

Kinship Quarterly Strengthening Families

October 2021

National Eat Better, Eat Together Month during October encourages families to gather for mealtimes. When families enjoy their main meals together, they tend to be more balanced food choices.

With the busy lifestyles of today's families, it may seem impossible to eat together for every meal. Make it a goal to eat at least one meal a day as a family.

<https://nationaldaycalendar.com/eat-better-eat-together-month-october/>



Did you know...

...that there is an Education Specialist that you can contact for any school related issue?

Education Specialists act as a connection between DFPS and local schools in your area. The Education Specialist is an excellent contact for building partnerships with the community and local child welfare system. They also serve as a point of contact for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

School stability is necessary for improving the educational experience and outcomes of students in foster care. Research highlights a link between school stability and improved graduation rates. According to the Casey Family Programs' National Alumni Study, foster youth who had one fewer placement change per year were almost twice as likely to graduate from high school.

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/State_Care/education.asp



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services
Child Protective Services





ECI Article

What is respite?

The word respite means “break” or “relief.” Respite services are designed to offer families a break from caring for their child with developmental delays or disabilities. Respite allows caregivers time to take part in activities they find relaxing, entertaining, or restful while a respite provider cares for the child. A respite break can allow a caregiver an hour to take a walk while a respite provider stays in their home to care for the child. It may be a weekend away while the child is cared for outside of the home. It can also mean time to take a nap or see a friend while the respite provider takes care of the child.

How can respite help a family?

Parenting is a difficult job and every parent can benefit from a break. Caring for a child with developmental delays or disabilities presents additional challenges that go beyond the everyday stresses. As a result, parents or caregivers may need longer rest periods or more down time. Respite services can provide support families need. There are several resources to support a family’s respite needs.

The [Take Time Texas](#) website provides many tools and a searchable provider database to access help and support for all families.

If a family is receiving Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services, their ECI program may have funds to help pay for respite services. ECI families should ask their service coordinator about:

- the availability of ECI respite funds,
- levels of funding based on level of care needed,
- process for prioritizing requests,
- wait list policy,
- annual hourly limit, and
- annual total dollar limit.

Although Kinship families that work with ECI may qualify for respite, another option is to seek out respite care from friends and family members. CPS requires an approved background check before friends and family members can be approved to provide respite. Talk with your caseworker about this option.

Respite: Taking Time for Yourself
Sometimes, the best thing a caregiver can do for their child is take some time for themselves.

Resources

- **Parenting Tips**
<https://www.getparentingtips.com>
- **Housing/Utility Assistance Programs**
www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/get_help_paying_rent.html
- **Your Texas Benefits**
www.yourtexasbenefits.com/Learn/Home
- **2-1-1 Texas**
www.211texas.org/
- **Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Program Locator**
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp
- **Kinship Manual**
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Kinship_Care/documents/KinshipManual.pdf
- **Texas Kinship Caregivers Facebook Page**
m.facebook.com/TexasKinshipCaregivers
- **Kinship Care**
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Kinship_Care/default.asp

Kinship support groups are an integral part of The Kinship Program. If you want more information about support groups in your area, please ask your Kinship Development Worker. If you want to be more involved in support groups, please consider becoming a Kinship Advocate on the Kinship Collaboration Group. For more information on kinship support groups or becoming an advocate, please contact **Stephen Martinez at (512) 960-9254**.

“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.” — **Oscar Wilde**