

TICC Board

ANNOUNCEMENT: Résumés are being accepted for the Tenas Illahee Childcare Center Board of Director's positions. There are currently two vacant positions.

Appointments are to be made at the Regular Tribal Council meeting in November.

Please submit your résumé to Attn: Tami Miner, Executive Secretary to Tribal Council, P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR 97380-0549.

Planning Department's Transportation Survey

On Aug. 12, we mailed a survey to 1,000 randomly selected Tribal households in the 11-county service area to ask about your transportation needs.

We asked questions about your driving habits, use of the Tribal transport service, opinion of the Tribal transport service, use of the Veterans Administration's transport service and other comments you wished to give.

The survey data is being gathered

to assess the transportation needs and desires of Tribal members. Once the data is analyzed, the information will be used to identify unmet transportation needs, enhance services and programs, and prioritize transportation resources.

We have received 196 survey responses and have drawn the names for the winners of the gift cards. The winner of the \$50 gift card is Jean Garrett

and the winners of the \$20 gift cards are Dennis Varner and Dennis Lucas, Jr.

Although the deadline for the gift card drawing has passed, we still welcome your input. Please send your survey in if you have not already done so.

If you did not receive a survey and wish to offer input on your transportation needs, please call Pam Lind, Tribal transportation planner, at 800-922-1399, ext.1361, or 541-444-8361.

October Notes from Healthy Family Healthy Child Project

The subject for this month is **child neglect, which is the most common form of child abuse**. To begin, it's probably best to refer to a section of last month's article.

"Of all the forms of child abuse and neglect, **neglect is the most frequently reported form of child abuse among American Indian families**. Nationally, of 879,000 reports of child abuse that were confirmed, 62.8 percent suffered from neglect, 19.3 percent were physically abused, 10.1 percent were sexually abused and 7.7 percent were psychologically maltreated.

"Nationally, in child abuse cases that resulted in the death of a child, 34.9 percent were associated more often **just with neglect** more than any other single type of abusive maltreatment.

"What is neglect? It's the failure to meet a child's basic needs for physical, social and emotional development.

"Neglect is failure to follow medical instructions or to seek medical care, which can also mean dental care. Neglect is also a lack of age-appropriate supervision and guidance."

Definitions of Neglect

In an effort to understand the term neglect, it's best to look at some definitions. The dictionary defines neglect, in part, as "habitual lack of care." The Federal Child Abuse Prevention Act defines neglect, in part, as being "an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm."

The Siletz Tribal Juvenile Code states that a neglected child is "a child whose parent or custodian fails or is unable to carry out their parental or custodial duties to the extent that the child's physical or emotional health, safety, welfare or intellectual development are harmed or threatened, including the failure of such parent or other custodian to take advantage of reasonably available public assistance and service programs designed to furnish such needs where the parent or custodian cannot provide such needs on their own."

The Siletz Tribal Juvenile Code further defines this as, "A parent or custodian who, with criminal negligence, leaves a child under 10 years of age unattended, or in any place, for such period of time as may be likely to endanger the health or welfare of such child."

Abandonment, which is a form of extreme neglect, also is addressed by the Siletz Tribal Juvenile Code, which defines abandonment as "a child whose parent or custodian has left the child without reasonable arrangements for care and supervision such that the physical or emotional health of the child is affected or threatened, or a child who has no parent or other custodian able, willing and available to fulfill parental duties."

The first step in helping abused or neglected children is learning to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single sign does not prove child abuse is occurring in a family; however, when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination, a person should take a closer look at the situation and consider the possibility of child abuse.

It should be stressed that the following are warning signs **only** and that a single occurrence of a sign does not mean that a child is a victim of abuse. But when this is seen with a combination of signs, it could signal that abuse is possible and the situation should be watched.

A. The following signs **may**, when combined with others, signal the presence of child abuse and/or neglect.

The child:

- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the attention of the parent
- Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, passive or withdrawn
- Comes to school or other activities early, stays late and does not want to go home

The parent:

- Shows little concern for the child

- Denies the existence of – or blames the child for – the child's problems in school or at home
- Asks teachers or other caretakers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
- Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless or burdensome
- Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
- Looks primarily to the child for care, attention and satisfaction of emotional needs

The parent and child:

- Rarely touch or look at each other
- Consider their relationship entirely negative
- State that they do not like each other

Specifically, neglect should be considered as a possibility when the child:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States there is no one at home to provide care

An observer also should consider the possibility of neglect when the parent or another adult caregiver:

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
- Is abusing alcohol or other drugs

Studies show that boys and girls are neglected at approximately the same rates. The ages of the neglected children, however, differ. It has been found that the highest rates of neglect are found in children ages 0-3, but continue to be high through age 6 and decrease for those children older than 6.

Other studies show the lowest-income families (those earning less than \$15,000 per year) have the high-

est rates of neglect. It's estimated that 27 out of every 1,000 children are neglected in these families, while the rate of neglect for children living in families that earn more than \$30,000 per year is less than 1 in 1,000 children. Additionally, neglect occurs more often in single-parent families and in families with four or more children.

Substance Abuse is Contributing Factor

The primary contributing factor in child neglect, however, is substance abuse. Whether it's drugs or alcohol, substance abuse is a factor in as much as 70 percent of all reported cases of child neglect.

It has been found that substance-abusing parents may divert money needed for basic necessities to buy drugs and/or alcohol. Parental substance abuse can interfere with the ability to maintain employment, further limiting the family's resources.

The substance-abusing behaviors can expose children to criminal behaviors and dangerous people. Substance-abusing parents can be emotionally or physically unavailable to parent their children or to properly supervise their children, risking accidental injuries. Children living with substance-abusing parents are more likely to become intoxicated themselves, either deliberately or by accidental ingestion of the abused substances.

Heavy parental drug use can interfere with the parent's ability to provide the consistent nurturing and care giving that promotes a child's development and self-esteem.

It's important to remember that it's a combination of the above signs that, if they give you cause for concern, should be reported to the Department of Human Services, 541-757-5019, or to Tribal Child Welfare. But if it's happening now, right this minute, call 911 and make the report.

Next month, Notes from Healthy Family Healthy Child Project will look at domestic violence and child neglect, the consequences of child neglect and begin to talk about the influence of methamphetamine on the family.