Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County
 Relatives As Parents Program (RAPP)
 Facilitating Groups for Relative Caregiver Families

“Tip Sheet”

1. **Marketing Support Groups**
   - Create and distribute support group flyers to local schools, faith based institutions, pediatricians, community based agencies, senior centers, government agencies (LDSS, OFA, probation, county jail, youth services, veterans services,), elected officials (county, state, federal)
   - Presentations about Kinship Families and RAPP to local coalitions, civic associations (Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis), chamber of commerce, staff meetings at local agencies/businesses, superintendent’s day at local schools
   - Table with RAPP information at local community days, farmer’s markets, school events
   - Interviews about kinship family issues with local radio personalities
   - Billboards and lawn signs with program information
   - Press releases about upcoming programs/events to local media
   - Program description and information on agency website
   - Updates about programs/events on agency Facebook page
   - Quarterly RAPP newsletter with information about upcoming programs, articles about parenting and community resources sent to current/past participants, agency staff, churches, schools

2. **Engaging Adults in Support Groups**
   - Reminder phone call each month from volunteer (also a caregiver)
   - Quarterly mental health presentations from local professionals: topics include coping skills, anger management, grief/abandonment, stress management
   - Presentations from local professionals addressing legal issues, financial assistance, special education, and parenting
   - Resource table at each group filled with brochures and flyers from community agencies
   - Healthy family meal at start of each group allowing family members time to socialize and network
   - Periodic surveys seeking information about program direction and satisfaction
   - Presenter evaluations to obtain feedback from participants
   - Develop annual ground rules for participation (including confidentiality statement)
   - Youth Group providing educational activities for children ages 5 and up during adult support group

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities. This program is partially funded by monies received from the County of Dutchess, Dutchess County Office of the Aging, NYS Office of Children and Family Services and NYS Kinship Navigator.

Please contact our office if you have any special needs.
3. **Engaging Youth in Youth Groups (ages 5 and up)**
   - Healthy family meal at start of each group allowing youth time to socialize
   - Begin each group with teambuilding activities and cooperative games
   - Quarterly mental health presentation from local professionals: topics include coping skills, anger management, grief/abandonment, alcohol/substance abuse
   - Educational lessons that compliment mental health presentations focusing on positive self-expression, coping with grief and loss, alcohol/substance abuse awareness; additional educational lessons focusing on financial literacy, nutrition, expressive arts and diversity
   - Develop annual ground rules for participation
   - Leadership opportunities for older youth (ages 12 and up)

4. **Sustaining Support Groups**
   - Marketing, marketing, marketing!
   - Obtain multiple funding sources from government and private foundations
   - Seek donations from local businesses to supplement program activities and events
   - Develop Advisory Committee comprised of staff from community/government agencies, libraries, schools, relative caregivers and community members to discuss needs and services available for kinship families
   - Opportunities for families to get together outside of support groups (inter-generational activities)
   - Create adult volunteer opportunities to support marketing efforts and program implementation; provide on-going training and supervision for volunteers