

COMPASSION IN ACTION

Cobb County School District - School Social Work Newsletter

April May 2011



WAYS TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

- Volunteer with a local program. Parent support groups, crisis centers, emergency shelters, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs, local schools and child abuse telephone hotlines are typical programs that welcome volunteers.
- Report suspected abuse and neglect to your county Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) or the police. Keeping children safe means each of you has an obligation to inform the authorities if you suspect children are being mistreated. Your concern may protect a child from further abuse.
- Advocate for services that strengthen families. Communities need comprehensive services that address issues that affect families. Health care, parenting programs, employment and housing are all important to maintaining healthy families.
- Contribute to a child abuse prevention organization. Your donations are put to good use in much-needed community programs that are crucial to prevent abuse and neglect.
- Help a neighbor, friend or relative. Someone you know may be struggling with his or her parenting responsibilities. Offer a sympathetic ear or a helping hand. Offering to baby-sit once in a while or helping locate community resources can be a tremendous boost to someone under stress.
- Support and suggest programs on child abuse prevention sponsored by local organizations. Many groups, including churches and men's and women's clubs, offer excellent opportunities for raising awareness in the community.
- Promote school programs that teach children how to protect themselves.
- Help yourself. Recognize the signs that indicate you may need some outside help. If you feel overwhelmed, constantly sad, angry and often out of control, talk to somebody and get help. Remember, it is a sign of strength, not weakness, to ask for help.

MEMORIAL FUND

We had a tragedy in the Cobb County School District family over the Holiday break. Georgia State Trooper Chad LeCroy, parent of a 5th grader at Eastvalley Elementary was killed in the line of duty. We offer our condolences to his wife Keisha, son Chase, and to other family and friends. A fund is set up by State Troopers if you would like to help out by donating to that fund. The address is: DPS Credit Union, P.O. Box 1456, Atlanta, GA 30371. Make checks payable to "The family of Officer LeCroy fund".



Did you know?

- April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Where can I learn more?

To report abuse or get help, contact the National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-Child (1-800-422-4453).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov/injury
Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb
Child Welfare Information Gateway
www.childwelfare.gov

FRIENDS National Resource Center
www.friendsnrc.org
National Scientific Council on the Developing Child

www.developingchild.net



FAITH BASED RESOURCES

As the needs of the families we serve continue to grow and the resources available continue to decrease the Area 2 School Social Workers have developed a partnership with the faith based community in our area. Monthly meetings are now being held to continue our discussion of community needs and how to connect families to local resources.

We have already been able to recruit mentors for our students. The mentors not only work with the students in our schools on a weekly basis but they also provide them with support out in the community. It’s been a wonderful program not just for the mentees but the mentors providing the support to students with needs. Our faith based members also provide the school social workers access to their resources such as: food pantries, clothes closets, after school programs/tutoring and support groups.

This collaborative started with just one social worker who saw a tremendous need in the community and

knew the faith based community was a great resource. We are rapidly expanding to include areas 1 and 2 and would love to make it a district wide initiative! We are excited about the continued possibilities for Cobb County School district students and their families!



AUSTELL CITY MAYOR MAKES A HUGE IMPACT IN SOUTH COBB!

Last year after the flooding the Austell City Mayor, Joe Jerkins, called Garrett Middle School along with four other schools in the area to offer a check of \$500 to 10 different families. He said that he knew we had connections to many families that were affected by the flooding and the City of Austell wanted to show their support. What a wonderful blessing that \$25,000 was for the families chosen by the social workers.

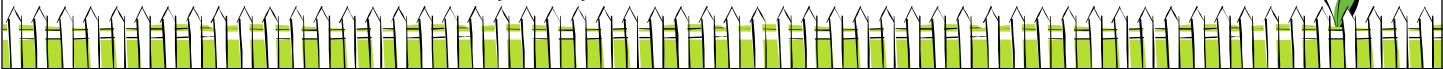
Then, in December Mayor Jerkins called again and said he wanted to help again this year—with the SAME amount for the same number of families--\$500 to 10 families in 5 schools! He also said the City Council had approved to give \$2500 to more than 10 local churches! That’s over \$50,000 from the city of Austell to families in Austell, Powder Springs, Mableton and even into Marietta.

One middle school student wrote: “Dear Mr. Joe Jerkins, This year for Christmas you have given our family a spark for presents, not only my dad and sister, but me mostly. This card is for you and the others. I wrote this card to thank you very much.”

Another student wrote: “Dear Mr. Joe Jerkins, Your money helped us get winter clothes. Now when I walk out in the cold, I feel better and it makes me happy and when I walk to school I am warmer.”

The parents that received this donation were gracious, to say the least, for the mayor’s generosity in these very difficult times. The families consisted of those experiencing homelessness, critical medical conditions, loss of a spouse through death, and extreme financial hardship. One parent stated, “Just when you think there is nowhere to turn, someone comes and answers all your prayers”.

Each and every year the social workers are depended upon to find resources for families in dire situations, especially during the holidays. There are many community agencies and resources that help us and others through these difficult times. We couldn’t thank them enough for the support they offer! Thank you for helping to make another holiday season GREAT!



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We are recycling used electronics to raise funds for our schools! We are currently collecting cell phones, laser and inkjet cartridges, iPods, video games & consoles, scientific and graphing calculators, DVDs and GPS devices, PDAs, digital cameras and laptops to raise money for our schools. Please bring all items to the drop-off location at your school. Call your School Social Worker for more information.

Thank you for recycling!

Visit CFKtoday.com for more information about our recycling program.