

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Resilient Grandparents
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Resilient Grandparents

In our last issue, we briefly introduced five factors or characteristics of strong families. Each factor related in some way to the saying “it takes a village to help (grand)parents raise a (grand) child.” For the next five issues, we will look at each factor in more detail. But because we all learn by repetition, let’s review all five factors.

1. **Caregivers are resilient.**
2. **Families have many social connections.**
3. **Caregivers have knowledge of (grand)parenting and child development.**
4. **Families receive concrete support in times of need.**
5. **Families have or are developing their social and emotional skills.**

This month, we are focusing on factor #1—Caregivers are resilient.

Dictionary.com defines it as “returning to the original form after being bent, compressed, or stretched.”

Even though it defines a physical object, grandparents and other relative caregivers may feel they are often bent, compressed, and stretched. Are there other words you would add to this list? What helps you return to your original form—to come out of tough times a

better, stronger person and family? Here are some ideas:

- **Maintain a positive attitude.**
A positive attitude contributes to longer life, and an overall sense of well being. Laughing and humor are good medicine—they help reduce stress and provide the body with natural endorphins which act a little like painkillers. Another suggestion is to ask everyone at dinner to report about one good thing that happened during the day. Some grandparents keep a gratitude list on the refrigerator, Do you have other ideas?
- **Solve problems creatively.**
Everyone faces problems each week. Consider asking a friend or family or a child for creative solutions. Don’t be afraid to try new solutions. But most importantly, don’t give up. Tutu always said, if we don’t at first succeed, TRY, TRY AGAIN!
- **Conquer challenges.**
Sometimes the best way to conquer challenges is to just focus on one day at a time. For a little boost, think about one of your biggest challenges in the last year and how you overcame it.

Lokahi

By Brandy Akimo, Neighborhood Place of Wailuku

The value of Lokahi, meaning harmony and balance in the Hawaiian language, is an important idea for grandparents raising grandchildren. These times are demanding! Raising our grandchildren comes with special challenges. Understanding their needs (grandchildren) and working within a system can be confusing. When we notice early that there is potential to be unbalanced, we are better able to get through the rough spots.

Think of your life as a wheel on a car. You're driving through life with your 'ohana and poof! Aue! There's a puka (hole) in your tire. Now, you have a flat tire. Your life can sometimes be thought of as that hole in the tire, puka tire. Unexpected events can occur that impact life and the way you respond to it. When you notice the puka, you pull the car over. When you recognize imbalance that throws off the Lokahi in your life, you "pull over" to seek answers, get connected, talk to someone, call the school, and take action. Lokahi can be restored with the support you may not even know even exists. Call the Hi'i Na Kupuna Coalition at 986-0700 to help support you and your 'ohana.

Kupuna Resources

Hi'i Na Kupuna Coalition

The Hi'i Na Kupuna Coalition needs grandparents like you to join and be the voice of others on Maui. Consider joining us in 2011 at our new time—3rd Tuesday of the month at 12:30. Call Heather for more information, 244-3242 ext 226.

Grandparent Support Groups

Join a support group today. Times may change, so call the hosting organization for more information!

- Raising Our Keiki's Keiki (ROKK), 1st Thursdays and 3rd Wednesdays of every month, 9-12:30am, Maui Family Support Services, 242-0900
- Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, last Thurs of Each Month, 5:30—7:30, 242-8888

Upcoming Events

Christmas & Toy Drives:

- Lokahi Christmas Gift program, Contact: Thelma Akita-Kealoha, Catholic Charities Hawaii, 872-6250
- Toys for Tots Drive, drop off centers Kaunoa Senior Center & West Maui Senior Center. Call for additional information, 270-7308
- Zumbathon fundraiser for Toys for Tots Drive, Dec 14, 5:30-9pm, Wailuku Community Center. Contact Kaunoa Senior Center for additional information, 270-7308

Dec 13, 2010, Safe TALK training (recognizing people with thoughts of suicide), 8:30-12:30, State building, register by calling 984-2156

December 15, 2010, Adolescents:

Mental Health Over the Life Span, Sponsored by Maui Training Collaborative, Location: MEO Classroom 1&2, 8:30-11:30am, register 242-1608

January 19, 2011, Adults: Mental

Health Over the Life Span, Sponsored by Maui Training Collaborative, Location: MEO Classroom 1&2, 8:30-11:30am, register 242-1608

February 10, 2011, BIG MAC

Event, Foster Care transition program. Community Resource Fair 3-5:30, Event 5:30-7pm, Wailuku Community Center

February 23, 2011, Elder Adults:

Mental Health Over the Life Span, Sponsored by Maui Training Collaborative, MEO Classroom 1&2, 8:30-11:30am, register 242-1608