

The Correspondent

Early Intervention Program

Early Head Start

Parent-Child Home Program

Wise Adult Day Health

Residential Services

Volume 15, Issue 1

January 2010



The Year was 2009!

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Wise on a Hayride at ET Farms



Early Head Start conducted several family nights



Residential Vacation on the Cape



PCHP graduation



Early Intervention Playgroups



Very Successful Wine Tasting



Another Full House at the Spaghetti Supper

Wise Adult Day Health

Wise Chorus Performs

On Tuesday, December 22, a group of participants from Wise Adult Day Health performed Holiday songs in the lobby of Associates for Human Services. The group was led by Cora Peirce, Social Worker. The participants included Gerry, Linda, Sue, Jean, Bob, Karen, Patti, and Nancy. Songs performed included Joy to the World, Rudolph, Silent Night, Deck the Halls, and White Christmas. Employees from the agency enjoyed the festivities and Wise participants loved having the opportunity to share their songs with others. Some of the employees even joined in to sing along with the participants.



Wise Chorus sing for AHS employees.

Holiday Festivities

The annual Wise Christmas party was a big success as usual. Bob Lima provided the musical entertainment. Participants enjoyed dancing and singing Christmas tunes. Santa Claus made a visit and passed out presents for all. Participants exchanged gifts with each other and Wise gave a gift to each participant. A special treat was enjoyed by all.



On Thursday December 16 several participants and staff were invited to, and attended, a musical production and dinner at the Taunton Catholic Middle School. This



is always a great time and very appreciated. The students and staff at TCMS put a lot of effort into making this a very special day for local seniors.

On Thursday, December 10, many participants enjoyed a day trip to LaSalette Shrine, including a trip to the gift

shop and hot cocoa.

On Thursday, December 31, Wise celebrated the New Year with festivities including cider and special treats. Bob Lima provided music for dancing.

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM WISE STAFF AND PARTICIPANTS

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

In Memory of Lorraine ...

On November 27, 2009, Lorraine J. passed away peacefully with her family by her side, after a brief illness.

Lorraine moved into our Pat-Ree Drive home in east Taunton after her family relocated to the Middleboro/Taunton area nearly nine years ago. According to family and support staff, Pat Ree Drive was a great match for Lorraine; she was very happy there. She got along well with her housemates and they often provided Lorraine with extra support in many small ways, such as helping with household tasks or praising her skills.

Lorraine loved music and dancing, often being one of the first on the dance floor at events, thoroughly enjoying herself. Lorraine also enjoyed going out to eat, to the movies, bowling, karaoke and shopping at the Raynham Flea Market and yard sales.

Lorraine looked forward to going on vacation and was open to new places and adventures. She especially liked visiting with her family on holiday weekends. She had worked at PRIDE and loved earning a paycheck!

Lorraine's support staff were asked to describe her, and here are a few of their comments: "she was a delight to work with", "she just loved music and dancing", "she could be so funny". They also acknowledged how important family, friends and housemates were to her, and that she got along with everyone. Upon hearing of the loss of their housemate, Mary, Joni and Jean all stated how much they were going to miss her with genuine sadness and caring. All who had the good fortune to know Lorraine will miss her.

Holiday Happenings

This holiday season was a very busy one in all of our homes. Between work parties, decorating, shopping and planning everyone was quite busy. Many folks went home for the long holiday weekend and many choose to stay in their own homes for dinner but got together in the afternoon. There were gifts galore and everyone had a great holiday season, whether Christmas or Hanukkah, and are looking forward to the New Year.

Looking forward to a New Decade

The approaching New Year and new decade provide us with an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments. This past year the Residential Program achieved many milestones; we received a Two-Year Certification, have successfully transitioned a young woman into our Field St. home, were able to transfer two women into new homes that are able to provide the increased support they both need and we've supported many of our folks in volunteering and personal growth.

Over the past eight years we have consistently made progressive changes in many areas: service delivery, staff training expectations, trainings offered to the people we serve, collaborations with other providers and within the structure of the Residential program itself.

We are looking forward to another great year and decade. Happy New Year, 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 Updates

Highlighting the Watch Me Grow program

All families enrolled in Early Head Start are offered an opportunity to participate in our "Watch Me Grow" program. The EHS program's Mental Health Manager, Milly Burrows, provides an opportunity for families to create a video keepsake of the parent and child during a planned activity in their home. This can be done either by having Milly join the Parent/Child Advocate (PCA) on a visit and video tape the activity, or by having the PCA video tape a scheduled visit. Milly will then review the video focusing on the strengths of the parent and child relationship, provide a written summary to parents and view and discuss the video with parents.

This opportunity is offered twice each year a child is in the program and given to the family as a farewell remembrance when they leave the program. We hope all families will take advantage of this part of our program.

Windows of Opportunities Pilot Curriculum

Our EHS program was selected to participate in piloting a new home visiting curriculum called Windows of Opportunities or WOO. This curriculum focuses on identifying a child's interests and planning individualized activities to extend his or her learning. Each PCA will select a few families from her caseload to participate in this pilot. As a participant, families will be asked to complete a survey regarding their experience with the curriculum. We have begun trainings for staff on the use of the WOO and hope to begin using it with families in February.

Early Intervention Budget

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all the parents who wrote letters regarding the EI budget deficit concerns, for this year as well as next year. These letters were given to the Department of Public Health and Governor Patrick. There are many ideas still being evaluated to balance the budget, including shifting the cost of co pays and deductibles to parents and/or increasing the Participation fees. It is my hope that through continuous open dialogue we can come to a solution that will have the least impact on families and children. If you would like any more information on what the process has been so far, or how to become involved, please feel free to contact me. Together, we can make the difference to maintain the high quality of work that is needed.

Thank you,
Zulmira Allcock, LMHC, CEIS/CEID
EI Program Director
508-880-0202, ext 302
zallcock@ahsinc.org

Don't Overdress Your Child

Dressing infants and toddlers to stay warm during the cold, winter months is very important. Dressing children in warm pajamas, covering them with thick quilts and turning up the heat in their rooms at bedtime is a common practice. When outdoors, dressing in layers provides extra warmth, however, it is equally important to remember that over bundling can lead to a child being overheated.

In addition to excess clothing and covers, elevated temperatures in the bedroom can also lead to over heating. Look out for the following warning signs and follow some simple recommendations to prevent overheating of infants and children.

Warning Signs:

- * Constant sweating; damp hair or dampness around the neck and collar area.
- * The presence of heat rash or redness in the face.
- * Rapid breathing and restlessness.

Source: <http://www.woio.com/Global/story.asp?S=9664863>

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. 354 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

Parent-Child Home Program

Early Head Start

PCHP Updates

Happy New Year! As we begin the New Year, it is a wonderful time to make new resolutions.

PCHP would like to suggest a few ideas:

- Set aside 15-20 minutes a day to read to your child. Make this a special time that they can look forward to. Snuggle up close and let them choose their favorite books.

- Set up a home library for your child so they have easy access to reach books to read. This can be as simple as a basket or tote where you keep all their books or as elaborate as a special book shelf.

- Try to keep television viewing to a minimum (having it on all day does not help your child's attention span, it shortens it!) If they are watching tv, the best way for them to benefit from it is to include careful selection of programs and discussion from you about the show. Research recommends children between the ages of 2 – 3 should not be watching more than an hour a day.

- Try to establish a regular routine with your child so they know what to expect. They transition much better if they know change is coming.

- Try to keep all your homes visits as regularly as possible and make up those you have to miss.

- Spend time daily playing with your child, helping them to get the most out of those new toys as possible. Label, label, label.

- Reorganize your PCHP toy bin, get rid of things that don't belong and collect all the pieces needed together.

- Make plans to take a trip to the public library, and check out their free story hour program.



Toys to Avoid

Some toys are very seductive for children and parents. Don't be fooled! Toy companies make you think that you need special toys to help your child learn - watch out for these types of toys:

High Tech Toys & DVDs

Toy companies say that watching Baby Einstein, Brainy Baby and similar DVDs help babies get smarter sooner. But researchers found that for every hour spent watching baby DVDs, infants learned six to eight fewer new words than babies who never watched. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no electronic media before age two.

Baby DVDs can actually cause delayed development.

The Campaign for Commercial-free Childhood (CCFC) filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) saying there is little research to support these claims made by manufacturers and some research finds these items can even delay development. In 2008, the FTC agreed with the CCFC and told companies to change their false advertising claim.

Disney agreed to refund consumers for a limited time. Go to www.commercialfreechildhood.org to get more information.

Toys and other items based on TV Shows

Even though children want toys that are based on characters from TV shows or movies, these toys encourage consumerism, unhealthy food choices, and limit your child's imagination.

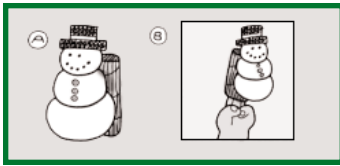
Beware of Branding

Toys, clothing and foods often use a TV character, like from Disney or Sesame Street to capture young children's attention. Why is this a problem? Whenever kids see it, they want it because it's familiar. These kinds of licensing agreements, which support branding efforts, can lead to unwise buying choices, unhealthy eating habits and nagging.

Activities

Source: www.familytlc.net

Snow Person Puppet



Together with your older toddler, create a snowman puppet to celebrate winter whether there is snow or not.

Materials: empty bathroom tissue roll, white paper, fat crayons or markers, scissors and glue

Directions: Draw the outline of a snowman on white paper.

Invite your child to decorate the snowman. Help him draw eyes, a nose, and a mouth. Cut out the snowman.

Help your child glue him onto a toilet tissue roll.

Invite your child to place the puppet over his fingers and make the puppet move.

While you are having fun together, this activity helps your child develop small muscle skills and language skills.

Nature Walk



Enjoy the cool, crisp days of winter as you take your toddler on a nature walk.

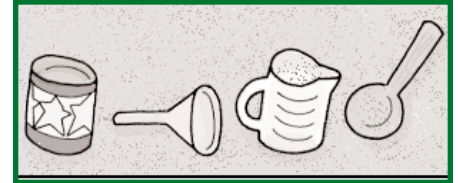
Materials: a shopping bag

Directions: Go out for a walk with your child in your neighborhood, the local park, or your own backyard. Bring a "collection" bag along with you.

Together look for interesting items to add to your collection. A stone, a leaf, a piece of stick--all are new and interesting to curious toddlers. Come home and look at your new nature collection together. Add to it on your next nature walk.

While you are bonding together, your toddler is developing an interest in nature through observation and important thinking skills.

Water World



Water play helps your toddler explore and discover while having fun.

Materials: two dishpans, warm water, cold water, plastic cups, spoons, funnels

Directions: Prepare one dishpan of warm water and one dishpan with cold water. Encourage your toddler to play freely in both pans. Talk to him about the different temperatures. Add cups, spoons, and funnels for him to play with. Talk about how the water feels in the two pans.

Letting your toddler play with water encourages development of the senses and opportunities for exploration, discovering new concepts, and learning new vocabulary.

Health Corner

Hypothermia in the Elderly

Hypothermia means "low heat." The term describes a condition when the deep body temperature falls below 95 degrees Fahrenheit or 35 degrees Centigrade. Hypothermia occurs when heat loss exceeds the body's ability to generate or conserve heat. It can range in severity from mild to life-threatening.

Older adults are at greater risk for cold injury because the body's ability to maintain a constant internal temperature decreases with age. If a chronic condition affects the circulatory or neurologic system or the thyroid, then their risk is even greater. Physical or behavioral limitations can also interfere with an older adult's ability to react to their environment easily. Even some of the commonly taken medications increase their risk for hypothermia. Other factors, such as poorly heated homes and poor nutrition, also put older adults at risk for cold injury.

Symptoms of hypothermia include:

- * shivering
- * cold skin
- * loss of control of fine finger movements
- * blue-gray color of the fingers, toes, ears, or nose
- * sluggishness or drowsiness
- * confusion
- * slurred speech
- * slow and shallow breathing and
- * rigid muscles

If possible, it is important to get the person out of the cold into heated shelter. Cold or wet clothing should be removed. Wrap the person in blankets or other warm coverings. If the person is alert, they can have warm, not hot, liquids but they should not drink any alcoholic beverages.

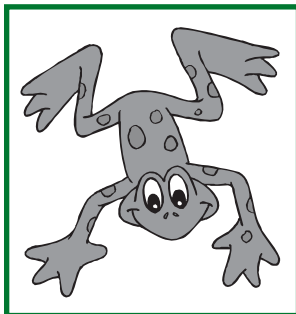
Source: <http://www.uihealthcare.com/topics/aging/agin3382.html>

Resource/Information Page

It IS Easy Being Green

by **Chrissy Collins, Early Intervention Counselor**

In the after glow of the holidays, I realized all the time spent with family and friends was well worth my time personally (learned some new holiday recipes) and professionally (amazing eco friendly ideas). My friends and family have been fine tuning their way of living "green." Of course, I asked as many questions as I could. Continue reading to find some of the easy things my friends and family have been doing.



Shred all your used wrapping paper to make decorative bag filler instead of tissue paper.

Prune some of your over grown plants and start new ones by placing the clippings in a glass of water which will force roots to grow. Don't forget to put your glass in the sun to help the process along.

While emptying the dehumidifier, use the water to nourish your indoor plants.

Send your broken holiday lights to Recycling Program 118 Rosehill Drive, Suite 1, Jackson, MI 49202 or check out HolidayLEDs.com.

Save your plastic shopping bags and use to line your bathroom trash can or for cleaning out the liter box.

Break up your old bread and spread it around your backyard or a park for the neighborhood birds.

Buy a compost bin and save your kitchen scraps. Eventually, you will produce the best soil you have ever seen! (As stated by my friend)

Save on time and cleaning supplies by taking your shoes off at the door of your home.

Reuse your plastic sandwich bags by just rinsing them out and hanging them to dry.

Use a wash cloth to wipe up the baby after his/her meals instead of paper towels.

As for baby wipes, buy one plastic container and just buy the refill wipes. We don't need so many plastic containers ending up in the landfill.

I hope you find these tips helpful. I know I did. Let me know how it is going at Chrissyc1@cox.net.



Winter Blues

Do You Have the Winter Blues?

If you experience two or more of these symptoms each year in the fall and into the spring you may suffer from the winter blues:

- * Increased feelings of lethargy
- * Difficulty waking up in the mornings as the days get shorter
- * Difficulty concentrating and thinking creatively in comparison to the summer months
- * Incorrectly blaming oneself for things that go wrong
- * Difficulty performing tasks that normally seem to be easy/enjoyable
- * Increased craving for carbohydrate-rich food like chocolate and sodas

What to Do:

1. Multiple studies found that the majority of those suffering from the winter blues experienced relief solely from the regular use of "light boxes." Light boxes emit high intensities of light of 2,500 to 10,000 lux (as compared to a normal light fixture that emits 250 to 500 lux) and produce similar effects to the sun's natural rays.
2. Aerobic exercise has proven to help college students combat feeling the blues in the winter. Not only does aerobic exercise improve mood, but it also has been shown to reduce stress, which often exacerbates feelings of depression brought on by the winter blues.
3. A strategy for anyone with the winter blues would be to eat larger portions of complex carbohydrates, like pasta and rice, and healthy simple carbohydrates like fruits and fruit juices during meals, and stay away from unhealthy snacks that will cause momentary relief, but ultimately decrease energy.
4. Winter blues sufferers should make an effort to expose themselves to sunlight in the early morning. Take a walk outside or lift the curtain in your room as soon as you rise. Also, try to limit sleep to 8-hour periods on a regular schedule. Oversleeping and fluctuation in sleep-wake schedule causes increases in levels of melatonin during sleep, which can contribute to feelings of depression. Set a regular bedtime and wake up at the same time each day. This will give you more energy during the day and reduce feelings of depression.
5. Some people who suffer from more severe cases of the winter blues might find that anti-depressant medicine, in conjunction with other forms of therapy, assist mood.

Source:

<http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/healthAtoZ/healthAdvice/winterBlues.html>

ASSOCIATES FOR HUMAN SERVICES, INC.

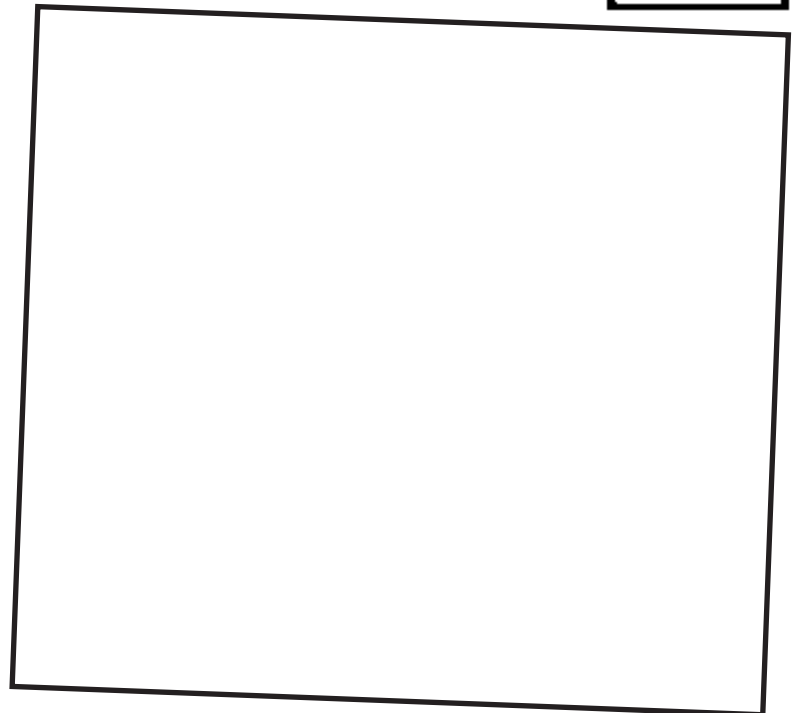
Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Taunton, MA
Permit No. 55

68 Allison Avenue
Taunton, MA 02780

Phone: 508-880-0202
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E-mail: dhowland@ahsinc.org

"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
- * High Volume Blender
- * Dehumidifier
- * Construction Paper
- * Baby wipes
- * Ink pads
- * Drawing Paper
- * Acrylic paints
- * New dish towels
- * Topple, Parcheesi, Dominoes, UNO, Trivial Pursuit, Monopoly, Jenga
- * Easy arts & craft projects
- * 12 x 16 carpet
- * Kitchen table
- * Umbrella stroller
- * Double stroller (2)

Special Days to Celebrate in January

Eye Care Month
National Staying Healthy Month
National Blood Donor Month
1st - New Year's Day
3rd - Festival of Sleep Day
4th - Trivia Day
5th - National Bird Day
6th - Epiphany Day
6th - Cuddle Up Day
8th - Bubble Bath Day
10th - Peculiar People Day
11th - Secret Pal Day
12th - Work Harder Day
13th - Make Your Dreams Come True
14th - Dress Up Your Pet Day
16th - National Nothing Day
18th - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
20th - Inauguration Day
20th - Penguin Awareness Day
21st - Squirrel Appreciation Day
24th - Compliment day
25th - Opposite Day
28th - National Kazoo Day
29th - National Puzzle Day
31st - Backwards Day

Unusual Facts

- * The Tasmanian Devil stores body fat in its tail and an unhealthy devil often has a thin tail.
- * On average, a child uses 730 crayons by their 10th birthday.
- * Scientists estimate that between three to five new stars are born every year within our own the Milky Way galaxy.
- * In American naval slang, submarines are the only vessels referred to as "boats", whereas surface vessels are colloquially referred to as "ships".
- * One inch of rain over one square mile is 17,378,700 gallons of water.



AHS staff enjoyed a Holiday Luncheon sponsored by Central Support Services