



KINSHIP TIMES

SEPTEMBER, 2007

The Family Friends Program of Children's Mercy Hospital and Clinics
Support for Grandparents and Relative Caregivers

RESPIRE CARE

A great success!

The Family Friends Program provided a much needed respite care for grandparents raising grandchildren. The event took place at the 40 Acres & A Mule Activity Campus during the week of July 30th through August 3rd. The children enjoyed so many wonderful activities such as playing basketball, swimming, music and movement, and entertainment. A big thank you goes to Rich Linden, facilitator, Devin & Deron Lloyd, youth workers and Margie Alcanter of Wyandotte/Leavenworth Area on Aging for providing transportation.



Happy Grandparents Day

September 8th is Grandparent's Day. Family Friends would like to acknowledge each of you and thank you for the special job you are doing! May God continue to bless each one of you!

Grandparent's Day originated in 1970 by Marian Lucille Herndon McQuade, a West Virginia housewife, who initiated a campaign to set aside a special day for Grandparents. The first Grandparents Day was proclaimed in 1973 in West Virginia by Governor Arch Moore. Also in 1973, Senator Randolph introduced a Grandparents Day resolution in the United State Senate. In 1978, five years after its West Virginia inception, the United States Congress passed legislation proclaiming the first Sunday after Labor Day as National Grandparents Day. The proclamation was signed by President Jimmy Carter.

More than 2.4 million grandparents are raising their grandchildren. They stepped in at a moment's notice when their families needed help, put their own plans on hold and decided to take care of their grandchildren when the parents of those children could not.

Today this event begun by only a few, is observed my millions throughout the United States. Grandparent's Day is the perfect time to enhance communication between the generations.

FAMILY FRIENDS

BACK TO SCHOOL NOTES

Back To School Fundamentals

When it comes to the debate regarding which skill is the most important for success in school and life, educators usually agree that **reading is the key** that unlocks everything else in the classroom. Without basic literacy, a student can't learn much of anything else. What can a parent do to improve their child's reading skills? Always ask your child's teacher or school for advice. One simple thing you can do is read to your child or give them ways to read on their own. Children learn best in the morning so a good time to read would be before or after breakfast. Here are some hints to squeeze some reading into morning routines:

1. Post the school lunch list on the refrigerator and read the lunch menu with your child.
2. Cereal spelling—Buy alphabet shaped cereal and spell some words on the table for your child to read when he/she gets to the table.
3. Comic books. Read "Garfield" with your child each day.
4. Make a special place at home for reading and writing. Spend regular time with your kid in the reading space.
5. Designate an area as the "library" with a bookshelf or provide some other means of shelving books. Stock the library with books your kid will enjoy and try to find meaningful, age-appropriate books about your kid's hobbies and interest. A child's response to a book helps comprehension.

HAVE A GOOD SCHOOL
YEAR!

Preparing your Grandchild for Returning to School

- Focus on "FUN" by providing opportunities to build social skills
- Practice following two and three step directions with your child
- Help your child practice with their coats, zippers, washing hands properly and knowing how to tie their shoes
- Children learn through play. Encourage your child to identify colors, count and recognize shapes. Let your child help around the house by setting the table, sweeping the floor and dusting
- If your child will need before & after school care start researching your options early. There are often services offered through school, a YMCA or other community organizations.



Quote for the Day!

"The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives."

TIPS FOR GRANDPARENTS

Parenting again is a tremendous responsibility for those of us who accepted the job of raising our grandchildren. But our parenting experience is helpful as we deal with each child as an individual. Our priorities have changed as we have grown older, making us better parents. Children are also great teachers, and we can learn much about love and life from them. Keeping a positive attitude is so important in dealing with our grandchildren on a daily basis. On that note, I want to share some tips on parenting successful children: Listed below are some tips on parenting successful children:

- Give the child an "I can" attitude. Teach them to believe that nothing is impossible.
- Encourage the child to solve his own problems as often as possible and to express his own ideas.
- Teach the child to question everything. Lead the child to think, "Is there a better way?"
- Teach your child initiative, which is doing something without being told. It helps develop self-confidence and self-reliance
- A child should be taught to do at least one thing very well. This builds self-confidence and self esteem.
- Give them responsibilities of their own.
- Teach your child the value of making his own money and give him guidelines for spending, saving and giving.

- Do not feel sorry for the child. Too much sympathy teaches him/her to whine and blame others for everything.
- The child should be taught to look out for the needs of others.
- Teach him that his words and actions affect everyone around him.
- Teach the child compassion. Point out that there are people less fortunate, and talk to them about ways they can help others.

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I hope these tips will help you as you endeavor to raise your grandchildren.

We must set goals and just take one day at a time.

Keep in mind that there is no perfect parent, and you can not do this alone.

ENCOURAGING AND MENTORING TOOLS FOR BUILDING CONFIDENT KIDS

Recreate the Village

It may be safe to say that most grandparents and relative caregivers can be considered “ole school.” So as “ole schoolers”, we know that it really does take a village to raise a child. In growing up “back then” our village was usually the collaborative efforts of family, neighborhood, church and school. In those days this was an extended family.

Now most of our families are called dysfunctional; our neighborhoods are sometimes scary places where we rush to get the kids inside by dark-thirty; our schools are having to turn to uniforms in order to prevent students from having to defend the colors they wear. So how, as caregivers of this generation, do we make a big enough impression on their lives to ensure that children grow into wholesome, educated contributors to society? And how do we reverse most of the negatives that may have already affected them?

If you’ve ever attended a support group you know that it is the prayer and heart’s cry of every grandparent to give the children in their care a fighting chance at life.

Even though some tried and true “ole school” methods may still apply, it is still sometimes difficult to use those principles in this day and age with this generation.

One thing we can do is to re-create the village. Although the elements of the communities of the past may no longer be stable, you can still surround your children with a positive support network. The key to the villages of the past is that each element of the village shared the same value system. Surround your children with people and groups that share your value system.

At the beginning of every school year get to know your children’s teachers and other school administrators. Don’t make your only contact with them on back-to-school night, open house or when lil Johnnie gets in trouble. School officials should also have the opportunity to get to know you and understand your values as well. Become a part of the student’s educational team.

There are several community agencies and programs that children can get involved in to help them gain a positive view of themselves and the world around them. Most churches offer activities designed to promote

growth and development of young people. It is a good idea to become involved in the support groups so that you can form alliances with other caregivers who are striving toward the same goals for their children as you are.

The most important aspect of the village is still YOU. You can be the best teacher, role model, and mentor your children will ever know. To fulfill this role you must learn the importance of encouraging your children. In addition to your child’s assets and liabilities they need to feel worthwhile. The goal of encouragement is to enable the child to develop courage and a good self-image.

Here are some methods of encouragement from the book “*Encouraging Children to Learn*” by Don Dinkmeyer and Rudolph Dreikurs:

- Place value on the child as he is.
- Show faith in the child that enables the child to have faith in himself.
- Recognize a job “well-done.” Give recognition for effort.
- Recognize and focus on strengths and assets.

HEALTH NEWS

Did you know.....

Physical activity lowers health risks.

People need to think about being active everyday the same way they think everyday about brushing their teeth. We miss out on a lot of benefits that comes from physical activity, including lowering their risk of chronic diseases, reducing stress and sleeping better.

It does not take a whole lot of activity to have positive effects. It is reported that 60 percent of Missouri older adults do not get enough activity to provide health benefits. A lifestyle with no physical activity contributes to overweight and obese in children and adults.

Physical activity has been shown to lower the risk of developing health-related diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, non-insulin diabetes and colon cancer. Physical activity also reduces stress and feelings of depression and anxiety, as well as building healthy bones, muscles and joints.

Adults should get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity-equal to a brisk walk. For children, 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous daily activity is recommended.

Recreate the Village
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These are just a few suggestions to help build up self-esteem in children. Psychologists suggest also that you don't make comparisons with other children or their siblings. Avoid making statements like "Why can't you be more like..." And as grandparent caregivers we should be very careful not to let the frustrations or anger with the birth parents reflect how we talk to our children. Be alert as to how you talk to them and always be willing to listen. Remember, recreating the village starts with YOU.

ANXIETY

Do not be anxious about anything but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

We live in a world that sometimes seems to shift beneath our feet. From time to time, all of us face adversity, discouragement, or disappointment. Throughout life, we must endure life changing personal losses that leave us breathless. When we do, God stands ready to protect us. Psalm 147 promises that "He heals the broken hearted, and binds their wounds". When we are troubled, we must call upon God and, in His own time and according to His own plan, He will heal us.

Are you anxious? Take those anxieties to God. Are you troubled? Take your troubles to Him. Does your world seem to be trembling beneath your feet? Seek protection from the one who cannot be moved. The same God who created the universe will protect you if you ask Him... so ask Him.

Grandparent/Relative Caregiver Resource Page

Utility Assistance:

- ◆ United Services Community Action Agency: 816-358-6868, federal assistance for residents of Clay, Jackson & Platte counties.
- ◆ Kansas Low Income Energy Assistance Information Line: 1-800-432-0043, federal assistance for Kansas residents.
- ◆ Mid America Assistance Coalition Information & referral line: 816-561-3339, 8:30a-1:00p, Mon-Fri. Referrals to agencies providing utility aid in KS and MO.
- ◆ Grandview Assistance Program: 816-761-1919
- ◆ Independence Services League: 816-254-0446
- ◆ Metropolitan Lutheran Ministry: 816-931-0027
- ◆ Raytown Emergency Assistance Program: 816-356-0054



Housing Assistance:



- ◆ Housing Authority KCMO: 816-968-4100
- ◆ Housing Authority of Independence: 816-836-9200
- ◆ United Services Housing: 816-358-6868
- ◆ Homeless Hotline: 816-474-4599
- ◆ Swope Parkway Housing: 816-923-5800
- ◆ Housing Authority KCK: 913-281-3300



WIC: Food vouchers to assist with nutrition of babies and toddlers. 1-800-392-8209



Child Support: 816-889-3767



Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline MO: 1-800-392-3738

Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline KS: 1-800-922-5330



Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, 230 N. 13th St., Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 567-7000. The volunteers support families under stress and single



In Missouri:

Family Support and Children's Division – Relatives Raising Children

As most of you know by now, Governor Matt Blunt completely eliminated the Grandparents As Foster Parents Program along with major cuts in the Medicaid services that many people relied on. However, the Income Maintenance Division which is through the Children's Division has another program many grandparents may qualify for. It is called the Non-Parental Custodian. In some cases, you may receive the same amount or more that TANF pays. To apply, check with your case manager. If she doesn't now about it, ask to speak to her supervisor. Remember, you may qualify for TANF for the grandchildren. Ask your caseworker to help you figure out which is best for you. Downtown Office 889-2000, Midtown 929-7100, South town 325-1012.

In Kansas:

Social Rehabilitation Services (SRS)

Currently assistance for grandparents and other relatives raising children is available by applying for TAF (Temporary Assistance for Families). The average monthly stipend is \$175.00 per child. Other assistance available may include: medical assistance, food assistance and child care assistance. Contact your nearest SRS office for specific details at (Wyandotte Co. (913)279-7000 and Johnson Co. (913) 826-7300). The toll free state wide number is 1-888-369-4777.

SEPTEMBER 2007
FAMILY FRIENDS SUPPORT GROUP SCHEDULE

You're cordially invited to attend!

St. James United Methodist Church
5540 Wayne, KCMO
1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month
September 4th & 18th
1:00-2:30 pm
Contact: Mary Campbell (816) 921-4299

Christian Fellowship Baptist Church
4509 Troost Avenue, KCMO
2nd & 4th Thursday of each month
11:00-12:30 pm
September 13th & 27th
Contact: Debra Watson (816) 358-4142

Palestine Neighborhood Dev. Corp.
3445 Indiana, KCMO
1st & 3rd Thursday of each month
September 6th & 20th
11:00 - 12:30 pm
Contact: Debi Lee (816) 726-6532

Kansas Groups

Johnson County
Roeland Park Community Center
4850 Rosewood, Roeland Park, KS
2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month
12:30 pm-2:00 pm
September 12th & 26th
Contact : Leann Hochstetler (913) 362-1899

Community Assistance Council
10901 Blue Ridge, KCMO 64134
1st & 3rd Monday of each month
September 3rd & 17th
12:00 am - 1:30 pm
Contact : Beatrice Mack (816) 861-5718

Wyandotte County
6813 Garfield Dr., Kansas City, KS
1st & 3rd Thursday of each month
September 6th & 20th
6:00 pm -7:30 pm
Contact: Rita Walker (913) 299-4304

Family Friends Grandparents and Relative Caregivers program was created to empower grandparents and others in helping them improve the quality of their lives and those of the children they care for.



Children's Mercy HOSPITAL

www.childrensmercy.org

**Family Friends
Program**
2401 Gillham Road
Kansas City, MO
64108

Family Friends Staff

JoAnn Stovall
Family Friends
Coordinator

Estelle Williams
Family Advocate

Beatrice Mack
Grandparent Mobilizer

Mary Campbell
Grandparent Mobilizer

Debi Lee
Grandparent Mobilizer

Leann Hochstetler
Grandparent Mobilizer

Rita Walker
Grandparent Mobilizer

Debra Watson
Grandparent Mobilizer

Maria Leathers
Administrative Assistant
(816) 234-3676