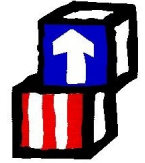




Kootenai Center Head Start News



North Idaho College Head Start

January 2012

Parent Meeting

Our most recent Parent Social was held on December 8th with 9 families in attendance. Families enjoyed a game of Jeopardy with budgeting as the theme. A lot of fun and laughter could be heard as each team competed to be first with the correct answer. A request was made from staff to move \$500 from office supplies into classroom furniture so a new shelf for each classroom can be purchased. Susan and Patti also presented our need for a new Policy Council Representative and Alternate. Due to a lack of quorum a ballot was circulated and the request for the budget move was unanimously approved. Sean Justice was approved as our new Policy Council Representative and Katie Johnson was approved as Alternate. Families brainstormed ideas on how to improve attendance at the Parent Socials.

Our next Parent Social will be held on **Thursday, January 26th at 4:15pm at the Coeur d'Alene Library**. Families will enjoy a tour of the library and hear a presentation on early childhood literacy. We hope to see you there!

Upcoming Events:

Parent Social	Jan 26 @4:30pm @ CDA Library
Policy Council	No Jan Meeting

Pedestrian Safety

Safety for you and your child is always a top priority.

Safe behaviors:

- Don't allow little kids to cross streets alone.
- Don't let little kids play in driveways, unfenced yards, streets or parking lots.
- Teach your child to "look left, right, and left again" before crossing the street.
- Cross when the street is clear, and keep looking both ways while crossing.

Safety basics:

- Always supervise your child when crossing the street.
- Make sure your child is visible when he/she is walking.

Excerpted from
www.safekids.org

Education

EARLY LITERACY SKILLS

The National Research Council recommends that children enter school with specific early literacy skills that serve as the foundation for learning to read and write. Children who enter school with more of these skills are better able to benefit from the reading instruction they receive when they arrive at school.

- **Print Motivation:** Find books that speak to your child's interests and share them often.
- **Vocabulary:** Teach you child the specific names of things, like vegetables at the grocery store.
- **Print Awareness:** Help your child discover how to hold a book and turn the pages.
- **Narrative Skills:** Tell stories together, encourage pretend play, and let your child be a storyteller.
- **Phonological Awareness:** Sing songs, play games and share rhymes to help your child play with the smaller sounds in words.
- **Letter Knowledge:** Help your child identify the first letter in his/her name and find it in books, on street signs and package labels.

Submitted From: www.multcolib.org/early literacy

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Mental Health

TIPS FOR RAISING COMPASSIONATE KIDS

Understanding and compassion are skills that children develop over time. At age 3, children are more aware of others, but still have trouble relating to how other people actually feel. By age four children may be better able to understand when they have hurt someone and are beginning to develop the ability to share.

Tips to develop kindness in kids:

1. Believe your child is capable of being kind and treat him/her that way. If you start to assume the worst, you may soon get it.
2. Model positive behavior. Discuss out loud when you pass around the food dish at dinner to share with family members or when you help a neighbor.
3. Treat children with respect. This can be as simple as alerting children that playtime is almost over, instead of abruptly ending your child's fun. Think about how you would like to be treated.
4. Coach your children to pay attention to other people's facial expressions. Talk about what a sad, mad, or happy face looks like.
5. Show your children how they can help others and discuss how the person they are helping feels. "Susie's face looks happy when you help her pick up toys."

Submitted by Shaura Larson, Mental Health Consultant

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Health & Safety

TOOTH TID BITS

With so much information being thrown at us every day, it is not surprising that we get confused! Here is a tidbit to help sort through one set of facts that directly affect your family's teeth.

Sugar that contains calories has the potential to increase the bacteria shown to cause cavities. Examples are table sugar, brown sugar, lactose (milk formula, breast milk), fructose (fruits and veggies), high fructose corn syrup (added for flavor), maltose (grains) or any ingredient that ends with "ose". Sugar substitutes, on the other hand, do not cause cavities, weight gain, or diabetes. Examples include xylitol, aspartame, and saccharine. Sugar substitutes like stevia and splenda come from sugar sources, but the sugar content is reduced so they have less cavity potential and calories. Xylitol, currently found in "sugar free" gum and candy is the only sweetener known to reduce new cavities. Whatever you use, don't overuse any of them! If your child is getting more than 30 grams of any kind of sugar or substitute daily, it's too much.

Excerpted from article by Shari Williams, RDH-ER

Nutrition

AVOID THE NO-THANK-YOU BITE

Some adults require children to eat one bite of each food offered. Rather than learning to choose and eat a variety of food, the children eat because someone else makes them. Many foods are unfamiliar to children, and some foods are truly disliked. Learning to eat a variety of food requires exposure to a variety of foods. Here are some ways to help without forcing them to eat an unwanted bite:

- Give food a name, as you model eating the food.
- Help children learn about texture, taste, shape, and the smell of food.
- Use familiar vocabulary as you describe how the food is similar to something they already know such as vegetable, meat, crisp, sweet, smooth, etc.
- Offer the food many times so children can become comfortable with the appearance, smell, and taste of food.

Forcing children to eat does not work in the long run. Avoid using one-bite rules. Take advantage of the many positive ways to expose children to foods without the force, pressure and negativity.

Excerpted from <http://www.childcareapp.org>

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