

Adopted Kinship Families Experience the Spirit of Christmas

Contributed by Dionne M. Simmons

For some of our clients, this Christmas was one of the best! The generous support came from the community and the Center for Healthy Communities employees. These wonderful people adopted 41 families, providing presents for 136 kids. The families received everything from clothing, food, gift cards, and toys to cleaning supplies. Most of the families were asked by the sponsoring agency to complete a wish list; the families, however, were not guaranteed any particular items.

The caregivers did not have any idea as to the amount of items that would be purchased for their family. It gave them much joy and happiness that they were able to provide something for their children. Several grandmothers shared that if they had not been adopted as a recipient family, their children would not have had a Christmas.

One caregiver wrote: "I and [my] kids could never thank you enough for the best Christmas we ever had...you will never know how much this meant to us." Another caregiver wrote: "Thank you so much, I wish you could have seen the excitement in the kids...you put a big glow in their faces. They couldn't hardly wait until Christmas because they never had a Christmas like this."

because they never had a Christmas like this."

We would like to thank the following families and agencies:

- Carla Clasen & Family
- Annemarie Halfpap & Family
- Kay Parent & Family
- Catholic Social Services
- Christ United Methodist Church
- Fifth Third Bank
- Hannah's Treasure Chest
- Jeremiah's Letter
- Legal Aid of Western Ohio



Gwen Stone is caring for one grandchild.



Ardella Lauderdale is caring for four grandchildren in addition to four at-home children.



Patricia Simons is caring for two grandchildren.



Just a portion of the generous donations of Christmas gifts made by local families and agencies

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The Flu Season

It is that time of year where everyone is trying to avoid colds and most especially influenza, also known as “the flu.” The kids are coming home from school with all kinds of viruses that can soon be spread throughout the family. Among our job as caregivers is to stay healthy so that we can nurse everyone else back to health. Often times, you are also burdened with symptoms of what you might think is the flu. But how do you know it is the flu?

The term “flu” is tossed around casually enough to confuse everyone about what actually qualifies as an influenza infection. Far more than a case of the sniffles, the flu is a distinct viral illness with specific symptoms, and it tends to occur at a particular time of year—late fall and winter. The incubation period—the time from exposure to the flu virus until you develop symptoms—is 1 to 4 days. Influenza typically comes on with a miserable mixture of fever, chills, body aches and muscle pain. There is a sudden onset of a high temperature of 100 to 104 degrees Fahrenheit in adults and even higher for children, and the patient can hardly bear to stand upright.

And the flu bug is just getting started. Because it’s an illness of the upper respiratory tract (nose/mouth to lungs), flu is also characterized by coughing, stuffy nose and sore throat. Abdominal pain and nausea are less common, except in children, and everyone can expect a painfully pounding headache, especially after a coughing fit or in response to light. Other fun stuff includes pink eye (conjunctivitis) and the requisite runny nose. The medical term for runny nose is rhinorrhea. Tell your boss you have a contagious case of rhinorrhea, and see how quickly that gets you a day pass.

That’s the flu. Once you know these symptoms, it’s hard to miss. But if you’re too groggy to diagnose yourself, call the office and tell them you’re going to see a doctor. Let your doctor decide if you should go in to work. You may need a physician’s note anyway, and a formal diagnosis removes any skepticism on the part of your employer.

How the flu spreads

Like all viruses, influenza needs a host in order to survive and multiply. The flu spreads from one person to another when tiny droplets of contaminated saliva are airborne

Caregivers Corner



by a cough or a sneeze. Hanging in the air, they find a new home when inhaled into an unsuspecting host. Flu virus can also survive for several hours on a surface a telephone handset, a copying machine, a doorknob, or a screwdriver before a host comes along, gets the virus on his or her hands and then internalizes the virus by touching the eyes, nose or mouth.

It’s possible to pass the flu along to someone else 24 hours before you even show symptoms. The virus has a quick incubation period, and most people will fall ill within one to three days of becoming infected. You may still be contagious up to a week after symptoms first set in (a few days longer for children).

How to treat the flu

In otherwise healthy adults, influenza lasts between seven and 14 days, with at least three days of severe symptoms. In the meantime, you can take steps to feel better:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Fluids also make sore throats feel better. Hot tea with lemon, water, fruit juice and soup are good fluid choices.
- Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen to lower a fever. Lowering the fever will not make you recover from the flu faster, but it will make you feel more comfortable.
- To treat body aches and headache, take aspirin, acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Do not use aspirin if the patient is younger than 20 years old unless directed to by your doctor. Also, aspirin and ibuprofen can upset your stomach, but acetaminophen doesn’t.
- Try a decongestant or nasal spray to treat stuffy noses. Look for a single-ingredient decongestant that contains phenylephrine. Avoid antihistamines. They do not treat flu symptoms and may make nasal drainage thicker. Don’t use medicated nasal sprays or drops more often than directed or longer than 3 days. Breathing in moist air from a hot shower or from a sink filled with hot water also helps clear a stuffy nose. Rub petroleum jelly on your nose and lips if they become sore from being rubbed with tissues.

Flu, continued next page

Kinship Permanency Incentive Program

Legal Talk



Ohio's Biennial Budget established the new **Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPI)**. The program was implemented January 1, 2006. This incentive will provide financial support for minor children in the legal custody of grandparents, relatives, or other "kinship caregivers" (defined in Ohio as any relative or non relative adult who has a long standing relationship or bond with the child and/or family).

Eligibility requirements for Ohio's KPI Program include:

- Juvenile court has adjudicated that the child is abused, neglected, dependant or unruly
- Court must have awarded legal custody or guardianship of the child to the kinship caregiver, based on the best interest of the child, on or after July 1, 2005
- Child must be considered "special needs" (same criteria as for adoption subsidies)

- PCSA must have completed the Relative or Non-Relative Substitute Placement Approval Process, inclusive of a criminal background check, as well as completion of an application form
- The gross income of the caregiver's family, including the child, may not exceed 200% of the federal poverty guidelines

Other Program specifics:

- Eligible families will receive an initial payment of \$1,000 per child, followed by \$500 per child every six months thereafter for a total of 36 months (\$3,500 limit)
- Funding will come from Ohio's TANF funds in the amount of \$10 million per year
- This program does NOT preclude these families from receiving Child Only TANF benefits; it is in addition to such benefits

For additional information please contact Montgomery County Children Services, Children Benefits Supervisor, Sheryl Daugherty, at 937- 276-1675.

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- For coughing, use cough drops or plain hard candy to ease the tickle. If your cough is of the dry, hacking kind, use a nonprescription cough medicine that contains dextromethorphan. Watch out for cough medicines that use a high amount of alcohol. Use them with caution. Elevate your head at night with an extra pillow to reduce coughing in your sleep.
- Avoid smoking or breathing second hand smoke. While this is always good advice, it's especially important if you have an upper respiratory infection like cold or flu.

How to prevent the flu

Increase your chance of staying healthy by:

- Washing hands often, especially during winter months when the flu is most common
- Keeping hands away from nose, eyes, and mouth. Viruses are most likely to enter the body through these areas
- Eating a healthy and balanced diet
- Getting regular exercise

- Not smoking. Smoking irritates the lining of your nose, sinuses, and lungs, which may make you susceptible to complications of the flu

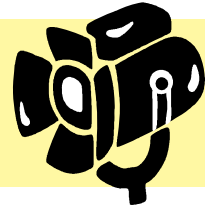
Flu can also be prevented by getting immunized with an influenza vaccine each year. October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, but you can still get vaccinated in December and later. Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May.

Physicians suggest that the following individuals receive the flu vaccination:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities that house those with long-term illnesses
- Adults and children 6 months and older with chronic heart or lung conditions, including asthma
- Adults and children 6 months and older who needed regular medical care or were in a hospital during the previous year because of a metabolic disease (like diabetes), chronic kidney disease, or weakened immune system (including immune system problems)

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Rebuilding Together Dayton

Contributed by Rosemary Dannin

Rebuilding Together Dayton (RTD) is a non-profit volunteer organization founded in 1996 by Preservation of Dayton, Inc. The organization's mission is to build community partnerships and provide home rehabilitation for low-income Dayton homeowners, particularly the elderly and disabled, so they may live in warmth, safety and independence. RTD is the only organization in the Miami Valley dedicated to rehabbing owner occupied homes for low income homeowners at no cost. Since its inception, RTD has repaired over 200 homes in neighborhoods all across the city. On April 30, 2005, approximately 1,000 Rebuilding Together Dayton volunteers worked on 30 homes across the City of Dayton, providing \$250,000 worth of home improvements.

RTD selects rehabilitation projects from nominations by neighborhood groups, churches, neighborhood development corporations, city housing inspectors, priority boards and individuals. To qualify for the program the applicant must own their own home in the City of Dayton and have a combined income of less than 80% of the area's median



income. Preference is given to homeowners who are elderly and/or disabled and have lived in their home a minimum of ten years.

NEIGHBOR•CARE – Rebuilding Together Dayton's Year-Round Repair Program

In the spring of 2000, Rebuilding Together Dayton completed its fifth Rebuilding Day effort by making repairs to 35 homes throughout Dayton. While Rebuilding Day was a success, qualified homeowners' requests for repairs continued to stream all year. Many of these requests were for repairs of an urgent nature that couldn't wait for the next Rebuilding Day. It became increasingly apparent that the needs of the low-income community would be best served by Rebuilding Together volunteers if the effort were extended to include year-round repairs. Neighbor•Care addresses these needs.

The program focuses on *minor to moderate* home repairs for low-income homeowners within Montgomery County. In keeping with the mission of Rebuilding Together Dayton, Neighbor•Care serves homeowners who are elderly, and/or disabled, and/or have young children in their home. Neighbor•Care enlists local contractors who either donate their labor in full or provide it at a discount. Funding from the community allows Neighbor•Care to pay for the supplies. There is no cost to the homeowner.

To be considered for a Neighbor•Care repair, homeowners must first complete an application.

Applications can be requested by calling the Rebuilding Together Dayton office at 293-0400. Applications are also available on-line from Rebuilding Together Dayton's website at www.rtdayton.org.

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.*

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caused by medicines or by infection with human immunodeficiency virus [HIV/AIDS])

- Children 6 months to 18 years of age who are taking aspirin for a long-term medical condition. These children are at greater risk for developing Reye's syndrome if they get influenza.
- Women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- All children 6 to 23 months of age
- Household contacts and caregivers of children between 0 and 23 months of age



Call your physician's office for additional information on influenza and the flu vaccine.

Shining the Light on Our Children

by Dionne Simmons, Program Director

The Kinship Navigators wish to highlight some of the wonderful stories that are shared by grandparents and other relatives caring for kids. **Please share your success stories with other caregivers through your newsletter, *Links*.**

Write 2-3 paragraphs outlining what it is so terrific that your child has done. We will include these stories in the *Links* newsletter. You can e-mail the information to me at dionne.henderson@wright.edu or mail it to: Dionne Simmons, Center for Healthy Communities, 140 E. Monument Avenue, Dayton, OH 45402.

Goodbye, Donna Thiede



Donna Thiede joined the Kinship Caregiver Coalition as Kinship Navigator in March 2005. She has accepted another position at Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine. We will miss Donna but wish her the best in her new position.

Sad to Say Goodbye...I began with the Center 11 months ago and have enjoyed the many friends I have made along the way. My last day as a Kinship Navigator will be February 10, 2006. I am transferring to a new job within Wright State University as Medical Student Coordinator.

I will miss my time as a Kinship Navigator and wish everyone good luck.

God bless to all.

Donna Thiede



Mrs. Davis wrote:

I am a grandmother raising three grandchildren, Anthony, Brittany and Aaron. Anthony and Brittany are siblings and Aaron is their cousin.

Brittany and Anthony both attend Louise Troy Elementary School. Anthony is eight years old in the third grade. Anthony has been on Honor Roll and High Honor Roll since he started school. The Honor Roll consist of A's, B's, and 1 C and the High Honor recognizes students who achieve all A's and B's.

Brittany is four years old in the Early Childhood Education. She recognizes letters and shapes. Brittany is hopefully headed down the same track her big brother has paved for her! Hopefully, all of my grandchildren will continue to do well in school.

Yours truly, H. Davis

Kinship Resources

Kinship Klostet Update

We are thankful for another successful year with the Kinship Klostet. In 2005, the Kinship Klostet was able to provide clothing to nearly 100 children. We would like to thank East Third Street Baptist Church and First Baptist Church for their continued support. We are also grateful to the many agencies and caregivers that provide donations.



At this time we are accepting Spring clothing. Please no adult clothes at this time we don't have room to store them. Call Marjorie Waggoner if you would like additional information, 937-775-1118.

Additional Funding for HeadStart Programs

The Early Learning Initiative (ELI) was drafted and submitted to the Governor's office on Friday, November 4, 2005. The new rule went into effect on November 21, 2005. Currently children in receipt of child only cash assistance are eligible for ELI, if the caregiver meets the work and income requirement.

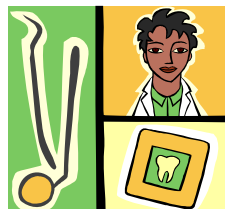
The revised rule specifies that all children receiving cash only assistance are eligible for ELI.

(Kinship Caregivers if you are caring for children in your home between the ages of 3-5, and you are receiving an OWF child only grant you may benefit from a qualified HEADSTART Program).

Contact your Montgomery County Job & Family Services Case manager for additional information.

New Dental Provider

Small Smiles of Dayton, is offering dental care to children with Medicaid, Healthy Start, Healthy



Families or CareSource. Services are available for children from their first tooth to age 21. The Small Smiles office is located at 4257 W. Third Street, in Westtown Shopping Center. If you are interested please call 937-268-1665.

It's Tax Time Again!

Once again the city of Dayton will provide the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax



Assistance) tax preparation services. Earned Income Tax Credit eligible families are encouraged to avoid high filing fees of "rapid refund" loans. By using free IRS - sponsored VITA tax preparation you could save money. At most VITA sites walk in appointments are welcomed, but we are encouraging you to call prior to your visit to a VITA site to verify hours. The VITA sites listed below are scheduled to open the first week in February.

VITA sites in the city of Dayton: (These sites are scheduled to open in February)

Community Action Partnership, 719 S. Main St., 341-5000
The Job Center, 1111 Edwin C. Moses Blvd., 333-2700
Wesley Center, 3730 Delphos Ave., 263-3556
Weed N' Seed, 1352 W. Riverview Ave.
Linden Avenue Baptist Church, 101 Linden Ave., 254-1724
Ellison Senior Center, 2412 W. Third St., 333-6606
Oikos at FROC, 1306 N. Main St., 222-7815

What is EITC?

Earned Income Tax Credit is a federal tax benefit designed to help low income workers increase their financial stability. The purpose of EITC is to reduce taxes for these workers, to supplement wages, and to make work more attractive than welfare.

What is the Child Tax Credit?

This credit is given to an individual that is caring for a dependant child under the age of 17.

Can you receive both the EITC and Child Tax Credit?

Yes. You can receive as much as EITC up to \$4,200 for some families, and Child Tax Credit up to \$1,000 for each dependant under age 17.

Tax Time, continued next page

Tax Time, continued from page 6

Who is a qualifying child?

Your child is a qualifying child if your child meets three tests: relationship, age, and residency.

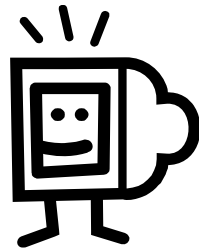
Relationship – a child must be your son, daughter, stepchild, eligible foster child, grandchild, brother, sister, half brother, half sister, or a descendant of any of them.

Age – must be under the age of 19 at the end of 2005, a full time student under age 24 at the end of 2005, or permanently or totally disabled at any time during 2005.

Residency – your child must have lived with you in the United States for more than 6 months in 2005.

Kinship Resources on the Internet

Many kinship resources are available on the Internet. Use this list for easy reference. If you do not have a computer, most libraries have computers you can use for limited time periods.



Kinship Caregiver Coalition web site at <http://www.med.wright.edu/chc/kinship/index.htm>

Other Kinship Web Sites:

AARP Ohio Fact Sheet on Kinship Care in Ohio
http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/general/kinship_care_2005_oh.pdf

Aging in Ohio
<http://www.hec.ohio-state.edu/famlife/aging/index.htm>

Ohio's Early Learning Initiative (ELI)
<http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/eli.stm>

Ohio Family Care Association Resources/Links
<http://www.ofcaonline.org/resources.htm>

The Public Children Services Association of Ohio, kinship support page
<http://www.pcsao.org/KinshipSupports.htm>

National Kinship Web Sites:

About.com's About: Single Parents, Kinship Care Resources <http://singleparents.about.com/od/kinshipcarefamilies/a/kinshipcareres.htm>

Children's Defense Fund - National
<http://www.childrensdefense.org/>

Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)
<http://www.cwla.org/>

Generations United (GU)
<http://www.gu.org/>

Grandparenting Today
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grandparent/>

Grandparents and More
<http://www.grandparentsandmore.com/index.html>

Grandparents for Children's Rights
<http://www.grandparentsforchildren.org/>

Grandparents Magazine on-line
<http://www.grandparentsmagazine.net/activities.htm>

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
<http://www.raisingyourgrandchildren.com/Index.htm>

GrandsPlace <http://grandsplace.com/>

National Alliance for Caregiving
<http://www.caregiving.org/>

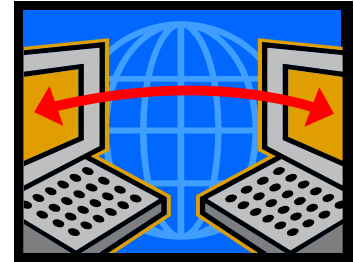
Kinship Navigators Move to HIEx™

*Submitted by: Mary M. Crimmins, Chief Information Officer,
Center for Healthy Communities*

H IEx™ is the new information management system that Kinship Navigators in Montgomery County are using to keep track of information about their kinship clients. The Kinship Navigators use this computerized system through the Internet on a virtual private network (VPN), which is protected from unauthorized access. The only people who can see the data are professionals who are in the business of helping people. We have legal agreements in place to ensure that we are following all of the HIPAA regulations regarding confidentiality of information and security of the system.

One of our goals in using the HIEx™ system is to work toward creating a shared community-wide record. If we succeed, we can imagine a community where no matter where you go to get health care or human services, your information is already available to those who are helping you. Filling out forms at each place you go will become a thing of the past. Professionals who help you and your

family, like school nurses, pediatricians, family doctors, social workers, and counselors, will have the important information they need to work with you and take care of you.



The HIEx™ system will help the Kinship Navigators do a better job of serving their clients and the children they care for. For example, the Navigators can use HIEx™ to set reminders to get back in touch with you. They can store copies of important records, like shot records, birth certificates, and social security cards, in the system. Once this information is put into the HIEx™ system, no matter who you called at our office, we would have the information we need to provide the assistance you need. We ask for your patience over the next few months as the Kinship Navigators get used to entering your information into the database while talking to you on the phone or meeting with you.