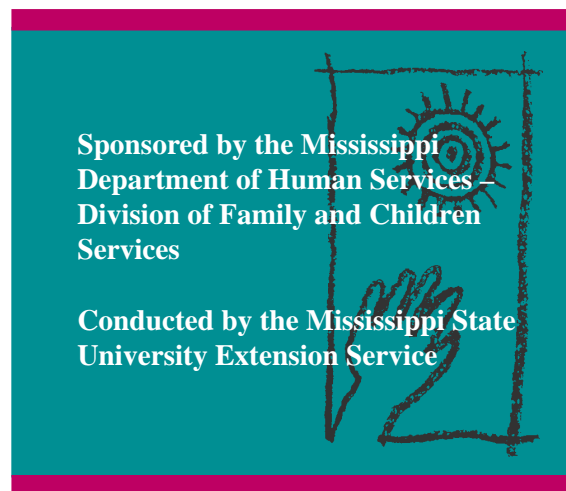
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## *Meeting the Challenges of Positive Parenting*

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