



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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Mahoning County Children Services Celebrates National Adoption Month



Gail Waters, Anita Wainwright, Judge Michael J. Ryan, Denise Stewart, John Jemison

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November is National Adoption Month, and each year the agency hosts a special event to celebrate adoptive families and increase community awareness about adoption. On November 7, 2009, the One Church One Child Recruitment Program of Mahoning County Children Services held a brunch at Tabernacle Baptist Church in observation of National Adoption Month. The event was attended by agency staff, foster and adoptive parents, young people, and clergy and members of their churches who have partnered with the agency in the One Church One Child Recruitment Program. The speaker for the event was Judge Michael J. Ryan of Cleveland Municipal Court. Judge Ryan spoke of the many obstacles he has overcome in his life to achieve his current position. The crowd of over one hundred people were both moved and inspired by his message.

On November 19, 2009, at the County Commissioner's meeting, the Mahoning County Board of Commissioners presented a Resolution to Mahoning County Children Services in recognition of the One Church One Child Recruitment Program in recognition of their "tireless work, professionalism, ethics, and dedication to the many children in need of care in the Mahoning Valley." John Jemison of the One Church One Child Committee accepted the Resolution on behalf of the agency.

Help Fulfill a Child's "Wish List"!

Mahoning County Children Services has been working hard to collect Christmas gifts for abused, neglected and dependent children in Mahoning County.

If you would like to help fulfill a child's Wish List please contact Theresa Pancoe by calling 330-941-8888. We will be accepting gifts until December 16, 2009. We always have a great need to provide gifts for the teenagers involved with our agency.

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From The Director's Desk

On behalf of the Board and staff of Mahoning County Children Services, I would like to thank the community for their incredible show of support by passing the renewal of our 1 mil levy. This funding will enable the agency to continue its mission of assuming a leadership role in the community to protect children while preserving families. We always try to work with families to maintain children safely in their own homes. When that is not possible, we strive to provide the least restrictive placement in the best interests of the child. In light of the current economic climate, we were especially thrilled with our levy passage rate of 66.7%. This clearly demonstrates the commitment of our community to the safety and well being of our children.

During this special season, many reflect on what has happened during the past year and begin to focus on hopes for the future. The year 2010 promises to be an eventful one for our agency, as we begin the implementation of our newly developed strategic plan. Together we have accomplished much.

In these challenging economic times, we are especially grateful to our community for helping to insure the stability of our agency, allowing us to set our course for the upcoming year.

Best wishes for this Holiday Season and for a happy and healthy New Year!

Denise Stewart – Executive Director

Board Member Spotlight – Lori Neill



Lori Neill

How long have you been on the Mahoning County Children Services Board?

"Father Joseph Allen asked me if I would be interested in becoming a Board member in May of 2002. I sent my letter of request to the Commissioners and I was appointed in June, 2002. My first attended meeting was in July, 2002."

What committees or special projects have you served on?

"This is my third term (one partial and two full 3 year terms). I have been appointed to the Personnel, Finance and Nominating Committees during these past seven plus (7+) years and found the experience of those committees to be interesting, informative and sometimes surprising."

What do you find most rewarding about serving on the Board?

"Being on the Board gives me new insight and esteem for what the personnel of Children Services do on a daily basis. Having a better understanding and respect for the daily experiences that the employees of this Agency live, breath and carry with them makes me want to be more understanding, supportive and encouraging. The most rewarding part of being on the Board is seeing and believing that the people who work here consider this more than just a job, they make these duties their mission."

What would you like the community to know about Mahoning County Children Services?

"I would love for the community to really know just how dedicated and caring all of you at Children Services really are and just how much you all carry with you in trying to do your best for those who need help the most. You are the voices of those little ones, young ones and those soon to enter the adult world and you try so hard to make a difference in their lives and so very often really, really do."

A special thank you to Lori Neill for her dedication and years of service on the Mahoning County Children Services Board!

Mission Statement

Mahoning County Children Services in partnership with the community is committed to being the leader in protecting children and helping to preserve families.

Vision Statement

Mahoning County Children Services will be the best, most caring and respected child protective agency working cooperatively with the community to preserve quality family life.

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Department News *This month we are featuring the Family Services Department*

By Cathy Gagliardi, Chief Supervisor of the Family Services Department

The primary role of the Family Services Department is to provide assistance to at-risk families in order to keep their children safe from abuse and neglect in their own homes. This is best accomplished in partnership with the family through protective services provided by the agency and with the community to ensure child safety and family stability.

Family Services caseworkers initiate services by engaging families to actively participate in the development of their case plan. During the Family Team Meeting, family members in conjunction with agency staff identify what is important to healthy family functioning and take action to achieve these goals. On average, the Family Services Department provides ongoing services to approximately 295 families per month; approximately 800 children in their own homes and 175 children/youth in foster care placement. These figures clearly demonstrate our commitment to keep children, when possible, within their own family systems.

One program offered through the Family Services Department and facilitated by Dorothy Staff is the Parent Education Program. It is designed to improve the parent-child relationship and to enhance parenting skills. It is an eight week series of classes offered six times per year which address such topics as self-esteem, child health care, child development, budgeting, meal planning, homemaking, discipline techniques, drug abuse and the impact on children, enjoying your child, fire and poison safety.

As per the mission of Mahoning County Children Services, the Family Services Department engages in several community partnerships such as Family Dependency Treatment Court, Parent Project, Inc., Hope House Visitation Center, D&E Counseling Center FOCIS Program, and Daybreak Youth Crisis Center to name a few.

The goal of the Family Services Department is to strengthen the family unit and decrease and/or eliminate risk to children. Using a wide variety of community services, case management techniques and agency resources, we strive to respond to the needs of the children and families of our community.

Mahoning County Children Services Foster Parent Association

By Peggy Messer

Jeanette and Charles Dubos, along with their daughter Valerie, have been providing foster care for Mahoning County Children Services since 2005. During that time, the Duboses have welcomed 16 foster children to their home and they adopted a child in October 2008. Jeanette Dubos has been an officer for the Foster Parent Association since March 2006 and has been the association's president since 2007. Recently, Jeanette shared her thoughts about foster parenting and the Foster Parent Association:



Jeanette and Charles Dubos

Why did you and Mr. Dubos become foster parents?

"We love children! I can no longer have children and my husband has never had any children. Also, my sister is a foster parent in Texas."

What is the most rewarding thing about being foster parents?

"We love the babies and we love watching them grow and develop. There have been some kids who came into our home malnourished and developmentally delayed. It is a joy to watch them gain weight, learn to talk and walk, and to get to where they should be. It is amazing to see how much they change when they come into our home. Also, it is very important to us that the children feel safe and secure."

What is the Foster Parent Association?

"It is a group of foster parents who provide emotional, physical, educational, social support, and cultural awareness. This year a great deal of our efforts went towards fundraising so we could hold our annual Christmas party. The children really enjoy meeting Santa and the gifts they receive. It is also a time of fellowship when people with common goals meet, greet, and break bread."

What advice would you give the next president of the Foster Parent Association?

"Encourage participation so all foster parents can work toward common goals and find the support they need. Continue to pass the word on about the association. If you get discouraged, just stick with it."

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Over time, the erroneous presentations of certain words become institutionalized in mainstream literary culture. For example, the word *baby-sit* and its attendant forms (i.e. *baby-sat*, *baby-sitter*, and *baby-sitting*) are hyphenated forms but are rarely presented as such in mainstream publications. Conversely, the blended family terms *stepfather*, *stepson*, *stepsister*, etc. are NOT hyphenated forms, yet they are almost always presented with a hyphen (e.g. *step-mother*, which is WRONG!). Unfortunately, such erroneous presentations of these words give the wrong impression that hyphen insertion is optional in such forms when it is not.

TIP: When constructing sentences and the same word or words land on both sides of a period, one can easily eliminate the period and collapse the two sentences into one. Simply use relative pronouns *who*, *that*, or *which* as bridges to create one smoother, more reader-friendly, concise sentence.

Two-sentence example: Brenda is looking forward to the annual benefit dinner. The annual benefit dinner is on September 30.

One-sentence conversion: Brenda is looking forward to the annual benefit dinner which is on September 30.

By the way...it's "a tough row to hoe" NOT "a tough road to hoe"!

This ain't a word: *alright*. The correct and only spelling is *all right*. *Alright* is a non-standard form that should never be used.

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

Did You Know?

That... www.mahoningkids.com is a valuable source of information about Mahoning County Children Services and provides information on *Agency Services* and *Children Waiting for Adoption!*

That... in the 1500s, baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the Bath water"! *Floree Stubbs*

That... one-fourth of the 206 bones in the human body are located in the feet. *Secrets of the Human Body*

That... there are several types of financial subsidies available to assist the adoptive families in meeting the special needs of their adopted child/children. The Title IV-E Subsidy Program was created by the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980. It provides federal financial support for adopted children who are described as having special needs. In addition to a monthly monetary payment, children who are Title IV-E eligible are entitled to other state assistance and services under the Federal Title XX Program and Medicaid coverage. *ODJFS*

That... Hippopotamus milk is bright pink! *Theresa Pancoe*

Community Resources

• Akron Children's Hospital

Mahoning Valley
Child Advocacy Center

Offers Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training
"Stewards of Children"

To learn more about this **FREE** child sexual abuse training, please contact Andrea Mistovich at 330-743-2539 or AMistovich@chmca.org. For additional information about Stewards of Children, visit the Darkness to Light website at D2L.org.

• Help Hotline

2-1-1

Providing Information and Referral Services. Get connected. Get answers.

• Family Helpline

1-800-TheKids

If you are feeling stressed out, call to speak anonymously with a trained volunteer who can listen and help.

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Research Shows Parents Use Deception to Influence Their Children

Lies My Parents Told Me

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Parents say that honesty is the best policy, but they regularly lie to their children as a way of influencing their behavior and emotions, finds new research from the University of Toronto and the University of California, San Diego.

Surprisingly little scholarship has been published on the subject of parental lying, so Gail Heyman, professor of psychology at UC San Diego, Diem Luu, a former UCSD student, and Kang Lee, professor at the University of Toronto and director of the Institute of Child Study, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, set out to explore the under-researched phenomenon. They asked U.S. participants in two related studies about parents lying to their children - either for the purpose of promoting appropriate behavior or to make them happy.

In one of the studies, many parents reported they told their young children that bad things would happen if they didn't go to bed or eat what they were supposed to. For example, one mother said she told her child that if he didn't finish all of his food he would get pimples all over his face. Other parents reported inventing magical creatures. One explained, "We told our daughter that if she wrapped up all her pacifiers like gifts, the 'paci-fairy' would come and give them to children who needed them...I thought it was healthier to get rid of the pacifiers, and it was a way for her to feel proud and special."

In the other study, the researchers surveyed college students' recollections about their parents' lying and obtained similar results: parents often lie to their children even as they tell them that lying is unacceptable.

The researchers refer to this practice as "parenting by lying."

"We are surprised by how often parenting by lying takes place," said Lee. "Moreover, our findings showed that even the parents who most strongly promoted the importance of honesty with their children engaged in parenting by lying."

Though Heyman thinks that there are occasions when it is appropriate to be less than truthful with a child - "telling a two-year-old you don't like their drawing is just cruel," she said - she urges parents to think through the issues and consider alternatives before resorting to the expedient lie.

"Children sometimes behave in ways that are disruptive or are likely to harm their long-term interests," said Heyman. "It is common for parents to try out a range of strategies, including lying, to gain compliance. When parents are juggling the demands of getting through the day, concerns about possible long-term negative consequences to children's beliefs about honesty are not necessarily at the forefront."

The research also examined "parenting by lying" among Asian-American and European-American parents. Asian-American parents were more likely to report lying to their children for the purpose of influencing their behavior. According to the researchers, one possible explanation for this finding is that as compared to European-American parents, Asian-American parents tend to place a greater emphasis on the importance of teaching children to be respectful and obedient, and they use a range of parenting strategies to meet these ends.

The research is published in the current edition of *The Journal of Moral Education* and was supported by a grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Heyman and Lee are now preparing an international study to explore the subject further, and they are also beginning to study the possible consequences of "parenting by lying": Does it create confusion about right and wrong? Does it undermine a child's trust?



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Health Matters

By Melinda Lackner and Patty Amendolea



Healthy Tidbits

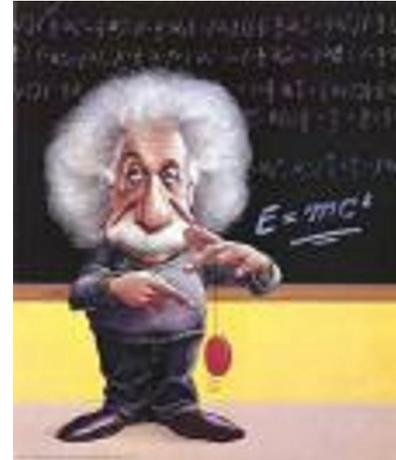
Antioxidants to the Rescue!

To help protect yourself from environmental pollutants, try to incorporate some of these foods. The following were listed as the top 10 foods with the highest antioxidant content per serving according to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

1. Blackberries
2. Walnuts
3. Strawberries
4. Artichokes (prepared)
5. Cranberries
6. Coffee
7. Raspberries
8. Pecans
9. Blueberries
10. Cloves (ground)

Winter Time Blues

Winter's shorter daylight hours are here! Try to find ways to increase the amount of sunlight/bright light that you receive during the day. The sunlight helps combat winter time irritability and improve sleep quality.



"Any fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius – and a lot of courage – to move in the opposite direction"

Albert Einstein

"Those folks who succeed simply remain enthusiastic longer than those who fail."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem."

African Proverb



Thank You!

The Mahoning County Foster Parent Association would like to thank the community for the continued support with the Annual Pie Sale to raise funds for the Foster Parent Christmas Party! Over 200 pies were sold!

Enjoy your pies!

We are looking for agency staff to be an active part in the Newsletter. Would YOU consider contributing to the Newsletter? If the answer is Yes, please contact a member of the Newsletter Committee.

Newsletter Committee:

Theresa Pancoe, Editor
Floree Stubbs, Supervisor
Philip Murphy, Abuse Supervisor
Melinda Lackner, Receptionist

Glenna Ress, Supervisor
Shawn King, Technical Support
Peggy Messer, Casework Specialist/Resource Department