



Grandparents Corner

April 2013

Child Abuse Prevention Month

Caring for children who were abused, neglected or abandoned - even if the children in your care are happy to be with you - have been through a lot. Losing a parent is hard on a child, and so are too many changes.

In addition to signs of physical abuse or neglect, children who have suffered a loss seem to share several common mental health issues. But also remember, each child will react or respond to the loss dependent upon the following:

- The significance of the loss
- Whether the loss is temporary or permanent
- Coping abilities of the child
- Availability of support
- Age and cognitive abilities of the child (at the time of the loss and the present time)

Remember, while some children may react in very extreme ways, others may respond mildly or not at all. Knowing and recognizing problems, as well as seeking treatment and finding supportive services specific to the child's needs, will help the child grow and thrive. Below are some common mental issues that may affect the children in your care:

- Grief - There are five identifiable stages of grief: shock/denial, anger/rage, bargaining, depression, and resolution/understanding.
- Control - Feeling like they have no control or decision-making power over their own lives - may have power struggles with authority figures, truancy, defiance, substance abuse.
- Loyalty - Having two sets of parents creates a conflict for the child. Feeling love or gratitude toward one set of parents may make the child feel they are being disloyal toward the other set of parents, thus hurting them.
- Rejection/Fear of Abandonment - Regardless of the actual circumstance surrounding the child's loss. The child's perception is one that they were rejected and they may be hesitant to become close to others.
- Self-Esteem - The perception of being rejected is a direct blow to the child's self-esteem. The child may feel unwanted and that something is wrong with them; therefore, school performance and self-confidence are affected.
- Trust - A particularly crucial issue for children who have had multiple moves during their young lives. Separation at an early age may threaten the establishment of basic trust and attachment which is necessary for healthy growth and development.
- Identity - The lack of information and secrecy that surrounds the child's history and birth family make it difficult for the child to establish his/her identity, a major task of adolescent development. The child may find this issue confusing, frustrating and scary. As for your role, educating yourself and seeking support services for yourself are important. REMEMBER...take care of yourself before you can take care of anyone else.

Source: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Ohio Resource Guide

QUICK QUIZ

Caregiver Assistance Newsletter - April 2013

A little attention to the safest way to move your body - and the person in your care - will keep you from unnecessary injury. Most muscle strain injuries to both the caregiver and care receiver are preventable if you follow some simple rules. Answer True or False to the questions below.

1. Certain parts of the body are for certain activities and perform best when they are used the way they were intended. T F
2. Body mechanics is using your body properly to perform tasks. T F
3. Back injuries among caregivers are common and many such injuries are preventable. T F
4. When lifting, use your arms and back rather than your legs. T F
5. Before moving a person, tell them what you are going to do. T F
6. Obesity is one of the biggest risk factors for developing back pain and arthritis because it speeds the destruction of joint-cushioning cartilage. T F
7. Weak muscles in the back and abdomen as well as lack of exercise can be contributing factors to back pain and the risk increases as you become older. T F
8. Numbness, tingling, weakness in the limbs, bowel or bladder problems, nausea, fever and vomiting are other signs that indicate you need immediate help with your back pain. T F
9. Feet together is the best base for lifting someone. T F
10. Keep your spine in a neutral (normal arched, not stiff) position while lifting. T F

KEY: 1. T 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. T 6. T 7. T 8. T 9. F 10. T