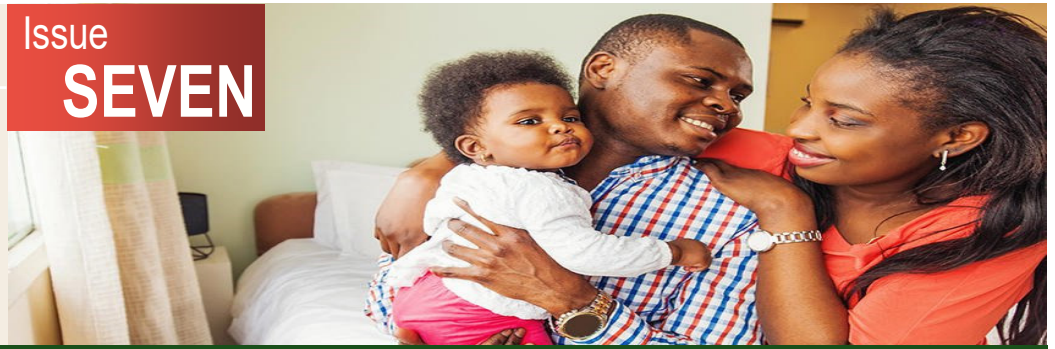


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A Seasonal Insight into the LHA FSS Program

# FutureForward

Current Topics >>>

## Welcome Carrie Kuszak!

Carrie is the new Family Support Specialist at LHA. She came into this field to help others who struggle with addiction and Mental Health and wanted to give back to the community. Carrie felt she could use her life experiences along with her Criminal Justice degree to help others. She knows how it feels to be judged and wants to provide a safe place for others to come when they need help without the fear of judgement. Carrie is a proud mother of two and grandmother of four.

Phone: (402) 434-5530



## Here's to Another Trip Around the Sun

*"The color of springtime is in the flowers; the color of winter is in the imagination." – Terri Guillemets*

This year we have had so many stories of families overcoming and persevering through hardships. 2020 and 2021 have really tested everyone, but also shown how committed you are to your success. You are still here, strong as ever, working on bettering your situations and working towards Self-Sufficiency. I'm so excited for those of you who took the step of joining our program in such an uncertain time. Thinking about the future in a time when it is hard to see months in advance takes dedication and at times true grit. Also, Congratulations to those who successfully completed their goals and graduated the FSS program! So far in the 2021 year we have had a total of 11 graduates, with a total of \$40,365.11 in escrow funds awarded. Keep working towards your goals one week, day, hour or even minute at a time. As long as you continue to put in the work, things will come into place. We look forward to featuring you as our graduates in the coming years!

**"The program helped me see my long-term goals and envision myself in how to get there step-by-step"**

**SUCCESS IS NOT FINAL;  
FAILURE IS NOT FATAL:  
IT IS THE COURAGE TO CONTINUE  
THAT COUNTS.**

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

***The Family Self-Sufficiency program is having another giveaway!***

**Take the Clifton Strengths Finder before January 1, 2022 and you are automatically entered! We will be drawing two names on January 3, 2022 for the chance to win a \$25 gift card. Visit page 4 for more information**

**GIVEAWAY**  
*time*

# Six Ways to Save This Winter

By: The Financial Gym Team



## 1. LOWER HEATING AND ELECTRICITY BILLS:

Cutting down on the electricity bill is as simple as turning down the heat before leaving the house. If you have a larger home consider closing doors to parts of the house you're not planning to spend time so the heat can collect faster. Try layering clothing instead of turning your heat up as well.

## 2. SAVE ON GAS:

Cars often work overtime in the winter, making stops for gas more frequent. Consider inflating your car tires more often than usual, as cold weather can deplete tire pressure – which effectively drains resistance in tires. Also look for underground parking when possible to help your car warm up faster.

## 3. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SEASONAL DEALS:

Many businesses offer seasonal deals to maintain sales during their winter quarter. Plan ahead by looking for deals on the items you wish to purchase for family and friends. If waiting in line for discounts isn't your cup of tea, try looking online for cyber-sales.

## 4. COOK AT HOME:

Shared meals with family and friends are one of the greatest joys of the winter season. Eating out in excess is an unnecessary area of spending. Consider inviting friends and family over to you home instead of making reservations at a restaurant. Why brave the weather when you can stay in, cook at home, and save money in the process?

## 5. AVOID WINTER FAST FASHION:

Don't be tempted by the latest styles bombarding you on social media, purchase classic winter clothes that you can use from year to year with colors that generally stay in style for more than one season. If you do need new winter gear, shop around to get the best deal. Don't be afraid of cost-saving thrifting.

## 6. OPT FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT DÉCOR:

Decorating during the winter season is a must for many families. Outdoor lighting displays are a favorite but can also be an energy guzzler and run up your power bill. LED-powered light strands can cost a bit more upfront but can save you money when used over time.

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## Preparing for the 2021 Tax Session

Tax season is just a few short months away. With all the changes that came last year, it is sure to be another interesting year. The third round of stimulus payments, unemployment benefits, working remotely (possibly in different states), as well as the advance child tax credits are all factors that make the 2021 tax returns more complicated. It's important to remember that the stimulus payments aren't considered taxable income so taxpayers should not include them as income otherwise they will pay more in taxes and may need to request a refund. The advance child tax credits are something taxpayers have never received before. Things to consider regarding the advanced child tax credit is any changes between tax seasons, such as a child aging out of an eligibility bracket. If this happened to you, you could be expected to repay the amount paid to you. A letter the IRS will send you in January 2022

called Letter 6419 will help you determine if you received an over payment and if you need to repay all or part of the advance payments. The IRS will begin accepting electronic returns anywhere between Jan. 15 and Feb. 1, 2022. Tax returns are due by April 15, 2022. If you'd like more time to file your taxes, you'll need to submit Form 4868 by April 1, 2022, or your particular tax deadline. With a tax extension, you can extend your filing due date by six months, up to October 15.





# Kids Space

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to our families in the FSS program! 'Tis the season to spend time with loved ones and bask in the beauty of Christmas lights and New Year's fireworks. There are so many events taking place in the Lincoln community this holiday season to keep you and the little ones busy. Special events to watch for:

CandyHouse Fun shop at Lincoln Children's Museum, December 1-2, 8-9, 13, 15-16, 20:

Book a session of Candyhouse Fun shop! The museum provides all the materials, including cardboard Candyhouse, three colors of frosting and endless kinds of candy and decorations. Sessions are 45-minutes long or you can purchase a take home kit. Pricing: Members \$30, Non-members \$40, Take Home kits \$25.



Railyard Ice Rink Skating, December 1 – February 28:

The Railyard Ice Rink is a seasonal outdoor ice-skating rink that has become a special wintertime tradition. Admission is free but you must check in at the ice rink skate hut to sign a waiver. Skate rentals are available as well; children \$6 and adults 12 and up \$9. Monday: closed, Tues-Thurs: 5pm-9pm, Fri: 5pm-midnight, Sat: 12pm-midnight, Sun: 12pm-9pm.

111<sup>th</sup> Annual Elks Children's Christmas Party at Pinnacle Bank Arena, December 16:

Lincoln Elks Lodge No. 80 hosts its annual FREE Children's Christmas Party. Hundreds of toys will be given away. Every child in attendance will receive a goodie bag including candy, snacks and fruit. Doors open at noon with Santa arriving around 2pm.

New Year's Eve Fireworks Spectacular, December 31:

Located in Omaha, NE, this FREE event will take place around 7pm at the CHI Health Center parking lot where you will be able to enjoy the spectacular firework show in the warmth and safety of your vehicle.

## Santa's Workshop

*If you are still looking for some last-minute assistance with gifts and food before Christmas, People's City Mission may be able to help!*

People City Mission Help Center, located at 6800 P Street Lincoln, NE, is helping with gifts and food on December 18<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 2pm. They will have gifts for ages ranging from toddlers to teenagers. Their food baskets will have a ham and multiple sides to make a beautiful Christmas dinner. PCM asks that individuals sign up for a Clarity Card but it isn't required to take part.



## Christmas Trivia

1. Who is the lead reindeer on Santa's sleigh?
  2. Which who in Whoville visits the Grinch?
  3. All I was for Christmas is...?
  4. What is Frosty's nose made of?
  5. Where does Santa live?
  6. What happens if you stand under a mistletoe?
  7. What should you leave for Santa and his reindeer?
  8. How do you say Merry Christmas in Spanish?
  9. What is Scrooge's first name?
9. Ebenezer  
 Pole, 6. You may get a kiss, 7. Cookies and milk, 8. Feliz Navidad,  
 1. Rudolph, 2. Cindy Lou Who, 3. You, 4. Button, 5. The North

# Clifton Strengths



Created by Donald Clifton, who started the ground work in studying positive psychology, the CliftonStrengths assumes that in high performing teams, successful people will use their strengths to become more productive. The Clifton Strengths helps individuals grow confidence in who they are and how they can contribute to the world. This program uses the CliftonStrengths assessment to measure natural patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving. You will be given an entirely unique profile of your top 5 strengths after completing the assessment that you and your FSS Coordinator will go over together. The Clifton Strengths helps individuals and teams really understand what makes them unique.

Your strengths will support you in any role! These strengths are meant to be used as tools that you can use in order to achieve your highest performance. They'll help you explore ways to talk about and apply your strengths in a practical way. They describe how you work at your best rather than what work you should be doing better. As you look through your strengths, think about the reputation you want to have at work and how you want to be remembered by your team.

## Which Careers Fit My Strengths?

Contact your FSS Coordinator who will provide you with an access code that will allow you to take the CliftonStrengths assessment for free. This is a 30 min questionnaire about your feelings, behaviors and the way you think. Each question is timed so if you need the timer removed please let your coordinator know. Complete the CliftonStrengths assessment before January 1, 2022 and we will automatically enter your name into the drawing for a \$25 gift card. We will contact two winners on January 3, 2022. If you have already taken the CliftonStrengths assessment you are already entered to win!

