Making-Ends-Meet on a Budget

Brittney was struggling to meet her family’s basic needs on what she received each month in disability, was newly separated, and was not yet receiving child support from her children’s father. She had just been served an eviction notice from her landlord and was in the process of trying to find a better, more affordable place to live for her and the two children. Brittney was suffering from mental health issues and to compound her stress, both children were not doing well in school. Her children needed her, but Brittney didn’t have the mental or physical strength to deal with anything else. Brittney knew she needed help.

During her initial visit with one of SENCA’s trained Family Development Associates (FDA), Brittney was asked to provide basic household information including income verification. Brittney qualified for rental assistance to help with her first month’s rent. As a program requirement she began working one-on-one with the trained FDA to complete six months of case management. Brittney’s first assigned task was to identify her income, itemize her expenses, and create a budget that she could maintain. Once her budget was established, Brittney felt more organized and better prepared to handle her finances.

Maintaining a monthly budget provided Brittney with the assurance she needed to successfully manage a household for her and her two children. While in case management Brittney was the recipient of an iPad SENCA was giving away. The iPad has provided Brittney with the ability to organize her bills, life, and budget in an easy and efficient way, thereby reducing stress and increasing her self-confidence.

More than six months after exiting case management Brittney and her children are still benefitting from the budgeting and money management skills Brittney acquired from SENCA’s Family Development program. Brittney is staying on budget each month, meeting basic needs and paying her rent and utilities on time. There are still financial goals that Brittney wants to achieve, such as paying down previous debt and establishing a savings account for future wants and needs.

“Throughout this experience my mental health has never been better,” shares Brittney, who took the first step in making a positive change in her life. In addition to achieving the peace of mind a feasible budget can provide, Brittney also improved her organizational skills. She now has both the time and energy to help her ten year old son and twelve year old daughter with their homework, and as a result, both children are doing much better in school.

“Family Outreach provided much needed relief and support to our family during a difficult situation. I definitely recommend SENCA programs to others in need.” shares Brittney.

SENCA Family Development Specialist
by: Nicole Wilken, FDS

During December SENCA’s Family Development Associates (FDA) were busy with clients, holiday activities and traveling for training. One particular training was Family Development Specialist training presented by Bob Swanson, who has facilitated non-profit trainings for thirty years. SENCA FDAs joined staff from other Community Action Agencies and spent two days furthering their skills with interactive tools and techniques that assist in emancipating people from poverty and traumatic experiences. This is an on-going effort to better serve clients throughout our six county area. All four SENCA FDAs graduated with the title of Family Development Specialist.