

THE LOVE BASKET



By Jessie Bellevue

Our West Perrine Women Infant and Children (WIC) team wanted to honor a needy family for Christmas. After much discussion, we chose a lovely mentally challenged mother of four.

We collected canned beans, fruits and vegetables, boxes of pasta and hot chocolate from our kitchen cabinets and put together them in a basket. We wrapped the basket with red and green foil and candy-cane ribbons.

We knew our client took the bus for her appointments and it would be easier if a family member with a car drove the goodies back to her home. So we called her mom and said, “You don’t know us but we work of the Health Department. We would like to help your daughter and her kids with a Christmas basket this holiday.”

“WOW!” Grandma replied, “How can I help?”

“If you could please give your daughter and her children a ride to the clinic on December 15th, it would help.”

“Please don’t mention this to your daughter. We would like to make it a surprise,” we whispered.

Grandma loved the surprise idea. She proceeded to tell us of a tale of the absent father of the first two children, the abuse which resulted in the third pregnancy and the occasional help given by the father of the fourth child. She also mentioned her other daughter who had an 18 month old baby and had stopped receiving WIC benefits. She added that they could not afford to celebrate Christmas.

After hearing such a dismal story, we decided to bring Christmas to them. A nonprofit organization donated toys for the children, and we bought small gifts for the three adults.

The family arrived at 1PM, and we presented them with the food basket and gifts. The adults cried tears of gratitude. The children became wide-eyed and smiles broke out of their faces. We also used this opportunity to certify four of the children into the WIC program for another year.

They were overjoyed. We cheered up a family in need and the happiness multiplied to each and every one of us.

Throughout the year we at WIC help those in need feed their families and during this holiday season we not only provided them with bundles of food but with a basket of love.

Healthy Stories is available on Amazon at http://www.amazon.com/Healthy-Stories-Sharing-Health-Department/dp/0615206344/ref=sr_1_7?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1224865070&sr=8-7