

COMMUNITY ACTION

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency: Diaper donations needed for community children



APRIL 05, 2015 6:15 AM • [KATHY GALLINGER](#) | [SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN](#)

Spring 2015 has brought many reasons to celebrate. The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency is 50 years strong and Healthy Families New York has actively served families and children in New York state for 20 years. Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca has received a generous and substantial early childhood grant from the Allyn Foundation that will allow us to move forward with the purchase and training of the “Growing Great Kids Curriculum”

to serve and strengthen families in Cayuga and Seneca counties.

Healthy Families Cayuga/Seneca is currently providing home-visiting services to 102 families. Home-visiting is routinely practiced and widely accepted in other countries. In the United States, we have experienced a slower acceptance of this practice. Healthy Families has been proven effective in preventing child abuse and neglect, promoting positive parenting and parent-child interaction; ensuring optimal prenatal care, health and development; and enhancing family self-sufficiency.

The essence of the home visit lies in the relationship between the family and the home visitor. Healthy Families America has acknowledged this and accounted for its importance in the new “Best Practice Standards.” When our staff is hired, personal characteristics are considered, along with their professional experience. We look for staff that are nurturing, warm, nonjudgmental and dedicated to strengthening and respecting the parent-child relationship. We have long considered this our strength, and given the fact that we will have 20 families graduate in July of this year after three years of service, it validates how important and effective these relationships are. With this in mind, we sought to invest in the Growing Great Kids Curriculum.

Growing Great Kids is a skill-driven curriculum that is strength-based and solution-focused. Healthy Families has long embraced the necessity of protective factors in order to support and strengthen families. Included are; parental resilience, knowledge of parenting and child development, social and emotional competence of children, social connections and concrete support in times of need. The Growing Great Kids Curriculum will allow us the opportunity to address and build protective factors with families on a regular basis.

This venture is really a great partnership. Healthy Families America has partnered with

Great Kids, Inc. for 20 years. We are excited to join other Healthy Family New York programs using this curriculum. We are even more excited that we will have 13 of our enrolled families actually assisting us with the initial week-long training. We look forward to the changes and growth this opportunity will provide for us and those we serve.

In the spirit of providing practical assistance to our families in need, we are conducting a Bottoms Up Diaper Campaign throughout the month of April. A baby goes through thousands of diapers within the first 30 months of life, an estimated expense of \$100 per month, or \$3,000 total per child. There are no subsidies or government programs that aid with the purchase of diapers. Diapers cannot be purchased with food stamps or WIC checks. According to the National Diaper Bank Network, 34 percent of mothers admit to cutting back on food or utilities in order to buy diapers.

A recent study through Yale University published by the American Association of Pediatrics (May 2013), "Diaper Need and its Impact on Health," funded by the National Institutes of Health and supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, concluded, "... an insufficient supply of diapers is not only a risk factor for poor infant and child health but also for maternal mental health, potentially diminishing maternal sense of competence and increasing maternal stress, which ultimately leads to potential negative impacts on child health and development. For families who are financially struggling, health care professionals and researchers should recognize not only food and housing but also diapers as basic needs."

Please join us this April in celebrating and supporting the youngest of children in our community by contributing to our Bottoms Up campaign. Our agency is accepting disposable diapers, of any size or brand, at our new Auburn site, located at 89 York St., Suite 1, and our Waterloo location at 23 Center St. If you are unable to drop diapers off, we will gladly pick them up. Please call (315) 255-1703 ext. 211 to make arrangements. You may also donate monetarily by cash, check or online through our secure website, cscaa.com/healthy_families.html.