



Mahoning Matters

1. matter (n.) – material, topic, issue or subject
2. matter (v.) – to be of importance, to count, to make a difference

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April is National Child Abuse Prevention



By Denise Stewart, *Executive Director*

Every year during the month of April there is a statewide campaign to promote public awareness of the issues surrounding child abuse and neglect. With the support of a grant from the Ohio Children's Trust Fund, Mahoning County Children Services will host several events to educate and inform our community about these issues locally.

Traditionally, there has been a "blue ribbon campaign" where participants wore blue ribbons to bring attention to child abuse and neglect. After learning that there are over 14 organizations that also have a "blue ribbon campaign", a different approach is being taken this year.

On April 11, 2012 the State of Ohio is sponsoring a "**Wear Blue to Work Day**" to promote public awareness of child abuse and neglect in each county. Mahoning Children Services will participate in this campaign by encouraging staff, foster and adoptive parents and other

supporters to wear blue to work along with an official campaign button displaying the Pinwheels for Prevention logo with the message "**Child Abuse is Preventable.**" Organizations participating in this event are encouraged to take photos and send them to us via e-mail at cruzz@odjfs.state.oh.us. We will share them on Mahoning County Children Service's website. A statewide Facebook page (www.facebook.com/WearBlueOhio) has been created as a resource for this event.

We will kick-off the month's activities on April 3rd at Akron Children's Hospital for our 7th annual *Pinwheels for Prevention* event at 12:00 Noon.

For additional information regarding these events or about community education on child abuse and neglect in our county, please contact Radhika Cruz at (330) 941-8852.

Abuse & Neglect Prevention by Radhika Cruz

There are 5 Protective factors or conditions in families and communities that have been identified as reducing the risk of child maltreatment. Please visit www.childwelfare.gov for more information on how families and communities can be strengthened by promoting these factors:

1. Nurturing & Attachment
2. Knowledge of Parenting and child/youth development
3. Parental Resilience
4. Social Connections
5. Concrete Supports

Social Work Appreciation Month

A successful social worker has emotional maturity as well as experience which requires:

- The ability to deal constructively with reality
- The capacity to adapt to change
- The capacity to find more satisfaction in giving than receiving
- The capacity to relate to other people in a consistent manner with mutual satisfaction and helpfulness
- The capacity to love those who do not love themselves

(taken from www.post-journal.com)

A social worker's job is demanding and complex. Please take time to appreciate a social worker today!

Continuous Quality Improvement

by Julie Rudolph

We at Mahoning County Children Services strive to provide high quality services to parents and children who are at risk for, or who have or experienced instances of abuse, neglect, or dependency. **April is Child Abuse Prevention Month** where we focus on ways to prevent abuse from ever occurring. Please consider the following prevention ideas provided by the Ohio Children's Trust Fund. **Consider** offering to babysit when a friend needs a break and provide child-friendly activities

or games while the child is in your care. How about **sharing** helpful, non-judgmental advice with the parent or caregiver about ways to engage an energetic child or redirect a child who behaves inappropriately? **Consider** preparing a meal for a family or invite them over for dinner when it's obvious that the parent needs encouragement.

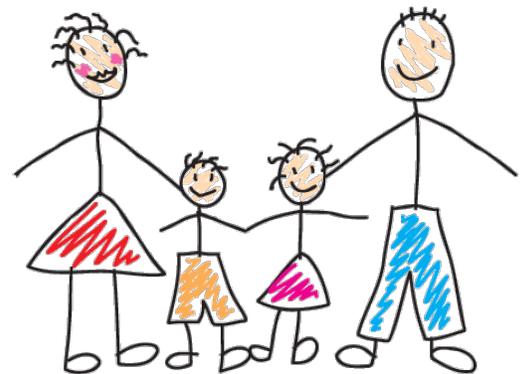
By initiating these proactive steps, positive impacts can be made in the quality of life for countless parents and children.

Family Life Education Month

by Radhika Cruz

February was **National Family Life Education** month in which helping professionals promoted healthy family functioning through preventative education. Healthy functioning for families includes positive communication skills, effective conflict resolution, stress management, coping skills, knowledge of human development and healthy interpersonal relationships.

Family life education also seeks to enrich and maximize a family's potential by assessing the needs of each individual by implementing a customized educational or intervention plan that promotes the overall well-being of the family. Furthermore, *Family Life Education* focuses on the needs of the individual **and** the family as a whole while also considering the implications of environmental factors on family relationships and functioning. Not only is this type of education preventative in nature, it is also



collaborative in its' methods of providing guidance and building family potentials and strengths.

We at **Mahoning County Children Services** recognize the strengths in **all** families and seek to support their well-being through concrete supports, individualized service delivery, crisis prevention and education on healthy family functioning. When we as a community make it a priority to strengthen, empower and support families *today*, we will be building healthy families and communities for *tomorrow*.



I'm sure most of us have heard the old saying "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." We can apply this saying to almost any situation. In our work as caregivers, we

need to realize the importance of taking care of ourselves. Before you start to feel overwhelmed, take some time for yourself and go to your favorite spot and meditate.

Be sure to take time from your everyday hectic schedule and do something you enjoy. This will go a long way in preventing stress and stress related illnesses.

So, take a deep breath, exhale, sit back and relax!

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

It Matters To Meghan

By Meghan Tarantino



Many people worry about burning out from the constant drain of caring for a child 24/7, and this can be an even more crucial issue for the parents of a child with bipolar disorder, ADHD or other serious mental health conditions. Without planning adequate opportunities for the parent/caregiver to be free from demands, rested and rejuvenated, parenting is likely to rapidly deteriorate into a painful power struggle benefiting no one. It's imperative not to neglect this most urgent of issues if you are to remain effective parents and happy people. I'd like to share an illustration with you entitled "**put the glass down**" that exemplifies this important idea of **respite**.

A lecturer was speaking to his students on stress management. He raised a glass of water and asked the audience, "How heavy do you think this glass of water is?" The students' answers ranged from 20g to 500gm. "It does not matter on the absolute weight. It depends on how long you hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it is OK. If I hold it for an hour, I will have an ache in my right

arm. If I hold it for a day, you will have to call an ambulance. It is the exact same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, we will not be able to carry on, the burden becoming increasingly heavier. What you have to do is put the glass down and rest for a while before holding it up again. We have to put down the burden periodically, so that we can be refreshed and able to carry on. Whatever burdens you are having now on your shoulders, let them down for a moment if you can.

Pick it up later when you have rested. (excerpt taken from www.healthyplace.com/parenting/stress)

Black History Month Facts:



Garrett Morgan
invented the gas mask and first traffic signal



Madam C. J. Walker
invented a hair-growing lotion and became the first female African-American millionaire!

Did you know?

February was:

Black History Month

Family Life Education Month

March is:

Women's History Month

Social Work Appreciation Month

April is :

Child Abuse Prevention Month

Cultural Diversity Month

May is:

Foster Care Awareness Month

June is:

Internet Safety Month



The English language has seven **coordinating conjunctions**: *for, nor, or, but, and, yet* and *so*. Coordinating conjunctions act as bridges that turn multiple simple sentences into one, more sophisticated compound sentence. A key rule of thumb regarding coordinating conjunctions is that a writer should never use two coordinating conjunctions consecutively because only one is needed. For example, consider the following construction:

Frank recently won two million dollars in the lottery, and yet he still seems unhappy.

Only one of the two coordinating conjunctions is required; either will suffice:

Frank recently won two million dollars in the lottery, yet he still seems unhappy.

Frank recently won two million dollars in the lottery, and he still seems unhappy.

E-mail me your English questions at pkm32mpf@aol.com and I'll give you my words.

THE COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS



By the way...*anymore* and *any more* are NOT interchangeable words. The one-word version *anymore* means "no longer" while the two-word presentation *any more* expresses a condition of "no greater amount":

After defiantly telling her parents she would not be doing *any more* chores around the house, Zia also announced she would not be attending college *anymore*.



According to a Health Care Article in the New York Times, a proactive approach to good health habits is the most important part of preventive health care.

Focus on **daily** exercise (a 15 minute walk twice a day is listed as substantially improving heart health), weight control, proper nutrition, avoidance of smoking and drug abuse, moderation of alcohol use (if any) and monitor control of any ongoing disease or disorder, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol.

Become a partner with your health care provider in maintaining your health and

make an appointment right away if: a lump or persistent lesion appears on your body, you have an unexplained weight loss, have a lasting fever, develop a chronic cough or notice continued body aches and pains.

Periodic screening of adults for specific problems is important and recommended. Speak with your health care provider about a schedule of tests that reflect your needs due to your age, family history, past history and lifestyle.



Community Resources

Mahoning County Children Services

offers **free** child safety and mandated reporter presentations in the community. Contact Radhika Cruz at 330-941-8852 for more information

Akron Children's Hospital

offers **free** child sexual abuse prevention training. Contact Andrea Mistovich at 330-743-2539 for more info.

Help Hotline 2-1-1

Information and community referral services. Get connected. Get answers.

C.A.S.A.

Court Appointed Special Advocates "Speak up for a child." Contact Renee Battafarano at 330-740-2239 for more info.

Community Events

April 3rd
Pinwheels for Prevention

April 11th
Wear Blue to Work Day

May 12
Foster Care Awareness
2k/5k Walk

Contact Radhika Cruz @ 330-941-8852 for event details