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 Ad Size: 6 x 20.75"
 Ad Builder: Julie Beacham-Hooie
 Insertions: 1

Code: 001300000
 Revision No.: 4
 Sales Rep: Blank #1
 Rep Phone:
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 Date: Fri, Jan 16, 2009 - 11:08 AM

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 Insertion Date Publication
 Wed, Jan 21, 2009 Local

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MANATEE COUNTY FEATURES A STUDENT AND A CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION TEACHER

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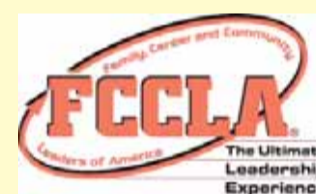


Parenting Preparation

Lakewood Ranch High School's Center for Liberal Arts Education offers a fabulous elective for students interested in learning more about children and parenting. Mrs. Lori Pike, the Parenting Skills/Child Development teacher and co-advisor for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), was awarded a grant to purchase several RealCare® Baby lifelike dolls for her classroom. These computerized infant simulators make real baby sounds and require realistic care around the clock, including feeding, burping, changing diapers, and soothing. The level of "baby" care requirements can be adjusted to three different intensities.

Part of Mrs. Pike's curriculum involves each student caring for their baby for an entire weekend. Students take the baby home with them in a car seat on Friday and return their darling on Monday. The RealCare® Baby computer chip then prints out an analysis of how many minutes the baby cried, how the needs were met, and whether the head was supported properly the whole time it was under the care of the student.

This parenting exercise raises the student's awareness of the level of responsibility, sacrifice, and planning required to care for an infant.



DISCOVER
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 Future

Regional Careers: Related occupations and current wages in the Suncoast Workforce Region.

Occupational Title	Entry Level	Experienced
Minimum wage	\$7.21	—
Manatee County Teachers – 10 month – Bachelors*	\$38,517	\$60,836
Manatee County Teachers – 10 month – Masters*	\$39,555	\$66,033
Childcare workers**	\$7.67	\$10.18
Preschool teachers**	\$8.80	\$15.89
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	\$12.94	\$20.27
Parenting (estimated costs to raise a child***)		(-\$250,000)

*annual

**hourly

***Broad estimate. U.S. Department of Agriculture figures vary depending on income level and single parent/two-parent households. See <http://moneycentral.msn.com/articles/family/kids/tkidscost.asp>

Source: <http://www.manatee.k12.fl.us/sites/hr/Salary/salary.html> and <http://fred.labormarketinfo.com>

Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics & Wages Program

Career Pathway: Students desiring a career in any of these areas can find related educational programs at these schools*:

Lakewood Ranch High School
 Manatee Technical Institute
 Manatee Community College
 University of South Florida

*Other Manatee schools may offer similar programs. Listed schools are related to today's issue.

WEB
 Wise

Check out the following websites:

www.flfccla.org
www.fcclainc.org
www.familyeducation.com
<http://forums.familyeducation.com/forum>

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Family Values

Bria Jackson, a sophomore in Mrs. Pike's class at Lakewood Ranch High School (LRHS), parented a RealCare® Baby at home for the weekend. Bria said, "Babies are hard to take care of. They wake up every two hours through the night." Bria's diverse interests include world issues, community activities, and eco-friendly projects. "My absolute favorite part of the day would be my art class. I love having the freedom to express myself, and my views, through my artwork. My artwork gives me the chance to reach out to youth my age and send a message to my peers."

What is Bria's message? Moral values matter. "It's important to have a role model, to look up to someone who is real, not just a celebrity," said Bria. Strong family values shine through in her art. In fact, Bria sketched a beautiful portrait of sisters that is currently displayed in the LRHS auditorium. Bria's portrait speaks to her family values and is titled *Role Model*.

InnoVators

Maybe, Baby...or Maybe Not



Hey, girls...do you ever see a cute baby and think to yourself, "I can't wait till I have one! I'm going to buy the prettiest baby clothes." Or guys, maybe you see a little kid playing ball and think, "I can't wait till I can play with my kids." Those are fine dreams and certainly a fun part of being a parent, but it's important to remember that parenting comes with huge responsibility. Babies are entirely dependent and need parents who are ready to take good care of them—24 hours a day.

Maybe you're ready to go shopping for cute little clothes, but are you ready for sleepless nights? Newborns wake up every two hours needing to be fed. Are you ready for a huge financial challenge? Diapers and formula are expensive, and don't forget the crib, stroller, car seat, bottles, and blankets. If you aren't married, your situation may involve paying child support. Guys, are you ready to financially support that child for the next 18 years? Your freedom will experience a blow, too; no more going out to the mall or the beach whenever you feel like it—you'll need to find a willing babysitter.

Think about education. If you planned on going to college, it will be harder to attend while caring for a baby. If you need to work (and who doesn't?), daycare could cost as much as your salary, leaving you in a perpetual cycle of financial hardship.

Parenting has its joys, its triumphs, and is definitely more about gain than loss. Many of us wouldn't be who we are today without the love and care of our parents. But it's a sacrifice, not a fairy tale. Are you ready? Think about your actions—and the consequences!



Explore
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Baby-sit an Egg

Let us introduce you to your new egg child—he or she is tiny, smooth, and fragile, just like a newborn. Cute, too, depending on your artistic ability. Of course, eggs don't cry, wake you up, or need to be fed or changed, but caring for them will help you understand a fraction of the responsibility that comes with parenting.

1. First, get a raw egg from the fridge and draw a face on it with a permanent marker.
2. Your egg needs a good name. Is it a boy or a girl?
3. Treat your egg like it's a real baby. Don't leave it alone for a second, and take it everywhere you go—to the store, to sports practice, to the mall, etc. (You might need permission if taking it to school.)
4. Try this for a few days. Don't let your egg break! Fashion an egg-carrier out of Styrofoam or cardboard that will help protect it. A tissue box with a rag or paper towels inside would work well, too.
5. If absolutely necessary, find an egg-sitter who is willing to watch your egg child for a while.

If you break your egg or leave it alone for even five minutes, you've failed the parenting test. If you think caring for an egg is hard—imagine being a parent!



InquiziKidz page is published every Wednesday in Bradenton Herald. Provided by Newspaper in Education, Christine Fritch (941) 748-0411 ext. 5464, cfritch@bradenton.com Julie Beacham-Hooie, Page Editor.