

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS

Primary Audience: *Head Start Parents*

Parenting is a critical job that ultimately helps shape the future of our communities. More than ever, preparing our children to succeed and make a difference in today's world is critical, and you—as a parent—play the most important role in this process. The Parent track offers sessions and special events that, with compassion, humor, and vision, will help you:

- ∅ Sharpen your parenting skills
- ∅ Share your stories and gain important advocacy skills

Special Events and Activities for Parents

Informative Workshops: Participate in workshop sessions designed to help you improve your parenting skills and gain important leadership skills that will help you advocate for yourself, your children, and your family. Take time to visit the model classroom in the Minnesota Children's Museum and see the newest innovations in classroom design with a Head Start flavor.

Parent Action Room: Get in on the action in the Parent Action Room! Visit the Parent Action Room to connect with other parents, to learn about current legislative issues, and to contact your legislators via telephone and/or e-mail regarding issues important to the future of Head Start and our families. Prepare for the 2008 elections by crafting questions to ask the candidates that will make clear their views on Head Start and make *you* an informed voter.

Mock Legislative Visits and Mock Legislative Hearing: Join local and national legislators for *Advocating in the Legislative Process*, a special session designed to help you understand the importance of advocacy and to conquer your fears about speaking before your legislators. "Hands-on" time with legislators and a mock legislative hearing will provide you with opportunities to practice speaking to legislators and telling your stories.

Cultural Reception: Join us for an exciting evening of music and dance performed by local artists in celebration of cultural diversity!

Exciting Cultural Presentation featuring Tou Ger Xiong: At the Closing Session, enjoy *Teaching Culture Through Laughter*, a thought-provoking and entertaining presentation by Hmong storyteller, comedian, and rap artist Tou Ger Xiong. Hailed as "the Hmong version of Chris Rock, Jim Carrey, and Snoop Dogg—all stir fried into one," Tou Ger's one-man show combines explosive energy, humor, folklore, dance, and rap music to educate people about cultural diversity and racial stereotypes. Don't miss this one!

Visit the Minnesota Children's Museum and the Science Museum of Minnesota: Special admission rates are available to conference attendees for both of these popular Twin Cities attractions. Stop by and see what's new!

Schedule Overview with Workshop Highlights for Parents

Thursday, October 25		
	9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.	Parent Action Room open
	9:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.	Workshops/Seminars: <i>Loud and Clear: The Voices of Fatherhood Coordinators and Successful Strategies from the Field</i> <i>SEED: An Asset Development Program that Establishes Children's Savings Accounts</i> <i>Legislative Update by NHSA</i> <i>Awakening the Gifts Within</i>
	11:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M.	Opening Session/Luncheon Keynote Speaker: Dr. Eric Jolly, President of the Science Museum of Minnesota
	1:30 – 5:30 P.M.	Advocating in the Legislative Process Mock Legislative Visits and Mock Legislative Hearing

	<p>1:30 – 3:00 P.M.</p> <p>3:30 – 5:00 P.M</p> <p>6:00 – 8:00 P.M.</p>	<p>Featuring Local and National Legislators</p> <p>Workshops/Seminars: <i>Partnerships Count for Fathers and Families</i> <i>Creating Inclusive Environments for Children With Disabilities – Part 1</i></p> <p><i>Creating Inclusive Environments for Children With Disabilities – Part 2</i></p> <p>Cultural Reception</p>
Friday, October 27		
	<p>9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.</p> <p>9:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.</p> <p>10:45 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.</p> <p>12:15 – 1:30 P.M.</p> <p>1:30 – 3:00 P.M.</p> <p>3:30 – 5:00 P.M.</p>	<p>Parent Action Room open</p> <p>Workshops/Seminars: <i>Getting Out of Debt and Into Savings: Financial Keys to Unlock Poverty – Part 1</i> <i>African American Healthy Marriage: Because Our Children Can Do Better</i> <i>Conscious Discipline – Part 1</i></p> <p><i>Getting Out of Debt and Into Savings: Financial Keys to Unlock Poverty – Part 2</i> <i>Early Math Development and Assessment</i> <i>Sing-A-Move-A-Dance</i> <i>Conscious Discipline – Part 2</i></p> <p>Lunch</p> <p>Workshops/Seminars: <i>Kids Groove When They Get to MOVE</i> <i>Asset Building and Financial Literacy Strategies for Families</i> <i>How Nature Prepares Kids and Families for Learning</i></p> <p><i>Resources and Supports: Caring for Children With Special Needs</i> <i>Infant Toddler Music</i> <i>Supporting the Sensory Needs of Young Children</i></p>
Saturday, October 28		
	<p>9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.</p> <p>11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.</p>	<p>Workshops/Seminars: <i>Bridge to Benefits: Helping Families Improve Economic Stability by Enrolling on Public Programs</i></p> <p>Closing Session: <i>Teaching Culture Through Laughter, featuring Tou Ger Xiong</i></p>

Registration Information

One-day registration for the Institute is \$100; three-day registration is \$215 before October 1 and \$250 on October 1 and after. Register online at www.mnheadstart.org.

Tou Ger Xiong Biography

Tou Ger Xiong (TOO-JUR-SHONG) was born in Laos in 1973. Since Xiong's father served with the CIA, his family had to flee Laos after the communist takeover in 1975. Xiong's family escaped across the border and sought refuge in a Thai refugee camp. After four years in the camp, Xiong's



Tou Ger Xiong

family immigrated to the United States as refugees of war. Xiong's childhood in America began in the public housing projects of St. Paul. In 1992, Xiong graduated valedictorian from Humboldt High School. He went on to receive a degree in political science from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. In 1996, Xiong created *Project Respectism*, an educational service project that uses comedy, storytelling, and rap music to bridge cultures and generations. Since then, *Project Respectism* has evolved into a program that provides cultural entertainment and education for people of all professions and backgrounds. Xiong has taken his message about respect to 44 states in the past nine years. He has given over 1,500 presentations nationwide to audiences of all ages and ethnic backgrounds, sometimes reaching as many as 10,000 people in a week.

Xiong's work as a Hmong artist and activist has been featured on national television and radio, and in national newspapers. He has been quoted as "one of the most influential Hmong in America today." A documentary/rap video of Xiong's project titled, *Hmong Means Free*, is currently airing on public television. Xiong also starred in *Portraits from the Cloth*, the first television movie about a Hmong family's journey from war. Recently, he received the National Alumni Hall of Fame Award from the United Neighborhood Centers of America and the Pride of St. Paul's Spurgeon Award for his accomplishments. Professionals refer to him as the first Hmong comedian, bilingual storyteller, and consultant on multicultural issues. Young people know him as the Hmong version of Chris Rock, Jim Carrey, and Snoop Doggy Dogg—all stir-fried into one.