



## 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 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm.

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

All family members welcome.

Daycare provided.

## Recipe Corner

After much discussion about cooking and enjoying some delicious goodies at our December GRAND Support Group Meeting, it seemed as though it may be a good idea to include recipes in the newsletter. The first recipe to start us off comes from one of our GRAND members.

### Apple Cake

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

In a bowl mix:

- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 1 cup oil
- 3 eggs

Add and blend with an electric mixer:

- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 dash of nutmeg

Then fold in:

2 cups flour  
2 cups diced apples  
2 cups chopped nuts (optional)

Pour mixture into a greased baking pan and bake for 35-45 minutes

When cool, sprinkle with powdered sugar

## 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.



## Talking About Drug & Alcohol Risks

As a new year begins and we all start to think of those resolutions we're going to abide by, one item that should be on your list is talking to your children about healthy decisions and choices. Research shows that children that receive information about the dangers of drugs in their home are 50% less likely to use than those children who do not receive this information.

Below are "10 Resolutions That Show Your Kids You Care" from The Partnership at Drugfree.org

- 1.) Teach your children to trust you by seeing you as a role model.
- 2.) Be patient, not just tolerant. Apologize when you make a mistake or do something you regret.
- 3.) Ask teens what they need from you – and do whatever to meet those needs.
- 4.) Listen to your teens, a lot. Avoid interrupting.
- 5.) Teach your children about ethics, values and principles they can apply in choices and decision making.
- 6.) Help them discover the feeling of gratitude, not just to say thank you.
- 7.) Keep promises you make. If you do not keep your word, acknowledge that. Help your teen understand the circumstances or choices that precipitated the change in your plans.
- 8.) Answer your teen's questions and be consistent.
- 9.) Be understanding when they have a difficult time and let them know you will love them no matter what.
- 10.) Be diligent. Have ongoing conversations with your kids about the risks of drugs and alcohol.

## Choosing the Best Toys for Babies

According to a physician from Akron Children's Hospital, simple toys are the better choice. Choosing toys that have just one function will allow that toy to grow with the baby, affording new and creative ways to use them. Simple toys also tend to be less expensive.

It is always important to make sure the toys are safe and age appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the baby. Always watch out for small toys or toys with small parts that can be swallowed or put in the ears or nose. One rule that can be utilized is not to give a child under the age of 3 anything that can fit through a toilet paper roll.

When selecting stuffed toys, be aware of what is inside. If the toy is torn or has a hole, small beads or seeds inside can become a choking hazard. Remember that babies explore by placing everything in their mouth. Check toys for sharp or jagged edges and make sure they do not have toxic paints. Suggested toy items:

### 0-6 months

- Black and white patterned toys
- Toys that make noise to get their attention, such as mobiles or rattles
- Soft teething toys with different textures
- Weighted toys that rock back and forth when struck
- Board books with non-breakable mirrors
- Toys that can be held onto such as squeeze toys and rattles
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### 6-12 months

- Toys that can be stacked or transferred such as soft block, stacking rings or nesting cups
- Play mats or busy boards
- Washable dolls with embroidered eyes
- Squeak toys with non-removable squeakers
- Bath toys
- Musical toys
- Study, colorful cars and trucks

**"A child needs a grandparent, anybody's grandparent, to grow a little more securely into an unfamiliar world." – Charles & Ann Morse**

# Keeping Children Safe Through the Winter Weather

As evidence by the month of December, Ohio's winter weather is in full swing! Children in Northeast Ohio enjoy sledding, ice skating, skiing and more when the snow falls and temperatures drop and it is very important for caregivers to protect them from the cold weather and injuries that can occur. Here are some tips from Akron Children's Hospital to ensure a safe and fun winter season for you and those in your care.

## To combat the cold weather:

- Dress children in several light layers of clothing. Cotton and wool blends allow the skin to "breathe". Avoid overdressing, which can cause sweating, prickly heat and rashes.
- Make sure external layers, like jackets and pants, are waterproof and wind-repellent.
- Keep the head, ears and hands covered.
- Cover the mouth with a scarf and encourage your child to breathe through the nose when outdoors.
- Make sure socks and shoes aren't too tight.
- Don't forget sunscreen, especially on noses and cheeks.
- Check on kids frequently, every 20 minutes or so, to make sure they are not too cold.
- Remove wet clothes as soon as children come inside.

## When skiing or snowboarding:

- Enroll children in classes before they take to the slopes.
- Use goggles or sunglasses to ward off sun glare.
- Invest in a multi-sport helmet for added protection.

## When sledding:

- Supervise children when sledding to prevent injuries.
- Inspect all equipment carefully before use. Beware of loose parts and sharp edges.
- Inspect the area where the children will be sledding. Look for and remove, if possible, any rocks, stumps, branches and other obstacles. Be aware of any icy patches that could increase speed or reduce control.
- Don't allow sledding in the street, sledding head first, or sledding when it is dark.

## If going ice-skating:

- Stick to public or indoor rinks to avoid the risk of falling through thin ice.
- Learn the proper skating technique through classes or instruction.
- Choose properly fitted skates.
- If playing hockey, suit up with a helmet, facemask, and pads for hips, knees and ankles.



## GRAND Meeting Reminder

Please remember that our monthly Guardians Raising and Nurturing Dependents (GRAND) Support Group meeting will be held on **Monday, January 17, 2011**. This meeting will be held from 6:30 pm – 8:00 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. A tax representative will be available to answer questions and lead a discussion pertaining to how kinship families can prepare their taxes. For more information, please contact the Kinship Navigator at 330-677-4124 ext. 28.

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

143 Gougler Avenue  
Kent, Ohio 44240

**Phone**  
330-677-4124 ext. 28

**Fax**  
330-677-4134

A program of:



In conjunction with:



Portage County Jobs &  
Family Services



**Find out more about  
Kinship**

[www.kinshipohio.org](http://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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