

# Series will answer parents' questions about teenagers

BY JAN GAILLARD

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Seton House will offer a six-week program designed to help families cope with the ups and downs of raising today's teens.

The free course, "Actively Parenting Teens," will be held at the Princess Anne Recreation Center from 7 to 9 p.m. beginning Tuesday.

"The program is open to anyone looking to improve their teenager's behavior to improve the relationship with their adolescent," said Renee Dupuis, director of youth and family counseling for the non-profit organization based in King's Grant.

Since 1985, Seton House has provided free shelter services and counseling for teens in crisis. Its goal is to offer a temporary safe haven for young people ages 12 to 17,



JAN GAILLARD

**Sasha LeGeros, left, counselor and facilitator, discusses the six-week parenting class that Seton House offers area parents with the director of Youth and Family Counseling, Renee Dupuis.**

and also to facilitate resolution of family conflicts, allowing families to be reunited.

Crisis counseling services are available any time, at no charge along with a 24-hour

crisis hotline. Serving more than 7,000 teens and their families a year, Seton House offers parental support and outreach programs such as the Actively Parenting Teens class.

Instilling responsibility, building self-esteem, problem-solving and shaping family values are some of the topics that will be discussed by the group's facilitator, Sasha LeGeros, during the upcoming course.

"Parenting a teen is more of a collaborative effort with the teen, involving freedom within limits. A lot of it is providing support to see change, not to overpower," said LeGeros, a parent educator, teen facilitator, and youth and family counselor with Seton House.

"There is a lot more peer pressure on teens today; it's just as scary for teens as it is for parents."

The program is based on a method of study founded by Dr. Michael Popkin, a former child and family therapist, and coordinator of child and family services for Northside Community Mental Health Centers in Atlanta.

The series of parenting studies integrates video and group discussion into advanced education programs. Parents will be provided with a book and notes to take home at the end of the course.

"It is helpful to refer back to the book, instead of just sending them out with nothing," said LeGeros.

■ *"Actively Parenting Teens" will be offered free to public at the Princess Anne Recreation Center, 1400 Nimmo Parkway. To register, call Sasha LeGeros or Renee Dupuis at 306-1840.*