Helping Hands Kinship Support Services Program

Quarterly Newsletter

Winter 2016

ONTARIO KINSHIP CENTER

Recurring Groups and Classes
- Support Group, Tuesdays-10am-12pm
- FKCE Workshop—4th Tuesday of each month
- Youth Group 4th Friday of month
- Panera Bread 1st & 3rd Tues. of each month

January
- 1st & 2nd Office Closed
- 21st– Kinship Advisory Council-Ontario
- 22nd Youth Group 4-6pm

February
- 12th Tentative Family skate night
- 18th KAC San Bernardino29th Caregiver Potluck
- 26th– Youth Group

March
- 17th Happy St. Patrick’s Day
- 25th– Youth Group

YUCCA VALLEY SUPPORT GROUPS:
January 20th
February 17th
March 16th

VICTORVILLE KINSHIP CENTER

Recurring Groups and Classes
- Support Group, Mondays-10am-12pm
- FKCE caregiver Workshop—2nd Monday of each month
- Youth Group 2nd & 4th Wed of each month
- Potluck & Game- last Monday of each month after Support Group
- Panera Bread 2nd & 4th Tues. of ea. mo.

January
- 26th Potluck & Game

February
- 11th Tentative Family skate night
- 19th KAC San Bernardino
- 23rd Potluck & Game

March
- 17th KAC Victorville

Check your monthly calendars for more details.

Holidays both offices will be Closed:
- January 1st-2nd
- January 18th
- February 15th
- March 31st

Surviving the Holidays

Holiday Survival Threats:

Grief/Depression: The first thing you should do when feeling like Mrs. or Mr. Holiday blue is, acknowledge your feelings. Be realistic and set limits. For example: don’t do things you don’t want to do. In addition, celebrate your loved one. If a loved one has passed away, you can celebrate the holidays just adjust your tradition. For example: instead of putting up Christmas lights on the house, just buy a 2ft Christmas tree. The most important thing to remember is to take a time out (self-care). Take 10-15 minutes to yourself. Stay active and keep a schedule such as going to church or shopping.

Financial: Set your budget…and stick to it! Try to take care of yourself first before buying others their gift. Know your limit and trim your list if need be. It is best to plan ahead like shopping online and/or using coupons. Another great idea for not breaking the bank is to get creative with your gift(s). Consider other things like a Secret Santa, if you have a large family or want to stay within your budget.

Excessive Consumption: Avoid being on a binge (excessive eating/drinking). Plan time for exercise, such as walk or bike. Try not to skip meals because that will lead to eating bigger meals. If you are attending a holiday event, take a healthier dish and this will help those with weight/health concerns. Once arriving at the event, survey the buffet. Walk and take a look first to think about what you want to eat and remember to have portion control. In addition, practice mindful eating. What does this mean? It means sit down and enjoy your food. Remember to slow down. A very important thing to remember is to use caution with beverages. Drink slowly and have a plan for your unique challenges.

Family/Relationships: Have realistic expectations, so no magical thinking. Determine your boundaries…and stick to them. Accept others. Have a plan to have someone bail you out from talking to others too long that you may not want to be speaking to. Pro-actively tackles, also known as “unfinished business”, try to do this before the holidays.

Over commitment: Set your priorities and make time for that. Learn to say No! Especially on things that won’t fit your schedule. Most importantly, remember to have fun!

(California Pacific Medical Center, 2014)

Join us for Youth Group in January!

In Victorville we will meet the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of Every month starting January 13th, 4pm to 6pm at the center.

In Ontario we will meet the 4th Friday of Every month starting January 22nd, 4pm to
FOCUS on Foster Families app

FOCUS on Foster Families is designed to support foster (kinship) youth and their caregivers. Through candid video interviews and online tools, FOCUS on Foster Families helps users improve their skills related to communication, emotional regulation, problem solving, and goal setting.

FOCUS On Foster Families brings FOCUS Family Resilience Training skills to families where they live, work and play. FOCUS is a program that teaches families to use five related skills to build on strengths and overcome challenges. These skills are problem-solving, goal setting, communication, emotional regulation and managing trauma and stress reminders.

Please check out the app on apple or android devices. We can always help you download the app and help you navigate through it. Check out the website for more information: https://nfrc.ucla.edu/focus-on-foster-families

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

This Holiday Season we were blessed by so many donations and assistance from our communities… We would like to thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts for making this season an even brighter one for our families...We are all very appreciative! Thank you so much!

The Santa Sleigh Program in the High Desert Sponsored 25 of our Kinship Children ...Thank You to the Don Ferrarese Foundation & Mr. Dan Tate for thinking of our Kinship Children!

High Desert ChiPs for Kids
Donated 150 toys for our Kin kids. Thank you for including us in your program!

A BIG THANK YOU to the Westside CFS office, your donations allowed caregivers to pick what they wanted to cook for the holidays!

For Thanksgiving we received food donations from these wonderful organizations...Thank you!

West Side Children & Family Services
Rancho Cucamonga Christian Fellowship
Panera Bread
Congressman Freddie Rodriguez
Cathy Johnson
Mr. & Mrs. Smith

Thank you Home Depot in Ontario, Victorville & Barstow for Donating 7 Christmas Trees to our kin families!

Thank you Lowes Apple Valley for Donating 1 Christmas tree to a kin caregiver!

Thank you for your Donations to our Christmas parties!

Children's Fund of San Bernardino  Kurt's Pharmacy  Ray Van Zant
Red Robin  Hometown Buffet  Red Lobster  Olive Garden
In n Out  Weinerschnitzel  All about you Beauty Salon
Mr. & Mrs. Cooley  Benito Family  Mr. & Mrs. Smith

Visit our website: mhsinc.org

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Helping Hands Kinship Newsletter
Contributors: Belen Vargas, Dawn Van Zant
Elizabeth Sandoval & Cindy Lopez
Caregiver Corner

Caregiver Corner features kin-caregivers from Helping Hands in the West End and North Desert Regions. This is a great way to get acquainted with and to acknowledge the efforts of our kin-caregivers.

We would like to introduce:

Doris McIntyre - Yucca Valley

We would like to introduce Doris and Tony McIntyre from Yucca Valley. Who are raising their 3 Grandchildren- Caleb 14, Nathan 8, Kate 5.

Mom wasn’t able to care for the children therefore they stepped in. Their biggest challenge has been the children’s emotions, they go up and down. One of the ways their family has grown from this situation, is that they have learned how to be patient. A most positive thing that the family has gained is that they are able to keep the children in the family and out of the social service systems.

The McIntyres like that with Support group you have someone to bounce things off of that knows what you’re going through. Doris and Tony would like to see more resources from the center, you never know what you might need. They would also a center that is closer to their home in Yucca Valley.

When asked if they could change or do anything Doris and Tony stated that they would love to build a bigger house on the same property to be more comfortable.

Tips they would give to other caregivers are:
Be thankful for what you have.
You’re doing a great thing.
Patience is a Virtue

Rita Cameron – Yucca Valley

Rita Cameron is caring for her 4 grandchildren, Gabriel 17, Rigoberto 15, Alyssa 13 and Lilee 9. When her daughter was grieving the loss of her husband, she started using drugs. She was soon addicted and then her children needed to be taken care of by grandma. Daughter got them back after a year but fell back into cycle and the children were taken away a couple more times when they asked Rita if she wanted them permanently. Rita let them know she needed help with a couple of things to keep them, and they helped with housing and transportation, eventually Rita and the children moved from Long Beach to Yucca Valley.

The Biggest Challenge for her has been in getting the kids to understand that they are a family and they work together. Rita is not just their Grandmother she is also their Mom. She also includes mom in everything, like IEPs and some family decisions. She feels that the family is still growing, “everything is constantly changing”. Rita also feels that educations is very important to Rita. The positive that has come to her is that her daughter is now clean and doing better. She also stated that the children’s reading and writing has improved since they were behind when they first went to stay with her. She knows that the kids are doing better knowing that they have permanency in their lives.

When asked what she’s gained from attending the support group she said, “I never felt like I fit in, in any Kinship program, this is the only time I have been able to participate”. It’s something she has wanted to do, she believes it’s ok to let people know your overwhelmed, and to be able to take about the joys of raising your grandchildren.

Tips and advice she would give new kinship caregivers is to think long and hard before you take on the children, its hard on marriages, bio children. To be realistic and honest, it’s a lifelong change. Think about what impact it can have on your own children. It is a good thing that you are caring for your grandchildren, just be realistic and honest with yourself before you choose commit.
Kinship Support Services Program

Kinship Youth Groups

2nd & 4th Wednesdays
4pm to 6pm
North Desert Region Office
16519 Victor St. Suite 404
Victorville, CA 92395
(760) 843-1177

4th Friday of the month
4pm to 6pm
West Region
316 East E Street
Ontario, Ca 91762
(909) 986-9710

Kinship Support Services is for Grandparents, Aunts & Uncles, Brothers & Sisters and other relatives that are giving care to children of their family members.

Our Goal Is
To strengthen and help sustain formal and informal Kinship Families in San Bernardino County, so that children can stay connected to their families, culture, language, & traditions, while living in safe, healthy & stable homes.

Program Funded by San Bernardino County Department of Children’s Services

Mental Health Systems is a non-profit agency founded in 1978 to improve the lives of individuals, families and communities facing substance abuse and behavioral health challenges.

mhsinc.org