

Joyful Connections Newsletter

MEET BOARD MEMBER Jeff Chio

My name is Jeff Chio, and along with my wife Ann, have been lifelong residents of Ottawa County, raising our three kids here.

I first became aware of Joyful Connections when Judge Bruce Winters spoke at Shoreline Church about the need for the program and the process that was underway to get an organization established that supported and protected children and families dealing with supervised visits and exchanges between parents.

Being a participant in Leadership Ottawa County, I saw the need to get involved in my community working with a cause I felt strongly about.

In the past 15 years, I

have repeatedly had direct involvement with friends, coworkers, and others in our community who desperately needed these types of services and they had nowhere to turn.

It was very disturbing and painful to see a friend constantly have to worry over the safety of her son when she brought him to the required time with her ex-husband or had to face abuse herself during the exchanges.

Recently, there has been national attention for the three brothers missing in Michigan, where according to news reports, there were court ordered visitation issues.

I urge everyone to support Joyful Connections in

any way you can; financially, as a volunteer, or just spreading the word on what we do and how important the services are.

Encourage your church, your family or the service/fraternal club where you're active to get involved. They can make a huge difference in the lives of our local children. Give these young people a chance to become healthy community leaders themselves in the future.

Thank you Jeff

For your commitment

To Joyful Connections!

Planning for the Future at Joyful Connections

On a cold Saturday in December, committed Board members devoted their morning to planning for the upcoming year at Joyful Connections. Judge Geisler joined the group and added insight to the needs of the courts and the families.

Some of the key strategies adopted for 2011 included increasing the public's awareness of Joyful Connections and its purpose through outreach activities and general advertising. The Board will endeavor to increase its membership to assist in implementing and

monitoring Board policies that were adopted in 2010. Recruiting additional volunteers will also be a primary goal, as the Board looks forward to maintaining its quality services throughout 2011 and partnering with other service providers to provide referrals to Joyful Connections clients.

The Board and Staff are excited about the future of Joyful Connections and dedicated to ensuring that children are safe and allowed to engage in healthy visits with their parents and relatives at Joyful Connections.



Planning
for
2011



Volume 2, Issue 1
February 2011

Joyful Connections Mission Statement

Joyful Connections provides a healthy, safe, and home-like environment where children can interact with family members in a non-judgmental setting.

2011

Board Members:

Corrine Creeden, Chair
Ron Nisch, Vice Chair
Wayne Biggert
Jeff Chio
Pam Courtney
Sharon Hess
Stephanie Kowal

Ex-Officio Members:

Judge Bruce Winters
Judge Kathleen Geisler
Commissioner James Sass

Staff

Karen Demangos
Executive Director

Sheila Powell
Fiscal Operations Manager

Amanda Clymer
Visitation Monitor

Erin Moss
Visitation Monitor



We Love Our Donors!



A Great Big Thank You to these Generous Donors who have provided support for Joyful Connections in the past quarter!

Our Gold Donors

St. Boniface Catholic Church

Our Silver Donors

Oak Harbor Rotary

Our Bronze Donors

Village of Genoa
St. Paul's UCC in Oak Harbor

Our Patrons

Gypsum Community Church

Thank you!

Our Friends

Real Estate Professionals
Jeff and Ann Chio
Virginia Carr
Terry and Brenda Hetrick
Steve and Kim Fish

Meet one of our Wonderful Volunteers

Patti Howell

Resides in: Port Clinton

Family Status: Married with 2 adult children, 1 grandchild and 1 great-grandchild

Employment Status: Retired

Previous Experience: Degree in Early Childhood Education; WSOS Pre-school with 25 years of experience; Raised 2 children

Hobbies: Reading, Golf, Playing Games on the Internet

Why do you volunteer at Joyful Connections: I feel that giving everyone a safe friendly place to meet is important. I enjoy being involved with children again. I like to see growth in the families. It just makes me feel good to help.

A big thank you to
Patti
for her dedication
to the children
at Joyful Connections!



Please join us!
Joyful Connections
is hosting an
Open House
To honor
our generous
donors and
supporters.
Please join us!

Open House

Date: February 28, 2011

Time: 5:00pm to 7:00pm

At Joyful Connections
8200 W. State Route 163
Oak Harbor, OH 43449

Contact person: Karen Demangos
Executive Director

Please RSVP!
Phone: 567-262-3181
Fax: 567-262-3182
Email: joyfulconnections@cros.net



Joyful Connections has a Fan Page!!

Check it out at
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Joyful-Connections/171170219593625>

Watch for updates on happenings at Joyful Connections and hints on activities for children!

Paper Conversation Heart Wreath



This paper conversation heart wreath is a great project for younger kids. It's easy to put together and fun to display!

What you'll need:

- 9" dinner plate or paper plate
- Recycled cereal box or other thin cardboard
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Heart pattern
- Construction paper: pink, purple, red, and blue
- Markers, crayons or paint pens
- Glue sticks
- Yarn for hanger (optional)
- Heart pattern

How to make it:

1. Trace around the 9" plate onto the cardboard. ([See photo.](#))
2. Use your pen or pencil to draw another circle inside that one, about an inch away from the outside circle. ([See photo.](#))
3. Cut out the circle and the center of the circle to create a cardboard wreath base. ([See photo.](#))
4. Fold a piece of scrap paper in half. Using the heart [pattern](#) line up the fold line of the scrap paper with the dotted line of the pattern. Cut out the shape so that when you open it, you have a heart shape. ([See photo.](#))
5. Fold the short end of a piece of construction paper up about 3 inches. Place the folded heart around the folded paper and trace the half heart shape into the paper. You should be able to fit three hearts on the paper. Repeat this step for each colored piece of paper; you will have a total of 12 hearts. ([See photo.](#))
6. Cut out all the hearts and flatten out the creases so that the hearts lay flat. Using markers, crayons, or paint pens, write conversation candy phrases on the hearts such as "LOVE", "HUBBA HUBBA", "SWEET", "LOVE", "BE MINE", "KISS" and "PAL". ([See photo.](#))
7. Arrange your hearts on top of the cardboard wreath shape without gluing them down. Once you have them where you want them, use the glue stick to attach each one. ([See photo.](#)) You can hang the wreath as is or attach a piece of looped yarn to the back as a hanger.

Working on a simple craft project together is a great way to spend time with your child.

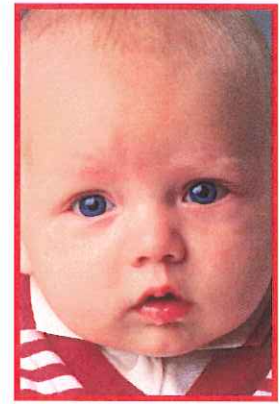
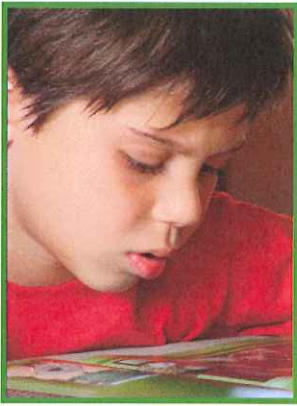
Children love to make crafts and oftentimes making something together is a great conversation starter.

Making gifts together is also a good way to teach your child to give to others.

Here's an idea for a fun Valentine's Day craft to make with your children!

BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

Joyful Connections is looking to expand its Board of Directors. We are looking for individuals with finance, human resources, fundraising or marketing experience to devote a few hours a month to support the mission and vision of Joyful Connections. The children need your help! If you might be interested, please contact Karen Demangos, Executive Director at 567-262-3181 or Corrine Creeden, Board Chair at 419-734-3266 for more details.



Jennifer's Story:

There is a little girl who visits her Dad at Joyful Connections. Her name is Jennifer. We don't know the whole story about Jennifer and her family and why's she's coming here to visit her dad and not visiting at his home. But we do know that she loves her dad very much.

When her mom is around, Jennifer calls her dad "John." When her mom leaves Joyful Connections and her dad arrives, she runs to him and says "Daddy, Daddy!" They talk and laugh and play for the two hours they are here at Joyful Connections. When it is time for dad to leave, they give hugs and kisses and Jennifer tells him not to leave. Sometimes she cries when he walks out the door.

There are reasons that the court has ordered John to have his visits with his daughter supervised. We hope that John is working on whatever issues have caused his visitation to be limited to Joyful Connections.

Time will tell if Jennifer is allowed to visit her dad at his home again or if she will continue to visit him at Joyful Connections. What we do know now is that Jennifer has been able to hold on to her dad even during some rough family times. She may have become shy and distant from him and even have started to forget her dad if they had been separated for many months. Joyful Connections has prevented this from happening. Every week Jennifer can say, "Daddy, Daddy!" and give her dad hugs and kisses.

Kids need to have a relationship with both of their parents if at all possible. Jennifer can be safe while expressing her love for her dad and receiving his love back. She can know that her dad cares about her very much and know that she is important to him. Kids are what matter to us at Joyful Connections. This is why we are here and this is what we're all about.

Comment from Karen

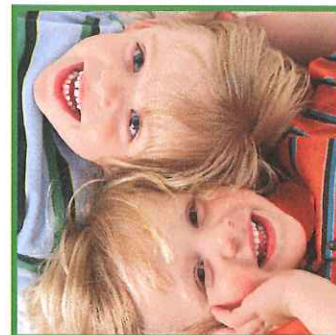
At Joyful Connections, there are many emotions being expressed all of the time. Our name suggests what our mission is all about, bringing families together in ways that give them time to enjoy their relationships with each other.

In the midst of crisis and stressful times, our site is a place that can be a refuge for families, if only for an hour or two, a place where they can have a "joyful connection" with someone they love.

It is a heartwarming experience for the staff and volunteers to see these "joyful connections" and hear the sounds associated with them. There is giggling, teasing, robust laughing, tears of joy, sighs of contentment, and the sound of a mom or dad softly reading a book to their child.

To be sure, children will be children. They argue with their siblings and don't always want to listen to the rules that mom and dad tell them they must follow while at Joyful Connections.

But in the end, we are privileged to hear the music of connection, the music of love between those who are separated except for their few precious hours each week here where they can be joyful.



Joyful Connections operates on a limited budget and would welcome donations of any of the following items: White Copy Paper ~ Colored Copy Paper & Card Stock ~ Pens (blue, black, green, red) Wite-Out or EZCorrect ~ Binder Clips ~ Kleenex ~ Disinfectant Wipes ~ Washable Markers Stickers