

New Year Letters From Home January 2010

A Place To Call Home – Mesa, once again celebrated Christmas with it's families at the Phoenix Zoo on December 12th. Staff and families alike enjoyed great weather, great food and most of all the celebration of another successful year of creating caring homes for our children and adults.

It was a team effort to create such a fantastic event, not only on the part of staff, but the community, too! Please take a minute to look over this year's list of donors and sponsors. Without them the party would not have been nearly as merry and bright!

~ Jacqueline Destremps, Mesa Recruitment Coordinator



Another Tucson party has come and gone and we are excited about how everyone came together to make it a huge success. Please appreciate the following feedback;

I just wanted to thank you (and the rest of the staff, too!) for putting together such a great Christmas party. The kids had a blast! They especially loved the jumping castle, and we enjoyed the large grassy area for them to run around and play in with the other kids. Christmas parties are generally hard with our little ones, but you had everything divided up and set up in a way that worked so well for them. Thank you! :-) As I write this, the 3 of them are actually playing (nicely together - sharing and everything) with the Duplo Legos that Nicholas received at the party. They loved the gifts they received, and have been playing non-stop all weekend with them. :-) Thanks again! Foster Parent Melissa

This makes it all worth it... FS Carri Rios

THANK YOU FOR SHARING CARRI!!!!!! AND YES THIS IS WHAT MAKES IT ALL WORTH WHILE....
PC Robert Jackson

What a wonderful party. Everyone enjoyed it. Respite Coordinator Anna Sizer

My husband and I were overwhelmed by the amount of people who open their homes and their hearts to love and care for children and adults who do not belong to them. Kudos to Lora and everyone for making the party such a success! I was proud to be a part of it. FS Jane Gariepy

The party was a huge success. The venue was perfect. We were able to spread out and do our thing. (Smile). It's the best party we've had thus far. All of the families were very complimentary. Thanks for finding such a good location. Trainer Phyllis Johnson

My thoughts as I welcomed families were that it is comforting to see how many of them are still with us four years later since I began with APTCH. Some of the kids and adults may have changed but the happy look is all over their faces and that makes it all worth while. Administrative Assistant, Maria Dominguez

Congratulations on the best organized Holiday Party I've participated in at A Place to Call Home. Expectations were understood, agenda flowed well and curtain opening to reveal Santa was a highlight. I enjoyed my stint as the Gingerbread Man. It was great to be an interactive backdrop to family pictures, too. Behavior Specialist, Gale Proff

May you all have a beautiful and family focused New Year!

A New Year of Training & Development

Home Improvement and Quarterly Meetings Information

By: David Willing, Mesa Trainer

I hope all of you had a safe and happy holiday season. Now that we have a new year in swing, I'd like to talk a moment about our Home Improvement Trainings and Quarterly Meetings.

Home Improvement Trainings are designed to supply you with information on topics of your interest. This, of course, means that I need to be getting some new ideas about what you would like to have presented over the next year to assist you in being better foster parents. I will explore any topics that you recommend and try to accommodate them to the best of my abilities. To suggest topics you would like to have addressed, you may contact me at 480-456-0549, or by sending an E-mail to me at, dwilling@tocalhome.com

Each Home Improvement session supplies you with two hours of training which can be put towards the renewal of your license. The Home Improvements for Mesa are from 6:30 pm-8:30pm. The Quarterly Meetings are also informational in nature, but we are trying to supply a more in-depth approach to topics than we have had in the past, as well as giving you some choices as to the topics you can take during the session. The Quarterly Meetings are from 9 a.m. – noon.

Home Improvement Dates for 2010: 1/11, 2/8, 3/8, 4/12, 5/10, 6/14, 7/12, 8/9, 9/13, 10/18, and 11/8

January's topic has not yet been established.

Quarterly Meeting Dates for 2010: 1/23, 4/24, 7/24, and 10/23.

At this point, we have one topic in place on Disability Law. This will be a three hour presentation. We also have a 2nd tentative topic, which has not been confirmed yet, by a speaker from the Phoenix Children's Hospital on Adults Resolving Child Sexual Abuse in their Community. If confirmed, this, too, will be a three hour presentation. I look forward to seeing you at these meetings.

For Luck in the New Year

By: Phyllis Johnson Tucson Trainer



Traditionally, it was thought that one could affect the luck they would have throughout the coming year by what they did or ate on the first day of the year. Traditional New Year foods are also thought to bring luck. Many cultures believe that anything in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle," completing a year's cycle. For that reason, the Dutch believe that eating donuts on New Year's Day will bring good fortune.

Many parts of the U.S. celebrate the New Year by consuming black-eyed peas. These legumes are typically accompanied by either hog jowls or ham. Black-eyed peas and other legumes have been considered good luck in many cultures. The hog, and thus its meat, is considered lucky because it symbolizes prosperity. Cabbage is another "good luck" vegetable that is consumed on New Year's Day by many. Cabbage leaves are also considered a sign of prosperity, being representative of paper currency. In some regions, rice is a lucky food that is eaten on New Year's Day.

Kick off the New Year with a healthy eating plan! Take the steps toward a healthier lifestyle.

A warm welcome to all of our new A Place to Call Home families!!! Please remember we have the Lending Closet full of wonderful items for the whole family. Please take the time to contact Karen Ames to see them.

Make sure to set aside the time to attend Home Improvement for the coming year.

HOME IMPROVEMENT DATES: 1/14, 2/25, 3/25, 4/15, 5/13, 6/24, 7/15, 8/12, 9/23, 10/21, 11/18.

QUARTERLY DATES: 1/ 30, 4/24, 7/ 31, 10/ 30

Have a happy and prosperous New Year!

Clear Communication

by: Brandon Pickett, D1 Behavior Specialist

A Two Step Approach:

Get the child or adult's attention before communicating with them
Tell them what you would like them to do.

A lot of communication occurs when the child or adult is doing something else or is otherwise preoccupied. Shifting attention to your requests may take a lot longer than you think, especially if they are enjoying what they are doing.

Get their attention prior to communication by:

- saying their name
- using a gesture
- show him/her an object to get them to look at you
- use a visual cue
- move to get in their visual field

Help them know what to do

Use prompts/reminders (ie: hand them a tissue instead of saying "Don't wipe your nose on your sleeve")

Use a gesture (ie: point to the toy bin instead of saying "Don't leave your toys on the floor")

Model what you want (ie: offer "let's do it together")

Make eye contact and ensure you have their **attention**, then state exactly what you want. Be diligent to not assume that he/she knows. Clearly and simply state your expectation/direction.

It's 2010, Let's Do It Again!

We are still looking for new CDH and ADH families. Help spread the word for this need and have any new families interested call our offices!

Coming Together to Answer the Challenge

By: Alison Burch Tucson Family Specialist



On January 18, 2010, people of all ages, creeds, and backgrounds will come together to take a giant step in becoming a more "Beloved Community". Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. devoted his life to advancing equality, social justice, and opportunity for all and taught us that we all play a vital role in making the nation a prosperous place. He taught that through nonviolence and service to one another, problems such as discrimination, violence, hunger and homelessness can be overcome. May we take this day as an occasion to reach out to our community members and citizens of this world, to guide us in addressing our most pressing needs? In his infamous Inaugural Address, President Obama recognized the American Spirit of Service and called for a new "era of responsibility". Whether you work with your local schools or churches, focus on large scale volunteering centers, or help someone cross the street, may we take the time out of our ever busy days to help others, and answer the challenge given by Dr. King, in order to move our nation closer to that which he so gloriously envisioned.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS WHO DONATED GIFTS AND SPONSORSHIPS AND FOR MAKING OUR 2009 CHRISTMAS PARTY SPECIAL FOR EVERYONE IN ATTENDANCE, ESPECIALLY FOR OUR CHILDREN AND ADULTS IN OUR CARE!

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And all of the Volunteers!**

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Sam & Janine
Edith Serrano & Robert Ortiz Slide Show
Samantha Ballestezak Photographer**



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