

Camp Fun for DCBS Kids

Submitted by Dale Streble, DCBS Bullitt County

It is a Monday morning in July, and anticipation is high. Breakfast is over in the cafeteria, and everyone is walking up the hill. Cars are starting to pull through the gates, cars with children who are filled with anticipation as well as uncertainty about the week ahead. The place is Lions Camp Crescendo, located in Lebanon Junction in Bullitt County. The children arriving are foster children and children in relative placements. They are here for Camp Freedom, a weeklong overnight camp developed to give 100 of these children an opportunity to have a week of fun-filled outdoor activities like swimming, fishing, boating and archery, in a structured summer camp environment. All of this is provided at no expense to these families or to the Cabinet.

The first Camp Freedom was held in 2006, with 50 children from the Salt River Trail and Jefferson County Regions participating. Since then, the camp has served around 100 children each year during its one-week run. Volunteers make this camp possible and come from many walks of life, but all have in common a love for children and a desire to help them.

Volunteers from the Department for Community Based Services participate in the camp. These volunteers include Child Protective Service investigators and ongoing staff, Recruitment and Certification staff, administrative support staff and foster parents. There are also school teachers, medical professionals, college students, even high school students (provided they are 16 or older), and many others. A background check is done on all volunteers to help ensure the children's safety. Volunteers are encouraged to stay the entire week and are assigned to dormitory rooms where they stay with the children for around-the-clock supervision. However, daytime volunteers are also needed and help give the around-the-clock staff a well-deserved break.

The purpose of Camp Freedom is to help the children served by Protection and Permanency by giving them an opportunity to attend a summer camp free of charge and to just be kids. Camp Freedom is made possible through grants and donations. Lions Camp Crescendo is a part of Lions International, but you do not have to be a member of a Lions Club to participate or support the camp. Any help, whether it is volunteering to participate at camp or donating to Camp Freedom, is welcomed and greatly appreciated.

Camp Freedom occurs annually in early July. It is one of three service camps provided at Lions Camp Crescendo. The others are Camp Heart to Heart for HIV/AIDS infected children and Lions Youth Camp for vision and hearing-impaired children. The camps usually share counselors, and all three are provided at no cost to the children.

If you would like more information about Camp Freedom or any of the service camps provided by Lions Camp Crescendo, you can visit their Web site at <http://www.lions-campcrescendo.org/index.php>. You can also e-mail me at Dale.Streble@ky.gov if you would like to know more about Camp Freedom.

KECC Testimonial: United Way Helps Woman in Abusive Relationship

Submitted Anonymously

I have a story about how one of the KECC charities, the United Way, helped me. When I was very young, I was in an abusive relationship. I was living with my boyfriend, and he had cut me off from all my family and friends. I thought I had nowhere to go and that no one could help me, so I stayed in the relationship. It was a typical abusive relationship. He would get drunk, hit me and then when he sobered up, he would swear it would never happen again. Then I found out I was pregnant, which made the situation worse. The night that I told him I was pregnant, he threw me against the wall and started choking me. I was on the verge of passing out when a neighbor who heard the commotion pulled him off of me. I didn't know where to turn, but I knew I couldn't raise a child in that environment. I got out the phone book and found an ad where one of the local churches offered help. I called, and within hours a nice couple picked me up, packed all my stuff in their car and took me to the Simon House. While at the Simon House I was given a chance to get on my feet and make a life for myself. They helped me get a job and an apartment. They made sure I got health care and training on how to take care of my child. Without the United Way sponsoring places like the Simon House, I, as well as many others, would have slipped through the cracks. I honestly believe I wouldn't be here today without them. So please support KECC. It really does make a difference in someone's life.

Personnel Hosts 'Money' Seminar

The Personnel Cabinet is hosting the Money Works Program in partnership with Women in State Government. The seminar will be Tuesday, July 21, at Kentucky State University, Governmental Service Center, Room 542, Fifth Floor Academic Services Building. Seating is limited. Please contact your agency training liaison to enroll via Pathlore.

Living Well: Kentucky Makes the Top 10

A recent study ranks Kentucky in the top 10 among states with an obesity problem. Our official number is seven. Mississippi captures the No. 1 ranking for the fifth year in a row, classified as the nation's heaviest state. The new Centers for Disease Control report reveals that the nation's waistlines are still expanding or holding steady, but not shrinking. The worst and the best states have not changed from previous reports. Colorado is still the only state where fewer than 20 percent of the adults are obese. However, back in 1980, no state had an adult obesity rate over 20 percent, and the national average of obese adults was 15 percent.

A majority of states ranked in the top 10 are in the south. Most alarming is the ranking of states' childhood overweight and obesity rates. These rates are based on children ages 10-17 years of age. The top five states are in the South, with Kentucky ranking fourth at 37.1 percent.

The numbers may not be startling in terms of the adult obesity standing, but everyone should be paying attention to the increasing numbers for children. As adults, we need to become better role models by adopting healthier lifestyles and providing positive experiences for our children. Health professionals suggest the following to reverse the obesity trends for the future.

- Nutrition and obesity counseling
- Screening for obesity-related diseases (for adults and children)
- Increasing community programs (making more nutritious foods affordable and accessible)
- Providing safe places for people to engage in physical activity
- Providing healthy foods in schools
- Promoting more physical activity in schools
- Cutting back on TV, video games and computer time (for adults and children)
- Encouraging companies to offer workplace wellness programs

In today's economic crisis, the obesity epidemic may worsen due to an increase in food prices and the fact that many Americans are experiencing increased stress, anxiety and depression. Living a healthier lifestyle will help us all cope with these additional pressures, as well as show our youth its importance. If you would like to learn more about the state's employee wellness program, visit the Personnel Cabinet Web site and join the Journey to Wellness program at <http://personnel.ky.gov/dei/wellness/>

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

In our work, we meet new people every day. Milwaukee business consultant Joan Lloyd writes that a good way to earn their trust is to show our interest in them. Do this through a method called "reflective listening."

Reflective listening involves summarizing what people say to you and repeating it back to them. Most people enjoy talking about themselves - steer conversations to their areas of interest. Show you can remember the details about someone, and they'll be more likely to give you the help you need when you ask.