

Four-year-old boy calls 911, saves grandmother

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Barbara Little began to feel pain in her chest — like she was having a stroke or a heart attack. She was barely able to talk, in so much pain she needed assistance to dial 911 and talk with dispatch. Fortunately, her 4-year-old grandson Jaxton Hines was there on April 19.

“He knew his numbers, and so I told him I needed him to call for help,” Little said. “I got the dial pad up for him, and I told him to find the 9 and find the 1’s and then he did,” Little said.

Little was surprised at how calm Hines was throughout the whole ordeal and didn’t know how someone his age could be so calm. He used his manners and avoided screaming or yelling when talking to dispatch.

“Her chest was really hurting, and I got to call 911,” Hines said. “I was fine, and I got to go on the ambulance because I can’t stay home by myself cause I’m too little.”

When Jaxton called 911, the call didn’t go through initially, Little said, but dispatchers called him back. He told the dispatcher about his grandma’s condition.

Shiela Kowing, the dispatcher who took the call, talked to Hines and asked him for his name, his grandma’s first and last name. He told Kowing her last name was “Grandma.”



Contributed photo
Amanda Allen and her 4-year-old son, Jaxton.

“On a 911 call, adrenaline is high, especially when a child calls because sometimes they do not provide good information and dispatch is trying to figure out where they are,” Kowing said.

Since the call came from a cellphone, dis-

patch could not plot the location immediately. It can take up to an hour to talk to the provider and pin the location of the call.

Hines told dispatch the color of the house and a street name that was close to the real name but was incorrect. However, Little was able to faintly tell Kowing the correct address to the house.

As help was on the way, Kowing talked to Hines and asked if he could help by opening the windows in the house and putting pillows under Little’s feet. Jaxton did this and in a calm manner.

“I’ve had this happen before, but I didn’t have my grandchildren call 911 so that was the first time I ever asked my grandchild to call 911,” Little said.

Hines’ mother, Amanda Allen, said she was glad somebody was with her mother to call 911. When Allen had the first opportunity to talk to Hines after the incident, she said he was calm but worried about his grandma.

Allen taught her kids about knowing their address and the importance of calling 911 during an emergency.

“I taught my kids what our address was and if they needed to dial 911 that they knew how to do it so if they ever needed to make that call they could,” Allen said.

Little recovered from the incident and continues to enjoy the time she spends with her grandson.

Report details impact of school-based oral health program in Eastern Oregon counties

Blue Mountain Eagle

Eastern Oregon Healthy Living Alliance released a report detailing the impact of the Healthy, Happy Smiles, a school-based oral health program, for the 2019-2020 school year.

Overall in the 2019-2020 school year, 51% of students returned parent consent forms, 42% of students received dental screenings, at least 36% of students received fluoride application and 14% of students received dental sealants. Forty-six percent of students received oral health education through the learning lab, 100% of students received free toothbrush kits and 36 students were referred to their provider for urgent dental care needs.

Grant County schools saw a small decrease in parent consent form return rate over this school year, with an overall parent consent form return rate of 65% compared to last year’s 67%. Grant County schools saw an increase in the number of students for 2019-2020 school year (from 710 students to 767 students).

Between the four participating schools, Prairie City, Seneca Elementary, Humbolt Elementary and Grant Union Junior-Senior High School, 492 students were screened, 50 received fluoride applications, 188 received silver diamine fluoride applications and 108 received sealants. Prairie City School and Seneca Elementary students received education through the learning lab.

Services provided through HHS include free dental screenings, fluoride varnish, silver diamine fluoride, sealants and follow-up for students identified to have urgent dental care needs. Expanded practice dental hygienists from Advantage Dental from DentaQuest administer these services. Fluoride application can result in 37% less cavities on baby teeth and 43% less cavities on permanent teeth, and the placement of dental sealants reduces the risk of cavities by 80%. Silver diamine fluoride looks like water but is a very powerful form of fluoride that can heal early tooth decay. Fillings may not be needed for cavities that are treated with silver diamine fluoride.

Through the HHS program, schools also have the opportunity to participate in a hands-on dental health learning lab. The lab features age appropriate educational material on brushing, flossing, fluoride, orthodontics, tooth anatomy, oral safety, tobacco’s effect on the mouth, sugary foods and drinks and dental careers. In addition, all students receive a free toothbrush kit containing a toothbrush and tooth paste.

All students in grades kindergarten through 12th grades at participating schools are eligible to receive services with parental consent regardless of insurance status. Parents who have not filled out a consent form are encouraged to contact their school. Services are performed by an expanded practice dental hygienist.

HHS is a school-based program provided in partnership with Advantage Dental from DentaQuest, serving 5,063 children in 30 schools across four counties, including Baker, Grant, Harney and Malheur in the 2019-2020 school year. All four participating counties are considered rural or frontier counties where 73% of children aged 6-9 have already experienced a cavity, compared to the state average of 52%.

HHS is funded by The Oregon Community Foundation through the Oregon Children’s Dental Health Initiative, which is in its fourth and final year. However, EOHLA is actively fundraising to continue the program for the 2020-2021 school year and beyond.



The Eagle/Rudy Diaz

Families First put pinwheels on their front gates for awareness during Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Child abuse challenges amid COVID-19

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, but the work continues year-round, especially as the pandemic presents challenges.

Breanna Wilson, the program coordinator for Grant-Harney County Court Appointed Special Advocates, talked about the importance of Child Abuse Prevention Month and how the community can help as quarantines and stay-home orders continue in Oregon.

“Think about the unfortunate reality that some of the challenges the children in our community face,” Wilson said. “It happens year-round, but this month is a time to give awareness and make additional effort to train people so year-round we have more people being vigilant and watchful for our children.”

Wilson said prevention is more important now than it has been in the past due to the current pandemic, quarantines and the rising stress that parents face.

The number of child abuse and neglect cases reported between the months of February and March in



Contributed photo

Pinwheels displayed in front of the Harney County Courthouse in 2019.

Oregon has seen a 70% decrease, according to the Oregon Department of Human Services.

Wilson said, although statistics show a decrease in cases, looking at past trends reveals that in times of recession there’s a decrease in child abuse cases reported. However, she added that there’s an increase in the number of youths being admitted to the hospital because of injuries.

“Unfortunately, kids aren’t out in the open where you can see them right now because we’re under stay-

at-home orders, and that means some of these kids that would normally be seen by their teachers, friends and neighbors are going unseen, and we can’t pay attention to see if they’re doing well,” Wilson said.

CASA postponed its placing of pinwheels — a symbol of child abuse prevention and child abuse awareness — this year to ensure people maintain physical distance, but Wilson said families can still participate and make origami pin-

wheels at home and place them in their yard.

An online training, “Darkness to Light: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse,” will be held on April 30, which will be facilitated by Tracey Blood from Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization. Anyone can register for the free training at eventbrite.com/e/darkness-to-light-preventing-child-sexual-abuse-tickets-103471285400.

A big help the community can provide during this time is to support parents and stay connected with other people in the community, according to Wilson.

“The biggest thing is to support parents so they don’t feel they’re alone because you hear about families that are stressed out because they have their kids 24/7 and are working from home now. Calling and offering to babysit via video chat for a half hour or offering to pick up groceries can help,” Wilson said. “I think others have hit the nail on the head when they said that it’s not social distancing, it should be physical distancing, and we should still be socially aware and supportive of our friends, family and community.”

Call 1-855-503-SAFE (7233) to contact the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline or 911 for emergencies.

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