



Links

linking kinship caregivers



Vol. 8 Iss. 3 Fall 2006

In Remembrance of Mrs. Lafrancine Lewis

Mrs. Lafrancine Lewis passed away in June 2006. Mrs. Lewis was an original member of the GrandParent/GrandChildren Initiative (GP/GCI) Network. She was known for her longtime championing of grandparents raising grandchildren and ran a support group for many years to provide support for grandparents raising grandchildren. She was a member of the GP/GCI Education Subcommittee and advocated for an increase in TANF funds for kinship caregivers and supportive services for kinship children. In 2002, when the Education Subcommittee decided to host the First Annual Kinship Kamp, Ms. Lewis suggested they partner with Dakota Center. Dakota Center has continued to be a partner and has recently hosted the Fourth Annual Kinship Kamp.



The Kinship Caregiver Coalition is currently compiling reflections from caregivers and children living with grandmothers and relatives in honor of the life of Lafrancine Lewis, and other caregivers. We plan to publish these in a booklet that can serve as inspiration and strength for kinship families and their children.

If you or your children would like to share your experience as a kinship caregiver or offer words of wisdom, tips, or advice that have improved your ability to raise the children, please send them to us.

Example submission:

"Raising your grandchild has its challenges, but they're far outweighed by the rewards. Seeing her happy, seeing her succeed, having her wrap her arms around me and getting a great big hug – that's the best reward in the world."
– Sandy Powers (Grandmother)

You can email them to dionne.henderson@wright.edu or mail them to the Center for Healthy Communities at 140 E. Monument Avenue, Dayton, Ohio, 45402, or fax them to 937-775-1110. Your entries may be edited slightly for length and appropriate content. **Deadline for all submissions is November 30, 2006.**

4th Annual Kinship Kamp a Success

Each year the Kinship Caregiver Coalition's Kinship Kamp has continued to expand and provide psychosocial education and supportive services to reduce the feeling of isolation among children living in a relative household. Children in kinship care relationships often have low self esteem, poor socialization skills and difficulties forming attachments. *Grand Ideas for Grand Kids* curriculum was developed by Western Michigan University to specifically address these issues. The curriculum covers the following topic areas: personal self, families, friendships, anger, fear, guilt, and grief and loss. These difficult subjects are explored through dramatic play, arts and crafts, and storytelling. Each year the format and activities are modified to provide the children who have attended the camp before something different.

This year, the Kinship Kamp ran from June 19 through June 30. Dakota Center and Five Rivers Metro Park

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Kinship Resources

The **Trotwood Madison Schools** support group is up and running successfully. This group meets the third Thursday of each month at

Westbrooke Village Elementary. For additional information about the Trotwood Madison Support Group, contact Marsha Jones at 937-770-2137. Also check the **Kinship Caregiver Coalition web page** for information:

www.med.wright.edu/chc/kinship/events.htm.

Christ United Methodist Church would like to invite you to join their Grandparent Support Group. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 3440 Shroyer Road., Kettering, Ohio. The next scheduled meeting is November 1, the topic will be "When Should We Begin Warning the Children about the Many Dangers?"

Senior Resource Connection is offering seniors in Montgomery County a FREE in-home assessment by a Registered Nurse specializing in Geriatrics. After a detailed assessment the nurse will assist you in finding services you need.

Who is Eligible? Seniors 60 and older in Montgomery County regardless of income! How do I schedule my free

assessment? Call the Senior Resource Connection Visiting Home Care at 223-8246.

Drive Thru Flu Clinic

November 1, 2006, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Hara Arena Complex
1001 Shiloh Springs Rd.

Sponsored by the Combined Health District of Montgomery County

Bring your insurance card and driver's license or state ID. The flu shot is \$28.00, based on ability to pay. No one will be turned away because they can't pay.

Who should get the flu shot?

- Pregnant women
- People aged 50 and over
- Adults with chronic medical conditions
- People who fear that getting the flu could lead to a life threatening situation

The Dayton Dental Collaborative is hosting "Helping Hands for Those in Need" on November 22, 2006 Call Tonya at Dayton Dental Collaborative to schedule an appointment at 937-435-5163.

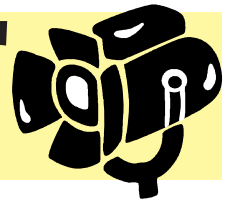
FREE Exams

FREE Cleanings

FREE Emergency fillings

FREE Emergency extractions

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



A Big Thanks to Jane Blount Kinship Klostet Keeper

Jane Blount served as a Program Aide for three months. She has been very instrumental in organizing both Kinship Klostets. Jane left the KCC at the end of September to join her family in Cleveland. Please join us in thanking Jane for her diligence in serving kinship caregivers.

Thanks to Sisters Helping Sisters

Sisters Helping Sisters is a group of women dedicated to making a difference in their community. This group was formed in 2003.

Their goal is to help women to make positive changes in their lives. They are motivated to complete at least one project a month. No ask is too big or too small for this group of women.

Sisters Helping Sisters has teamed up the Kinship Navigators to provide support to kinship families. They have donated several hundred dollars, a washer and dryer, and paid the utility bill for a kinship family.

We would like to thank SHS and wish them much success in helping the women in our community.

Legal Talk



Legal Aid Advocates for Students with Disabilities

By Branford Brown, Managing Attorney, LAWO Dayton

Funding from the **Montgomery County Human Services Levy** is enabling Legal Aid of Western Ohio (LAWO) to provide specialized advocacy for disabled students. Too many special needs children don't get the education they're entitled to and the consequences can be far-reaching for both these children and society at large—higher dropout rates, a higher risk for criminal activity, and higher social service costs. According to the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, up to seventy percent of youth in corrections and detention have learning, behavioral or emotional disabilities.

Our goal at LAWO is to help prevent disabled Montgomery County youths from dropping out of school and entering the juvenile justice system by addressing their underlying special education needs. Federal law requires school districts to create **Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)** for students with disabilities. But these plans are not always comprehensive—and sometimes, they're just not enforced.

Parents, who are already struggling with a special needs student, may not have the legal savvy to navigate through the administrative processes involved. Funds from the **Human Services Levy** have allowed us to hire a dedicated parent advocate to help parents cut through the red tape. We can now more effectively help parents prepare for IEP hearings and appeals and get their children the individualized instruction that they need for success in school and in life.

For additional information, call **Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Attorney Branford Brown**, at 937-228-8088.

Extra Cash for Relatives Raising Children through Ohio's Kinship Permanency Incentive (KPI)

A recent article in the *Dayton Daily News* reported there was money available for grandparents and other relatives raising children in the home. It is true that there are additional TANF funds available for grandparents and other relatives raising children **BUT** there are specific guidelines to meet to receive them through the **Kinship Permanency Incentive (KPI)** Program.

To be eligible for Ohio's KPI Program, you must meet these requirements:

- A judge has ruled that your child was abused, neglected, dependent or unruly.
- A Public Children Services agency completed the placement approval process.
- A judge awarded legal custody of the child to you after July 1, 2005.
- The child meets special needs criteria.
- Your income is not higher than 200% of federal poverty guidelines.
- You have submitted an application for approval to the public children services agency in the county where you reside.

This program does **NOT** prevent eligible families from receiving Child Only TANF benefits. KPI is **in addition** to these benefits.

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Generations United Welcomes Reauthorization of Federal Older Americans Act

<http://ipath.gu.org/documents/A0/OAAreleaseheaded.pdf>

Congress reauthorized the Older Americans Act (OAA) just before it adjourned for the mid-term election campaign and President Bush signed it into law on October 17. The Act makes valuable improvements to current law, including provisions to lower the age limit from sixty to fifty-five for grandparents and other relatives raising children to qualify for supportive services through the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP).

Generations United and its partners have championed the efforts on Capitol Hill to lower the age limits since passage in 2000, citing the fact that only 29% of grandparents raising grandchildren are over the age of 60. The change will increase the number of eligible families to 47%. The NFCSP provides information and assistance such as support groups and respite are to thousands of grandparents and other relatives raising children across the U.S.

New to the Older Americans Act is a provision that authorizes demonstration grants to non-profit organizations to carry out multigenerational and civic engagement activities such as those that connect older and younger people in child care, youth day care, after-school programs, and library and education assistance programs. The Act also authorizes funding for innovative programs that engage older volunteers providing support to families whose children have special needs, and supports to grandparents and other older relatives and the children in their care. To qualify for funding an organization must have a multigenerational coordinator. Now Congress must make sure these important programs get enough money to be truly effective. GU will join with others in the multigenerational community to urge lawmakers to allocate sufficient funds to help every family that needs it.

In keeping with a multigenerational approach, this reauthorization of the OAA also includes some measures targeted particularly at youth. The Federal Youth Coordination Act (FYCA) was attached to the Act as a separate Title to ensure that it would pass before Congress adjourned. The FYCA creates a council to oversee federal programs serving youth, with the aim of providing improved coordination and accountability.



The complete text of H.R. 6197, the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006, which includes the Federal Youth Coordination Act at Title VIII, is available at <http://thomas.loc.gov/>. The House bill was introduced by Ohio Representative Patrick J. Tiberi (12th Dist.) and co-sponsored by nineteen other representatives, including Rep. Ralph Regula (OH-16) and Rep. Tim Ryan (OH-17). The Senate version of the bill was introduced by Sen. Michael B. Enzi, (WY) and co-sponsored by Sen. Mike DeWine (OH), Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (MA), Sen. Barbara Mikulski (MD), and Sen. Tim Johnson (SD).

Links

is a quarterly publication of the Kinship Caregiver Coalition (KCC), an initiative of the Center for Healthy Communities.

For more information or to make suggestions, please contact Dionne Simmons, Program Director, Kinship Caregiver Coalition, at the Center for Healthy Communities, 140 E. Monument Avenue, Room 315, Dayton, Ohio 45402; (937) 775-1116.

In addition to the direct and in-kind support provided by our academic and community partners, the Center for Healthy Communities is funded through the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), Montgomery County Children Services Board, Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Mental Health, Planned Parenthood of the Greater Miami Valley, and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Charter funding: *The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Community Mutual Insurance Company, Ohio Board of Regents Action Fund, Ohio Department of Health, and the Dayton Foundation.*

Help for Winter: Payment Assistance Programs



Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

1-800-282-0880

If you are income-eligible and need help paying your winter heating bill, HEAP may be able to assist you. The amount of assistance will depend on the size of your household, your total income and the type of heating fuel you need.

Emergency Home Energy Assistance Program (EHEAP)

1-800-282-0880

From November 1st to April 15th, if you are unable to pay your energy bill or have less than a 10-day supply of heating fuel, EHEAP may provide funds to continue or restore your service for up to 30 days. You may also be able to use the funds to help repair a heating system. For longer-term assistance, see the information about HEAP.

Ohio Energy Credit Program (OECF)

1-800-282-0880

If you are an income-eligible senior or have a physical disability, the Ohio Energy Credit Program may be able to help pay a percentage of your winter heating costs.

DP&L's Medical Certification Program

937-331-3900

If you receive care for a serious medical condition and need help paying your energy bill, you may qualify for this program. You must be a permanent resident and you must be certified by a licensed physician or by a local Board of Health physician. DP&L can defer payment for 30 days, up to 90 days per permanent resident, per year.

Community Action Partnership Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) helps low income residents save money on the high cost of heating and cooling their homes by providing energy assessments and installation of energy saving materials in the homes and apartments qualifying individuals. Contact the HWAP office at 937-341-5000.

County Corp has Emergency Assistance money available to Montgomery County residents living outside of the city limits of Dayton and Kettering. There are income restrictions. Call Sandy Anderson or Stephanie Evans at 937-225-6328.

Kinship Kamp, continued from page 1

Adventure Central were the host sites. There were a total of 14 participants in the program. The Kinship Kamp Coordinator, Meagan Feasal, found that "working with the kids was an eye opening experience." Ms. Feasal felt the participants in the program were warm and had adjusted well to their kinship arrangements.

It is an accomplishment if each child in the group is able to make a new friend through the camp. We have definitely discovered over the years the lack of friendships that children in kinship care relationships have. To encourage new friendships, we requested that sibling groups not to partner with each other and to partner with someone they don't know. It is often difficult to get sibling or family groups to separate, however.



It was a benefit to the Kinship Kamp program to partner with Dakota and Adventure Central. These programs had worked with the children prior to the summer program and were instrumental in identifying those children who could benefit from additional services. The caregivers also shared with us areas where they would like to see improvement in their children. The Kinship Navigators continue to be a resource to the families after the camp is over.

Ohio KPI, continued from page 3

Other KPI program specifics:

- Eligible families receive initial payment of \$1000 per child.
- Continuing eligibility is verified every 6 months.
- \$500 per child will be provided every 6 months for a total of 36 months (\$3500 limit).
- KPI payments are in addition to Ohio Works First cash assistance received for the child.

For additional information about the Kinship Permanency Incentive, please contact **Montgomery County Children Services, Sheryl Daugherty**, Children Benefits Supervisor, at 937-276-1675.

10 Tips to Avoid Overspending this Christmas Season

Adapted from Citifinancial's "Tips to Avoid Overspending"

1. Make a list of what you need before you hit the stores.
2. Try to avoid credit card spending.
3. Avoid last minute shopping – compare prices before buying high priced items.
4. Not all gifts have to be purchased from a store – in fact some of the best gifts are homemade items such as cakes, cookies, crafts, etc.
5. Take advantage of layaway, paying off in small amounts items held until Christmas.
6. Scale back on your Christmas card list –send free holiday e-cards from websites such as

hallmark.com,
123greetings.com,
and
americangreetings.com.



7. Use discount stores to find inexpensive items—personalize something basic to give it a unique look.
 8. Photos are great gifts!
 9. Use coupons and discounts whenever possible.
 10. Offer to provide a service for friends and family members versus a gift: offer to baby-sit, do laundry, car pool, and assist with other home projects. This could be a great trade for busy families.
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