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United Methodist Youthville, Inc.
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

If you receive duplicate mailings,
please call 316.283.1950, ext. 323.
Thank you for your help!

QM Connection

Dear Q,
I am a little confused as to the first aid training requirement. Can you please clarify? - Susie Safe

Dear Susie Safe,
Successful completion of a first aid training is required to obtain and maintain a family foster home license.

Typically, first aid certification must be completed every 2-3 years, depending on the accrediting organization (American Red Cross, American Heart Association, etc). It is important that the resource parent and foster care worker work together to track when it is time to recertify. *Prior to the annual licensing renewal is an excellent time to check to see whether or not a first aid renewal is due.*

Additionally, please keep in mind that for families with swimming pools, successful completion of CPR is also required to obtain and maintain a family foster home license. - Be Safe, Q

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Join us on Monday, January 21, for the "Kid's Cultural Diversity Fair" at Tabernacle Baptist Church at 1817 N. Volutsia St.

Activities include: a service project and activities from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., a free lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and a celebration from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

GEAR UP

Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP, out of Salina, has moved into the North Central Area. GEAR UP is a grant funded program that provides educational services for foster children and limited-income children in grades K-12.

The free services include: tutoring, educational counseling, scholarship opportunities and summer programs.

Check with your local worker to find a GEAR UP program counselor in your area.

Families By Choice

Youthville's official newsletter for foster parents

Youthville • January 2008

From the desk of Denise Hunter-Mitchell

It has been a whirlwind for me, as I start a new chapter of my life with Youthville. I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of you. My name is Denise Hunter-Mitchell, and I am the new Director of Foster Care for Wichita and South Central Kansas. Because our foster care department has grown leaps and bounds over the past few years, Youthville decided it was time to give Patrice Claassen some help. She will now be the Director of Foster Care for Greater Kansas, and I am excited about working with Patrice to grow this department into not only the largest, but also the best foster care program in the state for the children and families we serve.

I am now in my fourth week here, and I am still trying to soak up as much information as possible in a short time. What I have learned, is how valuable foster parents are to the children and families we serve everyday. The work you do is truly remarkable, and to help me get a better understanding of what you go through, I will be taking the PS-MAPP training course to find out everything involved with getting trained to be a foster parent. I feel that anything I can do that is required of our foster parents, gives me a better appreciation of what all of you do on a daily basis. I also plan to do some shadowing of our foster care workers in the future, so it will be a great opportunity for me to get out and meet some of you.

Some of what you can expect from me:

- Help with continuing education for our staff in understanding cultural differences
- Work with staff to create and maintain a strong sense of support for our families
- Assist in increasing the number of quality foster homes in this area
- Assist in increasing the number of respite homes available
- Bridge the gap between case management and foster care to increase retention of homes.

I am hoping it won't be long before I can get out and meet all of our wonderful foster families. Until then, if you have any questions or concerns, I am here to help you.

Sincerely,



Denise Hunter-Mitchell
Director of Foster Care
Wichita and South Central Kansas



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DENISE AT A GLANCE

Education
Wichita State University
MSW, Social Work

Leadership Opportunities
Senior Vice President Urban League of KS
Head Start Site Coordinator
Head Start Federal Reviewer

My message to foster parents
Thank you for all the great work you do for the youth of Kansas. I value every foster home that Youthville has throughout the entire state. All foster homes are a critical and vital part of Youthville. I am happy that you are here to help in... "Giving Children Back Their Childhood."

Be Preventive Against an Allegation

by: Jennifer Meyer, LBSW

Providing care for the children in custody comes with many rewards and a set of challenges. One common concern resource parents have surround the issue of allegations. While allegations are not 100% avoidable, there are some steps that can be done in prevention. Education is one of the best prevention tools for resource homes to help in understanding how to avoid and handle an allegation if one occurs.

Allegations can come from a variety of sources; an angry child or parent, a child welfare worker or the school system. Most allegations are over a misunderstanding of how a situation is being handled; however it is the responsibility of SRS, KDHE and the agency to investigate any reports that meet their criteria. The goal for everyone working with the children in need of care is to keep them safe.

“Be” Tips: Before an allegation gets made, check out the 7 “Be” tips that every resource parent should consider:

- Be in a state of understanding about your family. At times, families find themselves feeling as if they can “save” every child. Certain children may not be a good match for your home and it is okay to say “no.” Be careful to not put your license at risk for one child and possibly deny future children the benefits of your home if they would be a better match. Visit frequently with your foster care worker about what types of behaviors are the best match for your family.

- Before placement- learn about the child. Knowing the questions to ask about the child prior to placement can be key for your determining if a child is the best match for your home. Set up a standard list of questions to ask the worker about the child and their situation. Resource parents should keep in mind that workers will not always know everything about the child and each child can respond differently in various family environments.

- Be VERY clear about household boundaries. Boundaries should include dressing, privacy and touching. Different cultures of parenting handle sexuality, dress, touching, sleeping habits and affection in a variety of ways. Be clear that your family has boundaries that match Youthville and KDHE expectations. Share these boundaries with any new placements and know that they may need to change given the child that is placed in your home. Sharing at the beginning of placement can help prevent any questioning on the part of the child. Some families feel uncomfortable sharing what the family’s sexual boundaries are with children; however, stating these in a matter-of-fact way can set a clear boundary that they need. A sexual safety plan can be a benefit for your home, visit with your foster care worker for information on how to develop this plan.

- Be aware of the “play” that occurs in your home. Avoiding horse play and wrestling in your home can help avoid sending mixed messages to a child. Resource parents may do this as an expression of fun and love towards children; however, for an abused child this can be very confusing and they may respond in a way that becomes defensive and aggressive. Many children in placement are still exploring or need help in developing healthy boundaries. These types of play often send mixed messages that result in someone getting hurt.

- Before you need it....DOCUMENT! There aren’t any resource homes that would ask for more paperwork; however, understanding how important documentation is can really help in a variety of situations. It is important to document any behavior patterns (positive and negative) and any sexual acting out. A home should put these into writing, not just conversation with other professionals. When documenting such activities remember to state them in a factual manner (who, what, when and where). Be sure to send a copy of these “logs” or include the dates and events on monthly reports. Homes might also find it helpful to keep a spiral notebook that serves as a daily journal of occurrences in the home. Making it a habit of jotting down the days’ events before bed can come in handy if there are questions about a past situation.

- Be active in a support group. Resource homes can feel isolated in how they handle situations in their home. It is important for homes to be networking with other homes. The trainings that occur can be a great time of gaining training credits, as well as meeting and sharing with other resource homes in the area. Resource parents should be sure that they have the most recent copy of KDHE regulations and Youthville’s Resource Parent Handbook on file in the home. Both of these publications can help advise you on how to handle situations and what is expected from you.

- Be sure to take care of yourself. Have you ever been on an airplane? One of the first safety tips you learn as a parent is that if oxygen is required to first put the mask on yourself and then a child. Why is this? If you forget to take care of yourself you will be of no use to your child. Sometimes the best parents can get caught up in the moment. By knowing what really pushes your buttons and having a plan identified of how you will handle that can help you out in a bind. Have a list of stress busters posted in a convenient place in the home. Take advantage of being a role model to your children and practice stress-reduction techniques...you might find the children taking your lead.

Look for a future article to cover what to expect when there is an allegation and the process of an investigation.

Be Preventive Against an Allegation

After reading the training article on page 2, respond to the questions below and return the form for a half-hour training credit. Each parent wishing to receive credit must complete their own separate form. Please be sure to print your name and sign at the bottom.

1. True or False Allegations are 100% avoidable.
2. What is a question you might ask about a child before placement?
3. Horse play is a fun way to express feelings, but can send _____ messages to children.
4. When addressing boundaries within the home, it is important to include:
 - A. Privacy boundaries
 - B. Sleeping boundaries
 - C. Sexual boundaries
 - D. All the above
5. List 2 stress busters you use to help to take care of yourself.
6. True or False It is not important to talk about boundaries within the family when there are new placements.
7. When documenting incidents, which of the following is not important?
 - A. Who
 - B. What
 - C. Weather
 - D. When
8. What did you find helpful in this article?
9. How will you use the information in your home?
10. What topics would you like to see future newsletter articles cover?

Print name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

To receive credit, please return your completed form to:
Youthville
Attn: Jennifer Meyer
PO Box 210
Newton, KS 67114



February Training Dates

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*No training in Wellington, Hays or Phillipsburg this month					1	2
3	4 Parenting Tips & Principles Shannon Reed 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Wichita-Kinship) The Angry Child Rose Alderson 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Concordia)	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 FAS Rose Alderson 7:00-9:00 p.m. (Colby)	12 Surviving Allegations Rose Alderson 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Garden City) Adolescent Chemical Dependency Mark Blakeslee 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Newton) TBA 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Beloit)	13	14 Surviving Allegations Rose Alderson 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Liberal)	15	16 MAB Jennifer Meyer 8:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. (Dodge City)
17	18 TBA 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Wichita-FC) Equine Assisted Therapy Amy Tuttle 7:00-9:00 p.m. (Great Bend)	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Family Group Discussion Making Jennifer Meyer 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Hutch)	27	28 Pratt Law Enforcement PPD 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Pratt)	29	

Partnership in Action

Jack and Jill of America, Inc. is a nonprofit family organization for mothers of children between the ages of 2 and 19 that provides constructive educational, cultural, civic, recreational, social and service programs for children, particularly African-American children. The organization was founded in 1938 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with 20 mothers under the leadership of Marion Stubbs Thomas, and today has more than 10,000 mothers who dedicate its resources to improving the quality of life for more than 30,000 children and spouses

The Air Capital Wichita Chapter, chartered in 2000, maintains the national organization's high standards and goals. Within seven years, the local chapter has created numerous significant programming activities, such as: the Safety Clinic, Donate-A-Book program for the Maya Angelou Library, an annual Halloween "Fun Night" for community children, teen retreats and nursing home Dessert & Tea programs.

There are 22 dedicated mothers who develop programs for 57 children and spouses in the Air Capital Wichita Chapter. Recently, the chapter requested a letter writing campaign for foster children. Thanks to the information and support from Misty Harding, the coordination efforts of Libby Smith, Shari Lovett Solomon and the assistance of Terra Owens, a special event was held on November 18th for children to write letters of inspiration and encouragement to Wichita TFC level children.

The event not only bolstered the spirits of Wichita children, but all those at Jack and Jill of America, Inc. It also provided us with the opportunity to introduce them to Youthville and provide information on fostering.



Did you know about these changes?

The HCBS-MRDD waiver program will implement changes as of 2/1/08. Read how these changes will impact resource parents who accept children who receive waiver funding. The highlights are:

- Effective 2/1/08, the State will no longer make a daily residential payment for children in the custody of SRS who are in foster care placements.
- The waiver will continue to pay for 1:1 attendant care support, such as Supportive Home Care and Respite Care; however, payment for these services will go directly to the payroll agent that provides these services.
- Foster families who have children currently receiving supports through the HCBS-MR/DD waiver will be contacted by the local CDDO or MR/DD case manager to conduct a needs assessment on the eligible child in order to determine the level of attendant care supports the child needs. These assessments are to be completed by mid-January.
- The CDDO & MR/DD case manager will assist families in identifying the possible payroll agents providing support services in their area.
- The contracting agency for the child will make payment for the foster care placement according to the child's level of care, as they do for all placements.
- Any questions can be directed to Greg Wintle, MR-DD Program Manager at SRS at 785.296.3561 or greg.wintle@srs.ks.gov

For more information on this matter please contact your Foster Care Staff for the formal letter that was sent by SRS.

Youthville Updates

South Central Update

Wow, another year has flown by. I would like to say "Thank You" to all our resource parents and staff. This past year has been both very rewarding and challenging. True to form, all of you have rose to the challenges and embraced the rewarding times. As we all know change is inevitable, Meghann Sterling has accepted a different position within Youthville. She will be housed out of our Youthville building in Hutchinson, so you will still see her smiling face around the office. We wish her well and know that she will do a great job. That being said, there will be some changes in workers until a new person is hired. Please be patient with us during this transition time. Thanks again for all you do.

Tammy Gream, LMSW | Foster Care Supervisor South Central

North Central Update

Brad Shrader is our new full time Recruiter in the North Central area. Brad brings to the team a wealth of knowledge about Youthville and foster care. He also brings his needed experience and wisdom in marketing. We are very blessed that he has joined our team. Brad has many contacts in the North Central area and will begin his search for foster parents. Brad and his wife have two children. They have been foster parents for Youthville and are also in the process of adopting three siblings.

Mary Reed, LBSW | Lead Foster Care Worker & Recruiter North Central

South West Update

The Dodge City Foster Care Support Worker position was filled by Stephanie Wetzel on December 10.

In October, Kelsey Carver, received the Youthville Service Award at the Governors Conference.

The Garden City office is wanting to begin a MAPP class by February, and we need more families to attend!

The SW Foster Care is taking steps closer to providing Area Mental Health Center foster homes for mental health clients. This program is called Professional Resource Family Care. Current foster families will begin training with Area Mental Health Center in Garden City on January 12, 2008.

Kelsey Carver | Lead Foster Care Worker & Recruiter

Wichita/Wellington Update

We want to take this time and thank all the families that provide respite and emergency foster care services. Respite is an important part of maintaining placements for children. We encourage regular respite for the benefit of the foster child and for the resource family. We hear from families that provide respite exclusively that they enjoy meeting many different children and impacting their lives, even though their time together is limited. We struggle at times to find respite placements for children, and we have an even bigger challenge with emergency placements. Routinely, there are multiple children (teens mostly) that do not have a regular foster home placement for weeks at a time, so they go to a different home every night. Specialized foster care worker, Cindy Rodriguez, talks about the valuable asset Trixi Pentick is to the foster care program... "Trixi is amazing. She is so willing to take in whatever kid we call her about. She looks past the behaviors and just sees a kid who needs someone to pay attention to them for one evening." The Youthville Client Support Center Director has shared the ongoing need for foster parents to assist with special cases from time to time. Occasionally, there is a child waiting for placement at the office who is ill or a child who is without placement and needs treated for head lice. Recently, resource parents Michael and Robyn Russell assisted with a child who needed significant lice treatment. Their worker, Lea Aunins, said, "It wasn't a pleasant task, but someone had to do it. Robyn didn't think twice. She just jumped right in."

If you have interest in assisting with tasks like these, please let your worker know.

Stacey Winter | Foster Care Supervisor

TFC Update

MTFC celebrated their 3rd graduation in October. Many thanks go out to the MTFC staff and resource parents! MTFC resource parents are Steve & Suzy Spatz, Kasha Wilson, CC Cordova, Ron & Lynn Payne, Joseph & Cissy Stiles, Nicole Dodd & Shawn White, and Janet Heiman.
You all ROCK!

**Misty A. Harding, LCMFT
TFC Program Supervisor**

January Training Dates

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*No training in Great Bend, Beloit or Olathe this month		1 Happy New Year!	2	3	4	5
6	7 TBA 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Wichita-Kin) Discipline Carol Finch 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Concordia)	8 Family Group Decision Making Jennifer Meyer 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Newton) Bipolar Disorder in Children Rose Alderson 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Garden City)	9	10 Bipolar Disorder in Children Rose Alderson 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Liberal)	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 TBA 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Wellington) Bullies & Bullying Rose Alderson 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Dodge)	18	19 MAB Jennifer Meyer 8:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. (Colby)
20	21 Martin Luther King Day	22 Birth Order Mark Blakeslee 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Hutch) First Aid 7:00-9:00 p.m. (Phillipsburg)	23	24 Family Group Decision Making Jennifer Meyer 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Pratt)	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		