



JANUARY GIVEAWAY

This month, we'll give away a tablet to continue to help caregivers with the HHA implementation.

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Stay tuned next month to see who won!



Congratulation to January winners Kyla Solomon and Michael Thompson Jr.!

We would like to share that Michael graciously declined and he asked us to give his gift card to someone in need, thank you Michael! Your gift card helped make someone else's holiday brighter!

Advice for the New Year

"1 Year= 365 possibilities. Take time to recognize and celebrate small accomplishments. Create a collection of accomplishments, moments and/or lessons by filling a jar with notes of good things. Taking the time to quickly jot down these items will be rewarding. At the end of 2022 open the jar and read through all the positive happenings and good vibes that filled your year."
- Lauren S. of VersiCare Group



Online Extension Extras Parenting Hour Positive Discipline January 4, 2022 8:00PM - 9:30PM

Contact: Courtney Aldrich, aldric82@msu.edu, 517-552-6909

Positive Discipline

Discipline is a difficult topic for parents. How do you know what helps and what hurts? Learn about techniques that focus on positive discipline that can help you create an environment that is safe, fun and focuses on learning while helping children develop self control and minimizing behavior problems.

Extension Extras Parenting Hour is a free online series of parenting workshops that provides guidance for parents of young children as they navigate the joys, challenges and concerns of parenting.

Certificates for participation are provided upon completion of the class.

Participants have the option to attend and actively participate via computer, or an app on a tablet or smartphone. Attendees can also listen to the presentation via phone (by calling in). Those who choose to call in must contact the instructor for directions on how to be eligible for a certificate.

If multiple people in the same location want to participate in the webinar and need certificates, they have to join the webinar separately or contact the instructor for special instructions to each receive a certificate.

To Register visit [Online Extension Extras Parenting Hour Positive Discipline - Parenting Education Classes \(msu.edu\)](https://www.msu.edu/online-extension-extras-parenting-hour-positive-discipline)

PAYROLL UPDATE

Verify Address for W-2 Mailing

IRS form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement will be mailed by January 31, 2022 to the mailing address we have on file for each employee.

Please make sure to review your active mailing address now and update as necessary. This will avoid W-2s going out to incorrect addresses.

All address changes must be done in writing. We will accept an email from the email address we have on file.



Grandma Sylvia's Spinach Pie

A RECIPE BY JENNIFER O. OF VERSICARE GROUP

ingredients

- 1 carton 24 oz. small curd cottage cheese
- 2 bags or 16oz frozen cut leaf spinach (thaw, squeezed dry) or 3 boxes of 10oz frozen chopped spinach
- 3 tbsp minced onions (or onion flakes)
- 4-6 oz. crumbled feta cheese
- 5 cups shredded cheddar cheese (or any other kind you like)
- 6 eggs

directions

- Mix all ingredients in a 9 x 13 glass dish.
- Sprinkle a thin layer of Parmesan cheese on the top.
- Bake about 1 hour in 400-degree oven or until top is dark brown and inside is set.
- Cut in squares and serve with dollop of sour cream (optional). ENJOY!

"If you love spinach pie but don't want as many calories as an Olga's spinach pie or other spinach pies made with filo dough, this is a great alternative. The layer of Parmesan on the top gives it a crust-like feel and takes way less time than using filo dough. This is a great dish for a brunch, side dish for a dinner, or a main course for a vegetarian (who eats eggs). My family is always fighting over the corner pieces!" - Jennifer

MDHHS shares mental health resources available for those impacted by Oxford school shooting

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is extending heartfelt condolences to all those affected by the tragic shooting at Oxford High School yesterday and sharing resources in support of anyone impacted by this horrible event.

“A school shooting is something we hope would never happen anywhere, but tragically occurred in our state this week,” said Elizabeth Hertel, MDHHS director. “While no parent or child should have to experience this, it is important to take care of the mental health needs of survivors and those impacted by this tragic event. We encourage parents and caregivers to use available resources as their children navigate grief and process this traumatic event.”

According to The National Child Traumatic Stress Network shootings are extremely traumatic experiences, and coping can be stressful. Children and teen’s reactions are influenced by how adults including teachers, parents and other caregivers respond. Common reactions include, but are not limited to, feelings of anxiety, fear and worry about safety of self and others; fear that another shooting may occur; changes in behavior such as increases in activity levels, decreases in concentration and increases in irritability; physical complaints such as headaches, stomach aches, or other aches and pains; and trouble staying focused and increased sensitivity to sounds.

“In the wake of the tragic shooting at Oxford High School, our hearts break for the community and families struggling to understand the loss of their beloved children and the toll of the injuries — both physical and mental — to so many others impacted by yesterday’s events,” said Dr. Debra Pinals, MDHHS medical director for behavioral health and forensic programs. “As we move forward step by step as a community, the questions and worries can be overwhelming. With anxiety and depression rates already heightened in the context of the pandemic, a tragedy like what happened at Oxford High School will need to be processed, and people will need to communicate about their concerns, even if they may be reluctant to do so. There is no shame in accessing support for emotional stress and trauma, and we encourage those who need that support to reach out to a health care provider or call 2-1-1 for local resources that can meet your needs.”

Take steps below to speak with your children about violence and help them cope through tragedy:

1. Reassure children that they are safe. Validate their feelings and let them know all feelings are okay when a tragedy occurs.
2. Make time to talk. Be patient and let children guide how much information you share by the questions they ask. Young children may need other activities like drawing or playing to identify and express feelings.
3. Keep explanations developmentally appropriate based upon age.
4. Review safety procedures both at school and at home.
5. Observe your child’s emotional state. Note that children may not be able to verbally express grief and may need the help of a mental health professional.
6. Limit television viewing of the events.
7. Maintain a normal routine. A regular schedule can help with healing and aid in managing grief.

MDHHS also offers the Michigan Crisis and Access Line (MiCAL) in Oakland County. Residents can call or text 844-44-MICAL (844-446-4225) 24/7 for free behavioral health crisis triage, support, resource information and referral to local services. Chat is also available through Michigan.gov/MiCAL.

To learn about speaking to your children about safety, visit HopkinsAllChildrens.org.

To learn about speaking to your children about violence, visit NaspOnline.org.

If you or a loved one is concerned about suicide, call 800-273-8255 or visit SuicidePreventionLifeline.org.

To help your children manage distress after a shooting, visit Apa.org.



Friday Frolic Dance

January 14, 2022 from 7p-9p
(ALSO February 11)

Troy Community Center

3179 Livernois Rd, Troy, MI 48083

Dancing with DJ with a fun holiday theme and refreshments. \$7. For more info, For more info, visit rec.troymi.gov.

FREE Adaptive Tennis Classes

Friday, January 21st from 6p-6:45pm
ALSO Friday, February 25 from 6p-6:45pm

Liberty Athletic Club

2975 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

The game of tennis can be adapted so everyone can have fun and play the sport. This program serves adults and children (ages 9-26) with disabilities and special needs. Classes will be led by Liberty Athletic Club's Head Tennis Professional, Dean Boodakian. These are FREE events with all equipment and instruction provided. For more info, contact Cara Peterson at cara.peterson@libertyathletic.net or 734-665-3738.

RARA Diner's Club

Monday, January 3, 2022 from 5:15-6:30p
(Also February 7, March 7, & April 4)

Select Rochester/Rochester Hills Area Restaurants

This opportunity is designed to support persons with special needs. Participants pay for their own meal, beverage, and tip. PRE-REGISTER EARLY as spots are very limited and so that we have enough assistance and space reserved in the restaurants. Exact restaurant choices will be announced at a later date. 14+ Years. \$6 per participant. To register, visit www.rararecreation.org.

TR Pizza and Movie Night

Friday, January 7, 2022 at 6p
(Also – February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6)

Clintonwood Park
6000 Clarkston Road, Clarkson, MI 48348

Enjoy an evening with your friends for a favorite movie and some delicious pizza. This program is for persons, ages 14+, with cognitive disabilities, with or without physical impairments. Call 248-625-8223 to register. \$10.

Hosted by Independence Twp Parks & Recreation.



Movie/Pizza Night

January 21, from 6:30pm-9pm
(Also February 25, March 25,
April 22)



RARA Recreation

500 E Second Street, Rochester, Michigan
Hosted by RARA Recreation. Enjoy a movie and a
pizza snack with friends one Friday a month. This
opportunity is designed to support persons with
special needs. Supervised event. Ages 14+. Fee is
\$15 for residents and non-residents. Register
via RARARecreation.org.

OUCARES After Hours Adult Social

Tuesday, January 25, 2022 from 6pm-9pm
(Also February 15, & March 22)
Oakland University Oakland Center
Lake Michigan Room

This is a support group for adults with the diagnosis
of Asperger's, High Functioning Autism or PDD/
NOS. Come join us for pizza, conversation, cards,
games, and fun! No registration required, come
when you are able. Ages: 18+ yrs. No cost for this
program. For more info, visit www.oakland.edu/oucares/



Healthy Habits for the New Year – *What are your goals for 2022? Here are a few easy things you can implement today for a better, healthier you!*

1. **Pair all your meals with a glass of water.** This will make you feel full and keep you hydrated.
2. **Have gratitude.** Expressing your appreciation with a simple 'thank you' is a change that will uplift not only yourself, but those around you.
3. **Go for a walk...often!** Even if it's just a tiny march from your living room to the kitchen, make sure you stay on the move throughout your day.
4. **Try something new.** Eat a dish you've never had before, tackle a manageable DIY project, explore an interest or hobby, google your city's most popular places and plan a day-trip around those sites. The list is endless!
5. **Do It Now.** If a task takes less than five minutes to complete, get it out of the way now. This helps you stay organized and increase your productivity.

THE DREAM
IS FREE.
THE HUSTLE
IS SOLD
SEPARATELY.



Thank you to everyone that completed our satisfaction survey and provided feedback about the newsletter. We strive to provide you with entertaining and helpful information and we want to hear when we are falling short so that we can make improvements. We will further evaluate the feedback and look to find ways that we can improve the newsletter and your reading experience. Please feel free to send us any information or topics that you would like us to consider including in the newsletter, you can send those to **nelliott@expertcare.com**

Here are some highlights from the feedback we received:

- Give away more prizes
- I always look for events specific to my client who lives in Wayne County. Maybe simple healthy snack recipes could be added?
- Mail the newsletter
- I really liked the trivia contest you had posted a few times.
- I would like see a column from caregiver to caregiver section where caregivers can give advice or words of encouragement to each other.
- My client lives in Wayne County, if possible more events in Wayne County.
- Not enough information for Genesee county.
- Put a little pop of color in the background to make it interesting. Explaining more information for one to understand.
- Reminders about how to communicate with staff and other processes.
- The community events are always in the same area and/or location. There are also a lot of other things that are not listed.
- The raffles are cool, but seem impossible. Would be cool to do the challenges as well again. Seems like the letter is more geared towards the consumers, not too much the caregivers.



SHINE ON 2022

Yes, after we held a virtual Shine On in 2021, we are excited to be back LIVE and IN PERSON this coming February.

Shine On provides a prom-like experience for adults (16+) with special needs. Lunch, dancing, Bingo, karaoke and much more. New this year!!! We are moving to a Saturday afternoon.



Date: February 19th, 2022

Location: Woodside Bible Church 6600
Rochester Road Troy

Time: 12:00PM - 4:30PM

Register Here:

<https://woodsidebible.org/shine-on-registration/>

Sensory Friendly Family Movie Night

January 28, 2022 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm EST



Join us for a family movie screening in a sensory friendly environment. Lights up, volume down, and no need to stay in one spot! Relax and enjoy among other families with sensory needs. Minors must be accompanied by a responsible adult 18+. All family members must register. You may bring pre-packaged, individual foods, please no peanuts or tree nuts. Popcorn and beverages (water and juice) provided.

Ages 0-2: Free
Ages 2-16: \$9 Resident; \$12 Non-Res
Ages 16+: \$12 Resident; \$15 Non-Res

Movie: Trolls (Original) PG



Employee Milestone Anniversaries

We would like to recognize and congratulate the employees below for reaching a milestone anniversary in December.



5 Years

Joshua Raczkiwicz-Sparks
Saffiyah Abdulghani

10 Years

Sharon Metts



15 Years

Melissa Hertz
Amanda Gora

Thank you for demonstrating a continued commitment to

ExpertCare and the clients we service.

You make a difference!



Fun activities during the Winter season that are free to do:

1. Build a snow man
2. Make a big pot of soup
3. Play board games/cards
4. Visit the Detroit Institute of Arts (*Free for Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne residents*)
5. Make snow angels
6. Bake a batch of cookies
7. Watch a movie
8. Drive around town to look at holiday lights and décor
9. Make a bucket list for 2022



GETTING TO KNOW THE EXPERTCARE OFFICE STAFF



We thought it would be nice to introduce ourselves and tell you a little bit about each of our office staff. Each month we will feature a new interview with someone from our office.

MEET MEREDITH BUCKLEY

ECare: If you didn't have to sleep, what would you do with the extra time?

Meredith: I actually love sleep so I would still probably do it. If sleep wasn't an option, I'd spend the extra time reading or doing crafty stuff. I can never find enough time for either of those hobbies.

ECare: What are three words that best describe you?

Meredith: Snarky, Loyal, Honest

ECare: What is on your bucket list?

Meredith: More traveling, specifically to Alaska, Ireland, Scotland, England and Slovakia. I would also love to buy a big piece of property in the middle of nowhere and start a rescue for senior animals.

ECare: When you are working towards a goal, what keeps you motivated?

Meredith: Knowing that the work I do will be appreciated.

ECare: What do you wish you knew more about?

Meredith: I've always been intrigued by space and the sciences related to it.

ECare: What are some things that help you have a great day?

Meredith: Working with our caregivers has been very rewarding, knowing that the work they do has such a positive effect on the lives of others.

ECare: What is your job title and role at ExpertCare?

Meredith: I am a Payroll and Billing Specialist. My primary role is to assist with making sure caregiver timesheets are submitted correctly and contain all necessary information.

ECare: What do you like most about ExpertCare?

Meredith: I love that we help to provide services that improve the quality of life for so many people.



your
CARE-FETTI
touches
EVERY SOUL!



**December Caregiver of the Month
Angela Fleming**

Angela has been dedicated staff for ExpertCare for over 13 years! She continues to shine in her role and provides great care for every consumer to which she is assigned.

During a recent performance review, the consumer parent commented on how she always does a great job helping her daughter face new challenges.

Angela is very patient and has been great at adapting to any company changes that ExpertCare throws her way. Internal staff enjoy speaking with her whenever she needs assistance because of her kindhearted nature.

ExpertCare truly appreciates everything she does and is proud to have her represent ExpertCare in the field. Thank you for your hard work and dedication in changing the lives of others.

Thank you for demonstrating ExpertCare's core values of:

Helping People Succeed

Passion for Success

Can Do Attitude