



Helping HelpCentral.org

Submitted by Tara Sullivan-Hames, Resource and Database Coordinator

Facilitating and improving the public's access to community resources is the goal of the HelpCentral.org project. This online directory of community services in Butte County displays over 750 low cost and no cost programs in a searchable database. If you are involved with an organization providing community services in Butte County, you can help HelpCentral.org keep this important information accurate and up to date!

Studies on the effectiveness of information and referral services have shown again and again that people in need remain underserved or unserved when they cannot quickly and easily access vital services. A wild goose chase to locate a program that no longer exists, incorrect information about eligibility, and wrong phone numbers are the types of deterrents that can prevent individuals experiencing hardship or crisis from getting help.

To help us ensure that reliable information is presented, here are some suggestions for keeping the Butte County directory of services current:

For agencies listed on HelpCentral.org:

- Designate a staff person who will be responsible for responding to our annual request for an update and who will notify HelpCentral.org during the year if there are changes in programs, services, addresses, phone numbers, etc. (Please note: Doing this will also assist

us in updating the twelve page Low Cost No Cost People Services Directory that can be printed directly from the HelpCentral.org web site.)

- In the larger agencies, more than one person may need to be responsible for updating information. This may include program managers, department heads, and/or public relations persons.
 - Notify HelpCentral.org of the appropriate e-mail address and fax number for the designated individuals so we can create a more efficient contact list for our annual updating process.
 - Request that designated individuals place a note on their calendars to review HelpCentral.org information at least quarterly. (Look up your agency or program information by clicking the Find Help Fast button on the HelpCentral.org homepage and typing the agency name in the appropriate search box.)
 - Add HelpCentral.org to your mailing list so we will receive newsletters, brochures, announcements, program fliers, etc.
- For individuals searching on HelpCentral.org::
- Found outdated information? Just let us know – we will track down the cor-

rect information and get it posted online – we update weekly.

Who to contact with updates and corrections: Tara Sullivan-Hames (phone: 530-879-2455; e-mail address: tsullivanhames@ncen.org; mailing address: HelpCentral.org, 2445 Carmichael Dr. Chico 95928; fax: 530-895-4010)

We appreciate working with you to provide accurate and up to date community resource information. Helping HelpCentral.org accomplish this goal will also help individuals and families that are experiencing chronic hardship or sudden personal crisis get connected to the appropriate community services for relief and recovery.



Inside this issue:



Helping HelpCentral.org	1
OPT for Fit Kids: Making A Difference	2
CARES Program: \$421,000 in Stipends Awarded!	3
Children's Dental Project: New Staff, New Program	3
Healthy Halloween Tips from OPT for Fit Kids and SCNAC	4
Halloween Safety Tips for your Ghosts and Goblins	5
How to contact us	6

NEWS FROM HELPCENTRAL.ORG

The new updates for the Low Cost No Cost People Services print directory are posted in both the English and Spanish versions on our home page, www.helpcentral.org. Be sure to print out a new copy so you will have the most current information on paper.

Also, look for a new link on our home page for the Hmong translation of low cost or no cost community services.



We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.
-Haida Indian Saying

OPT for Fit Kids: Making a Difference

Submitted by Michele Buran, MA,- Physical Activity Specialist

OPT for Fit Kids would like to thank our partners for their participation in a recent online survey which provided us with a wealth of information about our services. The survey was distributed to approximately 70 partners and 37 responses were received. According to partner's responses:

- * 94.6% agreed that OPT provides important services to Butte County residents
- * 89.2% would utilize OPT to conduct staff/provider trainings
- * 86.5% would utilize OPT to provide parent trainings
- * 59.4% emphasize the importance of good nutrition when working with families because of education received through OPT
- * 62.1% emphasize the importance of physical activity when working with families because of education received through OPT
- * 83.8% agreed that OPT provides nutrition education services that are not offered by other Butte County organizations
- * 86.5% agreed that OPT provides physical activity promotion services that are not offered by other Butte County organizations.

In addition to the data collected above, OPT also distributed a request for vignettes from clients. The following is a story about a mother's experience working with OPT for Fit Kids to create healthy change for her family:

My journey with OPT for Fit Kids started about a year ago when my then 4-year old son had gained a pound a month for four months. I was concerned and mentioned this to our pediatrician who referred us to OPT. My family thought this was crazy because surely my little boy didn't look fat, but I made the appointment and went into the experience sure that I knew exactly what they were going to tell me.

The first thing I learned was that our views of healthy and unhealthy weights have been distorted over time. As so many of our children and adults get fatter and fatter we see a child, like my son, who looks just fine, but is actually too high on the BMI charts. I learned that yes, he wasn't grossly obese, but why let him get to that point? I needed to take steps now to ensure he didn't grow up to be a young man with a severe weight problem. Thankfully, OPT for Fit Kids has taken me on a path that will allow my son and daughter to grow up as healthy, happy children.

I knew my son already ate pretty well. He loved fruits and vegetables. Therefore, I didn't really understand why he was gaining weight so quickly. I soon learned that I was clueless when it came to the proper portions for a 4-year old. I fed him two waffles, he should have been eating one. I always made him a whole sandwich, now he eats half. I was simply over feeding him. This was my first of many valuable lessons.

I love that the nutritionists at OPT weren't asking me to completely change my family's life over night. We met about every six weeks and during that time we discussed what seemed to be the most important issue for us at the time. From that discussion we would set a few goals that I would try to reach prior to the next appointment. I am proud to say that we met every goal, which all revolved around lifestyle changes. Some were harder than others, but all were attainable, and none had to do with how much weight my son would need to lose. We made goals as simple as creating grocery lists

prior to shopping, adding a salad to our meals, and making one nice dinner a week that wasn't processed. We also tackled more difficult goals like cutting back TV time to one hour a day! Was this childless nutritionist crazy? Well guess what? We did it. We don't do it all of the time, but setting this goal made me realize that we could do it! My other demon was fast food. When I first began at OPT I could easily count how many times a week we ate out at fast food. It was a minimum of 3 times a week. Now when I am asked I have a hard time even remembering the last time we ate out.

From day one my son never felt like he was targeted as being heavy or having a weight problem. The staff at OPT simply took his weight and height at the beginning of each visit and then he played while the nutritionist and I talked. My son knew that we were there to help our family get healthier, but I know he never felt targeted. In fact, he was the one who often kept me in line saying such things as, "The nutritionist wouldn't think this is a good idea."

As I stated earlier, we have been going to OPT for about a year. I feel that we have really gone over almost every possible aspect of creating a healthier life for my family. However, I find it difficult to break free of their support. I love checking in and seeing the progress my son has made and it will be difficult for me to wean myself from our nutritionist. This has been a wonderful experience for me and my son. I wish that all families with children, thick and thin, would take the time to assess their lifestyle and see what changes they could make now that will help their children forever!

We are always exploring new partnerships and ideas to help families make healthy lifestyle changes. If you have a client or a group of clients that you feel would benefit from our services, please give us a call at (530) 345-0678.

What children take from us, they give... We become people who feel more deeply, question more deeply, hurt more deeply, and love more deeply. **-Sonia Taitz**



CARES Participants earn over \$421,000 in Cash Stipends

Submitted by Cari Freeman, CARES Coordinator, and Tracy Kelly, CARES Specialist

Congratulations are in order to our Butte County child care providers! A total of 300 child care providers received over \$421,000 in June 2006 through the CARES program.

CARES (Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards) is a compensation program for qualified child care providers funded by the California Children and Families Commission, the Butte County Children and Families Commission through First 5 of California and the California Department of Education. There are five program tracks designed to place participants on career pathways leading to further education, advancement on the Child Development Permit Matrix, or degree attainment. The child care provider's education level and continued commitment to their professional development will determine which track they are eligible for and how much of a cash stipend they can re-

ceive. This past year, providers earned up to \$1500 each.

CARES participants work extremely hard to earn their cash stipends. Once they choose a track, they are committed to fulfilling certain annual requirements. One of these requirements is completing unit bearing classes or earning professional development hours through workshops, trainings, or seminars (depending on their chosen track level).

Beginning July 1, 2006, the CARES program is now into its second round and will continue through June 2007. There are currently 316 participants in the program who are committed to successfully completing their annual requirements to receive a stipend in June. Participants can earn from \$150.00 in supports and stipends up to

\$1,700.00 depending on their track level.

Out of the 316 participants, 35 are CARES advisors participating in track V. Participants in tracks II-IV are assigned a CARES advisor from track V. CARES advisors guide up to 10 participants, providing them resources and support throughout the year and completing a Professional Development Plan with them, ensuring that they meet their requirements in order to receive a stipend in June. For track I participants, CARES staff provide the necessary support and resources and work with them to reach their goals.

For more information regarding the program, please contact Cari Freeman at Valley Oak Children's Services at 895-3509, ext., 3043 or Tracy Kelly at Valley Oak Children's Services at 895-3509, ext., 3015.

Spooky Snack Ideas!

Courtesy of www.amazingmoms.com



Jack-O-Lantern Pizza

Lightly spread pesto or marinara sauce onto English muffin halves. Cover with grated cheddar cheese. Make a jack-o-lantern face with sliced black olives. Place mini-pizzas on a cookie sheet and broil in oven until the cheese is melted.



Halloween Ghoulish Punch

Pour juice or colored water into a surgical or rubber glove, tie shut and freeze. Place into the punch bowl at serving time... watch the kids eyes when they see a hand floating in the punch!



Halloween Spider Cookies

Split Oreo cookies and put three lengths of red rope licorice across the frosting, letting about 2 inches hang out both sides for legs. Add a little canned frosting and put the cookies back together. Put two small dollops of frosting on edge of cookie and add two red hots for eyes.

Children's Dental Project Welcomes New Staff, New Program

Submitted by Aimee Myles, Health Education Specialist

The Butte County Children's Dental Project would like to welcome Nikki Burke, Registered Dental Hygienist, to their staff. Nikki worked as a dental assistant for three years prior to being accepted to dental hygiene school. Once accepted to dental hygiene school, she relocated to Denver, Colorado to attend the University of Colorado, Health Science Center School of Dentistry. In 1996, she graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Dental Hygiene. Nikki has been working in private practice for the last ten years. She is a runner, quilter, gardener, massage therapist, wife of 7 years and mother of two adorable little girls and a pug named Fannie Mae.

The Children's Dental Project has a new program to help serve children in the 0 - 5 age group. This program is the Rotational Dentist System and recruits dentists who may not usually see children in their office under the age of 6 or without private dental insurance. These dentists have agreed to see a certain number of children referred to them by the project. The Children's Dental Project currently has 7 dentists participating in this system from Chico, Oroville and Paradise. The rotational dentists have seen approximately 14 children. These children have received either complete dental treatment by the dentist and/or a dental

exam and some have needed to be referred to a specialist. The Children's Dental Project staff provides case management services to help with transportation difficulties, language issues, insurance concerns, other barriers to care and assists with specialist referrals when needed. The rotational dentists report having had very successful and positive experiences with the clients they have treated through this system. The Children's Dental Project very much appreciates the valuable service and commitment that the rotational dentists are providing to the children of Butte County.



For in the final analysis, our most basic common link, is that we all inhabit this small planet, we all breathe the same air, we all cherish our children's futures, and we are all mortal.
-John F. Kennedy



Healthy Halloween Tips

Submitted by Kristin Gruneisen, MS, RD - OPT for Fit Kids & SCNAC



It won't be long before children turn into little goblins and venture out into the night to collect a bagful of tempting treats! Halloween is a great time to teach children the "trick" to balancing the gooey candy they love with healthy foods that are both delicious and satisfying! Remember, there are no "bad" foods, only poor diets. A little extra candy and cookies on Halloween aren't "bad." You simply don't want to allow your children to eat too much of those foods, too often!

Here are some healthy Halloween tips:

- Serve a **balanced meal** before the Halloween festivities begin so that children aren't tempted to eat their candy before they get home.
- Discuss in advance **how much and how often** they are allowed to eat their Halloween candy.
- **Mix in healthy snacks** along with Halloween candy, like string cheese, vegetables with dip, trail mix, yogurt or a glass of milk.
- **Model healthy habits** to your children by practicing restraint when dipping into the candy jar yourself.
- Remember that **dessert can be part of a healthy diet**. Overly restrictive rules on candy can make it even more desirable to your kids.

Make Halloween fun without candy!

- Host a **pumpkin-carving contest** at your home or school. Invite other parents or older siblings to supervise use of carving tools. Instead of carving, give younger children craft paint or magic markers to create their very own jack-o-lanterns.
- Many children may not realize the wonderful foods made from the very food they just carved and decorated! Pumpkin is rich in vitamin A, calcium and potassium, as well as fiber.
- **Make an edible scarecrow!** Offer a prize for the "healthiest" scarecrow made from fruits and vegetables and other foods from all the food groups!

Life-long health with good nutrition

Children who eat healthy foods will be more likely to choose healthy foods for a lifetime. Teach your children about healthy foods. Have them help you plan a meal which includes a healthy serving of protein, vegetables, and a healthy fruit for dessert. Teaching your children to how to have a healthy diet will have a bigger impact if you set the example. Eat right, get some exercise, and make a healthy lifestyle a family affair.





The Art of Toasting Pumpkin Seeds

Courtesy of www.homecooking.about.com



Don't toss those pumpkin seeds! Toast or roast pumpkin seeds in your oven in no time at all. They can be salted or spiced to suit your palate.

The shells are edible and are a good source of fiber. Use this method with other seeds such as acorn squash and butternut squash. Pumpkin seeds are also known as *pepitas*.

INGREDIENTS:

- Pumpkin seeds
- Cooking spray, olive oil, or butter
- Optional: Salt, garlic powder,

onion powder, seasoned salt, or other seasoning of choice

PREPARATION:

Rinse pumpkin seeds. Use your fingers to remove all the pulp. Drain pumpkin seeds and discard pulp. Spread out on paper towels on a cookie sheet to dry overnight.

Preheat oven to 250 F. Line a baking sheet with non-stick foil.

Toss pumpkin seeds in olive oil, butter, or spray with cooking spray. Sprinkle with salt, garlic powder, onion powder, seasoned salt, cayenne pepper, or your choice of seasonings. Toss to coat.

Bake about 1 hour, tossing every 15 to 20 minutes, until golden brown. Cool seeds before eating. Store in an airtight container at room temperature up to 3 months or refrigerate up to 1 year.

If you like your toasted pumpkin seeds extra-salty, soak overnight in a solution of 1/4 cup salt to 2 cups of water. Dry an additional day, then proceed as above.



Halloween Safety for your Ghosts and Goblins

Courtesy of www.childcare.about.com/od/childsafet1/a/trickortreat.htm

"Trick or treat!" That's the phrase shouted with glee by many a youngster across the country every Halloween night. But before your ghosts and goblins trick or treat this year, parents should keep in mind these safety tips to make sure the only howls are those of fun. Here are some trick or treat safety tips for youngsters:

Have each child carry or wear something lit, such as a flashlight, glow bracelet or necklace, or flashing attire for greater night visibility.

Adults should plan out a route in advance and check it during the daylight for such obstacles as broken sidewalks (or no sidewalks), construction timber, or other obstacles that could trip up trick or treaters. Trick or treat in familiar neighborhoods or areas.

Require well-fitting shoes to be worn; preferably sneakers. While adorable in the store as a costume accessory, kids planning to go trick or treat should wear sturdy shoes and not the princess high-heel, too-large boots, or other types of shoes often shown with costumes. Save those types of shoes for costume parties, not when a child is going trick or treat.

Avoid costumes that drag on the

ground. While cute initially, costumes that drag can trip up little feet, get caught on bushes, and create a tussle that sometimes results in the child wanting to remove the costume.

Pick costumes that are bathroom-friendly. On this same subject, parents should pre-plan a bathroom stop along the way (a friend's house will do and is a good time for a water break as well), or at a public facility if driving.

Be sure a child's mask allows full visibility and breathing. Spiderman masks, for example, sometimes only have small eye slits and nothing for the nose or mouth. Parents should try on masks for size and not hesitate to cut out larger openings for a trick or treaters' comfort. If possible, find a mask that "breathes" and is easy on/off.

Trick or treaters should walk, not run, and should never cut across lawns or driveways. Obstacles could exist that aren't readily visible in the evening.

Only carry flexible props, such as knives, swords, ninja items, etc., that can't cause injury if a kid accidentally falls. No play prop should resemble the real item; and consider leaving play weapons at home and not part of trick or treat night. **Only trick or treat at houses that are lit.**

Residents who do not wish to be bothered by trick or treaters often leave off their lights as a sign; respect their preference by only going to houses that are lit.

Be sure kids don't get over-heated and keep hydrated. Plan costumes according to weather; don't have your child dress in an adorable lion's costume with heavy fur and hood if you live in Southern states where temperatures could still be in the 80s in the evening; by the same token, a fairy costume might be impractical for a cold northern evening.

Think "practical" over "cute" when picking a trick or treat goody bag or container. Some of the seemingly-fun ones sold in stores are heavy--before any treats are added; others are too long and will drag the ground or have sharp edges that could scrape against tender skin.

Keep track of time and don't trick or treat after 9 p.m. (general recommendation). That allows ample time for children to trick or treat, and by then, the excitement of the evening and the candy/treats means little ghouls will be tired, anyhow.

Have a fun and safe Halloween!





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