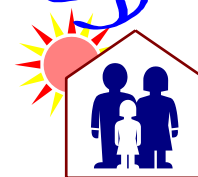


# Elmore County

## FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

# NEWS



FOURTH QUARTER 2011

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 Pratt Austin-Trucks

340 Queen Ann Rd.  
 Wetumpka, AL  
 334.514-4150 or 334.567.6301



## Welcome!

Yes, it has been a while! We apologize for the delay but we have gone through some dramatic changes in staffing. Due to the short falls in the state budget we did not receive grant funding from the State Department of Child Abuse Prevention (CTF). However, The Elmore County Commission was generous and provided us a small allocation to keep our important work going... just on a smaller basis. So we look forward to bringing you up to speed on some of the new and ongoing projects we have been working on.

Due to the before mentioned budget cuts we are sad to say we will not be working with the Christmas Clearing House this year. If you know of someone who has needs you can direct them to People that Care if they live in the Wetumpka area or The Salvation Army.

We are very excited about a new grant we received from the Administrative Office of the Courts for an Access and Visitation program. We will be providing mediation and other related services to non-custodial parents through court referrals. We Hope you have a wonderful holiday season !  
 Angela Cardwell

Happy Holidays from Elmore County Extension/Family Resource Center Staff!



**OFFICE  
 WILL BE  
 CLOSED:**

November 23rd–25th  
 December 19th–January 3rd



# SAVE THE DATE

November 30, 2011– PAL's Luncheon @  
Cozumel in Tallassee from 11:30 - 1:00pm

Did  
You  
Know?



**Get Connected to  
valuable resources.**

**Elmore County  
Resource Center  
334-514-4150**

## **November is National Life Writing Month!**

What better time to encourage a family connection than to sit down and share family moments together. Take the time to get your family together this month and laugh over some of the great stories of each of your lives. Some great ways to do this are:

- \* **Start a family tree.** Go back as far as you can, and don't just list people but share interesting stories about their life or just something funny you remember about them.
- \* **Make a scrapbook.** Get the whole family involved in making pages of a family memory or let each family member do their own special page of their favorite memory over the last year. Make it special and have a night set aside to share your pages then put them together in a book where you can add to them.
- \* **Start your own, or a family, journal.** Jot down great moments that need to be remembered. You can have each family member write down their moving stories over the last year, then schedule a family popcorn night where everyone gets together to share their stories, and then be sure to put them all together in a binder to save. This is something that can be continuously added to and will always make for great family time!

Other Resources can be found at:

National Association of Memoir Writers– [www.namw.org](http://www.namw.org)

The Family Scribes Group - [www.familywritingprojects.com](http://www.familywritingprojects.com)

# Trust Fund Award



From Left to right: Commissioner Earl Reaves, Angela Cardwell, Dane'le Hutchinson, Katrina Mitchell, Barry Mask, Doug Hall, Joyce Smith, Milton Jackson, Rhonda Sims, Jane Allen, Jeana Winter. Elmore County 2012 Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention grant recipients. Elmore County Extension Office and Alabama Parent Education Center.

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Family Resource Center has recently been awarded a small grant to help in the process of implementing a Parents as Leader's (PAL's) group for Elmore County. Be on the look-out for upcoming meetings and proposed ideas and feel free to send us any comments, ideas, or parents you think we may find helpful!

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# The Fruits of our Labor

Often times there are families who need a variety of services but do not know where to find them. In the work we do with the Elmore County Family Resource Center, we find that families have comprehensive needs. For example we receive calls from individuals who need emergency financial assistance, counseling services or parenting classes. Our role is to help them access the services available within our organization or refer them to the agency that can meet their needs.

Sometimes we are fortunate enough to work with clients in more than one way. Thus is the case which evolved through our "Learn & Earn" Christmas Project. We organized a series of educational workshops for families who were requesting help with Christmas. In previous years we had taken applications for the Christmas Clearinghouse and matched up sponsors with families in need. But each year we questioned if that activity was really matching up with the mission of Extension. So we felt we needed to adjust our efforts toward providing education to these families.

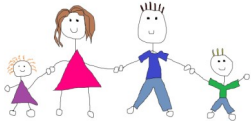
The participants earned \$10.00 for each two hour session that they participated in which came in the form of a gift card at the end of the project. The workshops included financial education, parenting issues, nutrition, and other family related topics. The first series included six workshops and ended with a luncheon and a speaker. Upon request we organized a second series consisting of nine sessions. We were able to again utilize REA's, our county staff, and partnered with other local agencies to facilitate the workshops. We ended the project with a reception with snacks and "Santa" for the children. In all we awarded over \$1100.00 gift cards to the participants

One of the participants MaegenMarie became very interested in our work and Extension. She asked how she could become more involved and possibly volunteer. In January of 2011 when we were invited to participate in a Parent Leadership Ambassador training we immediately thought of her and invited her to join us. Since then she has become increasingly more involved with our office. She and her daughter Journey (who also attended the workshops) have participated in various grant activities including Child Abuse Prevention Rally at the State House, our annual Child Abuse Proclamation at the County Commission. She has also become involved with 4-H and is volunteering with the Family Resource Center one day a week answering phones and making referrals. She is helping us with a small grant we received to promote parent leadership; through that grant we have been able to pay half of her tuition for Leadership Elmore County. She is also serving on our County Advisory Committee.

MaegenMarie has become an integral part of our county staff. She and her four children are taking advantage of the many opportunities provided through Extension and the Elmore County Family Resource Center. In turn she is filling a huge gap that was left from cuts in our grant funding for the Resource Center. We should never underestimate the value of quality programs that benefit families and what positive relationships and possibilities can come out of our work.

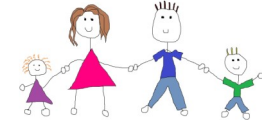
MaegenMarie is one of the many clients out there who just needed a little help and through our Learn and Earn project she has gained knowledge that has come back to benefit us more than what we ever expected.





# PAL's

**\*\*Parents as Leader's\*\***



- ⇒ Have you always wanted to make a difference, as a family, and in the lives of your children?
- ⇒ Do you see needs that can be addressed in your neighborhood?
- ⇒ Do you want your kids to have the best life has to offer, right where you live?

Then PAL's may be for you!

## What is Parent Leadership?

Parent Leadership is a value-based approach to family support that is grounded in the philosophy that families are knowledgeable consumers and significant resources for programmatic as well as community change on behalf of children and families. Parent leadership is a process or path, but it is a destination as well. It begins by supporting parents in acquiring the skills associated with becoming leaders and helping to overcome barriers to their participation.

## Why is Parent Leadership Needed?

Parents and other caregivers are powerful advocates. By educating other leaders and decision makers about the needs of children and their families, parents can help shape program policies and effect changes in the systems which they interface. Parent leadership is a common-sense approach for ensuring that families get the resources they need to raise healthy children and protect their well-being. It is driven by the principle that the democratic involvement of parents is integral to better outcomes for families and communities.

PAL's will give you a voice and the opportunity to aid in activities that affect our children.

PAL's is for anyone who has an involvement with children, has good ideas for positive change, and is willing to get involved!

Are you interested in becoming a part of a PAL's group?

Do you know someone who would love to have an opportunity to voice their opinion about things that affect our children?

Call Family Resource Center @ 334-514-4150 to find out about upcoming meetings and opportunities to get involved.