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A BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR FOSTER & ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN UTAH: VOL 1, FEB & MAR 2011

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Audrey grinds her teeth in her sleep and it sounds horrible. Can anything be done?

Children grinding teeth in their sleep is very common, and most children will outgrow it. Sometimes it can sound so terrible, like grinding rocks, that parents have gone so far as to interrupt the sleep of their child to make them stop.

The technical term for grinding teeth is "bruxism", and the only effective way to prevent it harming the teeth is to sleep with a special mouthguard. However, this is not recommended for young children. There are two reasons for this: 1) Most children will not tolerate sleeping with a bulky mouthguard in their mouth, and 2) Assuming it stays in, wearing a mouthguard for seven or eight hours or more, each night, can restrict the natural growth of the jaw bones, causing a more significant problem later.

The bottom line is there is nothing that can be done for young, growing

children who grind their teeth at night. And although grinding teeth can sound nightmarishly awful, the teeth, even the baby teeth, hold up to the stress quite well. I have seen the teeth of some very aggressive grinders, and while the baby molars can flatten out and the front incisors can be ground down to the gumline, there is no long-term damage.

For kids who are still grinding when most of the baby teeth have been lost, roughly 11 or 12 years old and older, and who begin to show signs of wear on their permanent teeth, it is a good idea to try and introduce a nightguard for protection of those teeth that must last a lifetime. A nightguard fabricated in a dental laboratory can be pricey, around \$200 or so. I recommend patients try sleeping with a cheap athletic mouthguard first. They run just a few bucks at any sports store and will save you a lot of money if your child won't tolerate sleeping with it in. However, if they will sleep with a mouthguard in, then it is

recommended to get one from a dental lab. They are stronger and thinner and a lot more comfortable.

The vast majority of children will never get to the point where a mouthguard is necessary. As stated earlier, most kids end up outgrowing this worrisome phase.

John's new teeth are coming in behind his baby teeth. It looks like he has shark teeth or something, with two rows of teeth. What should we do?

Sometimes the permanent teeth don't come in exactly underneath the baby teeth. This scenario is most common with the lower front teeth. It can be troubling to parents, expecially if the baby teeth aren't even getting loose.

If permanent teeth are coming up behind the baby teeth, then the rule of thumb is this: If the baby teeth are loose then we leave them alone, but if they are not loose then they may need to be extracted. This is a simplified rule and other circumstances can come into play to change the recommendation.

For instance, if the baby teeth have been loose for a long period of time, say six months, and don't seem to be progressing toward exfoliation (coming out), then we may decide to extract them. Or if the loose baby teeth seem to be pinching the gums every time the child bites down and are causing discomfort, then we may decide to extract them.

The important thing to remember is that the natural pressure of the tongue is going to push those permanent teeth forward. They will actually come up and forward, so far as there is room for them. Which leads to another common question: "Katie's new permanent teeth look all jumbled up and crowded. Is she going to need braces?" I will discuss this question in the next issue.

Jeff Burg, DDS/ Owner of Burg Pediatric Dentistry/ Look for one of our six locations online at www. burgpediatricdentistry.com



foster parent sent a thank you note that sums it up best: "A great big thank you for your generous donation. It enabled us to purchase much needed winter gear for the twins that we foster. We always appreciate any help we can [get] in these hard economic times. Thanks again and happy holidays!"

KSL's Quarters for Christmas program made a very generous donation to help provide shoes, clothing, and winter coats for children in foster care this winter season. If you participated in this program and would like to express your gratitude and say thank you to KSL's Quarters for Christmas, please send your note to:

Nikki MacKay Utah Foster Care Foundation 5296 S. Commerce Dr. Suite 400 Murray, UT 84107

Clothing Allowance Reminder

Foster parents!

Did you know you are able to use the clothing allowance for children in foster care for diapers and pull ups? You still have to provide clothing for the infant/toddler, of course; however, you can use part of that money for diapers!

If you have any questions about the clothing allowances please contact your Resource Family Consultant (RFC).

Utah Foster Care Foundation Offices

Murray

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400 Murray, UT 84107 Phone: 801.994.5205 Fax: 801.994.5206 Toll Free: 877.505.KIDS

Ogden

3340 S. Harrison Blvd. #200 Ogden, UT 84403 Phone: 801.392.1114

Orem

252 N. Orem Blvd. Orem, UT 84057 Phone: 801.373.3006

Price

475 W. Price River Dr. #152 Price, UT 84501 Phone: 435.636.0210

Roosevelt

Phone: 435.724.0959

Vernal

1052 W. Market Dr. Vernal, UT 84078 Phone: 435.781.4224

Moab

180 S. 300 E., Suite C Moab, UT 84532 Phone: 435.259.3345

St. George

321 N. Mall Dr. #B102 St. George, UT 84790 Phone: 435.656.8065

Richfield

201 E. 500 N. Richfield, UT 84701 Phone: 435.896.1232

Thanks to



 $For years \, of \, support$





hen a child enters foster care, there are certain health care requirements. This quiz is a good refresher for foster parents. Test your knowledge:

- 1. How often does a child in foster care need a physical exam?
 - a. On entry into care and then every 6 months.
 - b. On entry into care and then every year.
 - c. On their birthday and before leaving care.
 - d. On entry into care and then every year unless under 2 years; and if under 2, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics schedule.
 - e. On their birthday and then every 3 months
- 2. If the birth parent has filed an exemption that immunizations NOT be administered to their child due to religious or medical beliefs, it is still okay for me, as the foster parent, to approve them while in my care.
 - a. True
 - b. False
- 3. It is up to the foster parent to determine if they can stop giving medications to children in foster care in their home.
 - a. True
 - b. False
- $4. \quad Electronic \, medical \, records \, from \, a \, doctor \, can \, be \, submitted \, in \, place \, of \, a \, Health \, Visit \, Report.$
 - a. True
 - b. False

- Referrals or follow-up ordered by a medical/dental/mental health provider are optional and do not need to be done if the child refuses.
 - a. True
 - b. False

A well child check must be done within 30 days of entering care and annually if over age two. If the child is under age two, the guidelines require them to be seen according to the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations. The extra exams fall in the same schedule that immunizations are due.

If birth parents are involved in the case and have filed exemptions for immunizations due to religious or medical beliefs, the child may NOT be immunized. In most cases, when the child is first placed with you, you will receive a health data report. It will be noted whether the child has received immunizations, if they are overdue to receive them or if there is an exemption on file.

Medications should always be given as prescribed by the medical provider. A foster parent should not stop a medication on their own and should consult with a medical provider. Any follow-up or referral visit ordered by the provider should be done as soon as possible. This information is documented in the child's health record and is monitored on a regular basis.

Many physicians are moving to what is called Electronic Medical Records or EMR. Ask them to print a copy of their notes. They do not need to write new notes on the Health Visit Report. Please submit the paperwork to the nurse as soon as possible.

One of the major roles in being a foster parent is to assure the children get their health care needs met. Make the appointments early so the visits do not go overdue. Thanks for all you do for the children in foster care!

(Answers: D; false; false; true; false)



Date of mission: Dec. 15, 2010

Time: 0900 hours

Mission: Deliver 900 holiday gifts to more than 300 children in foster care from Draper to the Idaho border

ith orders in hand, more than 70 airmen in combat fatigues were deployed to brighten the holidays for more than 300 Utah children in foster care. For the fourth year, men and women from the 419th and 388th Fighter Wings at Hill Air Force Base volunteered their own vacation time, vehicles and gasoline to make the special delivery.

The annual effort is spearheaded and coordinated by SmSgt. Matt Matysik.

"Every year, it warms our hearts to see these soldiers, who already serve our country, help us in this monumental effort," says Nikki Mackay, Directior of Foster Family Retention for the Utah Foster Care Foundation (UFCF).

Salt Lake Valley Foster/Adoptive Dad of the Year Mike Millgate and his wife Shelly talked to the airmen about what these deliveries mean to foster families. "Being a foster parent to these children is such a blessing," said Millgate, referring to son Ian, who the Millgates adopted from foster care. "Foster families make lots of sacrifices for their children, and they really appreciate this show of support from the community and the military."

The toys, video games, gift cards and other items are all collected through UFCF's Giving Tree program. For the month leading up to the delivery, both individuals and companies bring in both purchased gifts and cash contributions.

Foster families send their sincere thanks to every small business or church which sponsored a Giving Tree, as well as every Boy Scout, youth group or other volunteers who made the gift drive their holiday project. You can see the complete list of donors on the next page.

Division of Child and Family Services

Resource Family Consultant (RFC) Contact Information

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Magna, West Valley City, Kearns & West Jordan

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Lori Zumbrunnen 801.755.7646 84081 84088 84095 84096

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Susannah Holden 801.755.7018

Placement Coordinator For Salt Lake Region.

Clinical support for resource homes



With Gratitude...

Throughout the holiday season, there have been many people who were filled with holiday spirit and sought out ways to brighten the lives of children in care. For all of you who have helped make Utah Foster Care Foundation Giving Tree Program possible, we offer you our gratitude and best wishes for 2011.

Arline Rubin

Bobby Lawrence Karate Studio

Brenda Bates

Christina Farden

Christine Allred

Christmas Box House Int.

Cody Rasband

David R. Pettingill

Debbie Jacketta

Utah Department of Environmental

Quality

East Millcreek LDS Ward

East Millcreek LDS Youth Group

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Evan & Melissa Grennan

Heidelberger Family

Hill Air Force Base 419th and 388th

Fighter Wings

Hilltop United Methodist Church

Hilltop United Methodist Youth Group

Intermountain Medical Group

James & Jordan Gilliland

Jason Brailow

Jeff Turner

Julia Hatasaka

Kathy Adams

Leslie Campbell

Linda and Ali

Lori Sokoloski & Daniel Leveton

Margaret Whitaker

Marriott Bartholomew

Micheal & Cingy Niermeyer

Mike, Shelly and Ian Millgate

M'Lisa Long

Mountain America Credit Union

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North Star Academy

Peggy Lunberg

Quintail Neighborhood

Robert Gallup and Sally Hancock

Rose Mack

Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce

Starbucks West Valley

Susan Eyzaguirre

TD Williamson

The Wentworth at East Millcreek

University of Utah

Waddoups Family

Westminster College





id you know that March is recognized as Social Work Month? It is a time to celebrate the good social workers do, beginning in our communities and spreading throughout the world. Below are listed some fun facts about the history of social work.

Since the first social work class was offered in the summer of 1898 at Columbia University, social workers have led the way developing private and charitable organizations to serve people in need. Social workers continue to address the needs of society and bring our nation's social problems to the public's attention.

Today, Americans enjoy many privileges because early social workers saw miseries and injustices and took action, inspiring others along the way. Many of the benefits we take for granted came about because social workers—working with families and institutions—spoke out against abuse and neglect.

- The civil rights of all people regardless of gender, race, faith, or sexual orientation are protected.
- Workers enjoy unemployment insurance, disability pay, worker's compensation and Social Security.
- People with mental illness and developmental disabilities are now afforded humane treatment.
- Medicaid and Medicare give poor, disabled and elderly people access to health care.

- Society seeks to prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Treatment for mental illness and substance abuse is gradually losing its stigma.

Social work pioneer Jane Addams was one of the first women to receive a Nobel Peace Prize, which was awarded in 1931. Known best for establishing settlement houses in Chicago for immigrants in the early 1900s, Addams was a dedicated community organizer and peace activist.

Frances Perkins, a social worker, was the first woman to be appointed to the cabinet of a U.S. President. As President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary of Labor, Perkins drafted much of the New Deal legislation in the 1940s.

Social worker and civil rights trailblazer Whitney M. Young, Jr. became the executive director of the National Urban League while serving as dean for the Atlanta School of Social Work. A noted expert in American race relations, Time Magazine acknowledged Young as a key inspiration for President Johnson's War on Poverty.

Other famous social workers include Harry Hopkins (Works Progress Administration), Dorothy Height (National Council of Negro Women), and Jeanette Rankin (the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress).

As you can see, social workers are valued members of our community. Thank a social worker today!

Wishing Well Funds

Utah Foster Care Foundation has funds available to meet the special needs of children in foster care when DCFS is unable to meet these needs for any reason. Funds are limited.

Requests **MUST** include the following:

- Child's first name, last initial and age
- Foster parent's name and home address
- Caseworker's name and contact information
- The item being requested and the associated costs
- Brief description of how the child will benefit

Request should come in writing by a foster parent, the child in care or the caseworker.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Dispersal of funds can take up to 4 weeks
- Checks are mailed to the foster parent's home address
- Funds are for children in foster care ONLY
- Items covered by the foster care reimbursement or by Medicaid are not eligible.

VACATIONS:

- A child in care can receive vacation funds only ONCE in their lifetime
- Vacations are restricted monetarily & may not cover all costs

SUBMIT REQUESTS TO:

Tina Porter Utah Foster Care Foundation 5296 So. Commerce Dr. #400 Murray, UT 84107 801.994-5205 or tina.porter@utahfostercare.org



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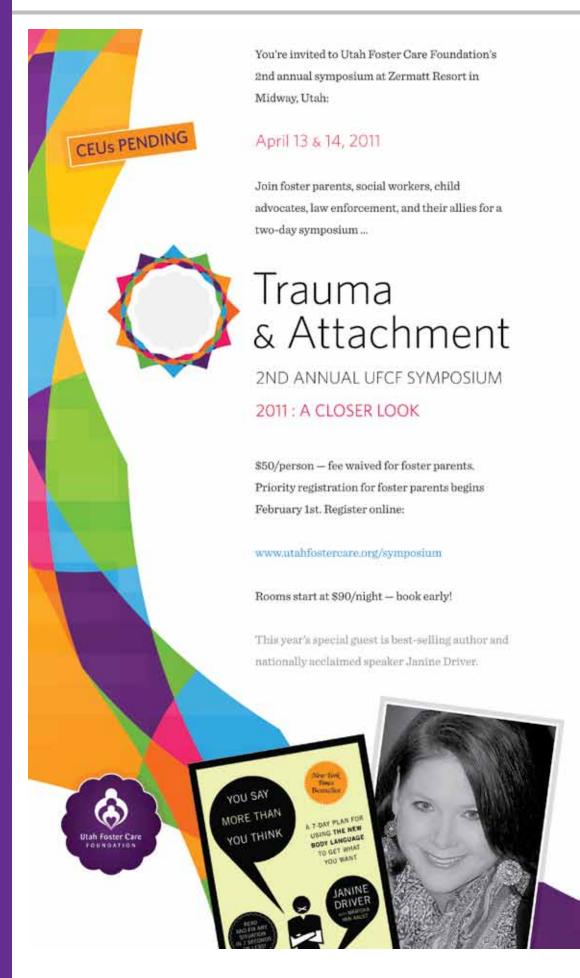
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Salt Lake Valley Cluster Information

For in-service training details, see the training pages.



Murray/Midvale/ E. Salt Lake Facilitator: Terumi Phone: 801.699.9769



Kearns Facilitator: Michelle Phone: 801.755.4766 mostmark12@aol.com



Magna/West Valley Facilitator: Linda Phone: 801.690.6490 peerparenting@gmail.com



Salt Lake Metro Facilitator: Rachel Phone: rlhharb@yahoo.com



Sandy/Draper Facilitator: Tina Phone: 801.994.5205 tina.porter@utahfostercare.org



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Tooele/Adoptive Parents Facilitator: Cami Phone: 435.830.6195 camimead@hotmail.com



Spanish/Cluster en Español Facilitator: Jessica Phone: 801.577.7161 steadmanjessica@aol.com

Wanted:Foster/Adoptive Dads of the Year 2011

s there a Foster/Adoptive Dad in your family who is exceptional, witty, lots of fun? Utah Foster Care Foundation wants to know! We are looking for five Foster/Adoptive Dads of the Year - one from each region of the state - to honor on Father's Day week-end.

The awards will be presented on Saturday, June 18th at Gateway shopping mall in Salt Lake City. There will be a luncheon to honor the dads following the ceremony. Families who must travel more than 100 miles one way will have one complimentary night stay in a nearby hotel on Friday, June 17th.

Children, wives, DCFS employees, friends and other family members (mothers-in-law too) can nominate the Foster/Adoptive Dad they love best!

 $\label{thm:continuous} Ut ah Foster Care Foundation will begin accepting online nominations beginning March 1, 2011 at http://www.utahfostercare.org/fosterdadoftheyear.html$

Please note: This site will only be accessible from March 1, 2011 through March 31, 2011.



Salt Lake Valley Region

Salt Lake Valley Office

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400 Murray, UT 84107 Phone: 801. 994.5205 Fax: 801.994.5206 Toll Free: 877.505.KIDS

Area Representative

Dan Webster

Foster/Adoptive Family Recruiters

Amy Boyack Christina LeCluyse Jordan Ames

Trainer

Liz Rivera

Retention Specialist

Tina Porter

www.utahfostercare.org

What are Clusters?

Clusters are groups of foster, adoptive and kinship families that meet together on a monthly basis.

Clusters can help you:

- Obtain in-service training hours
- Meet other foster, adoptive and kinship families
- Get support
- Arrange respite care
- · Attend fun family activities

Cluster facilitator nearest you or contact Tina at 801.994.5205 for more information.

For more information on upcoming Cluster trainings, see "Upcoming In-service Trainings."

Upcoming Training, Etc.



First Placement

First Placement

Presented by

DCFS/Liz Rivera

This training is a pre-service refresher as well as a chance to address specific issues with your current placement. We offer this class quarterly in the Salt Lake Valley.

March 10, 2011

6 pm - 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

FFY

Foundations for Youth

Sessions 1 & 2

Presented by

Liz Rivera

It is essential to help youth build a solid foundation upon which they can more easily make the transition to living as adults and building life long connections for greater stability.

Required for all foster parents of youth 14 and older

February 12

10 am - 4 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

 $5296\,\mathrm{S}.$ Commerce Dr. $\#400\,$

FFY

Foundations for Youth

Sessions 3 & 4

Presented by

Liz Rivera

It is essential to help youth build a solid foundation upon which they can more easily make the transition to living as adults and building life long connections for greater stability.

Required for all foster parents of youth 14 and older

February 26

10 am - 4 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation 5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

Level III

Being With Infants

Presented by Liz Rivera

This training is designed for families with children/youth placed at Level III. Specific skills aimed at teaching new patterns of behavior will be presented.

Session 1: March 3

Session 2: April 5

6 pm - 10 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

Trauma 1-2

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by Liz Rivera

Trauma 101

April 19

6 pm - 9 pm

Trauma 3-4

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by Liz Rivera

Understanding trauma's effects & building a safe place.

Trauma 5-6

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by Liz Rivera

Dealing with Feelings and Behaviors & Connections and Healing

June 13

6 pm - 9 pm

Trauma 7-8

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by Liz Rivera

Becoming an Advocate & Taking Care of Yourself

June 17

6 pm - 9 pm

Upcoming Training, Etc.



Kearns

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Presented by Dr. Matt Woolley

ODD is commonly present with other childhood issues. Dr. Wolley will present information to help.

February 23

6 pm-8 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

Murray

Subsidies

Presented by Panel

A panel from DCFS will discuss post-adoption subsidies.

February 9

6 pm-8 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

SVW/WJ

Helping Children Before/After Visits

Presented by Liz Rivera

Consistent visitation is a predictor of quicker and more successful reunification. But it can still be hard! We'll consider how to ease the stress of visitation for all involved.

February 16

6 pm - 8 pm

South Towne DCFS Office

12537 South Crossing Dr. (north of In and Out Burger)

SVW/WJ

Preventing Burnout

Presented by Irl Carlson

Irl will present a fun discussion on how to keep going when things get tough.

March 24

6 pm - 8 pm

South Towne DCFS Office

12537 South Crossing Dr. (north of In and Out Burger)

SVW/WJ

Those Who've Been There

Presented by Panel Discussion

A panel made up of adults who were in foster care or adoption will share their perspectives.

April 26

6 pm-8 pm

South Towne DCFS Office

12537 South Crossing Dr. (north of In and Out Burger)

Tooele

Movie Night: The Blind Side

Presented by Group Discussion

We'll watch The Blind Side together and discuss how it relates to our experiences.

February 15

7 pm - 9 pm

1784 Aaron Dr. Tooele

Life Books

West Valley City/ Magna/Kearns/ Spanish Speaking

A chance to work on Life Books. Youth 8 and older are welcome to attend too.

February 18

5 pm – 9pm

ADHD 101

Murray/Kearns/ Magna/West Valley City

Presented by Darcey Hirst, UFCF

Darcey will review tips and techniques to parenting the child with ADHD.

March 29

6 pm - 8 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400



Upcoming Training, Etc.



Chapter One

Circle of Security

Circle of Security Parenting is an attachment based model designed to promote secure attachments with our children. It is designed as an 8 "chapter" training. Please try to join us fo the entire series though you may begin at any time.

Presented by Liz Rivera

January 11

6 pm - 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

Chapter Two

Exploring Our Children's Needs

Presented by Liz Rivera

January 18

6 pm – 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

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Chapter Three

Being With

Presented by Liz Rivera

January 25

6 pm - 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

 $5296\,\mathrm{S}.\,\mathrm{Commerce}\,\mathrm{Dr}.\,\#400$

Chapter Four

Being with Infants

Presented by Liz Rivera

February 1

6 pm - 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

Chapter Five

The Path to Security

Presented by Liz Rivera

February 8

6 pm - 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

 $5296\,\mathrm{S}$. Commerce Dr. #400

Chapter Six

Exploring Our Struggles

Presented by Liz Rivera

February 15

6 pm - 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

Chapter Seven

Rupture and Repair in Relationships

Presented by Liz Rivera

February 22

6 pm – 7:30 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

Chapter Eight

Summary and Celebration

Presented by Liz Rivera

March 1

10 am - 4 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

What is Your Purpose in Life?



By Rene Caulkins, President, Utah Foster/Adoptive Families Association (UFAFA), www.myufafa.com

ast night, as I spoke with my teenage daughters in foster care, one brought up something she had learned that day that really made her think. She talked about the fact that we don't always know what our purpose in life is. Sometimes we think we may know, only to end up surprised in the end. We don't know who we may touch, or how we may affect another's purpose. It made me think, too!

Sometimes life seems really hard. Sometimes I wonder why I chose a particular path. With fostering and adopting, the path seems simple. The person we affect is there in front of us, right? Then, when things get difficult or we think we have "failed," we feel there was nothing we did that came out right- perhaps even that our time was wasted. The beauty in all of this is that we can't always see the changes! Sometimes they occur many years down the road. Sometimes they are another generation away. Often they are within ourselves.

As we begin a New Year and contemplate the resolutions we will make, and the changes we will work on, my hope is that we remember - we are in this for the long haul! Changes will come, slowly but surely. Changes in ourselves and those we are trying to help. Changes in a system that doesn't always work the way we would like it to. We just keep working at it in little bits and pieces.

This is amazing work, and we never know when our efforts will come to fruition. "To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream, not only plan, but also believe."



One Stop CD Shop can help you preserve your family memories by turning your old forms of media into a DVD. Call us today! 801.303.6100.



Kemauri

Birthday: 06/1996 Grade in School: 8th Heritage: African American

Reading and dancing are tops on Kemauri's list of favorite things to do. She also enjoys swimming, boating, camping, and hairstyling. This young woman is very engaging and friendly; she wants to please, loves to talk, has a great sense of humor, and is a blast to be around. Kemauri wants very much to be adopted and is looking forward to having a forever family. If your family can provide for Kemauri with the love and support she needs, we urge you to inquire.

For more information, please contact

The Adoption Exchange (801) 265-0444 www.utdcfsadopt.org







Charles

Birthday: 08/1996 Grade in School: 9th Heritage: Hispanic

"Take Me Out to the Ball Game" could be Charles' theme song. Playing baseball is something this young man loves to do and he has participated on many baseball teams in the past. From playing outfield to batting, he does it all! But baseball isn't the only sport this young man is interested in; he has also played some soccer and flag football. Along with a desire to play sports, Charles is a big fan of camping. With a charming smile and great sense of humor, Charles is quick to be riend others. A huge strength is his outgoing personality. If your family can provide Charles with the love and support she needs, we urge you to inquire.

For more information, please contact

The Adoption Exchange (801) 265-0444 www.utdcfsadopt.org

Pediatric Tooth Decay: Protect Your Child's Oral & General Health

By Susan Morgan, Staff Writer

he oral health of adult Americans has improved in recent years, but tooth decay among children – especially preschoolers – is on the rise. Dentists report they are now seeing cases with severe tooth breakdown in toddlers as young as two and a half years of age.

Although cavities are common in children, they are not the norm, but rather a malady leading to chronic pain, slow weight gain, further tooth decay, misalignment of the permanent teeth and infection that, if left unchecked, may result in abscess or even death.

Preventive measures include:

- Checkups with a pediatric dentist starting at 12 months of age.
- Good nutrition ensures your child has a balanced diet of fruits and vegetables, breads and cereals, milk and dairy products, and meat, fish and eggs. Sugar-rich foods and beverages need not be completely avoided. But in order to cut off the build-up of decayinducing bacteria, their frequency should be limited.
- Supervised tooth brushing until approximately age six, when children are likely to demonstrate that they can capably brush on their own. Parents are advised to clean babies' and toddlers' teeth with a brush or washcloth and a pea-sized dose of toothpaste, starting the day the first tooth erupts.
- Check the teeth monthly for horizontal white or brown spots or lines close to the gums. These markings are signs of demineralization, the first indications of tooth decay. If you see these spots or lines, make an appointment with your dentist immediately.
- Get adequate amounts of fluoride. While children receiving therapeutic fluoride treatments do not need additional sources of fluoride, all others should brush with a fluoridated toothpaste and drink fluoridated water.
- Ask your pediatric dentist about dental sealants. These plastic coatings placed on the chewing surfaces of the permanent molars (which appear between ages six to 12) protect the teeth by shutting out cavity-causing food particles. They are recommended for children at moderate to high risk for decay.
- Use Xylitol, a natural sweetener, derived from hardwood trees, that has been shown to weaken the effect of streptococci mutans. Clinical studies show that mothers and other caregivers who start chewing high-concentration Xylitol gum three months after birth will not only lessen the strep mutans content in their own saliva, but will transfer that healthy saliva balance to their baby.



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