

Parish Nurse E-newsletter



**July 3, 2009**

***The Faith Connection***  
*~ News and Ideas for Your Health Ministry ~*

Sent to you by:

The Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program

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**News:**

**The Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program** started this monthly e-newsletter to help us all stay connected. The responses we receive tell us that the news, articles and information are helpful in your ministry. We welcome news from your church and suggestions for our future newsletters. Please keep in touch.....our new e-mail address is [parishnurse@mercy.pmhs.org](mailto:parishnurse@mercy.pmhs.org)

**Parish Nurse Basic Preparation Course 2009**

**Commissions 17 Parish Nurses and**

**1 Health Minister**



The Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program's class of 2009 includes:

Lori Jo Bell - Graystone Presbyterian Church, Indiana, PA

Karen Cooper - St. Louise de Marillac Catholic Church, Upper St. Clair, PA

Lois Cornman - Peace Lutheran Church, Greenock, PA

Sharon Hachtman - Fritz Memorial, United Methodist Church, Bethlehem, PA

Yvonne Harris - Greater Community Bible Tabernacle, Philadelphia, PA

Jamie Kray - First Baptist Church, Monongahela, PA

Diana Lehnkering - Covina Evangelical Free Church, Covina, CA

Diane Luther - Christian House Baptist Chapel, Aliquippa, PA

Iris McClenahan - St. John Neumann Catholic Church, Franklin Park, PA

Lynn McGrath - First United Methodist Church, Erie, PA

Carol Patton - Nineveh United Methodist Church, Nineveh, PA

Laura Sherretts - Linesville Presbyterian Church, Linesville, PA

Bernadette Shipeck - St. Victor Catholic Church, Bairdford, PA

Colleen Skvarca - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Carnegie, PA

Joan Soldner - St. Fidelis Catholic Church, Butler, PA

Debbie Thompson - St. John Neumann Catholic Church, Franklin Park, PA

Rose Whipkey - St. Hugh/OLC Catholic Church, Carmichaels, PA

Kerry Wolfrom - Mill Village United Methodist Church, Mill Village, PA

The Parish Nurse Basic Course offered by Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program is endorsed by the International Parish Nurse Resource Center and offers CEs for nurses. This course is offered every year in June.

We are considering offering an additional course in 2010, but in an alternative format such as one or two days over several months. We are open to your ideas of how this could better fit into your schedule. Please, let us know if you are interested in this format.

## Upcoming Events

### **Presented by Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program:**

- ◆ Parish Nurse and Health Ministry meeting for Education and Support  
**Healthy People 2010** will be presented by Michalene King, PhD, RN and Maria Pappas-Rogich, Dr. PH, RN on Saturday, September 12 from 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and again on Wednesday, September 16 from 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Select the date that is best for you. The meeting will be held at UPMC Mercy Hospital in conference room 2190 (down the hall from Sr. M. Ferdinand Clark Auditorium in Bldg. D). The purpose of this program is to discuss Healthy People in Healthy Communities including the public health challenges for each of the 10 Health Indicators and the implications for parish nurses. 2.0 contact hours for RNs – Fee \$10.00. No cost to attend for those not wanting CE credits. Reduced-rate parking in the UPMC Mercy garage is offered at \$2.50.  
**Call to Register – 412-232-5815**

- ◆ **Symposium 2009 – Save the Date**

### **Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry**

# 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium

November 7, 2009

*Parish Nurses and Health Ministers:*

*In the Forefront of Changing Health Care*

Keynote Speaker: Jean C. Kennedy, RN, MA

Earn 4.0 CEs for RNs

## Focus on Health and Wellness:

July is “Eye Health and Safety Month”. Our eyes are so important to us that we need to take special care of them. With school starting next month, it is a good time to make those eye exam appointments for the children. Review the list below for suggestions to keep your eyes in their best condition possible.

### EYE SAFETY FOR YOUNG AND OLD

#### DOS AND DON'TS

- **DO** use sunglasses with UV protection
- **DON'T** put a contact lens in your mouth to wet it
- **DO** use protective eyewear when playing sports like racquet ball
- **DON'T** stare at the computer or computer game for long periods
- **DO** use protective eyewear in the garage with power tools
- **DO** wash your hands regularly
- **DON'T** share eye makeup
- **DO** discard eye make up after 3 months
- **DON'T** be near fireworks
- **DO** avoid flying toys or projectile-firing toys
- **DON'T** play with toys which have sharp points, spikes, sharp edges
- **DO** avoid BB guns, bows and arrows, and darts

**SAFETY** is nothing more than common sense. 😊

Used by permission from “Wellness Tip of The Week” written by JoAnn C. Kauss, RN, MSN, St. Malachy Church, 2003.

## NEW COBRA LEGISLATION: OVERVIEW

*Designed to help employees who lose their jobs maintain coverage during the current recession ...*

- As part of President Obama's stimulus provisions, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides temporary subsidies (premium reductions) for unemployed workers who maintain employer-sponsored health coverage through COBRA after a layoff.
  - Under original legislation, individuals may elect to continue coverage for up to 18 months through COBRA and are required to pay the full premium plus a 2% administrative fee.
  - Under ARRA, many laid-off workers will be eligible for a 9-month federal subsidy covering 65% of the cost of COBRA premiums.
  - Employers will receive a tax credit (by the Treasury Department) against payroll taxes to cover the cost of the subsidy.

### **Assistance Eligible Individuals (qualifying event)**

- Defined as employees (and family members) who have been “involuntarily” terminated from jobs between September 1 '08 to December 31 '09 with annual incomes that do not exceed \$125,000 (for individuals) or \$250,000 (for families).
- Must be eligible for COBRA via recent employer or through continuation of coverage under state law similar to federal COBRA.
  - Must be covered by employer-sponsored plan at the time of event (COBRA generally applies to employers with 20+employees)
- Eligibility ends upon any offer for new group coverage (i.e., through a new employer plan or spouse's plan) or Medicare or when the COBRA continuation period ends.
- *Added Election Opportunities*
- *Guidance on notices provided by The Department of Labor (DOL)*
- *Individuals on COBRA as of Feb 17, 2009 will receive a “special notice” from plan or insurer explaining the availability of subsidy and how to apply.*
- *60-day option for qualified individuals, who initially declined COBRA coverage, to regain coverage and pay reduced premiums. No retroactive premium will be required.*

- *Option for employers to allow individuals to switch to a less expensive plan, if available.*
- *Appeal Review Process*
- *Expedited review (through DOL or Dept of HHS) for individuals determined by plan to be not eligible for premium reduction.*
- *Appeal form will be made available on [www.dol.gov/COBRA](http://www.dol.gov/COBRA)*

## **INFANT SAFE SLEEP PROGRAM**

The Infant Safe Sleep Church Outreach Committee is working with local churches to help get information to the community about how to reduce the risk of an infant sleep-related death. The Committee wants to ensure new moms and everyone else who cares for newborns places their baby in as “Baby Safe Sleep Zone”. We invite nurses who are interested in helping with this effort to contact Peggy O’Malley at 412-578-8350.

Between 2001 and 2006, 97 percent of Allegheny County’s 68 infant sleep-related deaths were discovered in an unsafe sleep environment or sleep position. Two-thirds of the babies were black and one-third white. The ideal sleep environment for infants includes— on their back, in a crib with nothing but the baby and in a home where there is no smoking; breastfeeding should be encouraged.

The committee is co-chaired by Jerome Gloster M.D., Medical Director of Primary Health Care Service and the Allegheny County Health Department’s Maternal and Child Health Consultant and by Reverend Brenda J. Gregg of the Greater Allen AME Church.

“To ensure safe-sleep practices are promoted and followed in every household with an infant in the African-American community, we formed the Infant Safe Sleep Church Outreach Committee to involve African-American clergy in this effort,” said Dr. Jerome Gloster.

“We want to reach as many new mothers as possible, which is why we’re reaching out to clergy, health care professionals and directly to families.” Gregg said. “The vast majority of these deaths are entirely preventable through better education.”

The safe-sleep guidelines, which are consistent with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, are available by visiting the Health Department’s Web site at [www.achd.net](http://www.achd.net) or by calling **412-687-ACHD (2243)**.

## **Bulletin Articles for August:**

With school starting again soon, we need to concentrate on getting children ready for their best possible start. Our church family needs to encourage and support our children and their families. If there are children in the neighborhood waiting for their school bus, take a minute to wish them well as you drive off to work. Little things can make an impression and show that our children are important to us as a society.

(The following was adapted from “Health Notes from the Hill” available at Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program – 412-232-5815)

**“Always remember what you have learned. Your instruction is your life --- guard it well.” (Proverbs 4:13)**

## **BACK TO SCHOOL**

With the start of a new school year, I always see it as a chance to do things better than they were done the year before. In the midst of buying new clothes, shoes, and deciding on the perfect hairdo, I want us to remain focused on the real essence of education, which is to LEARN. Teaching is not the sole responsibility of the teacher but takes a combined effort of everybody invested in the life of every child.

Ways we can help each child succeed in school include:

- Stay organized. Be sure that your child’s day is structured both in and out of school. If you have a baby sitter, make sure she keeps to your schedule.
- Review your child’s day at school as thoroughly as you can. If you need to make an appointment with the teacher, schedule one as soon as possible to try to nip problems in the bud.
- Limit TV watching and make sure that homework time and study time is protected. Homework should always be done in a quiet area with minimal interruptions.
- Bedtime is crucial for children because so much is expected of them during the school day. Set a reasonable bedtime depending on the age and sleep needs of your child
- Praise good behavior and work diligently to help your child change bad and unacceptable behaviors.
- Be attentive and sensitive to your child. If your child is unhappy about going to school or all of a sudden is developing belly pain and headaches only on school mornings, try to find out what is going on at school.
- There are several reasons children develop school phobia and reasons may range from problems with peers like bullying to academic difficulties.
- Have realistic expectations for your children. If they are doing the very best they can, please encourage and praise them.

Remember there are many things we can fix, like broken bones and ear infections. Self esteem pervades everything we do in life from work to relationships. However, once we have taken away our sense of self, it is almost impossible to repair the damage done. Our children have two main influences in their lives---school and family. Make sure that in both of these

areas they are feeling secure and being nurtured. As a parent, our children must remain our mission, one that has been entrusted to us by God.

Father God, we praise and thank you for our children. We are grateful for the precious gifts you have entrusted to us. Help us train and raise our children in a way that honors and abides by Your Holy and Righteous Word. In Jesus Christ's name, AMEN.

adapted from  
A Health Note from Catherine Udekwa, M.D.  
St. Benedict the Moor  
Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Team

### **From the International Parish Nurse Resource Center (IPNRC):**

**[Get My People GOING!!](#)** (CD) \$35.00 (includes shipping)

IPNRC: St. Louis, MO, [www.parishnurses.org](http://www.parishnurses.org) or 314-918-2559

A new wellness program, based on the Exodus story, is for children and adults of all ages and health conditions. The eight-week program encourages participants to choose three lifestyle areas they would like to improve: such as exercise, diet, sleep, prayer, time with friends, or drinking water. Each person is asked to choose a "buddy" with whom they check in weekly. Not everyone can run a marathon, even walk a mile, or get out of a chair, yet *everyone* can be part of this congregational wellness initiative. CDs are available from the IPNRC which include a participant booklet, an implementation manual, and a bulletin board, which may be printed from the CD and personalized for your own congregational setting.

## **Parish Nurse Resources**

### **August is National Immunization Awareness Month.**

August is a good time to take a look at your immunization records and determine if any immunizations are needed besides the yearly influenza shot. Time goes by quickly and it may only seem like yesterday that you got your last tetanus shot that adults need renewed every ten years.

**For a current schedule of immunization use:**

**<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules>**

The web site below allows you to download a variety of posters encouraging immunizations for all ages. Before school starts is a great time to encourage parents to get their children immunized and avoid the last minute rush.

[www.floridashealth.com/disease\\_ctrl/immune/publications/posters.htm](http://www.floridashealth.com/disease_ctrl/immune/publications/posters.htm)

August 14 is the start of the American Cancer Societies “Great American Eat Right Challenge”. Go to -

[http://www.cancer.org/docroot/subsite/greatamericans/Eat\\_Right.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/subsite/greatamericans/Eat_Right.asp) for more information. There are great resources to get you going.

### **Seven Weeks to Better Health:**

Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program is printing the last of seven sections to our “Seven Weeks to Better Health” bulletin board. The bulletin board comes in Microsoft Word or PowerPoint format. E-mail me at [jschumm@mercy.pmhs.org](mailto:jschumm@mercy.pmhs.org) for the entire program which includes a brochure on all the seven weeks and a health survey. The program will be e-mailed back to you at no cost.

# **Celebrate Your Progress**

- **Plan healthy rewards for progress**
- **Don’t wait until final goal is reached**
- **Make a list**
- **Find positive healthy rewards to anticipate**

- **Celebrate with those that have encouraged you**
- **Give away all your “fat clothes”**

*So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do,  
do all to the glory of God. I Cor. 10:31*

*Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program — ParishNurse@mercy.pmhs.org*

## **Parish Nurse “Store”**

**Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program offers products that are designed to help you in your health ministry and parish nurse program. This month we would like to feature our CDs – “Wellness Tip of the Week” in Volumes 1 and 2. The CDs give you a short message for each week. They are to the point and easy to read covering a wide range of topics. \$15.00 each**

**Thank you for reading The Faith Connection!  
We pray for God’s blessings on your ministry.**