



# Kids & Families Together

December 2016

## The Holidays Are Here!

### How to Afford the Holidays

The holidays are upon us and many of us are challenged with spending wisely during the holiday season. If we take some time to research and develop a spending plan, we might find it isn't as hard as we make it on ourselves.

Here are 10 easy steps to keep your bank account afloat this season:

1. Develop an actual written plan that includes possible gifts and dollar amounts per gift type or person.
2. Establish a limit on how much everyone in your household can spend if your account is used for their gift buying. Put a limit on how much is spent on each person receiving a gift.
3. Look for bargains early; use coupons from the newspaper.
4. Use CASH as much as possible! It greatly reduces arbitrary spending and you won't worry about bills after the holiday!
5. Please remember that some of the most thoughtful and appreciated gifts come from the heart and perhaps your oven! Things like cookies in a decorative tin, flavored olive oil in recycled Italian soda glass bottles, knitted scarves and other home crafted items are ways to share yourself with your loved ones and to keep costs down.

(From The Fleet & Family Support Center Newsletter)

**Have a Wonderful and Happy Holiday Season, from our Kids & Families Together family to yours!**

## Having Faith

This is such a difficult time of the year. The holidays are stressful for me, my partner and for my two adopted children. Can you give me some tips to help me cope during the holiday season?

Feeling frazzled in Fillmore

For kids that have spent time in the child welfare systems, the holidays can be a time of heightened emotions. This might be a time that they particularly miss their birth family if they are no longer living with them or have lost contact with birth family. Possibly, the holiday season is a time a child remembers past holidays filled with moments of joy, but it can also be a time that a child has memories of parents fighting and this being the season of scary times.

During the stress of the holidays, your child needs you more than ever to be a safe haven of emotional and physical security. To truly attend to the needs of your child during this stressful season, you must handle your own stress, known as emotional dysregulation. Below are some possibilities for increasing your own emotional and physical wellbeing.

1. **AWARENESS:** unless you are aware of that which (dysregulates), stresses you, you cannot create an environment that supports your wellbeing. Make a note of any stressful current situation in your life. What is it about this situation that stresses you?

Cont. Pg 3

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

## Dec. 1-17—Gingerbread Houses on Display

View Gingerbread creations at Heritage Square, 731 South A St., Oxnard.



## Dec. 11—Christmas Tree Trains

The Fillmore & Western Railway offers an opportunity for families to pick out a pre-cut tree. Visit Santa along the journey. For reservations and a full schedule of weekend and special events, call The Fillmore & Western Railway at 524-2546.

## Dec. 17 & 20—Magical Family Holiday Crafts

Get into the spirit of the holidays and spend an afternoon crafting with your child or grandchild. Choose from a variety of crafts to make; such as ornaments, cards and bags, or mason jar candle holders. Make some magical art as well as memories. Refreshments served. 3625 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., #249, Westlake village. For more information call 418-7000.



## Dec. 29—Winter Tech Fair

Do you have an electronic device that you do not know how to use or want to learn more about? Allow students to show you what to do. Learn how to use the basic function of your iPhone, iTouch, iPad, iPods, Camarillo Community Center, 482-4881.

### Keeping up with Kids & Families

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

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.



Cont. from Pg. 1

Write it down and if there is something you can change then change it. If there is not then see how you can change you. Remember it is often our reaction to a situation that stresses us out as much as the situation itself. If your reaction is out of fear, anger or anxiety, choosing instead to stop before you react and taking three deep breaths, calms your mind and your body. Your reaction is causing your stress response to activate. We can calm ourselves simply through our breath.

2. **EVERY HOUR:** Set your timer or alarm on your computer or phone to provide a soft, soothing reminder every hour of the day. When the alarm goes off, take five conscious breaths breathing in relaxation and wellbeing on the inhale and letting out stress, tension and anxiety on the exhale. This will help to calm you. Plus, stretch and move your entire body as well. Doing this every hour will make a big difference throughout your stress filled day to help you to stay calmer.

3. **Sleep Well and Rest Daily:** Sleep deprivation keeps your nervous system on high-alert and your cortisol levels high. This keeps you feeling anxious throughout the day. If you do not sleep well at night, rest during the day if you can, even for 30 minutes. This will bring your relaxation chemicals back to target.
4. **Time Out:** Not for your kids, but for you if needed! If you are at the point of blowing, you have permission to give yourself a time out. Let your children or loved ones know you will be back, that you just need to walk away for a few minutes. That is much less damaging than what you might say or do if you do not take this time out.
5. **Triple A's: Affection, attention, attunement:** Your kids need the three A's every day, but so do you. Create relationships that are full of affection, that provide you the attention you need, and that are attuned to your needs and wants.

—Faith

## Thank You!

Kids & Families Together would like to thank the wonderful and gracious people and organizations who generously helped us and our families these past few months.

Forty Leaguers of Ventura County

Heart 2 Heart would like to thank the following contributors for making our annual Coats 'n' Costumes event a complete success!

Soroptimist International of the Conejo  
Raising Hope  
Underwood Farms  
California Costumes  
James' Storehouse  
Sprouts  
Ventura Sunrise Optimists  
The student volunteers of Cal Lutheran  
Erika Lopez  
Pattie Hunt  
Corey Branchflower  
and  
KFT Staff  
Rotary Club of Simi Sunrise

## Training Opportunities

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

**Foster Parent Network Training** (East County)

**Topic: Eating Issues**

**Trainer: Joseph Rohmann, La Ventana Treatment Center & Facilitators: Wendy Homan & Iris Braswell**

**December 9<sup>th</sup> 9:00-11:00am, Topic TBD**

**Cornerstone Church 2080 Winifred St., Simi Valley**

An opportunity to receive updated information as to changes related to foster care and network with other foster parents who are geographically related. Specific topics will be addressed each month and friendships will be made and resources revealed. **Participants will receive credit for 2 hours of training upon completion of the class.**

Please RSVP to Wendy Homan at [homanwendy@aol.com](mailto:homanwendy@aol.com) or Debbie Flowers @ [Debbieflowers@vcccd.edu](mailto:Debbieflowers@vcccd.edu)

*Sponsor: Oxnard College FKCE*

**TEACH and Other Scholarship Opportunities for Foster Youth**

(West County)

**Presenter: Rhonda Carlson**

**Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> 6:30-8:00pm, arrive at 6:15 for pizza**

**Day Road Center @ Ventura College**

**71 Day Road, Ventura-Computer Lab**

Current or former foster youth have unique scholarship opportunities available just for them! This informational session for care providers and youth will provide information about the TEACH scholarship and other scholarships available to Ventura County foster youth who plan to attend college or vocational training in the Fall of 2017. Limited space available! **Participants will receive credit for 1.5 hours of training upon completion of the class.**

Please RSVP to [rcarlson@vcccd.edu](mailto:rcarlson@vcccd.edu)

*Sponsors: Ventura College FKCE & Ventura County Office of Education*

For more information on these classes you may call **Debbie Flowers at Oxnard College 986-5800 ext 2018** or **Rhonda Carlson at Ventura College 289-6181** or send an email [debbieflowers@vcccd.edu](mailto:debbieflowers@vcccd.edu) or [rcarlson@vcccd.edu](mailto:rcarlson@vcccd.edu)

# K&FT Staff Spotlight: Peter Soltero

*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.*



**1. What is your role at K&FT and how does it impact the organization?**

*My role at K& FT is to support, advocate and provide families with skills that can be used to help themselves during difficult times.*

**2. Describe yourself in one sentence.**

I thought of two

“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it” – Charles A. Swindoll

“If the only prayer you ever said was “THANK YOU” that would be enough”

**3. What’s something most people don’t know about you?**

I am a fan of Superheroes

## December Birthdays

Carl Chavez



Kids & Families Together  
856 E. Thompson Blvd.  
Ventura, CA 93001  
[www.kidsandfamilies.org](http://www.kidsandfamilies.org)  
Visit us on Facebook!

