

January 2005

Clinic Hours

The Clinic will be closed on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Monday, January 17th

KANSAS CITY FREE HEALTH CLINIC



Volunteer Update

Preventing Birth Defects

January is National Birth Defects Prevention Month. According to the March of Dimes (www.marchofdimes.com), approximately 150,000 babies are born each year with birth defects. Birth defects are the leading cause of death in the first year of life.

There are many known causes of birth defects, yet the causes of about 60% of birth defects are still unknown. Many birth defects are genetic, such as Marfan syndrome, TaySachs disease and cystic fibrosis. Abnormalities in chromosome structure also causes some birth defects. For example, Down's syndrome occurs when a baby has an extra chromosome 21. Some birth defects, however, are caused by environmental factors

and can be prevented.

Exposure to certain medications (e.g., the acne drug acutane), drug and/or alcohol use, and exposure to other chemicals can cause serious birth defects. Take the following steps to prevent birth defects:

- A pre-pregnancy visit to a physician can help identify troubling family history and allows the physician to evaluate the woman's lifestyle and health. This is a good opportunity for education and guidance.
- All pregnant women should take at least 400 micrograms of the B-vitamin folic acid. Studies show that this reduces the chances of certain

birth defects, such as spina bifida.

- Pregnant women and women who are planning pregnancy should not use alcohol, tobacco and/or street drugs. In addition, these women should consult a doctor before taking any over-the-counter, herbal, or prescription drugs.

Even though the majority of birth defects causes are not yet known, there are still some very important steps a woman can take to prevent birth defects and become educated about them in the first place.

Source: www.marchofdimes.com

Development...

Bloom 2005

We are just a little more than 4 months away from Bloom 2005, Kansas City's greatest annual event. Please contact us if you are interested in volunteering.

Bilingual Speakers

Are you bilingual? Do you want to further help out KC Free by offering to translate when you are here?

Mental Health Professionals

We are looking for mental health professionals to help us strengthen our mental health program. If you would like to volunteer in this capacity or know any Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Nurses, Clinical Social Workers, Psychologists or any other mental health professionals interested in volunteering, please have them contact Ginny.

Eastside Front Office

Are you interested in volunteering at our Eastside Clinic? Do you like volunteering in the front office? We are looking for a regular front office volunteer for Monday and Tuesday evenings from 5:30-8:30 at Eastside. We would be grateful if you could fill in on some of these shifts!

Contact Ginny Ramseyer Winter at 816.777.2761 or ginnyrw@kcfree.org if you are interested in a volunteer opportunity.

Dinner with Chiefs # 83 Kendall Gammon

Friends and supporters of the Clinic will fill the Chop House for a special dinner on Monday, January 10, to "kick off" this fundraiser. The reception begins at 6pm and dinner will be served at 7pm. Dinner tickets are \$60 each for an incredible three course dinner of: *Shrimp and crawfish gumbo on a small bed of rice, Kendall's Medallions of Roasted Tenderloin Entrée, Mashed Potato Profiterole, Fresh Asparagus, and Apple Wellington.*



Fun KC Fact

The average temperature in Kansas City in January is 29.1°F. In April, the average temperature is 55.3°

KC Free New Year's "Resolutions"

1. Leave Ginny a note or stop by if you need a new nametag (or anything else!).
2. Pretty please sign in to the computer or on the sign in sheet (if the computer is down).
3. Wear covered shoes in the clinic.
4. Only wear jeans on Friday (business casual Monday through Thursday).
5. Have fun!
6. Ask for new opportunities as you have new interests!
7. Ask questions.
8. If you know you cannot work your scheduled shift, please contact Ginny as soon as possible.



How is it that some people who have HIV or even AIDS have remained alive and healthy for many years? The L.I.F.E.

Program offers some answers to these questions, with step-by-step guidance on how to support your immune system in its fight against HIV. The L.I.F.E. Program originated in San Francisco in 1981 by the Shanti L.I.F.E. Institute and has educated 2100 participants. The program is new to Kansas City and the Clinic is proud to have completed its first cycle Fall 2004. The program will again be offered in Spring and Summer 2005.

L.I.F.E. stands for Learning Immune Function Enhancement. It is a mind-body health counseling and peer support program designed to boost the immune system, reduce risk behavior and enhance adherence to health rou-

tines, including medication schedules.

It is a new approach to health and healing based on two decades of published medical research. Literature in psycho-neuro-immunology (PNI), medicine, psychology, and allied health sciences, the program provides step-by-step guidance to assist you in creating and putting into action a practical plan for increasing immunity, safe behavior and health.

The L.I.F.E. Program emphasizes health education, support from HIV+ peers, social connecting, group discussion, individual counseling, and the promotion of personal commitment to health decisions.

A new session will be starting February 16, 2005. Contact the clinic for more information or encourage someone you know to check it out.

January 4th: Beneath the Surface

Beneath the Surface is back! For those of you who were not here or do not remember, Beneath the Surface is an educational series offered at KC Free for volunteers and staff. Past seminars include local agency presentations on significant social and health issues in our community and the services offered. CEU's can be pro-

vided to staff and volunteers upon request.

On January 4th from 6:00-7:30pm, KC Free is pairing with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to present information about Methamphetamine Labs and their impact on our community from a public

health perspective. Dinner will be provided.

To RSVP, please contact Jamie Stevens at jamies@kcfree.org or (816) 777-2769.

Look for the next Beneath the Surface in March!

"Property may be destroyed and money may lose its purchasing power; but, character, health, knowledge and good judgment will always be in demand under all conditions".
--Roger Babson

Clinic to Offer New Service

The Clinic is pleased to announce that we will expand our community mental health services by adding an Art Therapy Program. The program will expose clients diagnosed with mental illness to various expressive media and allow each client to explore media in appropriate progression in a safe and facilitating environment. The program will encourage insight and healing based on the creation process of art projects. The Clinic will partner with Emporia State University's Art Therapy Pro-

gram that will assist in the area of program development. Emporia State has also agreed to place masters prepared art therapy students at the Clinic for clinical rotations. The Clinic will use a holistic approach to health and mental health care by providing linkages to a multidisciplinary health care team to increase gains made in the group art therapy sessions. Art therapy and all services are provided free of charge to patients.