

RAPP April 2015 Newsletter

Support Group Support Meetings			
Monthly Sessions	Upcoming Dates	Time Frame	Location
1 st Wednesday, monthly	April 1, 2015 Girls with a Purpose, GWAP	4:30 – 5:30 pm	Carver School Road Library Branch 4915 Lansing Drive, WS Phone: 336-703-2910
1 st Thursday, monthly	April 2, 2015 Chris Gentry from Family Support Network will share about their activities. See page 3 for more details.	6-7:30 pm	Rupert Bell Rec. Ctr 1501 Mount Zion Place, WS 27101 Phone: 336-727-2051
2 nd Wednesday, monthly	April 8, 2015 Chris Gentry from Family Support Network. See page 3 for more details.	12:00 – 2:00 pm	Hanes Hosiery Recreation Center 501 Reynolds Blvd, WS 27106 Phone: 336-727-2428
4 th Thursday, monthly	April 23, 2015 Share ideas about future RAPP Programs, interests & needs!	6 – 7:30 pm	Good Shepherd Moravian Church, 1474 Kerner Road, Kernersville, NC 27284 Phone: 336-993-6633

What is the Relatives As Parents Program, RAPP?

Social Service's Relatives as Parents Program, or RAPP, provides support and activities to any relative or person providing full-time care-giving duties to another person's child living full-time in their home and whose parent(s) is absent. All RAPP activities are provided at low or no cost, and create ways for relative caregivers to meet others in their community. RAPP understands that caregivers face unique challenges in *unexpectedly* parenting someone else's child.

Why should I attend a group?

Because you are not alone! You may feel alone as a care giver, but you are not! Support gives you strength in finding others like you who have traveled this road. There are currently 7.8 million children living with someone other than a parent. This information comes from Generations United, a NY group who supports kinship families like you.

Important School Dates for April

- ✓ **Spring break** is from Monday, March 30 – Friday, April 3 (*Fri, March 27 was taken back due to snow days.*)
- ✓ **Monday, April 6:** Students return to school following Spring Break
- ✓ **Crosby Scholars community service deadlines remaining:**
 - Community service forms due for 6-8th graders on Friday, April 10th
 - Plan ahead, courtesy is to allow 3-5 day notice to complete student service forms.
- ✓ **Wednesday, April 15:** Early release day for the school system. Students leave 2 hours earlier than normal.



Relatives as Parents Program, RAPP

Attn: Susan Parker, Program Coordinator P.O. Box 999, WS, NC 27102-0999 Phone: 336-703-3744

e-mail: parkerse@forsyth.cc Office located on the ground floor, 741 Highland Ave.

RAPP Coordinator Supervisor, Teresa Bryant

DSS Opens New Employment Center

The Employment Center at DSS includes in-house Job Readiness instruction from Forsyth Technical Community College (FTCC), along with workshops on dressing for work, money management, and much more. All services are free and without charge.

Currently the program is open to assist anyone who needs help finding a job. The center's primary focus is to help non-custodial parents (*parents whose children are not living with them*) increase their ability to pay child support through employment. It is also hoped that these parents grow stronger relationships with their children and develop new skills in cooperative co-parenting with the parent who has physical or legal custody of the child. Non-custodial parents of children who receive Work First, also called child only TANF, are able to be served at the employment center. This means if you are a RAPP Family who receives Work First, child only TANF, you could get help with your resume, finding part time or full time employment, etc.

In the future, the vision is to expand those served by the center, to include other customers of DSS who have qualifying children, such as Medicaid and/or Food Nutrition recipients, and adults involved with our Family and Children's Services area. The Employment Center wishes to address the overall needs of families in a more family-centered, whole way. The Employment Center is on the main floor of DSS, behind the elevators.

"If people did not love one another, I really don't see what use there would be in having any spring."

— Victor Hugo,
Les Misérables

Survey Winners

Thanks to everyone who returned the 2014 RAPP Survey! Ms. Bryant picked our two winning numbers which are: 10126, and 10226.

If you are holding these numbers, contact Susan at 703-3744, and she'll let you know how to get your prize!



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Support Groups for April

At the April support groups on 4/2 and 4/8, we will hear about the Family Support Network (FSN). This group strives to help families by connecting them with services for special needs children. The FSN provides support, education and connections to other families. FSN staff have unique skills to coach parents with special needs children. Their services are free and open to the public.

The Family Support Network's term of "special needs" includes a lot of need areas. These include children dealing with ADHD, ADD, Autism & Asberger's, to those living with other physical and brain challenges. Our April speaker will be Chris Gentry from The Family Support Network. *What can FSN share with you?*

- Matching parents who are new in dealing with special needs children with those who have experience.
- Workshops, trainings, and parent groups that provide more information about parenting, and community help or resources.
- "Sibshops" evenings for brothers and sisters of children with special needs. The evening includes dinner, crafts, and discussion times for children 5 to 14.
- Resources for parents to help with understanding and navigating school system needs like the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process in schools, coaching parents on how to get their child's school needs met, or advocate for their children.

Expect to have hope rekindled. Expect your prayers to be answered in wondrous ways.

The dry seasons in life do not last. The spring rains will come again.

- Sarah Ban Breathnach

Free Fun for Families!

❖ The Tenth Annual Piedmont Earth Day Fair will be held on **Saturday, April 25, 2015**, from 10 am to 5 pm at the Dixie Classic Fairgrounds. The Piedmont Earth Day Fair is the largest Earth Day celebration. Check out the free fun, bounce balloons, games, vendors, exhibits and have a fun day out. This year marks the tenth annual fair. Join them!

Piedmont Earth Day Fair is a FREE event including parking, admission, activities, and entertainment for the whole day. Program partners will provide demonstrations, and many activities will be geared toward inspiring and engaging children in learning about re-using/recycling items to create a new circle of use.

The theme of the 2015 Piedmont Earth Day Fair is "*The Power of Bright Ideas*," aimed at educating the public on energy, renewable sources of energy, and the importance of energy conservation.



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Summer Camp Information

Why should I seek summer camp for my child?

- Because it gives you a break from the children!
- It gives them a break from you as caregiver!
- It is another way for children to learn, meet new people, and grow!

Many summer camps are taking applications now! It's time to be thinking about camps, programs or opportunities for your children this summer. Some camps are FREE, and other camps offer scholarships for youth to attend to help lessen your costs.

Camp Jump Start is a wonderful day-camp opportunity for 35- 45 middle school students. Camp is free and runs six weeks, July 22 – July 30th, operating Monday through Thursday. Children bring a lunch daily, and the camp provides chips and drinks. The camp's goal is school readiness, social skills, and being 'drug free'. The camp offers opportunities in music, art, physical activity, and nutrition, as well as field trips to local places. It is hosted annually at St. Paul's United Methodist Church and is a partnership between Drug Free NC's prevention unit, called Unlimited Success, under the coordination of Angela Diaz, Prevention Specialist. *Applications will be available through the RAPP office for interested families in late April - early May.* Camp is FREE, open to children in 6th, 7th and 8th grades. Families provide their own transportation to and from camp, no exceptions. The camp runs daily drop off from 8:30 to 9:00. Families commit to timely pick up at 3:00 pm, or they may be dismissed from camp. There are volunteer opportunities for High School students to serve as Jr. Camp Counselors; these opportunities are only for youth who are mature and without behavioral issues.

Camp Carousel, through the Hospice and Palliative Care Center, is designed to meet the needs of grieving children and teens (rising 1st graders through rising high school seniors). In this caring environment, trained counselors and volunteers help children and teens learn how to express their grief and develop new coping skills for facing their life changes. Camp Carousel promotes learning through creativity and fun. Groups involve the use of the arts — art therapy, music therapy, creative play, and animal-assisted therapy — to provide campers a natural outlet for the expression and understanding of feelings. Campers meet others their own age who know what it's like to lose a loved one. Camp Carousel also provides services for grieving adults who have had a loss. This healing experience offers adult sessions geared toward learning how to cope with personal loss and life change, and the chance to interact with others grieving similar losses. This camp meets for one week, and while a \$25 donation is requested, no one would be turned away. For more information, see their website at:

<http://hospicecarecenter.org/services/grief-counseling>

Any family without the internet can pick up an application from RAPP, or from Hospice.



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More Summer Camp Info

The Childcare Network, with locations in Lewisville and Kernersville, offers scholarships for attending based on family income and number of people in the family unit. Applications for camp and scholarships are both online at the website below. Their website shares, “campers can be found playing sports, cooking food, and enriching their knowledge of the local community by exploring parks, zoos, museums, aquariums, and farms. They will stretch their creative minds through arts, crafts, music, and play, all while continuing their educational journey with reading, math, and science.” For those without computers, RAPP can provide information on how to apply for those without computers. The 2015 summer camp themes can be seen at:

<http://www.childcarenetwork.com/programs/summercamp>

The Salvation Army’s Ken Carlson Boys and Girls Club offers low rates and a payment plan until mid-May; payments on the plan must be completed by May. The program cost covers the summer break, and if you pay for the full summer camp, it also covers after school care for the whole academic year 2015-16 for one price. However, you’ll need to confirm that they offer bus drop off from your child’s school to the Boys and Girls Club. Contact the club directly for more information; Sharon can share pricing details and final payment deadlines. This program offers payment by credit card, cash or money order.

This summer, the program runs from Monday, June 15, through Friday, August 14. The club remains open Monday thru Friday the whole summer, but will be closed on Friday, July 3rd. The summer program offers fun trips, activities and academic enrichment. Again, the RAPP office can help provide application details.

Sawtooth School for Visual Arts offers summer classes for Pre-K through high school students in all kinds of art-related activities like painting, ceramics, and photography. While the classes are quite expensive, the school offers scholarships based on family size and income. The school is committed to including students from all income backgrounds, and the RAPP office could provide you with the forms, or, you can see the application at:

<http://www.sawtooth.org/about/sawtooth-scholarships/>

Big Brothers /Big Sisters Program offers free information for children who are in their program. They periodically get details on summer programs and children get freebies for being a part of their Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program. Ask your assigned case manager about summer camp information. They can be contacted at 336-724-7993.



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Exciting shifts coming to RAPP!

We're becoming more official to serve you... we need your help...

Back in January, we included a kinship verification form in our newsletter. We encouraged you to return the form, so we could include our kinship families in our database. We need to be sure other workers are aware of your kinship situation in case you are needing assistance elsewhere in our agency.

The form asks your relative child's name, birthdate, and some other basic information. We are planning exciting updates to the RAPP program in the future. Families who came to the last lunch support group meeting heard first hand from our new Division Director, Victor Isler. Victor shared his hope to eventually expand the RAPP program so that it would be possible to provide some financial resources to families who have taken on this role on a full-time basis, caring for a relative's child. While, he is unable to promise anything, this is his goal.

In order for this to be reality, it is necessary to formalize RAPP or make it more official. This means families have to be in our database with their kinship information. That means:

RAPP families are those where a relative provides full-time care to another relative's child, who is 18 or younger, and the child lives with them daily, rather than with a birth parent (and the birth parent is not in the home).

Going forward, we will need for families who participate in our special Back to School and Holiday Project programs to have a kinship verification form on file. We have fifty families who have returned this kinship form, but that means a lot of families have not!

If your family meets the definition above and wants to continue participating in the Back to School and Holiday Projects, please return your form or contact Susan for a replacement form. She can email one to you, or leave one at the front desk for you to pick up.

Families where the child is now over 18, or where the child is no longer living with you full-time, can still participate in the support groups and be part of our newsletter list, in addition to being able to get other resource information from our program with Susan.

"A goal without a plan is a wish."

Former NFL Player & Coach, Herman Edwards



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