



Geauga County Job & Family Services Foster/Adoptive/Kinship Newsletter



Ingredients for a Comfortable Placement

Our Mission is to support families and children in the community. When a family is in crisis and a child is taken into custody, the child may have little or no time to pack. Anytime a child has to be removed from their home it is traumatic. To help ease with the transition, our agency provides every child that comes into our care a placement bag filled with essential items as well as items that are comforting and fun.

We recently received a donation of 30 blankets and 25 bath kits from "My Very Own Blanket." Volunteers from this organization make blankets and donate them to agencies all over the state.

Another agency that has helped us is the "My Stuff Bags" foundation. They donate duffle bags filled with items kids may need as they adjust to their new surroundings. These are made available to agencies all over the country as they are available.

If you would like to make a donation to help make a child's transition to foster care a little easier, contact Kathi Serafino at 440-285-1219. Some of the items that are needed include:

- ◆ Travel Pillows and cases
- ◆ Deodorant
- ◆ chap stick
- ◆ hand/body lotion
- ◆ coloring books and crayons/activity books
- ◆ Word search /crossword books
- ◆ Pens and pencils
- ◆ Hair brushes and combs
- ◆ Shampoo and Conditioner
- ◆ Backpacks, Duffle bags, suit-cases
- ◆ Body wash



Save the Date



The Chesterland Rotary Club is having its 22nd annual "Shining Stars" dinner dance fundraiser on Saturday, **February 16th, 2013** at the St. Noel's Banquet Center in Willoughby Hills. The party begins at 6:00pm and will go until midnight. Proceeds from the event will benefit **The Moorhead Scholarship Fund** which helps kids who are aging out of foster care in Geauga County custody with Secondary Education, Training Programs or other life readiness services .

Tickets are now available for \$125 per couple. This includes a fabulous dinner, top-shelf open bar, raffle ticket for a Grand Prize of \$1,000, dancing to the sensational live music of "The Don Woytilla Band", sideboards, door prizes and silent auction! Please contact Bob Voss at (440) 285-2159 for more information, to donate a silent auction item or to purchase tickets. Thank you very much for your support!

Thank You Geauga Children's Alliance

Thank you to the Geauga Children's Alliance for purchasing hams for Geauga County foster and kinship families for the 2012 holiday season. Eleven hams in all were purchased and delivered to families who are caring for Geauga County children in GCJFS custody. Foster families and kinship caregivers provide an invaluable service to children while their parents work with children services and the juvenile court to remedy their situations at home. When children are unsafe at home and must be moved for a period of time, they experience less trauma when they can live with a relative or other adult with whom they have a close relationship; this is referred to as kinship care. When an appropriate kinship home is not available for the child based on his or her needs, a placement in foster care is made. The goal is to help the birth family address the issues which are causing a risk to the child so the child can be reunited with his/her parents. As this can be a very difficult experience for children, having a family to provide them with safety, stability, and understanding means so much to them.

Preparing for a Meeting at Your Child's School



Developing an appropriate education program for your child is one of the most important steps in creating a successful school experience. The following tips on preparing for a school meeting were taken from an article by Patricia Gay, Miami Valley Education Center, Dayton, Ohio for "The Caregiver's Voice: Being Part of an Effective Child Welfare Team."

- ◆ Be prepared to work cooperatively with the professionals involved with your child
- ◆ Be able to communicate your child's needs
- ◆ Be ready to share your questions, concerns and praise

Here are a few steps you can take in order to be prepared:

1. Make an appointment to **visit your child's classroom** to see how your child performs and is progressing in the classroom and to establish a rapport with your child's teacher.
2. **Organize information about your child's medical history** including medications and the effects they may have on behavior and performance.
3. **Ask your child.** Children can provide invaluable information and perspectives about their education.
4. **Review your child's records** and don't hesitate to ask for clarification or an explanation before the meeting.
5. **Understand the nature and basis of your child's diagnosis** and its effect on his/her learning.
6. **Share aspects of your child's life** such as interests, hobbies, relationships to others, behavior at home and difficulties.
7. **Write down a list of questions** before the meeting.
8. **Take notes.**
9. **Investigate programs** offered by the school that may be appropriate for your child.

E-Track Tips

E-Track has now been up and running for several months – if you have not already used E-Track, the following tips should help you get started.

How do I log in to E-Track?

E-Track can be accessed at the following link –

<https://e-track.teds.com/Everyone/TEDSEveryOne.jsp>

Your log in is your two digit birth month, two digit birth day, first initial, first five letters of your last name and the number one. Julie Hayden's birthday is March 12 so her log in is 0312jhayde1. Amber Mann's birthday is January 28 so her login is 0128amann01. Tina Fey's birthday is November 7 so her login is 1107tfey001.

How do I complete my survey?

Once you have attended training, you **must** complete the survey in E-Track within 7 days in order to receive credit.

You will receive an email with a link to your survey after the class. Click on the survey link and it will take you to your E-Track login page. Login to E-Track and click on the survey link. Click "Begin taking this survey", click "Finish" when done. Then click "Complete Survey" to submit a completed survey.

If your email is misplaced, you can also complete your survey from your "To Do List" on your E-Track home page. Login to E-Track. Click on the blue "View All" button under your "To Do List". Click on the "Generic Staff & Caregiver Survey" link for the training. Click "Begin taking this survey", click "Finish" when done. Then click "Complete Survey" to submit a completed survey.

Questions about E-Track can be directed to Julie Hayden at 330-379-1976 or jhayden@summitkids.org.



Child Spotlight of the Month Kaleigh — DOB February 28, 1998



Kaleigh has been described as being caring of others, very observant, and a good conversationalist. She has a big heart, and always wants to “help” others.

Kaleigh enjoys drawing, coloring and painting pictures. Her favorite foods are pizza, crab legs, and pepperoni. Her favorite restaurants are McDonald’s and Red Lobster. She goes to the library weekly to get books that spark her interest. Kaleigh is someone who enjoys being outside, whether it be playing on the playground equipment, or just taking a walk. During the winter months she enjoys sledding and making snowmen. Kaleigh also likes to spend a lot of time with her baby dolls. Like many girls her age, she enjoys listening to music, dancing, and having her hair styled. Her favorite characters are Sponge Bob and Winnie the Pooh.

Kaleigh is in the 8th grade. She has an IEP for reading and math. Overall, she does well in school, and puts forth her best effort. While she has a difficult time socially, she has made progress in this area.

Kaleigh needs a family that will provide her with structure, support, and a great amount of patience and understanding.

If you are interested in hearing more about Kaleigh or feel you can give her the support she needs, please contact Permanency Planning at 440-285-9141.

TBRI Support Group

Sessions focusing on the principles of Trust Based Relationship Intervention, by Dr. Karyn Purvis and Dr. David Cross from the Texas Christian Institute, will be offered starting in January. Some of the topics that will be covered include:

- ◆ Understanding the impact of trauma on a child’s development
- ◆ Developing empathy & understanding in managing emotional & behavioral issues
- ◆ Strategies to help children feel safe in expressing their fears & feelings
- ◆ Developing an understanding of how to manage our own emotional responses to a child’s emotional & behavioral issues
- ◆ Strategies to guide & support parents & caregivers of traumatized children to prevent placement disruption

Groups start January 3, 2013, and will run from 5:30-8:15pm every other Thursday at GCJFS. Dinner will be provided and will be served at 5:30pm, and group will start promptly at 6:00pm. There will be 1.5 hours of Foster Parent training hours per group session.

To register or to arrange for child care, contact Melanie Becker at 440-285-1262.

Pre-Service Training

The following Pre-Service courses will be offered at GCJFS. Contact Amy Buresch at 440-285-1224 to register.

February 9, 2013	901	Orientation to Foster Care, Adoption and Kinship
	902	The Child Protection Team
February 23, 2013	903	The Effects of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development
	904	Attachment, Separation and Placement
March 2, 2013	905	Managing Behavior
	906	Preventing and De-Escalating Crisis
March 9, 2013	907	Cultural Issues in Placement
	908	Understanding Primary Families
March 16, 2013	909	Children Who have Been Sexually Abused
	910	The Effects of Caregiving on the Caregiving Family
March 23, 2013	911	Permanency for Children
	912	Permanency for Families



Homemade Flubber

Materials:

- ◆ 1 ½ cup of warm water, divided
- ◆ 1 teaspoon Borax
- ◆ 1 4 oz bottle of Elmer's glue
- ◆ Food Coloring

Measure precisely and mix well, for best results!

Directions:

1. Mix together ½ cup of warm water and 1 teaspoon of Borax until Borax is dissolved.
2. Mix using a whisk, 1 cup warm water, food coloring and 4 oz Elmer's glue so glue is dissolved in the water.
3. Mix Borax mixture and glue mixture together and you will see the chemical reaction right away!
4. Take the whisk out and mix with your hands.
5. Keep Mixing until the mixture is firm and flubby.



Store in a sealed plastic bag or airtight container and the flubber will keep for 2 weeks. **This is not edible.**

Recipes

Mini Football Subs

Ingredients:

- ◆ Meatballs
- ◆ Spaghetti Sauce
- ◆ Shredded Cheese
- ◆ Individual-size rolls



Directions:

1. To make a batch, first prepare your favorite meatball recipe, shaping each meatball into a mini football before cooking. Once they're cooked, add the meatballs to a skillet of spaghetti sauce and warm them through.
2. For each sub, cut a V-shaped notch from the top of an individual-size roll, place a meatball in the roll, and top with cheese shred laces. Finally, get the sandwiches in a huddle on a cookie sheet and place them in a warm oven for a few minutes to melt the cheese.



Banana S'Mores

Ingredients:

- ◆ 3 Large unpeeled bananas
- ◆ 1/4 Cup mini marshmallows
- ◆ 1/4 Cup chocolate morsels
- ◆ 1/4 Cup crushed graham crackers

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Peel back each banana on one side approximately 1 1/2 inches wide. Don't peel back completely,; stop near the end of the banana.
3. Scoop out a groove the length of the banana and fill with chocolate morsels and marshmallows and top with graham crackers.
4. Replace the peeled section on top and wrap the bananas in foil. Bake about 10 minutes on a cookie sheet.