

Program on Child Welfare

April 20, 2010

Kathy Whitmire, one of the state's leading experts on the importance of early education, spoke to the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area at our regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

A veteran educator of 35 years, Whitmire has worked in a number of positions in Oconee County public schools including teacher, principal and Assistant Superintendent. She has also served as an adjunct instructor at Clemson and The Citadel and executive director at the Cherokee Creek Boys School. Currently she is the principal at Orchard Park Elementary School, Oconee County. Pictured left to right: Janet Marsh, Kathy Whitmire.



In her many opportunities to share her knowledge of brain development and the learning process, Whitmire showed her audiences that a child's intelligence can be influenced more between the ages of 0 and 18 months than it can between 18 months and 18 years. In order to give a child the foundations needed for a successful future, a child's environment and caregivers must offer the child enriching experiences.

This presentation focused on the 'windows of opportunity' in brain development and identify the activities and experiences that are necessary to maximize the learning potential of children. Some of the topics to be discussed include identifying components of an enriched environment; stress and its impact on brain development; sensory integration as it relates to brain 'systems'; and the role of parents and childcare in providing the foundations for future success.

Whitmire has received numerous awards as an outstanding educator and for her active community involvement including SC Educator of the Year in 2003 and SC National Distinguished Principal in 2002.