



December, 2011

Child & Youth Development Services

MAKE UP YOUR MIND

By Susan Neufeld (Director of Child & Youth Development, HTHF)

The end of the year is always an interesting time that can stir mixed feelings such as excitement for a fresh start; a sense of satisfaction over accomplishments; or sadness as we remember changes or losses. Each year, I like to take time to inventory the past year and re-establish my purpose for the next. I ask myself key questions:

What was my most satisfying accomplishment or experience?

What event or moment stirred the strongest negative reaction in me?

What is something I regret not doing, saying, or experiencing?

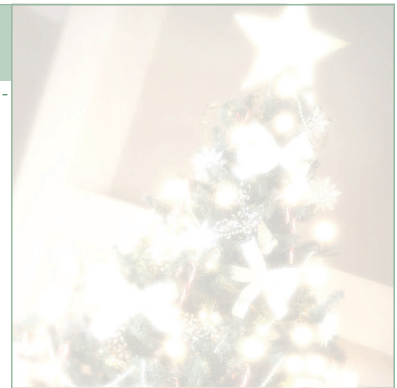
What was the most fun or joy I had during the year?

The answers to these questions give insight into who I am, what I value, and how connected I am to my purpose and mission. They also help me see how I've grown over the past year and where there is room for more growth. All of these insights can be used to hit my reset button for 2012 and help me walk into the new year with clarity and a solid intention for who I want to be and how I want to show up in my life.

I encourage all of us to find moments to reflect during this busy holiday season – as individuals and as site teams. As a group, talk about your program highs and lows. How can you use these lessons to create new intentions for 2012? What is your team's purpose and vision for your program? For your relationships with each other, parents, Property Management, and the youth?

The theme of this month's newsletter is "newness." More specifically, we have selected "Make Up Your Mind Day" as our central theme. This is a terrific theme that I interpret this way: **Make up your mind about who you want to be and what you want to get out of 2012.** Make it a year of action, growth, joy, and connection to purpose. If we all do this, 2012 will promise to be an amazing and impactful year.

Happy New Year!

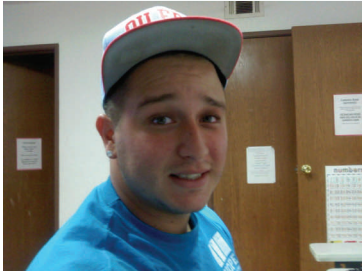


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- Get info about our upcoming trainings as well as how to earn a Rocker Coin or two



Adrien Flores

MEET OUR STAR STAFF

Congratulations, Adrien Flores
Monterey Village, Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Our friendly and energetic December Star Staff has been with Hope Through Housing since February. Debra Viola, his Site Coordinator, is proud to have him on her team. “He shows compassion and cares for the children in the program. He is creative and applies it.”

Get to know Adrien:

- Favorite colors: **Green** and **Blue**
- Favorite food: Sushi

- Favorite/Dream Vacation: Fiji
- What he is most proud of: his academic awards: three Scholar Athlete awards and the Golden State Merit Diploma
- His favorite part about working with youth: It is an escape from the everyday life of stress and worry. Working with youth is challenging at times but it can also be very therapeutic. It is rewarding in a sense of giving back to the future generations and bettering the children’s lives.

“While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about.”
- Angela Schwindt

PEACE CORNER

Praise People

- Hold a “Give S’more Praise Event”– Make S’mores and invite parents to come out and exchange Praise Notes
- Create a Praise Log– after giving a Praise Note, have youth fill out their Praise Log with who they gave the praise to and their reaction
- Make “Gifts of Praise”- make Holiday cards with praises for relatives
- Brainstorm a Praise List- come up with a list of as many Praises as possible and post them on a bulletin board

-Submitted by Lamar Simmons & Debra Viola

PEACE BUILDERS SPOTLIGHT

Mountainside, Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Congratulations to our December Peace Builder’s Site!

Staff at Mountainside have been working very hard to provide a safe, engaging and peaceful environment for their youth and families. With two out of three staff being new to the site this year, they have undergone a lot of changes and continually invest themselves in building new relationships with each other, their youth and their families. They have done an exceptional job and remain focused on their vision and goals as a site. Erica Vega, the Site Coordinator of Mountainside, has served her site well by being a positive example.

As one of our smaller and “spatially challenged” sites, Erica and her team have embraced the challenges of their program space and have created a place where youth and adults alike can relax and enjoy themselves. Olivia Torrez, Site Coordinator at Sunset Heights, has this to say about Mountainside, “They focus on team work, building each other up by praising one another and learning how to respect each other’s culture. This has allowed them to be themselves in a positive way and has brought them closer together and provided a strong sense of community.”

Well done ladies of Mountainside. Keep up the fabulous work!



A TOUR OF HOPE

BEST PRACTICES OF AFTER SCHOOL AND BEYOND



Left: Homework Kits in Action at Bravo in Riverside, CA



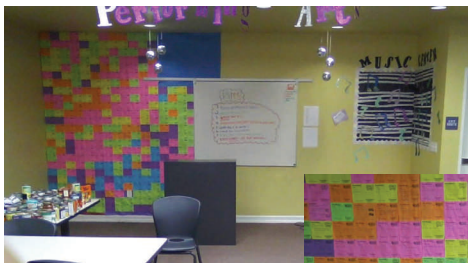
Above: Kids Taking Charge and Getting Comfy during KidzLit at Paseo del Oro in San Marcos, CA



Above: Getting in Touch with Emotions with the Today I Feel Board and Getting to Know Each Other during Circle Time at Monterey Village, in Rancho Cucamonga, CA



Right: Wonderful Works of Art from Renaissance Village in Rialto, CA



Left: Wall of Praise at Rancho Verde Village in Rancho Cucamonga, CA

IDEA CORNER

Festive Holidays

- Create a Holiday Scrapbook and document all the different celebrations you learn about
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/holidays/>
- Go Green! Make "A-Bottle-Able Snowmen" out of plastic bottles
<http://familyfun.go.com/christmas>
- Teach youth how to play Dreidel, and have a Dreidel tournament
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dreidel>



- Make Reindeer Cookies!
www.familycorner.com/family/kids/recipes



- Make a Kwanzaa Unity Cup

out of clay or inexpensive goblets and decorate with decoupage, fabric, buttons or beads
www.theholidayspot.com/kwanzaa

- Create a Poinsettia Candy Dish
www.crayola.com/crafts/detail/christmas-candy-dish-craft



- Holiday Relay Races—unwrap treats while wearing mittens; see which team can wrap gifts the fastest
www.partygameideas.com/christmas-games

- Homemade Doorbell Craft—recycle egg cartons and jingle away
www.marthastewart.com/270876/kid-made-doorbells



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Safe Departures

- ⇒ Post a list of youth who are not allowed to walk home near the exit
- ⇒ Have youth who are walking home line up at the door before dismissal
- ⇒ Ensure that youth use their “walking feet” as they leave program
- ⇒ Remind youth of safe travel (wear seat belts, look before crossing the street or parking lot, walk in pairs, don't talk to strangers)
- ⇒ Sign out and note the time of youth who leave early and check for permission from parents/ guardians
- ⇒ Sign out all remaining youth at the end of program as they leave
- ⇒ Whenever possible, have a “walking bus” and walk youth home
- ⇒ If it is dark when youth leave, encourage them to use flashlights and be extra cautious when crossing streets and parking lots
- ⇒ Assign “walking buddies” and have youth walk home with others who live nearby
- ⇒ Be sure all staff know the policy about who youth are allowed to leave with and what to do if someone they do not recognize comes to pick up a child
- ⇒ Always be aware of who is coming into the program space at all times

A NOTE ABOUT COMMITMENT

By Laura Fitzpatrick (Coordinator of Program and Staff Development, HTHF)

I recently read an article about commitment by a man named Chuck Gallozzi. I was struck by the sub-heading of Gallozzi's article: “A good start isn't good enough” and thought, “I've certainly been there a time or two.” How is it that we can be so enthusiastic about a commitment when we make it, only to wake up the next day completely unmotivated? “Coach of the Century” Vince Lombardi is quoted as saying, “The difference between a successful person and others is not the lack of strength, not the lack of knowledge, but rather a lack of will.” We may know that something is important and a good idea or even essential to our wellbeing, but how do we increase our willpower, our level of commitment in order to achieve real results?

It is easy to use ourselves or others as a scapegoat for not accomplishing goals: “I didn't have enough time or money; that goal was silly or not important anyway; I tried, but I'm just not _____ enough; he/she was supposed to _____.” What we need to understand is that the goals we have are not the problem, we are. Increasing your willpower for a cause or goal requires a change in how you think about yourself and the power you are willing to accept over your own life. It requires letting go of fears, past disappointments, our own rebellion and convincing our whole self (not just “motivated Laura” who's all over her commitment to a healthy lifestyle but “lazy Laura” and “I just want one slice of cake, and that cheeseburger, and those fries Laura”) that it can be done. I am smart enough. I do have what it takes. Turn your “I shoulds,” which Gallozzi notes automatically evokes resistance, into “I wants.”

So I ask you, what do you want this year??

Find Chuck Gallozzi's full article at www.personal-development.com/chuck/commitment
Read the article & email Laura 1 thing that stuck out to you & get a rocker coin!

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

Family Game Night– December 16th at 4:00pm

Family Games and Songs

Hawthorne Terrace in Hawthorne, CA

Winter Wonderland– December 17th at 5:30pm

Youth Performance, Photos with Santa, Gifts and Food

Bravo Mobile Homes in Riverside, CA

A Night with Santa– December 19th at 4:30pm

Photos with Santa and a Bake Sale

Monterey Village in Rancho Cucamonga, CA

A Night to Rejoice– December 22nd at 3:00pm

Youth Performances in Song, Dance and Poetry

Rancho Verde Village in Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Holiday Party– December 22nd at 4:00pm

Meet Santa, Fun and Games

La Quinta in Palmdale, CA

A Night with Santa– December 22nd at 4:00pm

Photos with Santa, Gifts and Hot Cocoa

Sunset Heights in Alta Loma, CA

TIME OUT!

HOLIDAY STRESS REDUCERS

Social Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Talk to your friends about your frustrations and joys
2. Prioritize invitations; say no to parties or make a brief appearance
3. Refuse to compare your appearance, lifestyle or possessions to other people's

Physical Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Get a massage , manicure or pedicure; or take a hot bubble bath
2. Go skating, skiing, or walking
3. Stop eating before you're too full; reduce your caffeine intake
4. Get enough sleep; take your vitamins and drink lots of water



“A child can ask questions that a wise man cannot answer.” - Unknown

Mental Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Volunteer at a food bank or special holiday dinner
2. Take downtime to relax, snooze, read, watch your favorite show or movie
3. Take a crossword puzzle or Sudoku break

Emotional Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Practice gratitude; laugh!
2. Have realistic expectations; stay in touch with your authentic emotions
3. Stop to take a deep breath; be alone for a few minutes

Creative Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Go to a movie in the middle of the day by yourself
2. Listen to music that relaxes and/or energizes you
3. Go for a drive in the country; stop for hot chocolate and muffins
4. Write in your journal

Spiritual Ways to Reduce Stress

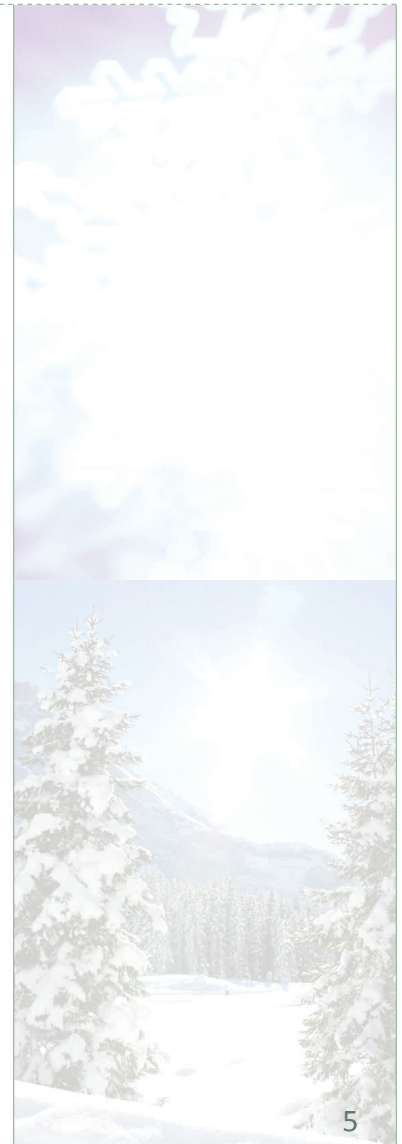
1. Meditate or pray often; read the Bible, Torah or other meaningful book
2. Seek the deep meaning behind the holiday(s) you celebrate
3. Reconnect with yourself, a higher power, or nature

Practical Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Use lists and calendars to stay organized; give yourself extra time
2. Delegate chores; cook the turkey and let guests bring the rest
3. Shop over the internet to avoid crowds; stick to your budget and avoid impulse buys

Relational Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Change your regular responses to aggravating family members
2. Don't expect other people to change
3. Maintain healthy boundaries



IMPORTANT DATES

7th– Hope Orientation

26th– Paid Holiday (Hope Staff)

27th-30th– Bonus Vacation (Hope Staff)

DECEMBER FUN FACTS

Flower: Narcissus

Stone: Blue Topaz

November is: National Stress Free Month (Ha!)

BINGO Month

Read a New Book Month

Days of Interest: 7– Letter Writing Day; Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day; Teacher Appreciation Day

10– Human Rights Day

12– Poinsettia Day

15– Underdog Day

17– Bake Cookies Day; Aviation Day

21– Humbug Day

23– Feast of Radishes Day

31– Make Up Your Mind Day



ANNOUNCEMENT

There will be no trainings in December.

We hope everyone has a happy, safe and enjoyable Holiday Season!

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HOPE through HOUSING
FOUNDATION

TRAINING LOCATIONS

Rancho Verde Village

8837 Grove Avenue

Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Parking: Any uncovered spot

Citrus Grove

1432 N Willow Avenue

Rialto, CA 92376

Parking: On the Street

Villaggio on Route 66

10220 Foothill Boulevard

Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Parking: Any uncovered spot

Paseo de Oro

432 W Mission Road

San Marcos, CA 92069

Parking: There is a small lot on the east side of the leasing office. On the west side of the office, there is a lot with 90 minute parking. Breaks will be provided to move your car if you must park here.