

The Correspondent

Early Intervention Program

Early Head Start

Parent-Child Home Program

Wise Adult Day Health

Residential Services

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

New Human Resources Director

AHS would like to welcome Barbara Laferriere as the New Human Resources Director. Terry Rodrigues, who has been at AHS since 1999, will be retiring from the position.

Barbara comes to AHS with over 21 years of experience in the Human Resources field.

Barbara will be responsible for recruitment/retention, agency orientation/training, benefit management, communication, HIPAA compliance, Data Security Compliance, Safety Issues and overseeing the administrative assistants' responsibilities.

Barbara stated, "I am honored and excited to have the opportunity to work for an agency with an outstanding reputation such as Associates for Human Services."

Please stop by and welcome Barbara to AHS!!



Holiday Gift Donation by TJ Maxx



Michelle Ackerman, District Manager for TJ Maxx, delivered a wonderful surprise to AHS right before the holidays. Employees at TJ Maxx collected monetary donations and purchased several bags of toys to be distributed to children in our Early Childhood Programs.

Martha McDow, AHS employee, also works for TJ Maxx and had told them all about our programs. Toys were given to several

families enrolled in our three early childhood programs. Thank you Michelle, Martha and TJ Maxx employees!



Wise Adult Day Health

Making Pickles at Wise

Barbara E., WISE participant, recently came across an old time favorite recipe at home. She mentioned this to Activities Coordinator, Jennifer Cansler, and Jennifer suggested that she bring it in and they make it. Barbara brought in the recipe, and it turned into a fun-filled project that was a great success.

Barbara, her friend Lil, and Jennifer went shopping to buy the ingredients to make the pickles. Barbara worked with Jennifer and another friend, Gisella to make the pickles. They made the vinegar mixture, cut the cucumbers and followed Barbara's directions to make superb pickles. The ladies then decorated their jars for the pickles and took a jar home to their families. Barbara's daughter and Gisella's daughter were both quite pleased to see their mothers have so much enjoyment making a favorite recipe. Both Barbara and Gisella used to like to cook, so the project brought back many pleasant memories. The pride and self satisfaction was very nice to witness.

On Tuesday, December 20, the lunch menu was cold sandwiches, and everyone was offered a pickle to go along with their lunch, from the ladies.

Jennifer was so pleased with the activity, that she is encouraging Barbara and others to bring in more recipes to cook at WISE. Activities such as these increase self esteem and self satisfaction and help prevent some of the depression that may accompany some of the losses one experiences with aging.



Holiday Happenings at Wise

December is always a busy, but fun, time at Wise. The month begins with decorating and making Christmas and Holiday crafts. Participants worked especially hard this year making personalized snowflakes and other decorations to display at the Wise center. They are quite pleased when visitors mention how nice it looks. Shopping also keeps participants and staff busy as they prepare for the Christmas party by purchasing gifts and food.

On December 12, some participants, accompanied by Activities Coordinators, Ray Pratt and Jennifer Cansler, visited LaSalette Shrine in Attleboro. The December weather had been unusually warm, so they were able to really enjoy the walk outside, and see the beautiful displays. They also loved listening to the music play.



Wise was invited to the annual Christmas production and dinner hosted by the Taunton Catholic Middle School. They had a wonderful time as they watched the production and were served a delicious meal by the students. The students were very gracious hosts and made the guests feel quite welcome. Participants that attended really enjoyed this day and loved spending time talking to the young students.

December 22 was the annual Wise Christmas party with singing, dancing, gift exchange and a visit from Santa. This is always a success and is anticipated with much excitement. Happy New Year to all our participants, families, caregivers, and friends and thank you for your continued support!

Adult Day Health Services

Wise Adult Day Health is a day support service for adults experiencing health care related issues or whose ability to function independently is limited. Wise is designed to provide quality services, including daily leisure, recreational and preventive health activities to aging or disabled individuals. An R.N. oversees all health-related activities, including restorative and maintenance therapies, nutritional consulting, and participant/caregiver training in preventive health. A nutritious lunch is served daily along with two snacks. For more information or referrals, please call the Wise Program Director, Debra Brower, at 508-880-0202, ext. 327.

Residential Services

A Dream Come True

Donald and Cheryl M. had expressed a desire to go to Florida to visit Cheryl's sister and other family members for some time. There were many reasons this seemed like an impossible dream... how could they financially afford the trip, where would they stay?

After several meetings with their support team, which included their Service Coordinator, Program Manager and Cheryl's guardian, a plan was developed and the work began.

An anonymous co-worker of Donald's heard about their wish to go to Florida and donated his condo free of charge.... what a generous gift! Next, Donald and Cheryl had some hard decisions to make. How much money would they need to save? What would they like to do while in Florida? What safety nets were needed in case of an emergency? And the most important question was when should they go?

Donald and Cheryl decided that their trip would be their Christmas gift to each other, and they began to save and budget their money. It was decided that early December would be best, and Liz, Program Manager, did a search for the best flight price they could get and tickets were purchased. Donald and Cheryl had a list of emergency contacts and phone numbers, as well as limited guardianship to be provided by a Florida relative. With these hurdles cleared and the trip a reality, the other details began to fall into place. One of Donald and Cheryl's support staff, Joan, agreed to do the very early trip to Logan, picking them up at 5am and making the special accommodations at the airport. Cheryl and Donald had made the decision to spend most of their time with family.

After their return, Donald and Cheryl explained the highlights of their trip included spending lots of time with Cheryl's sister and other family members and sight-seeing along the Coastal Canal including Boca Raton, where they saw a well-known singer. They enjoyed relaxing at the condo, where Donald took a swim in the pool every day, while Cheryl reclined poolside. They went to several clubs for a little dancing and fun. One of their favorite things was going to new and different restaurants serving local ethnic foods, trying unfamiliar dishes. They even got to do some Christmas shopping. Visiting with family was the highlight of the trip, without a doubt, and the fulfillment of their dream.



Residential Tid Bits

As always, the holiday season was a very busy one this year. Folks attended work parties and festivities. Those at Caswell Grove held their annual Hanukah-Christmas party; many spent time with their families, and others spent the holidays with friends, while some got together for dinner. Additional activities included attending a holiday play, enjoying the light displays at La Salette in Attleboro, taking a little ride to get a hot chocolate. It was a great holiday season for everyone!

Residential ...

The **Residential Program** provides a variety of supports to individuals with developmental disabilities, living throughout the community in single-family homes and apartments. Individuals are supported to achieve optimal independence through choices and opportunities that enhance their quality of life. Please call Ann Doyle, Program Director, at 508-880-0202, ext. 330 for more information; referrals are made through the Department of Mental Retardation.

Early Childhood Programs

Early Intervention

Parent-Child Home Program

Early Head Start

EHS Update

Please join EHS in welcoming our newest Parent/Child Advocate – Kim Forget. Kim has an Associate's Degree and many years experience working in a home visiting program. Kim will be serving families in Attleboro and a few in Taunton. We are delighted to welcome her to our EHS team.



Early Head Start – Staff Development

Staffs of EHS have been very involved with professional development in December. Several staff of EHS had the opportunity to attend the Zero to Three National Training Institute in Washington DC this past month. This training had workshops helping us to constantly improve the quality of services particularly to families with children who experience early trauma, homeless families, enhancing home visits and many other topics. One of the sessions Ronna attended was regarding improving health outcomes through health education for all families. Ronna and Sandy will be working on a “health literacy” curriculum. At staff meeting in the next few months, all staff who attended the conference will share new information with everyone and plans will be made to incorporate new ideas into our daily practices. In addition one staff member was able to attend a train-the-trainer conference in Atlanta for “Advanced Behavior Studies” and she will train all staff in how to identify personality/temperamental traits and how to use this information to individualize services to our families and children.

Although these trainings take us away from directly working with our families, they are so valuable in our efforts for continued quality improvement that is so much a part of the Associates for Human Services and Early Head Start philosophy.

Reading Tips for Infants

Modify picture books for infants. Since the storyline in a children's book may be too difficult for young children to understand, simplify it. Use your own words to describe the pictures. Simply tell your child what is in the picture (i.e. “Look, a duck”, “The duck is in the water.”) Remember, the story itself is less important than the pleasure of the experience you are having with your child. As your child progresses you can rephrase the story in a shortened form.

Be dramatic. Using different vocal expressions can make the experience more fun. There are many types of tones you might try, for instance, surprise, whispering, drawing out vowels. If you want to soothe your baby, try using books that have a repetitive rhythm, rhymes, and gentle words.

Parent Group Topics

- Mon., Jan. 2, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - HOLIDAY
- Wed., Jan. 4, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Time Outs
- Wed., Jan 4, 2012** (12:30 - 2:00) - Time Outs
- Fri., Jan. 6, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Time Outs
- Tues., Jan 10, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Dealing with family
- Wed., Jan. 11, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Discipline
- Wed., Jan. 11, 2012** (12:30 - 2:00) - Discipline
- Thurs., Jan. 12, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Dealing with family
- Fri., Jan. 13, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Discipline
- Mon., Jan. 16, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - HOLIDAY
- Wed., Jan. 18, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Discipline
- Wed., Jan. 18, 2012** (12:30 - 2:00) - Discipline
- Fri., Jan. 20, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Discipline
- Mon., Jan. 23, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - How do you catch a virus?
- Tues., Jan 24, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Public School Transition
- Wed., Jan. 25, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Tantrums
- Wed., Jan. 25, 2012** (12:30 - 2:00) - Tantrums
- Thurs., Jan. 26, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Public School Transition
- Fri., Jan. 27, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Tantrums
- Mon., Jan. 30, 2012** (9:00 - 10:30) - Tantrums

Early Childhood Programs ...

Early Head Start Program is a federally funded program that provides comprehensive services to families who are pregnant or have children between the ages of birth to 3 and meet income guidelines. Call Ronna Schaffer at 508-880-0202, ext. 355 for more information or to make a referral.

Early Intervention Program is an integrated developmental service available to families of children, between birth and three years of age, for whom there are developmental concerns due to identified disabilities, certain birth circumstances, or environmental circumstances (e.g. cerebral palsy, prematurity, homelessness) or show a delay in one or more areas of development. Please call Zulmira Allcock at 508-880-0202, ext. 302 for more information or to make a referral.

Parent-Child Home Program is a home-based literacy and parenting program, which helps prepare children to succeed in school, emphasizing parent-child verbal interaction. Please call Debbie Jenkins at 508-880-0202, ext. 362 for more information or to make a referral.

Early Childhood Programs

Early Intervention

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Early Head Start

PCHP Updates

Playgroups

Early Intervention is inviting all PCHP families with children under the age of 30 months to participate in a weekly playgroup. These groups are available Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9:00-11:00 at Associates for Human Services. All groups include a parent training, dealing with issues related to child development, as well as time for the children to engage in language stimulating play. It is a wonderful time for your child to learn social skills and for parents to receive support. If your child is already participating in Early Intervention, they automatically qualify. If you are interested in participating but do not receive EI services, please contact Pat Bushika at 508-880-0202 ext. 335 so she can set up a free screening for your child. The screening will enable you to evaluate how your child is developing and if they need any services that EI provides. Whether your child is enrolled in Early Intervention or not, playgroups are free for families who receive MassHealth.

Free Adult Classes

The Taunton Public Schools and Bristol Community College have a free program available to adults who are interested in earning their GED or who would like help with ESOL (English for speakers of other languages). The classes are offered part-time days and evenings.



Earn a GED

To earn a GED you will need to first take a basic skills test to see what courses you will need to take. Classes begin three times a year, in September, January and April. You must take the test before you sign up and they will put you on a waitlist to begin. Tests are given on the last Monday of the month, and you can call 508-977-9565 (Monday-Friday) to set up an appointment. If you would like to attend the evening program for your GED call 508-821-1138 (Tuesday and Thursday nights 5:30-9:00 p.m.). There are several websites you can use to prepare for the GED however the test is only available at an official GED test center like the one at TPC/BCC. Two such sites are www.my-ged.com and www.ged-secrets.com.

ESOL Program

To enter the ESOL program you will need to take an oral assessment. You would need to call to set up an appointment. Day classes are at the Boys and Girls Club in Taunton, night classes are at the Parker Middle School. See telephone number above.

EI Updates

Playtime for Babies (6-12 months)

It's true that play is baby's work. Playtime is everyday, all day, everywhere, and anywhere! Your baby is ready, full of energy, and acquiring new skills all the time. Play helps a child learn about the world and make sense of what's going on. At the same time, your baby is developing motor, cognitive and language skills.

Your baby also needs you to play to demonstrate how things work, to describe what is happening, and to deepen the involvement with the activity. When you play together with your baby, your child will get more involved and play longer.

Your baby is fascinated that objects disappear and reappear. This is prime time for peek-a-boo games of all sorts. Use your hands, a scarf, a stuffed toy. Cover your face. You'll have a great time playing peek-a-boo wherever you are!

Your baby needs toys that can be held independently, toys that demonstrate cause and effect, and toys that can be stacked and manipulated. Soft cuddly toys are wonderful to hold and play with as well.

A few toys at one time are all your baby needs. If your child seems to lose interest in a toy, put it in the closet, and let some time go by. When you bring it out again, your baby may find it exciting to explore with newly acquired skills.

Look around you for wonderful everyday items for your baby to play with. Pots, pans, plastic containers, wooden spoons, or an old pocketbook make great playthings. Also check for rough or sharp edges. Show how to put things in the purse or bang on pots.

Keep a few different-sized, colorful balls in your toy collection. Roll one to your baby and encourage your child to "catch" it. At first, this might be simply touching the ball. Encourage your crawling baby by rolling the ball slightly beyond reach. This will motivate your child to move to get it!

Your baby loves imitating you. Give lots of opportunities when you play together. Clap your hands. Shake your head. Bang two small blocks together. Stack two blocks on top of each other. Take all the blocks out of a plastic container one by one. Eventually your child will begin to imitate your actions.

Bubbles are great fun for babies! They reach out to grab them and crawl over to chase them. Keep a bottle of bubbles in your diaper bag, they are wonderful to have when you need a little something special to do.

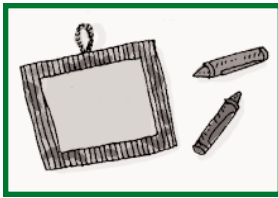
Source: http://familytlc.net/playtime_older_babies.html

Activities

Source: www.familytlc.net

Frame It!

Even your toddler can help frame the family photo collection. The photos will become



works of art to be cherished.

Materials: fat crayons, heavy white paper or cardboard, glue and photo

Directions: Put out crayons and a large piece of heavy white paper or cardboard. Invite your toddler to scribble special designs. Encourage drawing on different areas of the paper. If your child only draws a little bit, put it away and bring it out another day so that more can be added. Glue a special photo in the center of the paper, and hang it up. Toddlers can use large crayons and scribble. Being creative together helps your child develop both physically and mentally.

Make a Snow Picture

Let your toddler explore with white paint and create a snowy picture. Adding some table salt will make the snow sparkle.



Materials: black construction paper, white poster paint, white school glue, salt in shaker, and large paintbrush

Directions: Mix a small amount of glue into the white paint. Thin with a bit of water if the paint is too thick to spread. Dip the paintbrush into the paint mixture. Allow your toddler to freely paint onto a sheet of black construction paper. Before it's dry, sprinkle some salt on top of the white paint. Shake off the excess salt and let this dry thoroughly. Wash your child's hands to remove any excess salt, as the salt can sting the eyes. Together admire the snowy picture your child created. Older toddlers can use paint. Being creative together helps your child develop both physically and mentally.

Torn Mittens

Whether it's snowing outdoors or not, help your child learn about winter dressing as you make this fun art project together!



Materials: construction paper, scissors, glue, cotton swabs, small paper cup and pair of mittens

Directions: Cut two large mitten shapes from construction paper--one for you and one for your child to decorate. Invite your child to tear pieces of colored construction paper (tissue paper tears easily too). Help glue these onto the paper mitten. Cotton swabs and a small paper cup is the formula for easy gluing. Display your colorful paper mittens on the refrigerator for the family to see. While you are having fun together, this activity helps your child develop small muscle skills, eye/hand coordination and language skills.

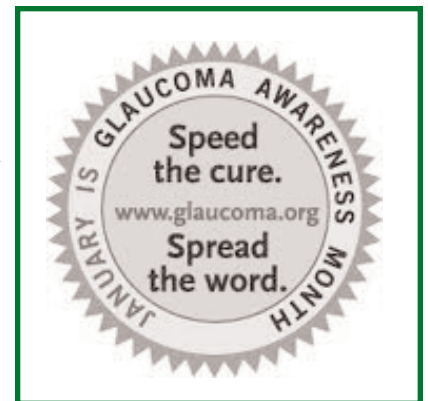
Health Corner

Glaucoma Awareness Month

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month. Nearly three million people have glaucoma, but half do not realize it because there are often no warning symptoms. What can happen as a result? Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the U.S. and the first leading cause of preventable blindness; approximately 120,000 Americans are blind from glaucoma, accounting for 9% to 12% of all cases of blindness in the US. Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness among African-Americans; it is 6 to 8 times more common in African-Americans than Caucasians.

African-Americans ages 45-65 are 14 to 17 times more likely to go blind from glaucoma than Caucasians with glaucoma in the same age group. Other high-risk groups include: people over 60, family members of those already diagnosed, diabetics, and people who are severely near-sighted.

The good news is that glaucoma is diagnosable and treatable. But unfortunately, too many people with glaucoma don't know how or where to get evaluated, especially if they don't have access to a regular ophthalmologist. EyeCare America, the public service foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, encourages people to take advantage of its year-round, national Glaucoma EyeCare Program. This program offers glaucoma eye exams and care for those at increased risk of glaucoma. To see if you, a loved one or a friend, is eligible to receive a referral for an eye exam and care, call 1-800-391-EYES (3937), 24 hours, seven days a week, 365 days a year. All eligible callers receive a referral to one of EyeCare America's 7,500 volunteer ophthalmologists. More information can be found at: www.eyecareamerica.org



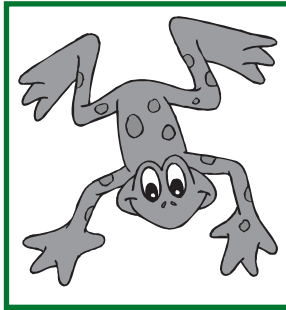
Resource/Information Page

It IS Easy Being Green

by Chrissy Collins, Early Intervention Counselor

Isn't this the time of year when getting healthy starts "again"? I am sure some of us are thinking about joining a gym and barely going or buying a treadmill and using it as a clothing rack. How about some "get moving" ideas that incorporate being green? They will save you money and keep winter blues away.

- * If it is not snowing get outside and ride your bike
- * Put away the gas guzzler snow blower and shovel
- * Hand wash your car (it is not easy this time of year)
- * Take out your area rugs and bang them clean
- * Make some home changes by rearranging the furniture (wards off feeling stir crazy)
- * Clean out your attic or basement and don't forget to donate your items
- * Walk your dog regularly or volunteer to walk a friend's dog
- * Feed the birds
- * Drag your comforters to the laundromat for a good cleaning
- * Don't forget to help your elderly neighbors in your neighborhood
- * Keep moving and get fresh air. Let me know how it is going at Chrissyc1@cox.net.



Tips for Blood Donations

January is recognized as National Blood Donor Month. Blood is in short supply during the winter months due to holiday travel schedules, and inclement weather.

Here are a few tips for successful blood donations:

- * Maintain a healthy iron level in your diet by eating iron rich foods, such as spinach, red meat, fish, poultry, beans, iron-fortified cereals and raisins.
- * Get a good night's sleep.
- * Drink an extra 16 oz. of water or fluids before the donation.
- * Eat a healthy meal before your donation. Avoid fatty foods, such as hamburgers, fries or ice cream before donating. Tests for infections done on all donated blood can be affected by fats that appear in your blood for several hours after eating fatty foods.
- * If you are a platelet donor, your system must be free of aspirin for two days prior to donation.
- * Remember to bring your donor card, driver's license or two other forms of ID.

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood/tips-successful-donation>

Scoop on Shoveling Safely

The **good** news is that 15 minutes of snow shoveling counts as moderate physical activity according to the Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health.

The **bad** news is that researchers have reported an increase in the number of fatal heart attacks among snow shovelers after heavy snowfalls. This rise may be due to the sudden demand that shoveling places on an individual's heart. Snow shoveling may cause a quick increase in heart rate and blood pressure.

Shoveling can be made more difficult by the weather. Cold air makes it harder to work and breathe, which adds some extra strain on the body. There also is the risk for hypothermia, a decrease in body temperature, if one is not dressed correctly for the weather conditions. Those most at risk include:

- * Anyone who has already had a heart attack.
- * Individuals with a history of heart disease.
- * Those with high blood pressure or high cholesterol.
- * Individuals leading a sedentary lifestyle.

Should I go get a Snow Blower?

Not necessarily. Not everyone who shovels snow is going to have a heart attack. Snow shoveling can be good exercise when performed correctly.

Also consider back safety when shoveling snow. Even if you exercise regularly and are not at risk for heart disease, shoveling improperly could lead to a strained back. If you've been inactive for months and have certain risk factors, use some common sense before taking on the task of snow shoveling.

Be heart healthy and back friendly while shoveling this winter with these tips:

- * If you are inactive and have a history of heart trouble, talk to your doctor before you shovel snow.
- * Avoid caffeine or nicotine before beginning. These are stimulants, which may increase your heart rate and cause your blood vessels to constrict.
- * Drink plenty of water. Dehydration is just as big an issue in cold winter months as it is in the summer.
- * Warm up your muscles before shoveling. Stretch the muscles in your arms and legs, because warm muscles work more efficiently
- * Pick the right shovel for you. A smaller blade will require you to lift less snow, putting less strain on your body.
- * Begin shoveling slowly to avoid placing a sudden demand on your heart. Pace yourself and take breaks as needed.
- * Stand with your feet about hip width for balance and keep the shovel close to your body. Bend from the knees and tighten your stomach muscles as you lift the snow. If you need to move the snow to one side reposition your feet to face the direction the snow will be going.
- * Most importantly — listen to your body. Stop if you feel pain!

Source: <http://www.ext.nodak.edu/snow.htm>

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"Quality Service for Quality Life"



Wish List

If you have an item you'd like to donate, please let program staff know, or call 508-880-0202, ext 333.

- * stickers
- * Kitchen table and chairs
- * Cribs
- * Microwave
- * Toaster
- * Small dresser
- * Infant toys
- * Batteries
- * 10-12 cup food processor
- * soft tissues
- * 100% juice

Special Days to Celebrate in January

Eye Care Month
National Blood Donor Month
National Staying Healthy Month
National Thank You Month
1st - New Year's Day
3rd - Festival of Sleep Day
4th - Trivia Day
5th - National Bird Day
6th - Cuddle Up Day
8th - Bubble Bath Day
9th - National Electricity Day
10th - Peculiar People Day
11th - Secret Pal Day
12th - National Pharmacist Day
14th - Dress Up Your Pet Day
16th - Dr. Martin Luther King Day
20th - Inauguration Day
23rd - Chinese New Year
24th - Compliment Day
25th - Opposite Day
26th - National Kazoo Day
31st - Backwards Day

Unusual Facts

- * The State with the highest percentage of people who walk to work: Alaska!
- * There are 293 ways to make change for a dollar.
- * All U.S. presidents have worn glasses. Some just didn't like to be seen wearing them in public.
- * Oak trees do not produce acorns until they are fifty years of age or older.
- * The raised reflective dots in the middle of highways are called Botts dots.
- * 'Strengths' is the longest word in the English language with just one vowel.



A Special Visitor greeted Peter G. with Holiday wishes and gave a gift to each Wise participant.