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Spring Training
Conference
Information

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foster parent news

February & March 2011 | www.dablodgettstjohns.org

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Foster Parent News is published bi-monthly by:
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OUR NEW WEBSITE

Be sure to take some time and check out our new website at:

www.dablodgettstjohns.org

It may take some time to get used to, but we are excited to be able to finally have a merged website. Please take some time to look at all of the sections and get a feel for where the information you are looking for is now located.

If you have any questions, please call or email info@dablodgett.org.

Thank you!



New health insurance for children in foster care

Per state & DHS requirements, all children in foster care now are in managed care Medicaid plans (with a few exceptions). For D.A. Blodgett-St. John's, most of our children are assigned to Health Plan of Michigan, under Dr. Saleh Dyke.

Dr. Dyke is the office doctor for our medical clinic and should be listed as primary care physician for your foster child, unless they have another doctor listed on their insurance card. Our physician assistants, Lynne Beals, PA-c and Kathryn Zagel, PA-c are both supervised by him & can contact him if they have any questions about our foster children's health.

Dr. Dyke and Lynne Beals PA-c both work out of the MMPC-Spectrum Health office at East Beltline. On the rare occasion we need to have a child seen by Lynne at their office, the medical office here will need to set up the appointment ahead of time, to ensure that she has all the medical information she needs to provide good medical care for the child. Kathryn Zagel PA-c works at the new pediatric emergency room at DeVos Children's Hospital.

As previously, any illnesses or injuries to your foster child should first be reported to the medical clinic at the agency, then I can help determine the most appropriate care for the child. As always, if you feel that there is a true emergency, please go directly to your nearest emergency room and call me later.

Susan Loveder RN
phone | 616.774.3580

It's Your Time! A Workshop for Parents of Children with Special Needs



DATE Saturday, March 5, 2011
TIME 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
Registration 8:30 – 9:00 AM
LOCATION Grand Valley State University
Downtown – Pew Campus DeVos Center
401 W. Fulton
Grand Rapids MI. 49504

Free childcare provided at David D. Hunting YMCA
Email pdhub@kentisd.org for information.

Exhibitors include:

- Gray Center Bookstore-Autism Resources
- Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital
- Schuler Books and Music
- Minds in Motion Toys
- Miles for Special Smiles
- Family Hope Foundation
- Local Author Johnnie Tuitel
- VIP Soccer and more.

Agenda:

8:30-9:00: Registration, Continental Breakfast
9:15-9:45: Living Light Dance Company led by Delight Lester
10:00-11:15: Choice of Breakout Sessions
11:30-12:45: Choice of Breakout Sessions
12:45-1:45: Lunch and Exhibits
1:45-3:00: Choice of Breakout Sessions

- \$10.00 Enrollment fee includes parking continental breakfast and lunch.
- Scholarships available: Call Chris 616.632.7039

Staff News



Congratulations!

Mary Jo Sabaitis is now the Supervisor for General Foster Care and Parent Therapist Foster Care.

If you would like to contact her, you can email her at msabaitis@dablodgett.org.



Documentation Books for 2011 are HERE!

Please contact Joyce Conley at jconley@dablogett.org or call 616.774.0662 to receive one today.



new members to FPAC

Foster Parent Advisory Council (FPAC) would like to welcome a new active member of the council, Mrs. Missi Lezman. And also Mrs. Tammy Peters became active in the winter of 2010. Welcome ladies, we look forward to a great new year with ideas and activities that will keep us recruiting more foster parents.

We are still open to more foster parents participating and attending FPAC. Husbands are welcome also. Just remember FPAC is the second Tuesday of each month.

So feel free to join us March 8th for sharing information, ideas and plans; 9:15AM - 11:00AM. Childcare is available.



Annual Conference is coming soon!

Foster Parents, mark your calendars...

DATE Saturday, March 12, 2011

The annual conference is facilitated by the West Michigan Foster Care Licensing Coalition. Watch for the Spring conference brochure in the mail.

If you have questions and want more information, please contact Mary Jo Steffens at 616.774.4317 or email msteffens@dablodgett.org.

Celebrar la Familia

What

Join us to learn how you can become a foster parent, or adopt a child from our community.

Who

Meet Carlos Sanchez, CEO
West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Entertainment - Cook's Art Center: Grupo Tarasco

When

March 10, 2011 from 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Where

New Hope Baptist Church
130 Delaware St. S.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

What to Bring

Bring a friend, bring your kids, and a favorite dish or Mexican dish to pass.

For questions and reservations, call Joyce Conley at 616.774.0662, or email her at jconley@dablodgett.org.

*look for invitations coming soon...

Free Tax Preparation e-Filing

You could receive up to \$5,666 in EITC and qualify for other tax credits too

To learn more, call United Way's 2-1-1 or 616.459.2255

The Kent County Tax Credit Coalition can help you complete your income tax return and apply for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a refundable federal income tax credit for working individuals and families. US citizenship is not required for filing your return, but you must file a tax return to claim your credit. We can help! There are 22 locations – one near you.

Take all these documents with you to your appointment:

Please note: If you are filing jointly, both adults must be present at the appointment to sign the tax return

- √ Social Security card for each family member and picture ID for adults
- √ W-2 form for all jobs worked in the previous year
- √ 1099 forms for other income, including unemployment
- √ Supplemental Security Income (SSI) letter
- √ Copy of your last year's tax return (if available)
- √ Last year's heating bills (11/2009-11/2010)
- √ Proof of rent or mortgage and property tax payments
- √ Childcare provider's name, address and federal tax identification number
- √ Blank, voided check (to set up direct deposit of your refund)
- √ Any other tax-related letters or documents you have received (including letters from the Internal Revenue Service)

Single Income*	Married Income*	Number of Children	Tax Credit**
\$13,460	\$18,470	0	\$457
\$35,535	\$40,545	1	\$3,050
\$40,363	\$45,373	2	\$5,036
\$43,352	\$48,362	3 or more	\$5,666

*Income needs to be no more than the listed amount

** Tax Credit is available up to the listed amount

Answers to Black History Word game on pg. 6

Across

1. John Mercer
2. Shirley Chisholm
3. P.B. S. Pinchback
4. Hiram Revels
5. Daniel Hale Williams
6. Dr. Charles Drew
7. Toni Morrison

Down

1. Collin Powell
2. Barack Obama
3. Carol Mosley Braun
4. Carl Stokes
5. Sarah E. Goode
6. Mae Jemison
7. Garrett Augustus Morgan



Join this website that helps you save!

Visit www.ifoster.org today!

iFoster is here to help those in the foster care community who raise our most vulnerable children. Our programs provide financial relief and opportunities for growth & learning that too often are unattainable luxuries for those in foster care.

Valentine's Day Word Puzzle Family Affair

V	M	D	E	T	Y	Y	D	R	D	Q	J
T	A	R	R	O	W	S	D	E	D	T	N
H	R	L	K	F	G	A	I	Q	T	E	K
S	T	L	E	V	O	L	W	W	R	F	E
Y	M	I	I	N	T	T	R	D	A	G	Y
B	O	W	G	K	T	O	L	A	A	D	U
R	M	O	T	H	E	I	T	D	N	Y	I
O	A	G	T	L	H	G	N	R	D	L	J
T	D	E	G	C	O	U	L	E	E	I	A
H	O	U	S	E	H	O	L	D	T	M	Q
E	R	Q	E	I	R	D	Q	O	R	A	S
R	E	H	E	A	S	T	H	O	A	F	A
Y	G	W	A	B	R	T	O	T	E	E	D
S	K	T	O	C	W	T	E	M	H	S	T
T	H	A	N	K	Y	O	U	R	M	T	G

- ADORE
- ARROW
- BOW
- BROTHER
- CHILDREN
- DAD
- FAMILY
- HEART
- HOUSE HOLD
- LIKE
- LOVE
- MOM
- SISTER
- VALENTINE



**SCHOOL DAYS/CASH
FOR CLASS
2010/2011 PROGRAM
GUIDELINES**

Information for School Groups

Da Blodgett Services For Children and

**CONGRATULATIONS...your school group is already enrolled in the
D&W Fresh Market School Days Program and Family Fare and Felpausch
Cash for Class Program.**

Your group's School Days code is **95640**

How the Program Works This Year

Your members will shop at one of the store's above and give your group code. Their purchase amounts will automatically be credited to your school group account. Your school group's rebate will be determined as a percentage of all group's purchases. Total contribution to participating school groups this year is \$60,000.

Cashiers will now be asking if you are shopping for a particular school and in-store marketing will be increased to promote the program.

Checks will be mailed at the completion of this year's program (early May, 2011.)

2011 Program Event Weeks

D&W FRESH MARKETS, FAMILY FARE AND FELPAUSCH STORES

April 10 – April 16, 2011

What You Need to Communicate to Your School Group Members

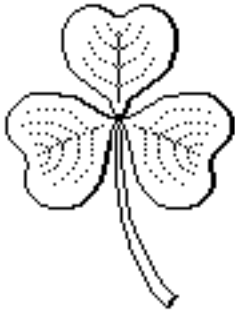
We have supplied a **sample letter** for you to customize and distribute to your school group members. The letter includes the key messages of the program:

- Your school group code
- Event Dates

Questions?

Call Dawn Bredeweg, Community Relations Coordinator, 616-878-2235

ST. PATRICK'S DAY WORD SEARCH



B U L Y I G I J Q O
 H V P U Z U R I E R
 G H E B C M I E A E
 A R E M I K S U E D
 L E P R E C H A U N
 E V X A M I A X Y A
 L O D I T R M U F L
 L L G N J T R T V E
 I C I B G A O T M R
 H A A O S P C K E I
 S Y L W S E K A N S
 O D V L I Y P Q E M

IRELAND
 IRISH
 GOLD
 POT
 RAINBOW
 GREEN
 CLOVER
 LUCK

SHAMROCK
 JIG
 PATRICK
 SAINT
 SNAKES
 LEPRECHAUN
 SHILLELAGH

Foster Parent Highlight Presents - The Mullins



Tom and Kim Mullins are the parents of two biological adult daughters. They decided three years ago that caring for children in need has been something they have had an interest in for a long time. Tom knew he only wanted to foster boys and he knew they would be teenagers. Kim expressed, "Tom is a magnet for youth. They (youth) always come to him, they are always asking his opinion and these boys are always around him."

Mr. and Mrs. Mullins are both retired empty nesters who were very involved with their daughters, the youth at their church and their community. Both Tom and Kim participated in the puppet ministry that went all over the community ministering to children, youth and the elderly. They believe in providing care to those in need and reaching out to those in the community with love and kindness. They expressed that they observed their sister and brother-in-law, Sam and Kathy Gregory, foster children for quite some time and they believed this was also a calling for them. After conversation and mutual agreement the Mullins decided to foster youth with troubled situations.

The Mullins are down to earth, interesting and amazing individuals who have developed a knack for making unusual situations a common part of life. The youth in their care are guided to cope with challenges by focusing on their strengths to achieve positive outcomes. Mr. Mullins expressed, "I am hard on these young men, I don't mess around with them and I challenge them to do their best. Many of these young men don't have anyone to come back to, no family, and no one to talk to once they become adults to reflect on decision making. That is who we are. We are the 'somebody' they can come back to and ask questions of as well as visit."

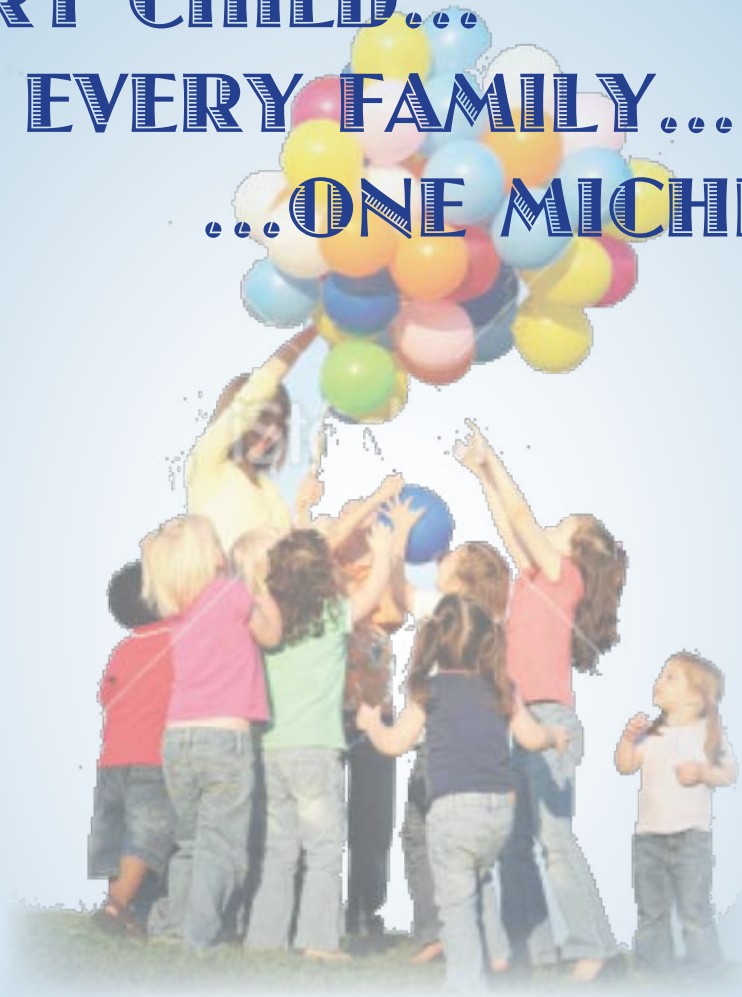
In the three year period of fostering, the Mullins have cared for six male youth, which were all in long term foster care. They currently care for a youth in their home that has demonstrated incredible change and has had a positive educational experience that has encouraged growth and a desire to go to college. "It is an amazing feeling to have a positive change come about in a child who has demonstrated little growth over the years and when society counts him out. That is just one of the rewards in why we do this; helping these youth build connections and a support system is another," expressed Mrs. Mullins.

When asked what they would share with someone interested in becoming foster parents, the Mullins agreed that "becoming a foster parent is an opportunity to affect a child's life in a positive manner and all persons should be given an opportunity to have something good in his or her life, because that something good could change a life forever."

According to Parent Therapist worker, Don Lappinga, the Mullins have been a valuable addition to the Parent Therapist Program. They have taken into their home kids with histories that few other foster homes would take. They have provided loving acceptance along with a tough love approach that instills values, change and respect from the young men. They are very involved in their local church and the boys join in the activities with them willingly. They involved the boys in the lives of their adult children, modeling an example of what a strong family is like. Young men who have left their home call often and visit when they can. We are very fortunate to have Tom and Kim Mullins as foster parents at D.A. Blodgett - St. Johns!

Michigan Association for Foster, Adoptive & Kinship Parents
SPRING TRAINING CONFERENCE
April 29 - May 2, 2010

**EVERY CHILD...
EVERY FAMILY...
...ONE MICHIGAN**



Causeway Bay Hotel & Convention Center

6820 South Cedar Street, Lansing, MI 48911

Conference room rate: \$71.99 Single/Double
(Conference rate deadline April 1, 2010)

For reservations, call (517) 694-8123

Additional books can be downloaded from our website: www.mafak.org

POLICY ANNUAL AND RENEWAL EVALUATION

Foster parents, here is a review of the Annual and Renewal process and requirements that the state and the agency follows for maintaining your foster home license.

Rule 400.9207 Foster Home Reevaluations (page 3 Foster Home Rules-Green Book)

Rule 207. A foster parent shall do all of the following:

- (a) Allow the agency reasonable access to the foster home for licensing and foster child supervisions purposes.
- (b) Provide all changes to the factual information contained in the initial evaluation and subsequent evaluations
- (c) Share information on family functioning and interrelationships.
- (d) Provide a preference for receiving children in placement, including the characteristics, age, sex, race, ethnic background, and number of children the foster parents would not wish to accept in placement

Rule 400.12313 Reevaluation (page 9 Child Placing Agency Rule-Pink Book)

Rule 313:

- (1) An agency shall conduct an on-site visit and complete a written reevaluation of a foster home annually.
- (2) The annual reevaluation shall include a determination and assessment of all of the following:
 - (a) all changes to the factual information contained in the initial evaluation and subsequent renewal evaluations.
 - (b) Family functioning and interrelationships as determined by observation of, and interviews with, each member of the household and each social service worker who has had children placed in the home during the last licensing period.
 - (c) Training needs of the family
 - (d) Compliance with the licensing rules for foster homes
- (3) An agency shall record the dates and places of contacts and persons interviewed or observed as part of a reevaluation
- (4) An agency shall document placement specifications consistent with the information contained in the reevaluation. Placement specifications shall include the characteristics, age, sex, race, and number of children preferred by the family, of children best served by the home, and of children who may not be placed in the home. The child's racial, ethnic and cultural identity, heritage, and background may only be considered if an assessment of the individual child indicates that such consideration is in the best interests of the child
- (5) An agency shall notify the foster parent that a copy of the reevaluation is available upon request.
- (6) An agency shall complete a reevaluation and shall make a licensing recommendation before the expiration date of the foster home license

During the process of completing the Annual and Renewal Evaluations, please be prepared to provide a copy of your driver's license, vehicle(s) registration and vehicle(s) insurance to your licenser.

D.A. Blodgett - St. John's
805 Leonard St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-1138

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