

FPSPI

PARENT PERSPECTIVES

This issue of *Parent Perspectives* comes from contributor, Gretchen Hundermark, of the Alaskan affiliate. Gretchen has been involved in the Future Problem for many years in a variety of roles! She is the former AD for Alaska, she has served on the Board of Trustees and currently serves as an international CmPS evaluator.



Parent Perspectives
contributor,
Gretchen
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You don't have to be an expert (I certainly am not) but understanding the basics of how the world works can go a long way to helping students develop realistic ideas. These can be fun conversations. Here are some suggestions of things you might talk about:

How does the "world" work?

- How do different countries work together, or not? Why?
- How do governments work? What is the government's role in society? What is the citizen's role?
- How does the field of economics work? What are the different sectors in an economy: business, service, government, etc.? What are their roles and how are they different from one another? Why are there taxes?
- How do laws work? For instance, it isn't helpful to make a law that cannot be enforced. "Making a law (or a rule)" often doesn't solve a problem in an adult world, but it is a common solution because that is how problems are often solved in a child's world. How can we help them to develop more effective ways to solve problems?
- How do families work? What are the roles in a family? How do families get money? How do they pay bills? How does economics affect your family? Why are laws important? How does the functioning of the government affect your family?

Are you an expert?

Do you know someone who is?

Hearing from an expert is so exciting. This year the topics are:

- Problem #1 **The Impact of Social Media**
- Problem #2 **Processed Foods**
- Qualifying Problem **Propaganda**
- Affiliate Competition **Enhancing Human Potential**
- International Conference -- to be announced March 2

Where can parents find out more about Future Problem Solving?

Visit the website at www.fpspi.org.

How can you help your child prepare for FPS?

Parents *really* can contribute to student preparation in a meaningful way. One way is by helping them find information on the topics for competition!

The FPS topics are tough, especially for younger students. "Research" is necessary for students for many steps of the process: to have a solid understanding of the topic, to recognize challenges faced within the topic, to recognize potential solutions to concerns, and to create an Action Plan to provide a better situation. When I say "research" I don't mean lots of stuff to read. Students need to **discuss** the topic and the materials that they have read. Reading is the starting point. Discussion is where **real understanding** begins.

Students need to think about why a topic was chosen. Why is the topic important to their future? How might this topic change their future? What are good things about the topic? What are possible challenges? What might be some solutions to the challenges? Who might be the different "stakeholders" affected by this topic and how might the challenges affect them?

It is also helpful to talk about trends. What is a trend? What are the trends of the last 10 years that we have experienced? What surprised you? What might the world look like in 10-20-30 years? Who will the students be in 10-20-30 years? Who will you be? What are the good things that could happen? What are some of the challenges? Students often must learn to be positive. Gloom and doom isn't fun or particularly interesting for many kids. Cynicism isn't helpful either and kids do pick up on it. We want the students to become problem solvers and that means finding ways to make the world a better place.

Please send your questions or comments to the Parent Committee via Chair, Deb Woythal at dwoythal@gmail.com

Would you like to read past Parent Newsletters?

Go to the website and click on "Get Involved" and then "Parents."

What are the FPS topics?

- Click on the link **What We Do**, then click on **Topics**.
- The current topics are listed (**Current Topics**). It is surprising how often these pop up in the media once you become aware of them.
- A list of past topics is available. (**Topic History**).
- You and your student can vote on future topics by clicking on the **Topic Vote**.
- Do you have ideas for future topics? Click **Submit Topic**. We would love to hear your ideas.



Research the topic!



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• **"It is time for parents to teach**
• **young people early on that in**
• **diversity there is beauty and**
• **there is strength."**
• — **Maya Angelou**
• •

How can you help your students find a Community Problem Solving (CmPS) project?

CmPS is the component where students use the Future Problem Solving model to find and develop their project and then solve issues that come up along the way using FPS tools. It is very important that projects be student-driven. It is very important to document and describe the FPS process. CmPS is empowering to students. They get to see their ideas and work to make a difference in the real world. Students become excited and, hopefully, become community advocates in the future.

Different kinds of community projects exist. One type is called "service learning," and this is different from CmPS. Service learning is where a project idea is generated by someone other than the students and is often funded by that "someone." The students provide the "labor," but there isn't much student-driven problem solving involved. Service learning projects can be very valuable to a community and a great learning experience for students - but this isn't CmPS.

How can students find community problems?

- The search should be conducted by the students, but it can be facilitated by a coach or parent. Because CmPS is student driven, it will be more meaningful to them.
- Look "out the window." What needs to be "changed?" It is important to be able to describe the "community" impacted. The students don't necessarily need to be part of that community, but they need to be able to state (in their report) why it is important to them to help the chosen "community." Plus, CmPS is a lot of work and the team needs to be motivated to complete the project - there is nothing quite like a vested interest to get a lot of work done.
- Start in the school community and then branch out in "concentric circles" into the rest of the community.
- Talk to local officials.
- Read the local paper.
- Sometimes the FPS topics can be applied to the local community.
- Do students want to do something about science? Talk to Fish & Game or Parks staff for ideas.
- Do students want to do something at school? Talk to the principal or the school board.

Solve a community need!



Important items:

- Have students take notes (like general meeting minutes).
- Take pictures of students as they search for their problem solving idea and especially once they start working on an idea (they will need these for their scrapbook).
- Focus on making a difference in the community, rather than focusing on "winning."

Students become leaders and community advocates from this learning experience. They find it empowering!

Resources: CmPS resources are available at the FPSPI Mart on the FPSPI website www.fpspi.org.

Check with your student's coach. Maybe there are volunteer opportunities for you, too. If you can't get a teacher involved, start CmPS with your kids and have some fun! Future Problem Solving and Community Problem Solving is rewarding for people of all ages.



Our wish for you is a
PROSPEROUS 2015!



A Holiday Activity for the Kids!
Can you match the term used for Santa Claus from countries around the world?

Note: *Santa Claus* is used 3 times and *Santa* twice!

Noel Baba	United Kingdom
Kris Kringle	Belgium
Father Christmas	Sweden
Santa Claus	Portugal
Sinterklaas	Korea
Ded Moroz	Malaysia
Pai Natal	Japan
Kanakaloka	Italy
Babbo Natale	New Zealand
Santa	Turkey
Jultomten	Australia
	Hawaiian
	United States
	Germany

May your holiday
season be filled with
family, friends, food
and love!
Happy Holidays
from the Parent
Outreach
Committee!

Answers will be given in the next issue!

