

# It's ALL Relative

GCCOA Kinship Newsletter

June 2022

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## *A Mental Health Crisis*



In November of last year, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), and the Children's Hospital Association (CHA) jointly declared a National State of Emergency in Children's Mental Health. Part of the statement reads, "Rates of childhood mental health concerns and suicide rose steadily between 2010 and 2020 and by 2018 suicide was the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24. The pandemic has intensified this crisis."<sup>1</sup>

Families in a Kinship situation already have emotional challenges. So what can be done?

First, be aware of the signs of mental health problems. These include:

- Lack of interest in activities or hobbies that the child/teen previously enjoyed
- A drastic change in academic performance
- Physical changes such as sudden weight loss/gain or lack of self-care
- Dilated pupils or frequent bloody noses can be a sign of drug use
- Extreme moodiness, and lashing out, beyond "normal" teenage growing pains
- A change in relationships - perhaps suddenly having a totally new group of friends

If the child in your care has one or more of these signs, and you are concerned, talk to your family doctor. Counseling may help.

Being open with adolescents about emotions and mental health can help as well. Difficult feelings are normal, and talking about how to deal with them will help the child feel less alone.

Ross Szabo, former Director of Outreach of the National Mental Health Awareness Campaign, suggests making your teen the expert on a topic. "For example, if you're worried your teen is vaping, then ask them what they know about vaping. Ask if they know anyone who vapes. Ask them what they think of vaping. And then ask if they are vaping."<sup>2</sup>

The childhood mental health crisis began back in 2010, right about the time that social networking was taking off. Too much screen time can lead to a lack of

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## *Mental Health Crisis continued*

in-person socialization, low activity levels, and lack of sleep. All of these take a toll on mental health. Adolescent girls, especially, are affected by how many “likes” their posts get on social media, but boys are not immune.

Combat this trend by:

- Encouraging the child(ren) in your care to play sports, go hiking, or otherwise play outdoors.
- Setting healthy bedtimes, and have a nighttime place for cell phones or video game devices that keeps screens outside the bedroom.
- Taking an interest in what the child(ren) are doing at school, their friends, and their activities.

It is also important to talk openly about internet safety. The Council has copies of a booklet put out by the FTC called NET CETERA: Chatting with Kids About Being Online. Contact us at 937-376-5486 or [susan.finster@gcco.org](mailto:susan.finster@gcco.org) to get your copy.

Finally, be mindful of your own mental health. Taking care of your own needs will give you the resiliency to take care of others'. As always, your Kinship Liaison is available by email, phone, or in-person to lend an ear or help you find resources.

1 <https://www.aap.org/en/advocacy/child-and-adolescent-healthy-mental-development/aap-aacap-cha-declaration-of-a-national-emergency-in-child-and-adolescent-mental-health/>, October 19, 2021

2 <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/social-instincts/202205/what-should-be-done-fix-adolescent-mental-health>, May 30, 2022

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## ***Kinship Permanency Incentive***

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Ohio's *Kinship Permanency Program*, or KPI, is intended to provide initial financial support for minor children who are being cared for in a kinship situation. Funds include an initial larger payment, followed by a series of smaller payments at 6 month intervals, up to a total of 8 payments.

*There is no deadline for the initial application.*

Eligibility requirements:

- A court-issued order granting legal custody or on or after July 1, 2005. Temporary or informal guardianship is not sufficient.
- The child must live with the kinship caregiver.
- Everyone 18 years or older in the home must complete a background check.
- If the placement was not made by an approved children services agency, the kinship family must undergo a home study (at no cost) prior to KPI approval.
- The gross income of the household cannot exceed 300% of federal poverty guidelines.

To request the KPI application packet, contact: Greene County Job and Family Services, 541 Ledbetter Road, Xenia, OH 45385 or call 937-562-6600

# Save the Date ~ JamFest

On August 17th, 4-6:30pm, our JamFest will once again be the place to bee. This family-friendly event is our largest fundraiser of the year, and will include shopping, refreshments, cloud races, a silent auction of some amazing baskets, and the day finishes with a live auction of homemade treats - both sweet, and savory. All proceeds go towards future programs.

Watch Facebook and our web site for more details, or contact Susan at 937-376-5486 x119 or [susan.finster@gcco.org](mailto:susan.finster@gcco.org)



Summer camps are a great way for kids to get outdoors, explore an interest, and maybe try something new. These web sites have a variety of camps listed:

[daytonlocal.com/summer-camps.asp](http://daytonlocal.com/summer-camps.asp)

[downtowndayton.org/things-to-do/summercamps/](http://downtowndayton.org/things-to-do/summercamps/)

Your local library is a great resource, too - and don't forget about the summer reading program!

[greenelibrary.bibliocommons.com/v2/events](http://greenelibrary.bibliocommons.com/v2/events)

## Finding Resources

Often these days, resources, information, or forms are best found on the web. If you do not have access to a computer, this can be a real problem. Here at the Council, your Kinship Liaison can help. She is able to help you find and print forms, and email or fax documents.

If you need help getting online, contact Susan at 937-376-5486 x119 or [susan.finster@gcco.org](mailto:susan.finster@gcco.org) to arrange a time to come in to the office. #

## MIAMI VALLEY Women's Center Summer Give Away

The Miami Valley Women's Center in Xenia is holding their annual summer give away. Most of the items are clothing, from infant to 5T. Everything is free! Call 937-374-0001 with any questions.

Miami Valley Women's Center Xenia  
245 S Allison Ave

|          |           |      |
|----------|-----------|------|
| Monday   | June 20th | 9-3  |
| Tuesday  | June 21st | 11-7 |
| Thursday | June 32rd | 11-6 |



## Shoes 4 the Shoeless

Shoes 4 the Shoeless is a faith-based, non-profit organization with a mission is to provide new gym shoes to children whose families cannot afford them. There is no cost. Go once to be fitted, then back a week later to pick up the shoes.

Shoes 4 the Shoeless - Measuring day  
Saturday July 30th, 9:30-10:30 am  
Faith Community United Methodist Church  
100 Country Club Drive, Xenia



# Kinship

1195 W Second St  
Xenia, OH 45385



## Upcoming Programs & Events

- ◆ **RAP Group (“Relatives As Parents” Support Group)**  
2nd Tuesday of each month (July 12th, August 9th, September 13th ), 10:00-11:30 am  
Council Office, 1195 W 2nd St, Xenia  
**Contact Susan Finster for details at 937-376-5486 x119 or [susan.finster@gcco.org](mailto:susan.finster@gcco.org)**
- ◆ **Shoes 4 the Shoeless Measuring Event**  
Saturday, July 30th, 9:30-10:30 am  
Faith Community United Methodist Church, 100 Country Club Drive, Xenia
- ◆ **Fall Prevention Awareness & Wellness Event**  
Thursday, September 29th, 1:30-3:30  
Xenia Community Center
- ◆ **Weekly Programming with our Partners at Real Roots Radio, WBZI FM 100.3:**  
Wednesdays between 12:05pm & 12:15pm      *Boomers and Beyond*  
Thursdays soon after 6:00pm                      *Partners in Caregiving*

**CONTACT US:** The above programs are sponsored by the Greene County Council on Aging (GCCOA). For information on these programs, contact us at **937-376-5486** or **[yourfriends@gcco.org](mailto:yourfriends@gcco.org)**.