



Butte County Public Health: Children's Dental Project

Submitted by Aimee Myles, Health Education Specialist

Developing good oral health habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Each February, the American Dental Association sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM) to raise awareness about the importance of children's oral health. The focus is on providing oral health education to children.

National Children's Dental Health Month is kicked off with Give Kids A Smile Day which is observed every year on the first Friday in February. Give Kids A Smile Day was designed to provide education, and preventive and



Aimee Myles, A.K.A. The Tooth Fairy!

restorative care to low-income children who do not have access to care. Last year and this year, local dentists have opened their offices and generously provided dental exams, cleanings, X-rays, and treatment to underserved Butte County children.

The Children's Dental Project and Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program at Butte County Public Health is planning outreach events throughout Butte County during Dental Health Month. Two events at elementary schools include using the Butte County Public Health Department's Medical Mobile Unit (MMU) to conduct dental screenings and apply fluoride varnish to children's teeth. Other events will take place at the Boys and Girls Clubs in Chico and Paradise targeting age 6-18 year olds, as well as the Oroville Gymnastics Academy targeting 18 months to 12 year olds. The Tooth Fairy will be at some of the sites as well.

Valley Oak Children's Services: CARES Project

Submitted by Connie Roberson, Home Visitor / R&R Recruitment and Training Specialist and Cari Freeman, CARES Project Coordinator

The CARES project is right in the middle of its 6th year of funding. In June 2008, qualified child care providers in Butte County who successfully complete the program requirements will receive cash stipends.

Currently we have 432 qualified providers working hard to continue their professional development and/or education in Early Childhood / Child Development.

Outreach for the CARES project is ongoing, especially for our Track 1, Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) providers. Track 1 is for license-exempt providers who work at least 15 hours per week caring for one family other than their own. They can choose from 3 different options and receive up to \$150.00 of supports and stipends. One of the most popular options is our Home Visit Option!

We currently have provided 61 home visits.

A typical home visit for the CARES/FFN project begins with the home visitor speaking with the exempt provider and getting details about the provider and the children in care. The home visitor might ask about what the children really enjoy doing or something new the provider is interested in doing with the children. The ages of all of the children who will be present during the visit are determined and the visit is scheduled.

In preparation for the visit, the home visitor gathers a bag of materials to take to the provider's home. For the provider, information given might include lead safety information, car seat safety, Ages & Stages, nutrition materials, science and math activities, creating a safe environment and other assorted materials as they are available. We will also give the

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We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget that he is someone today.

-Stacia Tauscher

Northern Valley Catholic Social Services: Young Fathers Group

Submitted by Kara Villarreal, Young Fathers Group Facilitator

The Young Fathers Group is a support group for young fathers ages 24 and under who are parenting children ages five and under. The focus of group is based on parenting issues as well as support for the young fathers in their journey through life as a father. We have covered a broad variety of topics ranging from nutrition to the stages of child development.

Group is held on Wednesday nights from 5:30 to 7:00 at varying locations and is generously funded by Butte County First 5, United Way, and a City of Chico Community Development Block Grant. Those locations range from Our Divine Savior church to Cal Skate batting cages. We are currently looking to meet at the new teen drop-in center in Chico. Some meetings are also held in the community doing physical activities to help the fathers release tension in a non-violent, positive way. Cooking groups are held to teach these father's how to supply adequate, healthy meals for their children

Although not all fathers have continued with the group, a group of three men have been with the program

since its inception three and a half years ago. These boys created a bond and use that to keep this group going. They are consistent with attending and are always looking for other young fathers to recruit.



Young Fathers Group members shop for a special "Giving Tree" recipient.

We also have an advisory group, which consists of men from the group. We meet separately and discuss topics they would like to cover. We also discuss what they have enjoyed and what suggestions they have to make group even better.

Group is and has been a very positive way for these young fathers to

find support from other fathers whom are going through the same situations. We even have young fathers who are choosing to be step-fathers to their partner's children. What an accomplishment for a young father who was previously overwhelmed with the thought of having his own child.

One of the most rewarding experiences while facilitating group was volunteering time at the "Giving Tree" in the Chico Mall. Rather than spend the allotted monies for group on incentives or food, the group chose to adopt a child from the tree and shop for that child with that money. While the facilitator and mentors volunteered at the tree, the young father's shopped in the mall to pick out Christmas presents. They were very conscientious of the young boy's wishes and spent the money appropriately to get him the most presents possible. The young fathers seemed to enjoy "giving back" to another needy child.



(CARES...Continued from page 1)

provider a chance to fill out a needs assessment form where they are given a list of resources pertaining to children and families available at Valley Oak. They can check off items in which they have an interest and information from these areas will be mailed to the provider after the visit.

The first part of the visit consists of just getting to know the provider and children and telling them a bit about the FFN program and what we hope to accomplish during the visit. The provider materials are gone through and questions are answered. If the FFN ap-

plication has not been filled out, it will be completed during the visit. One of the benefits offered to exempt providers is a gift certificate for 15 hours of health and safety training. This training includes CPR, First Aid and Preventative Health for child care providers. If the provider completes this training they will receive a \$50.00 stipend and a gift certificate for an early childhood education catalog to order materials to improve their program.

Then it is the children's turn. The purpose of this activity is to model an age appropriate activity with the children for the provider. Depending on the age of the children present, an activity

may be as simple as reading a story or a more complex art or science activity. In some cases, the activity doesn't happen the way it was planned. The children may be too tired, hungry or just not wanting to do the activity.

After the children's activity the items which are being left in the home are given to the provider. These items are for the use of the children and may include books, toys, games, puzzles and blocks. At the end of the home visit, the provider receives a \$50 gift certificate.

For more information about the CARES project, you can contact Cari Freeman at 530-899-4943.

Making the decision to have a child - it's momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking outside your body.
-Elizabeth Stone

Searching HelpCentral.org

Submitted by Tara Sullivan-Hames, Project Coordinator

The HelpCentral.org web site offers a way to search online for low cost and no cost services in Butte County and to help people get connected to currently available community resources! Over 750 programs are listed ranging from counseling, parenting, support groups, food assistance, housing, health care, legal aid and more.

Special tracking software allows HelpCentral staff to identify the categories, subcategories, keywords and agencies most frequently searched in the HelpCentral online database. This information is useful as an indicator of what types of services are "in demand" among individuals and families needing help in Butte County. The table below represents the categories and corresponding subcategories most frequently searched in 2007.*

In addition to tracking the types of services that people are seeking for help,

HelpCentral.org now has an entry screen for the site user to voluntarily designate the age range of the individual needing low cost or no cost services. In the last half of 2007, 5600 searches were recorded on HelpCentral.org. Of those, only 995 volunteered age information. However, 809 of the 995 searches with voluntarily recorded age information were seeking services for a child between the ages of 0-5. People searching for help for children ages 0-5 were looking for the following top five needs: Housing and Shelter, Food and Clothing, Crisis Intervention and Counseling, Health and Medical Services, and Child Support/Custody.

When using HelpCentral.org to locate services in Butte County, please take just a moment when you access the search screen to enter the age range information of the person needing help. This will greatly help us identify an important

demographic factor regarding the community services that are needed and being accessed in Butte County.

Remember! When you want to search the HelpCentral.org online database:

- Click the **Find Help Fast** button on the HelpCentral.org home page.
- From the search page, click the age range of the person(s) needing help
- You can now search for services in 3 ways: Click on a Category, type in a Keyword, or type in an Agency or program name.
- Now just keep making selections from the underlined links that follow to find the program and services detail page(s) you need.

If you need help, click on the **Search tips** link or if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us—879-2455!

Searches by Category Jan 2007-Jan 2008	# of Searches	Top Subcategories Searched for Each Category
Housing/ Shelter/ Transportation	1450	Subsidized/Low Income Housing; Housing Information & Assistance; Emergency/Homeless Shelters
Children/ Youth/ Families	1052	Family Supportive Services; Youth Development/Clubs; Child Care/Day Care
Food/ Clothing/ Personal Goods	919	Food Distribution; Personal Goods & Services; Clothing
Crisis Intervention/ Counseling/ Behavioral Health	848	Counseling; Alcohol & Drug Abuse/Treatment; Crisis Intervention
Population Groups/ Support Groups	472	Support Groups; Parents; Families & Children
Health/ Medical Services	466	Medical & Dental Services; Health Clinics, Hospitals & Facilities; Health Insurance
Legal Services/ Criminal Justice / Protective Services	447	Legal Assistance; Law Enforcement; Courts & Criminal Justice
Employment/ Financial Services	444	Employment & Job Training; Temporary Financial Aid; Public Assistance
Seniors/ Disabled/ Caregivers	417	Senior Assistance; Disabled Services; In-Home Assistance
Education/ Schools	304	Adult Education; Early Childhood Education; Learning Support
Community / Recreation/ Environment	202	Recreational Activities; Advocacy; Outreach Programs
Consumers / Business / Government	49	Business Services; Government Offices; Consumer Complaints & Protection

* This table represents only searches conducted by clicking on a category from the HelpCentral.org search page. Additional searches by keyword and by agency and program names are not counted in this tabulation.



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