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Issue
One

The Pulse

The Official Newsletter of Gracious Heart Resource Family Agency

Our Mission: To provide our youth with professional services, healthy homes, meaningful relationships and an enriched healing experience.



Around the Agency

Welcome to Gracious Heart!!!!

We would like to officially welcome each of our resource families, youth and employees to Gracious Heart Resource Family Agency!

We are so excited about this new journey and very grateful that you all have decided to join us. We promise to provide you with premier services, advocacy, resources, training and much more! Welcome to the Gracious Heart Family!!!!

Our newsletter, "The Pulse" will be the primary publication of our agency and provide you with wonderful information and precious memories. Thank you for putting your trust in our team and we will see you soon!



"Life is beautiful. It's about giving. It's about family."

- Walt Disney

Snack Time:

Graham Cracker Chocolate Banana Cake

Ingredients

Graham Crackers
2 tablespoon Nutella
4 oz cream cheese softened or at room temperature
1 banana sliced

Directions

Combine the Nutella and cream cheese together. Spread the mixture on top of graham crackers add sliced banana to each cracker than layer your graham crackers together to make your cake. Make the cake as high as you want.

Send pictures of your creations to lia@ghrfa.org or tag us on Facebook/Instagram @graciousheartfpa

It was a COVID Christmas!



Christmas was different for all this year as we experienced a COVID Christmas. Making things possible for our families and children were our wonderful "Community Partners." Our partners came out with an abundance of gifts, both physical and monetary, for us to provide the children a Christmas they all deserve. We are so blessed and thankful for our wonderful partners.

Agency Spotlight



Collaboration at its Finest!!!!

We are pleased to announce a collaborative partnership with The Heart Matters Mental Health Center! This new partnership allows our youth to have streamlined mental health services with our sister agency, reducing the wait for assessments and treatment. The Heart Matters Mental Health Center is located at 12139 Mt. Vernon Avenue, Grand Terrace.

Currently the mental health contract only allows us to serve Riverside County placements through our center. If you need assistance from one of the clinical therapists or have questions, please contact your agency social worker or call our office for more information regarding the help that is available to you.

Employee Spotlight

Jessa Garippo- Compliance Officer



We would like to CONGRATULATE and applaud our hard working staff - Jessa Garippo. Her hard work and dedication to Gracious Heart Resource Family Agency has not gone unnoticed. Jessa is the Compliance Officer and has worked diligently to ensure the agency's facility was in compliance with all city, county, state and federal regulations. Jessa takes pride in her tremendous amount of work and responsibility, and does it with grace and modesty. We would again like to thank her her on all of her hard work. Thank you Jessa and keep up the great work!

Tips for Parents

7 Ways to Empower Your Teen

- Tell them "You Matter."
- Listen.
- Regularly say "I believe in you."
- Make sure they get enough sleep.
- Teach teens to regard their bodies, and the bodies of other people.
- Thank them.
- Be a sanctuary.



"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new."

- Albert Einstein

Helpful Hints for Virtual Learning

What Every Online Student Needs to Know

Here are some tips you can share with your virtual school or blended learning student to help ensure his or her continued success while learning from home:

- Be Positive
- Get organized and stay organized
- Establish a flexible routine
- Set personal goals & re-evaluate each quarter or semester
- Make the most of your resources
- Exercise, get outdoors and move, even in the front/back yard. Walk, Stretch, Run or throw/kick a ball.

Real Talk: Being an Effective Parent

Raising children can be the toughest and most rewarding job in the world. At times you may feel you are not fully prepared, but in reality it's a learning process for all involved. There is no instruction manual but there are things you can do to be prepared. Raising foster children is no different. You as the parent need to be effective and still show the love, respect, humility and kindness you give your own children. Below are just a few tips that could help.

Some helpful tips for being an Effective Parent:

1. MAKE TIME FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Parents have a busy schedule with work and adult duties, but it is necessary to make time for the children. If it's 10 minutes before bed where you read a story together or maybe get up 20 minutes early and do some exercising with the older ones to stay fit and healthy. The time you spend together will be quality not quantity.

2. BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

Young children are impressionable, they watch and mimic what parents do and say. Be aware at all times that you could be being watched by them and you need to set the example.

3. BOOST YOUR CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM

Praising accomplishments, however small, will make them feel proud. Children feeling independent will make them feel capable and strong. Remember your tone of voice, body language, and your facial expressions are absorbed by your children. This will ultimately affect the development of their own self-esteem.

4. HAVE RULES AND BE CONSISTENT WITH THE DISCIPLINE

Discipline is a difficult position a parent is put into but is necessary in every household. The goal here is to help children understand they choose acceptable behavior versus unacceptable behavior. These are lessons they will need as they get older. Some rules may include: no television until homework is done, no name calling other siblings and no teasing. If we do not do this at home, we shouldn't be doing elsewhere i.e. school, camp or church.

5. COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Don't expect children to do everything you say because you "said so." They want and deserve explanations as much as we do when we do not understand something. Be open to your child, talk and work out problems and solutions together.

6. LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY

It is your responsibility for correcting and guiding your children. But how you express your corrective guidance makes all the difference in how a child receives it. When your child does something wrong, avoid blaming or criticizing, try to nurture and encourage even when you have to discipline your child.

7. COMPLIMENT WHEN THEY ARE GOOD

When your child does something wrong we are quick to correct, however; when they do something right we should also compliment on a job well done. If a child makes their bed without you telling them, recognize that they did a good thing. The compliments will work wonders with your children.

Real Talk: Being an Effective Parent

8. AS A PARENT BE FLEXIBLE AND WILLING TO ADJUST

As your child grows and ages you will need to adjust your parenting, sitting in a timeout may not be suitable for a teen. Provide guidance, encouragement and appropriate discipline while allowing your teen to earn more independence.

9. DON'T FORGET-KNOW YOUR NEEDS AND LIMITS AS A PARENT

Parenting is not easy and we are not perfect. You will have strong points and weak ones but recognize those and work on them. Whether you are single or a couple, working on parenting takes time and every child will be different to raise but you have what it takes. Remember you need time for yourself and you will need that after bedtime, or when the children finally get back in school. Even if it is doing grocery shopping, make some time to get your favorite coffee or smoothie. Remember you need "me" time.



**BEHIND EVERY CHILD WHO
BELIEVES
IN HIMSELF IS A
PARENT
WHO BELIEVED IN THEM FIRST**

-Positive Parenting Quotes



Carrie Mathews, MPA

Executive Director

Dear Amazing Families,

While COVID-19 may have inconvenienced many of us in our day-to-day living and has had widespread financial implications for our local businesses, it has not stopped one group of people from caring for some of our county's most vulnerable citizens – our foster children.

Throughout the past year of the pandemic, our agency's foster parents have continued to meet the needs of children in crisis in San Bernardino and Riverside County, who have needed the consistency of a caring home until they can be reunited with their families, placed with relatives, or adopted. For many, it has meant assuming the risk of being exposed to the virus themselves, as well as taking on the management of following the CDC guidelines to keep the children in their homes healthy and safe from COVID-19.

We have been fortunate that only a few of our foster children or foster families tested positive for the coronavirus. As staff, we have been diligent about providing our homes with supplies, as well as guidance for managing during the pandemic. We determine the comfort level of our foster parents before making any placements and will continue to do so. We will continue to support all of our foster parents where they are during this challenging time.

Gracious Heart will continue in its work and provide essential services to children and youth, while taking precautionary measures to protect our families and staff that engage directly with families.

I want you to know we are here to support you. We are so grateful to have foster parents who have stepped up during these critical times, focusing on the health of our families and going above and beyond. For example, I know you may not have envisioned facilitating virtual visitation, but I appreciate every one of you who has supported and guided our children through these visitations to ensure they remain connected to their families. I also want to thank those of you who continue to parent children impacted by the loss of familiar routines and the lack of contact with friends, family and community.

Amidst all this instability and uncertainty, you have been constant in the lives of children. We are deeply appreciative and thankful for your devotion and commitment to children you parent and welcome into your family. We see your contributions and effort and want to reassure you that we will get through this together.

Most Graciously with Love,

Carrie



Recipe of the Month

Chicken Tortilla Soup by Crock Pot

Ingredients

- 1 ½ lbs boneless skinless chicken
- 1 whole yellow onion chopped finely
- 2 (14.5 oz) cans chicken broth (low sodium may be used)
- ½ cup water
- 2 cans diced tomatoes (may use tomatoes w/green chilies for spice)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp chili powder
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- ¾ tsp paprika
- ½ tsp coriander (ground)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 (14.5 oz) can of black beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1 (14.5 oz) can of corn (drained and rinsed)

Serves 6

Prep Time 40 minutes

Cooking Time 6 hours



Instructions

Marinate your chicken breast with partial dry ingredients and lemon or lime for about 30 minutes in a ziplock bag. After 30 minutes remove chicken and place chicken into your crock pot. Pour the broth, water and diced tomatoes over the chicken. Add the rest of your ingredients into crock pot cover with lid and cook on low heat for 6 hours or until chicken is cooked.

After 5 hours remove chicken and shred with fork, return the chicken back to crock pot and add your corn and black beans and lime juice stir and cover for the last hour. Serve with tortilla strips or tortillas and you may add shredded cheese, cilantro sour cream and avocado.



*"A moment in my home,
forever in my heart"*

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