

The following article appeared in PARTNERS IN PROGRESS, Winter 2002, published by the PSE&G Strategic Urban Development Department

PSE&G Hosts Weekend Retreat to Improve Parent Communication Skills

More than 60 new Jersey parents, eager to talk openly and productively with their children, were offered communication skills training at a weekend retreat hosted by PSE&G on September 22-23 [2001] at the company's Training Center in Edison. The workshop participants were members of the Parent Leadership Corps (PLC), a statewide network of parents focused on improving communication between themselves and their children.

The PLC weekend retreat program was developed and delivered by the Princeton Center for Leadership Training (PCLT), a New Jersey-based, non-profit organization with over 20 years of proven success in developing leadership skills within schools and communities.

Conducted shortly after the tragic events of September 11, the training was particularly meaningful in that it focused on using communication - with an emphasis on active listening skills - as the best means of keeping children safe in a complicated world. Participants learned and practiced critical communication skills, including how to give and receive feedback.

Oscar Hay, a program participant and an employee at PSE&G in electric distribution, benefited both personally and professionally from the training. "You can't afford to make mistakes when you're working with high voltage," said Hay. "You and your partner have to be on the same page when you ask and answer questions, and active listening skills helped me with that;. Effective communication training can help you with all the people you come in contact with."

Princeton Center training works to transform parents into creative, dynamic problem-solvers. Their overriding goal is to help parents take on new challenges and apply the lessons learned in their everyday life.

"We're happy to support the excellent work of the Princeton Center in developing the leadership skills of parents, children and community residents," said Shirley Ward, PSE&G manager of strategic urban development. "Through their efforts, the Center has consistently generated positive outcomes and strengthened communities throughout the state."

PSE&G has faithfully supported the important work of the Princeton Center for Leadership Training, opening up the doors to company facilities for various training programs and contributing more than \$100,000 to the PCLT in the past five years. These gifts helped aid in the development of team mentoring and after-school programs for adolescents and supported the expansion of Community Partners for Youth programs in both Trenton and Camden.