

YWCA Serves Local Teens and Their Babies

A program for pregnant and parenting teens at the YWCA has expanded how many people it can serve and has a new name.

The YWCA Healthy Teen Parents/Healthy Babies Program, formerly known as JUMP, can now serve up to 85 teen parents and their young children. In 2016, the program, under the previous name and different funding, served 70 teen parents and 60 children.

Buchanan County sees around 135 teen births each year.

The overall goals of the Healthy Teen/Healthy Babies program are to improve health and well-being for teen parents and their babies and to reduce social isolation. Specifically, the program addresses the social sources that affect access to healthcare, obesity prevention and mental health.

"The mental health piece of this program is huge," said Traci McChristy, the program's coordinator. "Exhaustion, many appointments and the need to get services to help support the baby along with continued education for young parents can lead to a tremendous amount of stress that the program aims to help offset for a healthier start and a healthier future."

To qualify for the Healthy Teen Parents/Healthy Babies Program, applicants must be a pregnant teen or a teen parenting a child under the age of three years old. To participate, teen parents need to complete an application for enrollment. They will then receive a newsletter for events, including



The YWCA Healthy Teen Parents/Healthy Babies Program is making an important difference for Sidney and Alice.

information about monthly support groups and opportunities. The YWCA will provide childcare if needed.

An Extension Nutrition Specialist with the University of Missouri and a health/exercise science student intern with Missouri Western State University work with the YWCA to promote wellness for the teen program participants and their young children.

In addition, mentors from the community are important to the program. "We're looking for mentors who have compassion and a caring attitude toward young parents and teen parents," said McChristy. "It's simple to help, and the activities are planned in advance for a once-a-month meeting."

The program was renamed in September after receiving a Community Connections Grant through Mosaic Life Care.

Learn more by calling the YWCA at 232-4481, or visit ywcasj.org.

2017 Distinguished Leader Recognized

Dale Boulware was honored for her community service at the recent United Way Leadership St. Joseph graduation.

Boulware was recognized for making a difference as an active volunteer with many local organizations including the YMCA, St. Joseph Young Life, Junior League, Wyatt Park Baptist



Dale Boulware (left), an active leader in our community and a 1985 United Way Leadership St. Joseph Graduate, was named 2017 Distinguished Leader.

Church, Albrecht Kemper Museum of Art and United Way. She is currently leading the Missouri Western State University Capital Campaign as Co-Chair.

The Distinguished Leader Award is given once a year to a United Way Leadership St. Joseph alum who has used his/her leadership training as a volunteer for the betterment of the St. Joseph community in an especially beneficial way.

The total number of United Way Leadership St. Joseph alumni reached 854 with the addition of the twenty-seven 2017 graduates.

Boy Scouts Thank Air National Guard



Boy Scouts and adult leaders distributed popcorn as a gift in honor of the service men, women and families of the 139th Airlift Wing, Missouri Air National Guard in December. Here, Col. Edward Black posed with Scouts and their leaders who participated in the event.



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7 United Way Initiatives

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17 Partner Agencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bartlett Center Big Brothers Big Sisters Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Inc. The CENTER, a Samaritan Center Children's Mercy Community Missions (CMC) Family Guidance Center for Behavioral Healthcare InterServ Legal Aid of Western Missouri 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northwest Missouri Community Services Pony Express Council, Boy Scouts of America St. Joseph Safety & Health Council The Salvation Army Specialty Industries of St. Joseph, Inc. United Cerebral Palsy of Northwest Missouri YMCA YWCA
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