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Options Center- "Business of the Month"

A strong desire to help people prompted Helen Cox to open her business, Options Center for Health and Education, in 1985. By being open-minded and willing to study different approaches, she developed techniques and ideas in health and education that helped her friends. Success soon had her friends encouraging her to expand her efforts. Helen began offering her services from home, and then moved the business to East Peoria. The growth of the business forced Helen to move her office four times in less than two years, as satisfied clients spread the word about the unique services she was providing.



Helen actually got her start in the healthcare portion of her business through traditional channels. With a diploma in nursing from Methodist Medical Center and a bachelor's degree in nursing from Bradley University, she worked as a registered nurse for several years. During this time she also became interested in education.

In 1979, a series of health problems had led her to a health professional versed in alternative forms of treatment. The treatment she received there made her feel better than she had felt for months. The doctor not only improved her condition through his techniques, but also opened his extensive library on alternative health care practices to her. Through reading, and later, through taking extensive training, Helen began expanding her services with selected alternative health care techniques.

Helen also learned the Edu-Kinesthetics system for teaching students who experience various blocks to learning. The Edu-Kinesthetics system, called Brain Gym® by her students, has produced improvement in students with short attentions spans, hyperactivity, and low self-esteem.

Helen has also co-written and published a book, *Alternative Health Care: Space Age Interpretations of Age Old Truths*. This book, printed in 1994, explains her philosophy and many of the methods she uses in her practice.

"Alternatives in health care certainly don't exclude modern medical practices – but in many cases start there. While the term 'holistic' is often misunderstood, many holistic methods can be used in accordance with modern medicine," Helen says. "Our goal is to develop and maintain optimal health. My vision of ideal care is to give the patient as many options as possible and allow the patient to make knowledgeable choices."

Helen believes by modeling taking responsibility for her own health, it encourages clients to assume more responsibility for their own health. As a result of developing this philosophy she says, "I've found something that I enjoy and love – and it's given me great self-worth."

Through the years she has been able to see the progress made by both her health and education clients. She tracks her clients' achievements and often establishes lasting relationship with clients and their families.

Establishing the business was hard work, and involved a lot of dedication. While Helen is

now able to schedule her work hours around family commitments, there was a time when she couldn't. She put in long hours around the clock in the beginning, which was hard on her family. The support Helen received from her family was largely responsible for her success.

Now her business is thriving. Helen regularly attends conference and workshops to keep up to date with new developments in her field. "I want to learn as much as possible." she says.