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January 2022

**Issue
Eight**

Our Mission: To provide safe homes, healing and healthy environments and encouraging youth empowerment.

The Heartbeat

The Official Newsletter of The Heart Matters Foster Family Agency

Around the Agency

Here we GROW again!

The Heart Matters is steadily growing with the success of our mental health and transitional housing programs. We would like to introduce our newest members:

Madeline Gonzalez – Administrative Assistant

Marco Barriga – Clinical Therapist

Christopher Berrun – Behavioral Rehab
Specialist

Catiana Huante – Agency Social Worker

Camilo Aguirre – Education/Employment
Specialist - THP



These team members joined just in time for the holiday season. Since becoming part of our team they have not only assisted with the success of the holidays but have helped the youth in our Transitional Housing Program in their journey towards adulthood, provided mental health services for foster youth of all ages, and assisted in caring for all youth within our agency.

Heart Filled Holidays!



The holidays are always a difficult time of year for our foster youth. Each year our agency strives to let them know they are loved, and that Santa will bring them gifts wherever they are.

This year, with the help of over 70 businesses, organizations, and individuals, we were able to provide over 1,000 gifts to foster youth throughout the Inland Empire. Our hearts were filled with joy to see our children smile, laugh, and play while picking up their gifts. Each year, we are overcome with emotions as they carry their bags home and talk about how excited they are for Christmas.

We would like to take this time to thank all those who helped achieve this goal and helped bring joy to the foster youth within our agency.

****Adoption Spotlight****

*Our hearts are full of joy as we proudly announce
our recently adopted children!!!*

*"A family isn't made from blood; it's made from love."
-Unknown*



Amora Sun Cobos-Sanders
Adopted by The Sanders Family

Agency Spotlight -The Heart Matters Mental Health Center

The Heart Matters Mental Health Center has moved! We are happy to announce that our whole team is back together again as our Mental Health Center has moved into Suite 13 in the 21935 Van Buren St. complex.

Our Mental Health Center has grown exponentially within these last few months. We are thrilled to have a team which now consists of 4 mental health clinicians, a behavioral rehab specialist, 2 administrative assistants, and a parent partner.

The Heart Matters is also extremely happy to announce that this program will begin servicing San Bernardino County in early 2022, in addition to the youth served within Riverside County. This is a huge accomplishment for this program, as it will allow us to provide essential services to all youth within our agency.

If your foster youth is in need of mental health services, please contact us at (909) 906-1023.

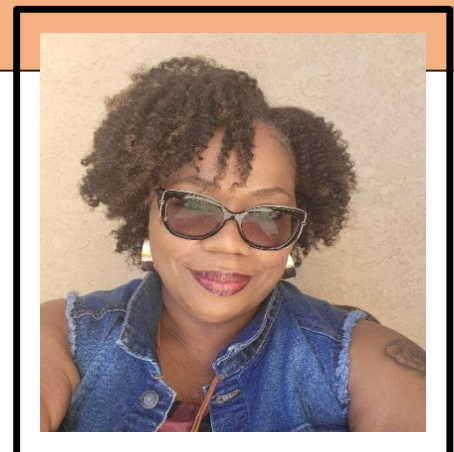


Employee Spotlight

The Heart Matters would like to announce our Employee of the Quarter, Tyiesha Coulson. We would like to honor and recognize Tyiesha for all she does in our Transitional Housing Program (THP). She has helped build this program from the ground up. THP is not an easy program to manage and has come with its challenges, but Tyiesha has never backed down. Her perseverance and passion to help foster youth has led to this program's growth and success.

"I love to see each youth flourish and thrive within the program. Helping them obtain jobs, housing, and educational advancement is a precious experience to be a part of. I am happy to have this opportunity to not only positively affect their lives but guide them through their transition into adulthood."

Congratulations Tyiesha!



Tips for Parents



Credit: Youtube – WhatsUpMoms: TIPS, Family Calendar (for Young Kids)

10 Tips to help get your child organized

1. Help kids break school projects or household chores into smaller, more manageable steps.
2. Once kids know all the steps involved with a particular task, help them add it to an overall to-do list. Include regular homework and chores on the list. Encourage kids to keep the list in a place where they'll see it often and can check off accomplishments as they go.
3. Encourage kids to write down important tasks on a calendar (digital or paper). Then help them estimate how much time each task will take.
4. Creating a regular schedule can help kids learn what to expect throughout the day. Use picture schedules, clocks, and other time management strategies.
5. Show kids how to use outlines, graphic organizers, or concept webs to organize ideas for school projects.
6. Assign colors to each school subject. Use brightly colored pocket folders for items that need to be signed and returned. Suggest using pens of different colors to help kids shift from the role of writer to the role of self-checker and editor.
7. Show kids how to create their own silly sentences, songs, acronyms, or cartoons to remember information.
8. Set aside spaces at home where each child can work without interruption.
9. Your child's backpack is a crucial link between home and school, so it's important to keep it neat. Schedule a time each week for kids to clean out and organize the backpack.
10. Before bedtime, sit down together to review plans for the next day. This can make kids feel more secure. Together you can plan how to handle things if a change comes up in the schedule.

<https://www.understood.org/articles/en/10-tips-to-help-get-your-child-organized>

“The best way to make children good is to make them happy.”

Oscar Wilde

How to Make New Year's Resolutions for Kids

New Year's resolutions aren't just for adults! Here are some practical ways to help your growing kids make achievable goals for the new year.

New Year's Day is the traditional time to celebrate a new beginning, and kids ages 7-12 are at the ideal stage to learn to make resolutions, experts say. "They're still young enough that their habits are not firm," says Christine Carter, Ph.D., author of *Raising Happiness: 10 Simple Steps for More Joyful Kids and Happier Parents*, and a teacher for an online class on helping kids develop happiness habits. "They're old enough to think about what a New Year's resolution is and to make their own—yet parents can still help guide them.

Jennifer Kolari, a parent and child therapist and author of *Connected Parenting*, says, "They're beginning to be mindful and to understand others' perspectives. They're doing more independently, and they're starting to open up to broader goals of how to become their best selves."

Making resolutions with your children can be fun and exciting, a time for growth and change, and an opportunity for family bonding. Read our tips on how to make New Year's resolutions for kids and help them keep in touch with their goals all year long.

HERE ARE SEVEN STRATEGIES TO GET YOU STARTED:

1. **Be Resolution Role Models.** As parents, it's important to practice what you preach. "Do you believe in, make, and keep resolutions?" asks Robin Goodman, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist and art therapist who has written books on children and stress. "You have to walk the walk and talk the talk to be most effective."
2. **Keep a Positive Approach.** Start by going over the positive things your kids accomplished last year. "Instead of pointing out shortcomings, be the historian of their previous successes," Dr. Carter says. "Point to the bright spot where they're doing something well."
3. **Suggest Resolutions, Don't Decide Them.** The big question parents have at this point: Should you make resolutions for your child? Most experts say no. You can guide and suggest general categories for change, help your child clarify goals, and make sure they're age-appropriate, but kids should come up with resolutions themselves. This is how they take ownership of their goals and learn to plan.
4. **Narrow Down the List.** Take a fresh sheet of paper and have your child write down their top three resolutions, leaving a large space between each one for inserting smaller steps. Help your child make them realistic and age appropriate.
5. **Take Turtle Steps.** Turning a good intention into a habit is "one of the most important skills we can teach our kids," says Dr. Carter. "It's the key to happiness in life." She suggests that parents help kids break their resolutions down into "ridiculously easy turtle steps." "Self-discipline is like a muscle that grows slowly," she says. "If you do too much at first, you will get fatigued and not be successful."
6. **Follow Up.** Check in periodically with kids on how they're doing. "Don't worry about lapses. Expect them. A lapse is forgetting for a day or two, or having a week in which a turtle step didn't work. Or maybe you went on vacation and couldn't practice. That's not failure; that's just trying. No big change is ever accomplished perfectly," Dr. Carter says.
7. **Make Family Resolutions.** Resolutions also bring families closer, especially when you decide to set goals together. Families could plan to do one charitable thing a month and brainstorm about what that might be. You could pick up trash in the park or donate used clothes and toys to a shelter. "As long as you're working on it together, that's great," Kolari says.

Written By: Wendy Schuman and Kim Conte for Parents.com



*Carrie Mathews, MPA
Executive Director*

Dear Amazing Families,

2021 was a year we will never forget. The Heart Matters Foster Family Agency celebrated its 5th year anniversary back in October and I could not help to think back to when this agency began. I started this agency with only a handful of staff members and 12 resource homes. I could not have imagined the success and assistance this agency would bring to the foster community. Now, in 2022, we have over 30 staff members and 57 resource homes. We have also grown to add multiple essential programs under our name. With the additions of our Transitional Housing and Mental Health Programs, we are not only able to provide safe and healthy homes for current foster youth, but transitional and former foster youth as well.

With a new year comes new goals and new growth. I am excited to see what our team and agency has planned for this upcoming year and cannot wait to share these with you all . This last year allowed us to come together again after a year of being apart. The Heart Matters plans to continue our gatherings throughout the next year to keep our children and families close and to present opportunities for our youth to grow socially, mentally, and emotionally. Our agency will continue to follow county guidelines during these events to keep all in attendance safe and healthy.

I am also proud to announce that our Mental Health Program has gained acceptance to expand into the San Bernardino County allowing us to provide services to all youth within our agency. It is an honor to have been accepted to serve this area and provide essential services to youth who have been unable to attain services in a timely manner.

As you can see, this year will be one for the books. I look forward to what is to come and wish you all a happy, safe, and healthy New Year.

Most Gratefully & Humbly
with Love,

Carrie
♥♥♥

Recipe of the Month

The Best Crockpot Beef Stew By familyfreshmeals.com



Ingredients

- 2 pounds beef stew meat (cut into bite-sized pieces)
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 medium onion finely chopped
- 2 celery ribs sliced
- 2-3 cloves of garlic minced
- 6 oz can tomato paste
- 32 oz beef broth
- 2 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 cups baby carrots
- 4-5 small red potatoes cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 cups frozen peas
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/4 cup water

Serves 8

Prep Time 10 Minutes

Cooking Time 8-10 hours

Calories 324

DIRECTIONS

Combine beef, celery, carrots, red onion, potatoes, salt, pepper, garlic, parsley, oregano, Worcestershire sauce, beef broth, and tomato paste in the crock pot. I used a 6 qt crockpot for this stew. Cook on LOW for 10 hours or on HIGH for 6-7 hours.

About 30 minutes before serving, mix the flour and the water together in a small dish and pour into the crockpot. Mix until well combines. This will add a nice thickness to the stew. Next add in your frozen peas and corn. Continue cooking covered for 30 minutes.



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