

VISION MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

To open up the world to people to encourage them to experience everything it has to offer; communicate effectively; and to be as healthy, safe, and financially secure as possible. experience everything it has to offer; to communicate

For people to feel good about themselves and their relationships with others, to have fun, be happy, and have meaningful things to do.

For people to live in safe and decent neighborhoods where they are accepted, valued, and respected including their cultural preferences.

To guide people on their journey to discover their abilities, talents, and desires by empowering them to be interdependent; to encourage people to make their own choices and decisions so they will have control over their own lives, and over the services and supports they use.



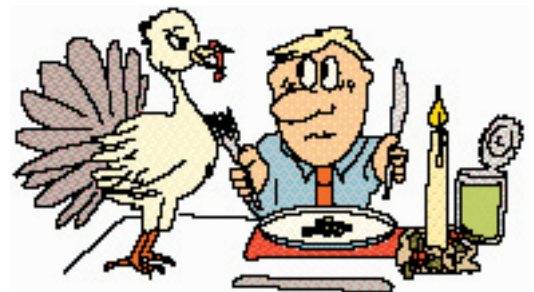
STEP NEWS

December/January 2004/2005 Volume 5 Issue 12

Talking Turkey

Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas Cos' turkeys just wanna hav fun,
Turkeys are cool, turkeys are wicked and every turkey has a Mum.
Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas, don't eat it keep it alive,
It could be yu mate, an not on your plate Say, Yo! Turkey I'm on your side.
I got lots of friends who are turkeys an all of dem fear christmas time,
Dey wanna enjoy it, dey say humans destroyed it, an humans are out of dere mind.
Yeah, I got lots of friends who are turkeys Dey all have a right to a life,
Not to be caged up an genetically made up by any farmer an his wife.
Turkeys jus wanna play reggae, turkeys jus wanna hip-hop,
Can yu imagine a nice turkey saying, "I cannot wait for de chop?"
Turkeys like getting presents, dey wanna watch christmas TV,
Turkeys have brains and turkeys feel pain, in many ways ike yu an me.
I once knew a turkey called...Tirkey, he said, "Benji explain to me please,
Who put the turkey in christmas an what happens to christmas trees?"
I said "I am not too sure turkey but it's nothing to do with Christ Mass,
Humans get greedy an waste more dan need be and business men mek loadsa of cash.
Be nice to yu turkey this christmas, invite them indoors fer sum greens,
Let dem eat cake an let dem partake, in a plate of organic grown beans.
An spare dem da cut of de knife,
Join Turkeys United and dey'll be delighted an yu ill mek new friends 'FOR LIFE'.

Jacque Dillard-Foss



STEP STARS

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Jason Skinner- for being willing to work last weekend with Mike Dyda. Thank-you
Tracy Taylor- for being very involved as a roommate with Barry. His parents love you!
Patti Dixon- for your quick assistance with H.R. issues. You are awesome!

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Maryann Dyda- for continuing to give all the support and love as a mother.
Mrs. Shahida- Des thanks-you, for the open communication and support you give to your son Atif.

Thanks you to all of those who assisted with the STEP Christmas Party, assuring that things ran smoothly!

Lisa Barrows, Bonnie Fuchs, & Laurie Malone -Thanks so much for providing your hair and make-up talents to various clients for the STEP Christmas Party.

.Mike Bachman-Thank you for taking up Chris F. and demonstrating great flexibility with your caseload.

And to all of those we have overlooked- know you are thanked and appreciated greatly

To All the PA's- who showed up and participated in STEP's first PA Advisory Committee meeting, you and your input are greatly appreciated. This is a great example of Team Building!

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NOTE:

Although the STEP STARS list was short this issue, we wanted you to know that all are thanked and appreciated for their individual and group contribution to the STEP Program.

P

A Very Happy Holiday
To You All!



Happy Birthday

Mai Vang 1/1
Walter Price 1/1
Linda Busher 1/3
Carol Nolan 1/5
Joshua Pinsky 1/7
Crystal Page 1/10
Cheryl Dub 1/11
Audra Granderson 1/11
Patricia Lee 1/12
Geanina Copaciu 1/14
Sara Hiatt 1/14
Sarah Austin 1/15
Stephanie Piscitelli 1/16
Dereck Nyamadzawo 1/18
Olaf Betts 1/18
Samuel Holden 1/18
Sandra Nieves 1/19
Carlos Hernandez 1/19
Luisa David 1/19
Pearlene Jo Theriot 1/20
Patty Genoa 1/20
Candy Bilyeu 1/20
Candy Boston 1/22
Mathew Call 1/22
Cassie Rasberry 1/26
Joyce De La Concepcion 1/27
Jason Skinner 1/28
Kim Van Os 1/31
Steven Lantz 1/31



SLS- Deaf

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Hi...

It is a very busy time of year with Christmas and New Year of 2005 on our heels. It is going CRAZY for everyone, but to make sure that you all are SAFE when you go out into the community. I want you to make sure that clients' are enjoying themselves during the holidays.

I want to remind you that on Dec 24th STEP is closed for the day. The clients are not going to any day programs, some of you will work all day, but have a lot of FUN with clients. STEP will be open again on Dec 27th. I want to make sure you all know that Dec 31st is still open for STEP that includes day program. Jan 3rd of 2005, STEP will be closed.

Reminders that you all will get paychecks on Dec 31st in the afternoon which is one week earlier for January of 2005. So that means you will not get other paycheck till Jan 21st. So makes sure that you budget for the last 3 weeks in January and good luck! I want you all to have a Happy and Safe HOLIDAY!

Diana Miller

SLS- Hearing

The Hearing SLS had a blast at the STEP Christmas party! We were able to appreciate two of our Coordinators who recieved the award of Coordinator of the Year! Those two hardworking individuals are Randy Cobb and Mason Leland. Randy has worked for STEP for 3 years and finds that helping his clients meet or exceed their goals has been the most rewarding part of his job. Mason has worked for STEP for a little over a year and feels that his success at STEP has much to do with the strong support he recieves from his colleagues, clients and administration. Both Randy and Mason share the same frustration with their jobs and that is allowing consumers to make a mistakes knowing there is a better choice in front of them. As we all know, experience is the best teacher and we are often faced by the challenges of our consumers learning their lessons through making mistakes just as we have done. Congratulations to both Randy & Mason! We would also like to say congratulations to Michael Lapailusa & Tatiana Rubin for their hard work and recieving the award of PA of the Year! A friendly reminder that we have a PA training on Jan 10th, 2005 from 9:30 am-11:30 am. See you there!

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Merry Christmas & Happy New Years!
Sandee Nieves

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Human Resources

OPEN ENROLLMENT
FOR MEDICAL AND DENTAL PLANS
THURSDAY JANUARY 20TH
12:30 TO 3:30

Formal presentations at
12:00 to 12:30 and 3:00 to 3:30



If you missed an opportunity to sign up, or if you want to make any changes to your coverage, this is the time to do so!

Please join us anytime between 12:30 and 3:30
If you have any questions, contact Patti Dixon.

REMINDER

"December 31st"

This is not an extra
payday you are just
getting your first pay
check for January,
2005

early so keep in mind
no pay day after the
31st until
january 21st!



EXTRA STEP

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Day Program

Next STEP

(A note from Lynn Vaughan, Program Director)

For most families, holidays are filled with great expectations. There are opportunities for togetherness, sharing, laughter, and memories. But holidays can also be a time of stress, disappointment, and sadness especially when a loved one has a disability.

The observance of holidays and special occasions can be planned so clients, families, and staff can enjoy them to their fullest. We must be realistic about our expectations, and respectful of the client's needs, and flexible in our planning. Old traditions, customs, and ways of celebrating may need to give way to a gentler, quieter, and more controlled environment.

Because of the changes a client has experienced in their life they may feel a sense of loss during the holidays. At the same time, we as their support staff may be overwhelmed trying to maintain holiday traditions for loved ones at home or here at STEP. Here are some suggestions that may help you (i.e., busy staff), the clients you support, and the family members who will be visiting.

- Encourage people to visit, but ask that they call ahead. We want to make sure the clients are home, ready and looking their best.

- If family members have not visited in a while and you have the client's consent, familiarize them beforehand of any changes in their loved one's condition. Ask the family to watch for signs of restlessness or fatigue. It may be best to shorten the length of the visit or outing.

- Encourage family to bring things to share such as treats, photos, favorite songs, or movies.

- Help them connect. It does not matter if they remember everyone's name. It does matter that someone visits and takes the time to make them feel special, respected, and loved.

- Suggest gift ideas. If you are unsure of things the client wants - sit down with them and a catalog or advertisements. Look for body language and gestures. Ask Clients to cut pictures out.

- Remember, the holidays are a wonderful opportunity to share time with others to reminisce and find comfort in being together. Try to make these days easy on yourself, your clients, and their families. Careful planning, low-key activities, and realistic expectations will help everyone enjoy this blessed time of year!

Lynn Vaughan



We want to say "THANK-YOU!" to "ALL" who work @ Day Program, for your dedicated hard work & support in the year 2004. Let's go into year 2005 by making the best of it. You can make the difference! We would also like to recognize Shannon Alioto and Tom Waters for being Job Coach of the Year, and Brad for Client of the Year. Thank-you for your hard work and being there for your clients.

Roger Miller & Debbie Waters

want to wish you all a very

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

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Healthy Living:

Poisoning

- * Mistletoe, holly, poinsettias, Jerusalem cherry plants, and other plants are commonly used as decorations during the holidays. Like many plants, these are considered potentially poisonous and should be kept out of the reach of children. Symptoms of plant poisoning can include rashes, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. If you suspect that your child has eaten any part of a plant, immediately call your child's doctor or the national poison control number: (800) 222-1222.

- * "Bubble lights" containing methylene chloride can be poisonous if a child drinks the fluid from more than one light (even if labeled nontoxic). Snow sprays may be harmful if the aerosol propellants are used improperly.

- * Alcohol poisoning is a common risk for children during the holiday season. Many parents host holiday parties where alcohol is served. Parents must take care to remove all empty and partially empty cups as soon as possible. Because children imitate adults, many may drink the beverages they see adults drinking. Children become "drunk" much more quickly than adults, so even small amounts of alcohol can be dangerous to children.

- * Food poisoning is another potential holiday hazard. Practice food safety by washing hands, utensils, dishes, and anything else that comes in contact with raw meat, including poultry and fish, and raw eggs before and after use. Don't contaminate a serving dish with raw meat. Store leftovers properly and heat them thoroughly before serving.

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HAVE A SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON



ILS



ILS Unit is currently working on their SMART Path for the year 2005. Some of the current projects we are working on include: Conducting ELP's with all ILS clients; developing and filming an ILS/Parenting unit training video; and seeking out additional raises for all Instructors. (That last part was a joke!)

This month our unit sponsored the 2nd annual Toy and Food Drive for our clients and Parenting families. A big "Thank You" goes out to everyone who donated their time and money to help out those in need. You are all greatly appreciated and "make the difference"! The Parent Support Group will be meeting again on January 20th, from 3:30 to 5pm. This month's class will be "Indoor Activities"- please see posted flier.

Congratulations to Gloria Goode, Stephanie Tate and Angela Olson who were honored this month at the STEP Christmas Party for all of their hard work and dedication as ILS Instructors. Ya'll Rock!!

Heather Campbell



Any articles, announcements, STARS, and resource information is welcome. The deadline for the next newsletter is 12/15/04.

Jen's Trivia Question: What is the name of the skin that hangs from a turkey's neck?

Be the first person to visit Jen Jone's office with the correct answer and receive a prize: ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S QUESTION: "WATTLE" WINNER: Mike Jones

NEW QUESTION: On which side of a building do isicles form?



A BLESSED SEASON TO YOU & YOUR FAMILIES



Bonnie Fuch

(Each month a new office staff)

Retrieves messages (phone, TTY, T-mail & E-mail) forawrds to appropriate personnel

Sorts and delivers incoming mail

Set up interviews for Deaf and Hearing

Assists Applicants on computers with application process

Create, maintain, and conduct monthly distribution of STEP phone & pager lists

Orders and maintains all office supplies and storage areas

Maintain copy machines and assist users when necessary

Does the time off requests

Inputs vacation hours

Makes ada cards for new staff

Pager repairs and lost pagers

checks out gloves and blue pads

Creates, and maintain STEP brochures

Create and distributes Personal Attendant badges and company business cards upon written request.

Schedule & confirm appointments by request

Takes pictures for Boards, and maintains photo database

Greet Guests, Consumers, Employees upon enetering office building

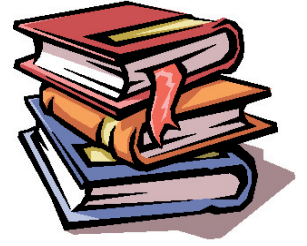
HAPPY HOLIDAYS !

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

HEALTH EDUCATION LIAISON PROJECT

The HELP health questionnaire is being rerun in this month's newsletter with an added incentive to increase the response rate: all those who return a completed survey by December 31st will be entered in a drawing to win \$25.00 (please include your name which will be kept confidential).

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As many of you may be aware, the incidents of disease amongst those with developmental disabilities is substantially higher than the general population. The Health Education Liaison Project (H.E.L.P.) wants your assistance in improving the health of our consumers. Please take a few minutes to fill out the health questionnaire below and return to Jaimie Dillard, your input is very important and highly valued.

What do you think the biggest obstacle to good health is for our consumers? _____

What factors do you feel have contributed to our consumer's poor health? _____

How can STEP improve services to better meet the health needs of consumers? _____

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What kinds of health related training opportunities would you most benefit from? _____

What types of diseases have your clients been diagnosed with? _____

Do you feel well informed of your client's health needs? _____

P

Do you feel adequately trained to meet your client's health needs? _____

Do you feel the medical community meets your client's health needs? _____

When does a person have the right to make the wrong choice about his or her health? _____

What is your best tip for those in the medical community to improve services? _____

What should happen if consumers do not follow the advice of their physicians? _____

What is your responsibility in ensuring your client remains healthy? _____

What other suggestions do you have for improving the health of our consumers? _____

Thank you for your feedback!

**GOOD-LUCK!
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

Jaimie Dillard

