

Attachment Parenting International is proud to be in service to creating a more compassionate world, fulfilling its mission to help children flourish and support parents. As the challenges of growing up in this world continue, API continues its resolve to help parents benefit from API's Eight Principles of Parenting, offering resilience and compassion through secure attachment. Like our world, society, the families we serve, and our very own families, our organization has also been impacted by COVID-19 this year.

We shifted to provide parent support exclusively online during COVID, postponing our scheduled conference participation, events, and in-person meetings. We worked to transition our in-person activities and to create online versions of our training workshops and classes. To complement our online self-guided local leader preparation tool, we launched our group meeting materials. We used the time to research, gather data, participate in webinars, and learn how we can continue to reach and serve parents as dramatic change becomes the new norm.

After 26 years educating and advocating for Attachment Parenting, the API Board spent the year working very hard on preparing for a new phase of API, to be announced in 2021. We look forward to sharing more in the coming year and, until then, read on for more of our activities, outcomes, and impact this year, and some of what's coming.

25 YEARS PLUS

It seems so long ago now, but we came out of our 25th anniversary conference and into 2020 with knowledge shared by our amazing speakers and new connections. At the beginning of 2020, we created and released a resource for those who could not attend the conference as well as for those who did, with slides, videos, and photos of the event and on breastfeeding, adverse childhood experiences, mental health, the chemistry of attachment, breastfeeding and ties, nonviolent communication, social determinants of health and media on breastfeeding and African descent women, science of mother-infant sleep, depression, empathic listening, the evolved niche, separation, and birth.

RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC

On the verge of launching spring training events for the Attached at the Heart Parenting Education Training in Tennessee and the U.K., we realized COVID-19's impact would mean postponing. While we hold a high value for in-person parenting classes under normal circumstances, we quickly embarked on a major effort to design virtual training and parenting classes. In November, we held our first fully-online test training event, with 11 new certified parenting educators to our more than 200, and are now accepting expressions of interest for 2021 training workshops. Under a grant to help pilot and test the The Attached at the Heart Parenting program in Tennessee, we also developed a new, more sensitive, survey instrument for evaluating the classes.

The pandemic meant parents' lives were upended, adjusting to a new reality while helping their children adjust. API responded by publishing support resources on working from home with children, helping recognize anxiety and other challenges in children at various stages and ages, offered in partnership free breastfeeding and infant massage programs, and published support group resources tailored to online environments. Local support groups switched to exclusively online social media support groups which were once a complement to in-person support. Some groups offered meetings on a nearly daily basis. The API Warmline offered support to parents via email and telephone. API surveyed parents to learn more about the challenges they have been facing, and how API can provide more support.

Since the pandemic began, more than 50 individuals have undertaken API's newly released parenting group facilitator preparation program, with new registrations daily from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Ireland, Greece, Bahrain, Turkey, Hungary, Kenya, South Africa, Brazil, Singapore, Spain, Mongolia, Italy, and other countries. We've updated the facilitator meeting resources and expanded, and published downloadable handouts in a searchable, filterable database. All of these resources and capabilities are available to facilitators at no charge. The new leader Facebook support group (Attachment Parenting Leader Exchange - APEx), launched, with more development in process. API created a survey for AP group leaders to gauge their experience with the pandemic, and how we can better support them.

ANTI-RACISM THROUGH PARENTING

API exists to be world changing, at its core working to create a more compassionate world. Healthy early secure attachment is the key element that children receive in relationship with their parents that helps children grow up healthy in every domain. Secure individuals are better able than those with insecure attachments, to give and love from a place of stability, security, empathy, and compassion for all. Anti-racism through parenting. The inherent value of every human life and the birthright of every human child for equitable, just, safe and healthy development surrounded by loving and caring families and communities. During the protests, API shared resources with parents about how to talk to children in age-appropriate ways about racism, listen and respond to their questions, help them read books that show diversity, and, as they grow, continue to share stories about racism, talk with them, help them know how to respond, model compassion for every person, connect with others different from themselves, and teach them to serve and fight discrimination and injustice. API works to continue to resource and support families on anti-racism, work on diversity and systems in the organization, and do so with the support of our community.

AWARENESS, EDUCATION, COLLABORATION

API partnered with the National Parenting Education Network to draw attention to the importance of parenting education, to help destigmatize and normalize engaging in parenting classes and attending support groups, as well as urge it as a priority for local community leadership.

Each fall, API hosts AP Month, an online-in-person event that connects our network around a different theme each year. In 2020 we embraced the theme of Parenting with PEACE as we focused a spotlight on Positive Childhood Experiences. Many involved with API have participated in adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) training and trauma-informed trainings and certifications over the years. API's place has been squarely in prevention of ACEs and during the pandemic we were able to learn more about Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs), and its alignment with API Principles. AP Month served to increase awareness through articles, posts, and daily tips, and included interviews with leaders in ACEs and PCEs. Organizations like The Evolved Nest, Kindred, and Dr. Sears partnered to promote Attachment Parenting.

API has collaborated and partnered and participated in efforts to support parents with the National Parent Education Network, The Evolved Nest, Kindred, Dr. Sears, the Center for Babywearing Studies, Dr. Peter Haiman, Bristol's Promise, David Stark Productions, Family and Home Network's efforts for Inclusive Family Policies, National Trauma Campaign sign-on for attention to ACEs at the federal level, World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action membership, consulted to other organizations, and welcomed several new professionals attesting to the API Principles and offering parents support.

API continued growing its community of publication subscribers, members and social media followers, as well as hundreds of AP local group leaders and parenting educators; provided the API Infant Sleep brochure to nearly 1,000 representatives, organizations, and agencies, and nearly 10,000 since the program began; responded to parent and professional inquiries; shared about API's research with Southern Methodist University; continued efforts to support change in custody, separation, and justice issues; engaged in new website development for greater accessibility; and held fundraising events, like the API auction to support these efforts.

We've made our research base more visible on the website; planned a new podcast program to launch in the new year; added seven new volunteers to the API staff helping with graphic design, podcasts, parenting education, grant writing, communications, website development, and blog editing; prepared a new edition of Attached at the Heart book for publishing with Praeclarus Press in the new year; added text-to-give to our donation options; navigated COVID-19 nonprofit relief; and secured office space and store space to enable resource lending and sales once again.

One of the biggest efforts API undertook this year was to examine our work and identify how to best address parenting education and support for today's parents. The board of directors met many times to form a strategy to guide and prioritize our activities and decisions. API is excited to announce the results of this work in 2021.

API's resources are free of charge in order to be available to every parent. Our work to produce these free resources is funded by regular and generous donors. We are grateful to the Cole-Belin Education Foundation for offering to match donations this year, and other foundations, long-time donors Reedy and PJ Hickey, and other donors, new donors who give \$5, \$10, \$50, or \$100 each month, and our board of directors for their continued contributions. API is a 2020 Great Nonprofits TopNonprofit and has a Guidestar 2020 Gold Seal of Transparency designation.

THANK YOU, KAREN WALANT

We thank Karen Walant, API Board member for her service, and all the work she does for families and society, as she completes her API board term this year.

With exciting announcements pending, scaling of all of our work, trainings around the world, plans for a parenting group mini-grant program to increase access to rental fees, Zoom accounts, webcams, and other ways to facilitate meetings, as well as planning for an online conference, API is here to support families and we welcome you to join us!

FREE
CONFERENCE
RESOURCES

CHANGING PLANS
WHILE WE STAY
ATTACHED AT THE
HEART

PARENTING
SUPPORT AND
ENCOURAGEMENT,
FULLY SHIFTED
ONLINE

PARENTING GROUP
FACILITATOR
PREPARATION AND
NEW RESOURCES

SPEAKING OUT
ON BLACK
LIVES MATTER

PARENTING WITH PEACE
BECAUSE POSITIVE
CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES
INCREASE RESILIENCE

ENCOURAGING AND
NORMALIZING
PARENTING
EDUCATION

SOCIAL MEDIA,
PRINT, AND
RESEARCH
AWARENESS
AND ACTIVITIES

PARTNERSHIPS AND
PROFESSIONALS

WE CAN'T
WAIT TO SHARE

NEW
INITIATIVES

HOW IT HAPPENS

API EMBRACES 2021