



Kids & Families Together

November 2011

November is National Adoption Month

How will you be raising awareness?

November marks National Adoption Month. What began in 1976 as a week-long awareness event in Massachusetts has grown into a national celebration. 2011 marks the 16th year of National Adoption Month with the theme “Build Capacity to Make Lasting Change,” which targets adoption professionals to focus on ways to recruit and retain parents for the 107,000 children in foster care awaiting adoptive families.

This month is about celebrating families of all kinds and raising awareness about adoption. On November 19th (National Adoption Day), thousands of adoptions will be finalized, which means just as many children will finally be obtaining stable, loving homes. To help spread awareness and celebrate your own unique family, a number of activities and projects can be found online. A few are listed below:

- Write a family mission statement, have everyone write down ideas that are important for creating and maintaining a great family



- Read/Write Adoption themed poems
- Contact the local paper/media source and ask them to run a story on National Adoption Month
- Write a Thank You note to a foster care agency, social worker, or any other agency that works with children & youth in foster care for the work they do. If your child was in foster care, write the judge, social worker or anyone else who helped you with the process a note of thanks
- Find opportunities to give back. Volunteer with foster youth, or help an agency spread awareness on the positive aspects of adopting a child

Cough, Cough, Sniffle, Sniffle

Tips for staying healthy and preventing illness



staying healthy- that means eating well, drinking plenty of fluids, exercising daily and getting a good

The cold and flu season is upon us. This year avoid the achy, sniffing, coughing and fever by being smart; prevent illness before it happens. Make sure your children are reaching their full potential by

nights rest. Handwashing is also critical in the preventing the spread of germs.

Illness is spread in a variety of ways, **direct contact** (between and infected person and uninfected person), **airborne** (coughs, sneezes, runny noses), **fecal/oral** (spread by hands from contact with bowel movement to objects or food entering the mouth) or through **blood/bodily fluids** (direct contact between blood and/or bodily fluids). Knowing these can help you practice better preventative methods as well as keep

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Kids & Families Together’s mission is to strengthen relationships and provide safe, supportive help and education to keep family members emotionally connected to one another.

IN OUR COMMUNITY

A look at what's happening this month

This month marks the beginning of the "Holiday Season." Pretty soon, shopping malls will be packed with crowds of bargain hunters, children waiting to meet Santa, and the headache of trying to find a good parking spot. So why not take a break before all that mess begins, and enjoy some time with the family. After all, that's what this time of year is all about.

November 5, 10am-4pm the Pleasant Valley Community Park in Camarillo is hosting the **Ventura County Book & Author Fair**. This event will have a free book expo and reading area for the little ones, as well as speakers and educational seminars throughout the day.

November 6, 10am-4pm Check out the **3rd Annual Simi Valley SnowFest Arts & Crafts Fair** at Rancho Madera Community Park 556 Lake Park Dr. It will be a winter wonderland, complete with snow, fun activities for the kids, music, food and cheer.

November 6, Celebrate the Mexican Folk tradition **Dia de los Muertos**, with face painting, traditional food, alter building and more! The festivities begin at 11am in Camarillo at the Conejo Mountain Funeral Home, Memorial Park & Crematory, 2052 Howard Rd.

November 19, **Young Readers' Story Fest** 9am-2pm at VUSD Education Services Center, 255 W Stanley Ave, Ventura. This event is free! There will be story tents, free books for every child and storytelling.

November 19, **The Galaxy of Gems Expo** will be held in Oxnard at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way. This event is free and will be glimmering with a lot of fun activities for all ages from 9am-5pm.

November 24, From 10am-3pm the Santa Barbara Zoo will host its annual **Pumpkin Smash** where your favorite zoo animals will be given pumpkins to interact with. Free with zoo admission.

November 26, **The 62nd Annual Christmas Parade** will be marching down Santa Paula's Historic Downtown Main Street at 10am. So find a good spot on the curb, bring a blanket and snacks and watch the Holiday Magic unfold.



Keeping up with Kids & Families

There are a number of ways to stay in loop with what's going on at Kids & Families Together. If you are reading this, you're already one step ahead!

You can also Like us on Facebook, send us a tweet on Twitter @KandFT, Follow us on LinkedIn, check out our calendar on our website, give us a call or stop by our center.



WISH LIST

Here at Kids & Families Together we put all our efforts into making the lives of kinship, foster and adoptive families just a little bit easier. Whether it is through counseling, support groups, or helping find new resources, our staff is here to help. But we need your help too! Our center and Alice's House are currently in need of:

- Beds
- Binders; white clear view, 1/2 inch and 1 inch
- Blankets
- Bus Passes
- Car seats

- Children's books
- Drought Resistant Plants*
- File Folders
- Gas Cards
- Gift Cards to Target, Walmart, and/or Vons
- Healthy (kid friendly) snacks
- Highlighters
- Outdoor door mats*
- Post-its
- Tissues

*For Alice's House

Training Opportunities

from Ventura County Community College
District's
Foster & Kinship Care Education

Grants & Scholarships—This workshop covers & discusses grants & scholarships available to current and former foster youth. Class location provided with mandatory preregistration. November 14, 6-8pm

Tame Those Tantrums— It may seem to come out of nowhere, but there are seven identifiable types of situations that often cause temper tantrums. This workshop will provide suggestions on handling each type of behavior and give you ways to prevent tantrums in the future. November 29, 6-8pm. 900 Calle Plano, Suite K Camarillo

Connecting with Compassion: Creating Mutual Trust— This training is the first of a series of three workshops based on the principles of promoting healing, growth, leadership and life success for youth in Ventura County's foster care system with the goal of creating "Guiding Principles for Youth /Adult Relationships." Come learn what youth from VC foster care system have to say about "creating mutual trust and understanding" during this highly interactive workshop designed and taught by the youth themselves! November 30, Dinner 5-6pm, Workshop 6-8pm. 5100 Adolfo Rd, Salon C, Camarillo.

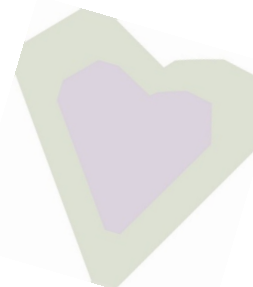
Visit kidsandfamilies.org/calendar for more information

SEND US YOUR FAMILY PHOTOS!

Pass along some great shots of your family having fun and creating lasting memories and get a chance to have them featured in our newsletter or on our website! If you are interested please contact bpinedo@kidsandfamilies.org

Thank You!

A very big THANK YOU! to **Ventura Missionary Church** for all of their help with the yard work at Alice's House. The space looks great! and we cannot express how much we appreciate your time and efforts.



Dedicated K&FT peer mentors tabling at an event

Cough, Cough...continued

the entire family healthy.

In addition to preventing illness in your own family, be sure to not spread it to others either. Avoid sending your child to school or visiting with others if they have a temperature over 101, are vomiting or have diarrhea, have some sort of infection, like pink eye, poison ivy or lice, or if they are exhibiting unusual symptoms or behaviors.

Kids & Families wants you and your family to stay healthy this winter. For more information on preventing illness or how to fight a bug you or your loved one has already caught please visit:

www.cdc.gov

K&FT Staff Spotlight: Sharon Cromartie

Our staff members play a critical role in maintaining the everyday flow of Kids & Families Together. They are kind, nurturing and here to serve their community.



The woman who does it all!

So, what exactly do you do here?

I'm the Executive Assistant which means I wear many hats. I assist David (Executive Director) with projects, grant writing and responding to correspondence and so on. I manage the office and supervise the Administrative Assistant. So we handle office supplies, troubleshooting computer and phone issues, manage Food Share and other office tasks. I also am the Human Resource generalist and process payroll. In addition, I am the Resident Advisor for Alice's House.

What's your favorite part of your job?

No two days are ever the same!

Can you do a cart-wheel?

I have NEVER been able to do a cartwheel. I always felt too tall (I was 5'8" when I was twelve)---always felt like too far to fall!

If you could have any type of sandwich for lunch today, what kind would it be?

Hmmm...since I'm not eating wheat, I'm going to say a Father's Office burger protein style.