

RAPP October 2015 Newsletter

Support Group Meetings			
Monthly Sessions	Upcoming Dates	Time Frame	Location
1 st Wednesday, monthly	Girls with a Purpose (GWAP) Next group is October 7, 2015	4:30 – 5:30 pm	Carver School Road Library Branch 4915 Lansing Drive, WS Phone: 336-703-2910
1 st Thursday, monthly	Next RAPP evening group is October 1, 2015 Leah Friend will provide our program; see Page 2 for details	6-7:30 pm	Rupert Bell Recreation Center 1501 Mount Zion Place, WS 27101 Phone: 336-727-2051
2 nd Wednesday, usually BUT NOT for October!!! We'll meet on 10/7!	Next RAPP lunch group is October 7, 2015 Leah Friend	12:00 –2:00 pm	Hanes Hosiery Recreation Center 501 Reynolds Blvd, WS 27106 Phone: 336-727-2428

What is the Relatives As Parents Program, RAPP?

Forsyth County's Department of 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 yourself who have traveled this road. There are currently 7.8 million children in the US living with someone other than a parent. This information comes from Generations United, a NY group that supports kinship families like yours. (Note: No groups are held in July and August!)

Important Dates

- ✓ **October 7** will be our next lunch support group meeting, even though it isn't the second Wednesday. We wanted to avoid the early release day on October 14.
- ✓ **October 14** is an early release day from the school system.
- ✓ **October 23** is the end of the first quarter, so help your children get any revised or late homework assignments in before this date!



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, Carmen Willis

October Support Group Programs

Our October programs will be led by Leah Friend, District Supervisor of the City of Winston Salem's Recreation and Parks Department. Ms. Friend works out of Miller Park, and is always making interesting programs available for children and youth, many at low or no cost. She schedules classes and events throughout the year, so you and your children could take advantage of a variety of opportunities.

We'll look forward to seeing you at our October groups! Check dates and times on Page 1!

Update on Flooding at DSS

By now, many of you know that a broken water line here at DSS on 8/31 flooded the ground floor where the RAPP offices are located (along with the rest of the Family and Children's Division). Many employees have been given offices elsewhere in the building, but some of us – like your RAPP Coordinator! – are working from home. For the time being, there are no employees working on the Ground Floor of the agency.

A finish date for repairs and renovations isn't firm yet, but it could still be several more weeks, if not longer. The tentative completion date at present is October 31st. In the meantime, you can still reach Susan at 703-3744, as her line is being routed to her cell phone. There have been a few times, though, when messages left have not made it to the cell phone in a timely manner, so if you would rather call her cell phone directly, you may reach her at 336-354-8085.

Phone Number and Address Changes

There have been a number of folks Susan has tried to contact recently who have non-working phone numbers, voicemail boxes that are full, or who have moved and haven't provided a new address.

Susan wants to be able to serve you well, but in order to do that, she really needs up-to-date info! Thanks for helping out by calling (703-3744) or emailing (parkerse@forsyth.cc) with your updated information!



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Grandparents and Caregivers Conference

On September 15th, Susan and Carmen were able to attend a conference held at the Durham County Department of Social Services. The conference was designed to highlight resources available through the city of Durham and Durham County that would be helpful to grandparents or other relatives providing kinship care.

The opening speaker, Ms. Delphine Sellars, Director of the Durham County Cooperative Extension, spoke passionately about what she sees as some of the particular needs of relative caregivers, speaking as a grandparent herself. First, she reminded everyone that the people surrounding you might not know you need help – unless you tell them! She encouraged folks not to be afraid to ask for help. Secondly, she encouraged caregivers to advocate for themselves and their children in the faith communities, and in the schools, as so many people don't realize the challenges relative caregivers face. Finally, she lifted up the importance of caregivers taking care of themselves. You can't take care of those children you love so much if you have allowed yourself to become sick and worn out!

While most of the resources discussed were only available in Durham County, it reminded us to check on what similar services might exist here in Forsyth County. Additionally, one of the sessions focused on services people would like to see offered by the city and county in the future. This discussion included two elected officials, and one of the agreements they made was to try and start a council that included relative caregivers so that city and county officials can learn more about your particular needs, and perhaps be able to help make changes to assist you.

Carmen also attended a meeting about the **Affordable Care Act** (also known as Obama Care) and provides the following information:

Open Enrollment at the NC Health Insurance Marketplace is November 1st, 2015, through January 31st, 2016. If you already have coverage, you will need to re-enroll each year. You are considered covered if you have Medicare, Medicaid, NC Health Choice, any job based plan, any plan you bought yourself, COBRA, retiree coverage, TRICARE, Veterans Administration (VA) health coverage, or some other kind of health insurance.

If you are paying taxes and do not have health insurance it is the law that you enroll. There are some exemptions but you have to complete the enrollment process to be exempted.

To enroll you can call The Marketplace 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week : [1-800-318-2596](tel:1-800-318-2596). TTY: [1-855-889-4325](tel:1-855-889-4325). You can apply online at www.healthcare.gov

You can apply in person with an agent. Call [1-855-733-3711](tel:1-855-733-3711) and the call center will connect you with a local agent who can guide you through the process and assist you with a plan that best fits you and your family's medical needs.

There is also a paper application that you can submit and apply through the mail.

Project Pumpkin at Wake Forest

We often have families participate in Project Pumpkin each October, but at the time of mailing this newsletter, we didn't have enough details to include. If you would like to take your children to Project Pumpkin, which will be held on October 29, contact Susan to let her know of your interest.



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2015 Toy Assistance Program

RAPP will be matching families with Holiday Assistance sponsors based on: already having a 2015 Kinship Verification Form for the family, the date it was received by the program, and attendance in special events. We will only be able to serve 80 families. If you have not completed a 2015 Kinship Verification Form, you can take advantage of the Salvation Army program as described below. RAPP will not be able to serve families who are taking advantage of the Salvation Army program, or any other agency or group. The Salvation Army will also not be able to serve you if you are getting assistance elsewhere.

2015 FORSYTH COUNTY CHRISTMAS ASSISTANCE REGISTRATION

Will you need assistance this year for Christmas toys for your children 12 years old and younger?

To Receive Toy Assistance, You Must Apply in Person:

Monday, October 12th through Saturday, October 17th

October 12th-16th - 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

October 17th - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: The Salvation Christmas Center
680 Peters Creek Parkway Winston-Salem, NC 27103

All applicants must bring the following required documents to qualify:

1. A valid form of photo ID for applicant (i.e., US Drivers License, US Passport, State ID, School ID, Green Card, etc.)
2. Proof of residence (utility bill, bank statement, etc.). Must be within the last month before registering.
3. Proof of ALL income, earned and unearned (check stubs, unemployment, SSI, Pensions, Veterans Benefits, Disability, Food Stamps, Child Support, AFDC, WIC, Family Assistance must be accompanied by a letter from the relative providing the assistance stating how much, etc.) - documents MUST have a dollar amount on them, we cannot accept a Food Stamp card or Appt. Letter Food Stamps cannot be your only form of income.
4. Proof of rent, mortgage, or subsidized housing (Receipt, Lease, or Letter from Landlord)
5. Proof of ALL other expenses (car loan, medical bills, credit cards, other loans, etc.)
6. All current utility statements (electric, water, gas, cable, phone, etc.)
7. Birth Certificates for all children to be registered.
8. Guardians/Grandparents need custody papers or note from the parents along with the Parents ID and all information listed above.
9. Please have a list of all clothing/shoe sizes for children with you.
10. Applications will NOT be processed without ALL of the above information.



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