



Guardians

Raising

And

Nurturing

Dependents

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GRAND Kinship Navigator Program and Support Group

What is a Kinship Navigator?

Kinship Navigator Services provide linkage and support for kinship families and the children they care for. Services may include: Legal Assistance, Financial Assistance, Medical Coverage, Educational Services, Day Care Assistance, Referrals to Community Agencies, Advocacy, and Support Kinship caregivers have made a courageous and life changing decision that exemplifies their commitment and devotion to the children in their care. With that in mind, GRAND Kinship Navigator Services

strives to maintain children with their caregivers, to promote stability and sense of belonging, maintain extended family relationships and continue to benefit from inclusion in family traditions and cultural beliefs.

Who is a Kinship Family?

Relatives and Non-Relatives providing substitute care who have a longstanding relationship with a child.

G.R.A.N.D. Support Group:

G.R.A.N.D. Kinship Support Group was established by community kinship families seeking to support and empower others.

When we meet:

The G.R.A.N.D. group meets the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm.

We meet at Family & Community Services, Inc. at 705 Oakwood St. Suite 122 Ravenna, OH.

All family members welcome.

Daycare provided.

Support Group Summer Activities

If you have not attended a G.R.A.N.D. support group meeting, you don't know what you are missing! Aside from the presentations from local community members and organizations, the meetings allow you to converse with other kinship caregivers who understand your thoughts, feelings, concerns and accomplishments. The group offers a place for kinship caregivers to discuss how their family structure came to be, the struggles one faced and the joys that are experienced when providing care for a child or children in need.

The support group not only meets monthly, presents information and allows caregivers to share and build relationships, it also provides opportunities for group outings and activities. In May, group members went bowling at Twin Star Lanes and attended an Akron Aero's baseball game. In June, members were able to go to a Cleveland Indian's baseball game. In July, members can go bowling again and in August members are planning a trip to the Akron zoo!

Regular attendance is not required of support group meetings. Please feel free to drop in on a meeting to see just what occurs and how you and your family can benefit from the support and understanding provided.

Ohio's Kinship Permanency Incentive Program

Ohio's Biennial Budget (HB 66) established the Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPI). The new program was implemented January 1, 2006.

This program will provide **financial support** for minor children in the legal custody or guardianship of grandparents, relatives, or other "kinship caregivers" (defined in Ohio as any relative or non-relative adult who has a long-standing relationship or bond with the child and/or family).

Eligible kin caregivers must have received judicial custody or guardianship on or after July 1, 2005.

For more details on KPI – Contact the Kinship Navigator at 330-677-4124 ext. 28.



Recipe Corner

This recipe comes from the Vice -President of Grand, he hopes you enjoy!

Easy Onion Chicken

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Makes 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 pouch of Campbell's dry onion quality soup and recipe mix
- ¼ cup of dry bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon of grated parmesan cheese
- 1/8 teaspoon of pepper
- 6 boneless chick breast halves or 12 skinless, boneless chicken thighs (about 1 ½ pounds)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tablespoons of margarine or butter, melted
- Thin strips of green onion for a garnish

Directions:

1. With a rolling pin, crush onion soup mix in the pouch. On waxed paper, combine the soup mix, bread crumbs, cheese and pepper.
2. Dip the chicken in the eggs and then coat with the crumb mixture.
3. Arrange the chicken on a baking sheet, drizzle with margarine and bake the chicken at 400 degrees F for 20 minutes. The chicken may take longer than 20 minutes to cook, continue cooking until the chicken is no longer pink. Garnish with green onion strips, if desired.

GRAND Meeting Reminder

Please remember that our future monthly Guardians Raising and Nurturing Dependents (GRAND) Support Group meetings will be held on **Monday, July 18, 2011 and Monday, August 15, 2011**. These meetings will be held at a new time from **6:00 pm – 7:30 pm** at the Place of Peace, located at 705 Oakwood St., Suite 122, in Ravenna. All are welcome to attend the meeting and child care is provided. During the July meeting a representative from the Portage Community Health Center will be present to distribute information and answer questions. No speaker has been scheduled for the August meeting at this time. For more information, please contact the Kinship Navigator at 330-677-4124 ext. 28.

LAG Meeting Reminder

The quarterly Local Advisory Group meeting held on Monday July 18, 2011 from 3:30 – 4:30 at 143 Gougler Ave. in Kent.

"To us, family means putting your arms around each other and being there." – Barbara Bush

Is Your Child Ready for a Cell Phone?

As caregivers, there are always concerns about what is age appropriate for your child. Technology today has created new conveniences but also new concerns. You may have heard the terms “sexting” or “cyber-bullying” and now have safety concerns regarding cell phone use and your child and this is normal. There are no clear cut lines guiding caregivers about what is appropriate for your children. Determining cell phone privileges should be determined by viewing certain indicators, such as your child’s maturity level, whether they can take care of the phone without losing it, and if they can use it according to the guidelines you set.

Below are lists of pros and cons to child cell phone use according to Dr. Geoffrey Putt of Akron Children’s Hospital. These can be used to help you reach a decision about your child’s capabilities of handling the phone and to see if you are ready for the added responsibility.

Pros:

Cell phones provide a safety net. Pay phones are no longer as abundant as they once were demonstrating the need for cell phones for children to call for a ride or to let caregivers know when they have reached their destination.

Cell phones allow you to monitor your child. You will be able to keep tabs on who your child is calling and texting as well as intervene if any serious issues arise, such as “sexting” or cyber - bullying.

Built-in GPS units are another way to keep tabs on your child. Today’s caregivers can check in on their children’s whereabouts – another way to build trust.

Cell phones can help your child get organized. Setting alarms or other reminder on a cell phone can help your child keep track of important deadlines and dates, allowing them to become more independent.

Cell Phones can be disciplinary tools. Giving your child a cell phone or increasing cell phone privileges can be a reward for positive behavior. Taking away privileges or the cell phone can be a consequence for negative behavior.

Cons:

Cell phones can be expensive. Adding another line to your current plan can be costly but expense can be reduced by using pre-paid phones or limited plans. Make sure your child understands limits and even ask your child to contribute their own money for the phone.

Having the “right” phone can create social pressure. Children are impressed with the latest gadgets. This may mean that a hand-me-down phone may not be “cool”. Try to teach your child that the phone is a tool, not a status symbol.

Cell phones can keep kids constantly connected. If children have unlimited access to their phones the doors are opened for distractions from studying or sleeping. Set rules about usage, such as charging the phone in the kitchen after dinner.

Cell phones are a distraction while driving. The dangers of talking or texting on the phone while driving are well known. Forbid cell phone use of any kind when your teen is driving and set a good example when you are driving.

“Sexting” is an increasing concern. While provocative or nude photos of minors are the main concern with “sexting”, even a seemingly harmless joke can be construed as child pornography. Make sure your child understands what is appropriate and what the consequences are for inappropriate behaviors.

Kinship Permanency Incentive (KPI) Changes

With the recent state budget crisis, many programs provided to families in Ohio are being subjected to changes and cuts. The KPI program is no different. The original proposition was to eliminate the program beginning on July 1, 2011. The program is going to lose some funding, causing the need for modification. Although the changes are not clear at this time, it seems that the KPI program will continue after July 1, 2011 but the payment amounts may be different. Please take notice of this information as it may affect your family in the future.

**Family & Community Services, Inc.
GRAND Kinship Navigator Program**

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A program of:



In conjunction with:



Portage County Jobs &
Family Services



**Find out more about
Kinship**

www.kinshipohio.org

About Our Organization and the Grant

About Family & Community Services, Inc. -

For more than 60 years, people in Northeast Ohio have turned to **Family & Community Services, Inc.** As one of the largest, non-profit social service agencies in Northeast Ohio, we can respond quickly and compassionately to Individuals and families who encounter adversity or have difficulty coping with the basics of living can contact us for help. We have the ability and program diversity to help meet emergency situations, as well as work directly with clients to develop long-term independence and self-reliance.

Our belief in individual dignity and our strong sense of community determine our focus direct our policies and drive our efforts. Our programs and community centers could not operate efficiently operate without our dedicated 3,000+ volunteers. In fact, our volunteers help us to provide the wide array of community-based programs and services we offer throughout Northeast Ohio. Our volunteers cook and serve meals, tutor school children, distribute clothing, assist senior citizens and work as advocates for the homeless and abused.

About the Grant-

As part of implementing the Fostering Connections to Success Act, Public Children Services Association of Ohio, in collaboration with seven Ohio counties and the Human Services Research Institute received a grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services to demonstrate the effectiveness of Kinship Navigator Programs in high need areas. Each of the seven county agencies involved including Portage Children Services , will provide enhanced Kinship Navigator services to a broad population of kinship caregivers, regardless of their involvement with the child welfare system.

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