



 Lutheran Family Services
of Nebraska, Inc.

Connections

Winter / Spring 2009

*Restoring
Health,
Providing
Hope*



Breaking the cycle

Providing hope to families

Not everyone comes from a strong and loving family. Where can new parents go when they do not have a positive role model for raising healthy children? Who can teach them how to break the cycle of unhealthy behaviors?

Consider Tanya, mother of a two-year-old girl named Nya. When Tanya and her husband, David, first learned she was pregnant, they were afraid of making the same mistakes their parents had made. They expressed these concerns to Tanya's doctor and he referred them to Lutheran Family Services' Building Families Boutique. Staff at the Boutique quickly enrolled Tanya and David in the Nurturing Parenting Program.[®] During the 16-week course they learned how to cook healthy meals, how to better understand their daughter's needs, and how to avoid the yelling and spanking that their own parents had relied on for discipline.

Through the Boutique's incentive program, Tanya and David purchased Nya's car seat and her first baby blanket with points they earned for taking the classes. More importantly, Tanya and David developed a support network of other new parents. Today Tanya and David have both become more confident of their parenting skills and are ready to give Nya a little brother or sister.

For more information, call (712) 242-1040 (Council Bluffs) or (402) 941-0075 (Fremont).



Tough times

Restoring families during a recession

Angie and Kyle will be married five years in March. Their only child, Rebecca, just turned three. They bought their first home last summer; a fixer upper. Angie works nights at a local hospital as an emergency room nurse and Kyle worked for a local contractor building new homes across Omaha.

As construction slowed in early 2008, Kyle's boss was forced to lay off 20 workers, including Kyle. With his final paycheck in hand, Kyle headed to the bar just as his father had done so many times. He came home late smelling of beer and refused

Need someone to talk to?

If you're feeling helpless or hopeless about your situation, withdrawal, or depression, we can help. We provide mental health services in 80% of our offices and have substance abuse treatment programs. If you're in crisis, please call 988. If you're looking for support and hope for the future, please go to our website for a full list of services.



to talk to Angie about what had happened. Over the next few weeks Kyle became sullen, distancing himself from his daughter and his wife. He stopped taking daily walks with their dog and would not attempt to look for a new job. His drinking was out of control and Angie didn't recognize her previously gentle husband. She knew Kyle's father had died years ago from complications due to alcoholism. She never expected Kyle to fall into that same pattern. His mother called Angie constantly out of worry and concern for her granddaughter. She warned Angie that unless someone intervened soon her marriage might never be the same.

Angie took Rebecca to her parents' home for a long weekend. She needed time to think. Since

retiring, her mother had been volunteering at Lutheran Family Services. She told Angie about the good work they were doing with families just like hers. Angie contacted the closest LFS office to her home and found they offered family counseling **and** substance abuse treatment! She scheduled an appointment immediately.

At first Kyle refused to attend the sessions. Angie begged and pleaded with him to help save their family. It wasn't until a "sober moment" weeks later that Kyle recognized the fear in his daughter's eyes and remembered his own childhood fears of his father. He finally agreed to seek help. After months of individual and family counseling, substance abuse treatment and support groups at Lutheran Family Services, Kyle is beginning to return to the loving husband and father he once was. Every night in her prayers Angie thanks Lutheran Family Services for restoring a sense of hope to her family.

How you can provide hope for families...

- \$25.30 a week pays for a parent like "Tanya" to attend the Nurturing Parenting Program® in Fremont, Lexington or Council Bluffs, Iowa.
- \$95 provides someone like "Kyle" one hour of substance abuse treatment.
- \$10 a week covers the cost for a parent to attend the RSAFE parenting class where they learn how to help children with sexual behavior problems, often due to past abuse.
- \$30 provides a refugee child from Myanmar with their first school clothes and backpack.
- \$50 purchases a car seat or stroller for families at the Fremont or Council Bluffs Building Families Boutiques.

By making a gift to LFS you can provide hope to families. Please use the enclosed envelope. For more information call Melissa Price, Annual Giving Coordinator, at (402) 978-5678 or mprice@lfsneb.org.



ing from others, or relying on alcohol and drugs to get you through the day, Lutheran Family Services is here for you. We
ance abuse treatment services at all but three of those locations. If you are looking for someone to help restore health to your
ll list of our locations and services: www.lfsneb.org. You may call a local LFS office or call (402) 342-7007.

International Center offers tax preparation assistance

For refugees, immigrants and asylees new to this country even simple things like grocery shopping can seem daunting. Language and cultural barriers make everything in life more difficult. Add to those barriers a complicated tax code that many Americans don't readily understand and there is bound to be confusion. That is why Lutheran Family Services' International Center of the Heartland is providing free tax services to refugee, immigrant and asylee clients until April 15 through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. This VITA program offers tax assistance for low- to moderate-income families (\$42,000 and below for couples) who need help preparing their own tax returns. Certified volunteers are available to help clients fill out their tax forms and to teach them financial literacy. Volunteers will teach clients how to use refunds to save for future needs.

International Center of the Heartland Director Maggie Kalkowski said that 250-500 people are expected to request an appointment or walk in for help. Sessions will be offered in various languages to accommodate different immigrant, refugee or asylee populations. "People will come to LFS because they trust us and the services we offer," said Maggie. "If a family hasn't been able to file their taxes for a few years, they could walk out with a refund and we will be there to help teach them how best to use it."

For more information call (402) 346-6100 in Omaha.



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Congress extends IRA charitable rollover

Congress has extended an excellent charitable giving opportunity for 2009. If you are at least age 70 1/2 and own an IRA, you can make a tax-free charitable gift via a direct transfer to charity, up to \$100,000 per year. Take advantage of this tremendous "tax-wise" opportunity to assist Lutheran Family Services with a gift through this extension! This opportunity expires December 31, 2009. Contact Ruth Henneman, Vice President of Development, at (402) 978-5654 or rhenneman@lfsneb.org for more information.

Connections

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Our Mission: To express God's love for all people by providing quality human care services that build and strengthen individual, family and community life.



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