



Our Babies Can't Wait Update

"Owh, eh, heh, eairth. . ." "Eh, hah, oow," said Zayden.

At four months, Zayden came with his parents to the Our Babies Can't Wait Parent Workshop offered through the Mid-Columbia Reading Foundation. To ensure that he was part of the conversation, Zayden would respond to the presenter's every remark to the group. To show his excitement for being part of the conversation, Zayden waved his arms and kicked his legs and made sure he did his part to participate in a room full of parents and other babies.

Since January, 41 parents have attended the eight-week session workshops providing information such as basic physical needs, child development, nurturing and bonding and life management.

The workshop targets parents of first-borns who are in the first years of life. "The most rewarding thing is to witness how both babies and parents grow in our eight-week sessions," said Kristy Wolters, coordinator for the workshops. "It is heartwarming to know that moms and dads are working hard and doing their best to have their child succeed," added Wolters.

Two new workshops, one in English and the other in Spanish, are planned for January. For more information, contact Kristy Wolters at 897-6484 or kwolters@readingfoundation.org.

For more information about Community Solutions and Our Babies Can't Wait, contact Becky Gauthier at 783-4102 or bgauthier@unitedway-bfco.com

YLS Annual Event a Success



On November 19, about 100 young professionals gathered at Anthony's Event Center to learn about the United Way Young Leaders Society. It provided an opportunity to network and socialize with other professionals in the area and learn about different ways to give back to the community through giving to the United Way monetarily or by volunteering. Aaron and Jerry Sparks received the United Way Young Leader Society Member of the Year award highlighting their extensive efforts in working with the United Way and Young Leaders Society. Last year the YLS raised over \$152,000 for local not-for-profits in our community and had over 250 members.

For more information about the United Way Young Leaders Society, contact Sarah Murphy at smurphy@unitedway-bfco.com or at 509-783-4102.

Dine Out for United Way

The 4th Annual Dine-Out for United Way is scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2010. Participating local restaurants will donate a percentage of the day's proceeds to the United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties. Many local restaurants are expected to participate, a list will be available in the January Newsletter. Be sure to mark January 21 on your calendar to Dine-Out for a great cause.

For more information on Dine-Out, contact Sarah Murphy at 783-4102 or smurphy@unitedway-bfco.com.

Volunteer Spotlight



Kayla has volunteered 200 hours since July 2008. Despite living in Benton City, Kayla's mother Marie, has faithfully driven Kayla to the United Way office in Kennewick every week to volunteer her time. Kayla has willingly learned many new tasks and continues to jump right into any project she is asked to do.

Kayla helped United Way staff prepare Our Babies Can't Wait materials, putting together bags of supplies for distribution to organizations throughout the community, assisting in bulk mailings and doing data entry tasks. Kayla says she likes to volunteer at United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties because she "enjoys making a difference in the community and likes the feeling that her work and time are appreciated."

We are so lucky to have volunteers like Kayla. Thank you!

Looking Ahead

Coming in January: Watch for information on the United Way Community Solutions Investment and Funding Application. The application will be available on our website at www.unitedway-bfco.com.

On the Calendar

Monday, December 14
Last day to donate toys for The Salvation Army

Thursday & Friday, December 25 & 26
OFFICE CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Thursday, January 1
OFFICE CLOSED FOR NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY

Thursday, January 21
Dine-Out for United Way



United Way Young Leaders Society is gathering toys for The Salvation Army to distribute to needs families.

Please bring toys to the United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties, 401 North Young Street, Kennewick, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Toys will be collected until Monday, December 14th.

Some suggested items for children: Barbie's, Spiderman, Dora the Explorer, Brats Dolls, and Transformers

Thank you for helping children in Benton and Franklin Counties have a wonderful Christmas!

For more information, contact Sarah Murphy at 509-783-4102.

United Way Funded Program Highlights Did you know last program year. . .

EDUCATION
Columbia Basin College Resources
Retention of Low Income Parents
Program helps provide resources and services that are crucial in preventing dropout. Many folks have benefitted from this program including a low-income mother who graduated with honors and was accepted into the Washington State University Nursing Program and a single father who graduated and was accepted into the Washington State University Engineering Program.



HEALTH
Grace Clinic's Mental Wellness Program provided individual and group counseling services in English and Spanish to 115 people. Group sessions included topics such as depression, money management, parenting, and teen issues.

SAFETY
The Arc of the Tri-Cities Youth Services program provided 663 students, with or without disabilities, skills to prevent bullying. The students without disabilities stated they learned to be more accepting and respectful of differences in people. The students with disabilities reported feeling less isolated and experienced fewer incidences of bullying.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY
Catholic Family and Child Service of the Tri-Cities Senior Companion/Volunteer Chore Service has 403 volunteers serving 678 clients. Seniors and individuals with disabilities who receive help from volunteers are able to remain in their homes longer and delay or prevent entering long-term care facilities. Volunteers built a wheelchair ramp for a 99 year old woman who progressed so well that she was able to leave Hospice and return home.

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