



Yolo County

KINSHIP Connection



Woodland Community College

Kinship Care Education

Fall 2009

Kinship Conference Nov. 7

Free Childcare Available At Half-Day Event

Grandparents, cousins, aunts, family friends and other "kinship" caregivers are invited to a special half-day conference **Nov. 7** in Woodland.



The free conference will be conducted from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at **Child Protective Services,**

170 W. Beamer St. in Woodland. It is designed to give relative caregivers the opportunity to address issues specific to kin care, explore techniques for raising relative's children and help facilitate networking between Yolo County relative caregivers.

Lunch and childcare are provided on site. Reservations are required for this special conference.

'KIN CONFERENCE' cont'd. Page 2

Fall Fun: Harvest Party Oct. 24

Relative caregivers are invited to join other Yolo County-licensed foster and adoptive parents at a special harvest party on **Saturday, Oct. 24.**

Get ready for some fun, fall activities at a home outside Davis. Pony rides, apple bobbing, hay rides, 3-legged races and special craft projects — such as pumpkin painting — are scheduled from 3 to 6 p.m. at the "Giddy Up"-themed event. A barbecued pork rib, hot dog



'HARVEST PARTY' cont'd. Page 2

Oct. 24 Parent-Youth Class To Focus On Teen Brain, Impulse Control

How many of us have looked at a teen-ager living in our home, sighed deeply, shook our heads and uttered the famous words: "What were you thinking?" — only to be greeted with a blank stare or a shoulder shrug?

Debra Wiegel, LMFT, will discuss the teen-age brain at the next parent-youth class, set for **9 a.m. to noon Oct. 24 at 25 N. Cottonwood St.**

Reservations are appreciated but not required. For additional information or reservations, please contact **FKCE Director Cherie Schroeder** at: cherie@yolofostercare.com; or visit: www.yolofostercare.com.

Coordinator Corner

Emergencies: Are You Ready?

Someone asked me the other day if I was prepared for winter. Do I have an emergency kit with water, flashlights, non-perishable food and — of course — a can opener for that special tin cuisine should the power go out to our home? Well, I have some basics — enough to not feel like an urgent trip to Wal-Mart is needed to ensure my family's survival.



Hiedi Andersen

But the question brought up a point I think many of us overlook. What is require of us, as relative caregivers, in case of emergency? Do we have to call someone at CPS if a storm knocks out our power or we have to evacuate due to flooding? What if there's a fire or other emergency that necessitates our leaving?

I actually had an evacuation scenario arise two years ago. During a big storm, power to our home was knocked out for several days. We had a barely 1-year-old foster daughter and a 9-month-old foster son to care for, as well our 10-year-old

'HIEDI' cont'd. Page 2



HIEDI from Page 1...

adopted daughter. For the first few hours, we bundled the babies, played fun games with flashlights and entertained the 10-year-old with trivia. That night, we put two pairs of pajamas on the babies, swaddled them in blankets and used our portable bottle warmer to keep formula at a drinkable temperature. It was like camping, but in our living room, not so dusty, and seemed like fun... at first.

But as darkness crept in on Day 2 and it became apparent the power was not going to be imminently fixed — *it's never a good sign when the power company sets up a special phone number just for your power outage* — my husband and I became increasingly concerned about the kids, adequate heating, warm bottles, etc. We called around, but most of our friends were without power, too. Hotels were booked. Then a good friend asked us to come to her house in another county. We packed up the kids and headed out the door toward warm showers, hot dinner and soft beds.

As we drove out of Woodland — so eerily quiet and dark for blocks — my husband reminded me that we needed to contact CPS and let them know where we were going to be staying. Just like if we were going on vacation, it's required that caregivers contact a child's social worker and let them know their destination, overnight arrangements and expected length of stay anytime they're leaving home for more than 24 hours — and definitely if there's an evacuation or emergency that precipitates the exit.

This was another time I was grateful that CPS requires us, as caregivers, to maintain updated **Placement Passports** for all children placed in our homes. In the cold, dark house as we rushed to get kids, diapers, clothing, dog food, medicine, favorite blankets, pacifiers, etc., it was easy to just grab the kids' *Passports* with all their medical information and important phone numbers and toss them into the diaper bag as we headed out the door.

From the comfort of our (heated) van, I called each child's social worker and let them know we were headed to a friend's home in Dixon with the babies; that we had no idea the length of stay; and that I'd call CPS back the following day with any updates or changes.

Fortunately, for us, this was a relatively short emergency evacuation; the lights were back on a little more than 24 hours later. We thanked our friends and headed home.

Now, two years later — as the rain pounds Yolo County, roads flood, trees fall — I am reminded that emergency preparedness for relative caregivers goes beyond the handy-dandy can opener. Keep those Passports up-to-date and emergency numbers close by the phone. You never know when you'll need them.

— **Hiedi Andersen**

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KIN CONFERENCE from Page 1...

Three tracks of classes will be conducted during the conference. These include:

- ❑ A Difference Kind of Normal: Raising the Child of a Relative
- ❑ Addiction and its Profound Influence on Children and Families
- ❑ Resources for You! Finding Help and Getting Services for Your Kids

The conference, lunch and child care are offered free, and presented in collaboration with the Yolo County Department of Employment and Social Services, Children's Services Division, and Woodland Community College's Foster and Kinship Care Education Program.

For additional information about the kinship conference, please contact: **Lisa Muller**, CPS Relative Caregiver Coordinator, at (530) 666-8243 or via e-mail at: mullel@cws.state.ca.us; or **Cherie Schroeder**, FKCE Director, at (530) 574-1964 or via e-mail at: cherie@yolofostercare.com.

Additional information about the conference and other Woodland Community College Foster and Kinship Care Education Program classes are available at:

www.yolofostercare.com.

HARVEST PARTY from Page 1...

and macaroni and cheese dinner will be served at 5 p.m.

Attendees are asked to bring food or drinks to share. Please contact Harvest Party Hostess **Emily Amy** and let her know what, *from the following list*, you are able to bring to the party:

- 3 cans frozen lemonade concentrate (12 oz.)
- 3-4 pounds (1.5-2 quarts) potato salad
- 3-4 pounds (1.5-2 quarts) pasta or macaroni salad
- finger snacks — grapes, apple slices or vegetables and dip
- green salad to serve 15
- 2 quarts fruit salad
- 3-4 dozen brownies
- 3-4 dozen cookies
- 3 packages hot dog buns
- corn bread to serve 24



Emily Amy and Fred Mitchell's home is located at **34905 Creeksedge Road** (off County Road 95A at Putah Creek).

For additional information about the Harvest Party, please contact **Emily Amy** at (530) 753-3037.

Next KCE Class: Oct. 23 from 1-4 p.m.
Woodland Senior & Community Center, 2001 East St.