



Connections



January 2008

La Crosse County
Human Services
Dept.

Volume 10, Issue 1
2008

Fun Family Winter Activities

Many psychologists tell us that winter can be a depressing time, for both adults and children. Weather considerations often keep people inside during the winter season, or require special clothing or equipment to spend time outside. But many parents have found that winter offers great opportunities for together time with their children. Activities both indoors and outdoors during the colder winter months can build memories, strengthen relationships, and just be all out fun with your children. Here are some great ideas for activities that can be simple, fun and don't have to be expensive.

- **Take Them Skiing or Snowboarding**...it's a fun family sport that can really build memories!
- **Consider Snowshoeing.** A less expensive option for people in snowy areas, snowshoeing offers some fun opportunities. The nice part about snowshoeing is that almost anyone who can walk can snowshoe.
- **How About Ice Skating?** Not everyone will be a Tara Lipinski on skates, but many families enjoy ice skating together during the winter season especially. Skating takes a little practice and steady ankles are pretty important, but it is a sport that is adapted well to the beginner. Just don't forget the protective gear!
Did you know the public can rent sports equipment from UW-L's Outdoor Connection? Ice skates, sleds, snowshoes, skis and other gear can be rented for less than \$10 a day. For hours, location, and other information visit http://www.uwlax.edu/recsports/OC_EquipmentRental.html or call 785-8860.
- **Building Snowmen (or Snowwomen).** Snowmen creations are only limited by your creativity!
- **Snow Painting.** All you need is a few water bottles with a squirt top, some water and food coloring and some snow. Fill each bottle with water and some food coloring and then head outside. A little imagination and some creativity will result in some great works of art.

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"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

Martin Luther King Jr.



Mark Your Calendar!

Training Opportunities

Thursday, Feb. 7 6:30-8:30pm The Dark Side of the Internet: Sexual Predators of Children

Franklin Elementary School 1611 Kane St., La Crosse

Presentation by Wisconsin Department of Justice Special Agent Eric Szatkowski on the online exploitation of children. Includes real-life examples and practical advice for anyone interested in the safety and well-being of our children. An eye-opening live demonstration of chat rooms is included. (Note: Due to the nature of the subject, the presentation is appropriate for adults only.) This presentation is free and open to the public. For more information call 789-8460.

Thursday, Apr. 3

Pre-Conference Event: Bullying Prevention

La Crosse Radisson Ballroom

Bullying... Where do you fit in? Bully, victim, bystander? Bullying is a community problem which requires a community solution. Come learn more about the 5 W's of Bullying: Who are bullies? What is bullying? Where does it occur? When? Why is it important for our community and society to address these issues? How can we do it? If you work with children or have children in your home you need to hear this information. This FREE seminar will help start the discussion in our community. Co-presented by Melanie Fay, School Counselor at Hamilton and Franklin schools and Carol Kuphal, School Counselor at Summit and Southern Bluffs Elementary schools.

2 sessions: 4:00-5:30pm Models to deal with bullying for educators and other caregiving professionals.

6:30-8:00pm Demonstrations by a local youth improv group with discussion facilitated by Diana Henry.

Foster parents are encouraged to attend either or both sessions! No registration required.

Friday, Apr. 4 8:30am-4:00pm 11th Annual La Crosse Child Maltreatment Conference La Crosse Radisson Ballroom

Save the date for this annual event that explores emerging trends in child maltreatment identification, intervention, treatment, and prevention. Look for details on topics and how to register in a future issue of Connections.

Upcoming Workshops at Family Resources, 1500 Green Bay St.

For more information or to register, call 784-8125. Child care may be provided.



Thursday, Feb. 28, 6:30-8:00pm

Understand Your Baby Through Baby Sign

Research shows infants using Baby Sign begin talking and understanding words earlier. Come learn some basic signs to start you on your way. Presented by: Danielle Sprain, Certified Baby Sign Presenter

Thursday, Mar. 6, 6:30-8:00pm

Four Cornerstones of a Healthy Relationship

Family life can be stressful. Come hear what makes a healthy relationship and how to keep it going. Learn strategies to improve even your most challenging relationships. Presented by: Carin White, Director of Brighter Tomorrows

Thursday, Mar. 27, 6:30-8:00pm

Tricks of the Trade

Learn some parenting tricks of the trade from a stay-at-home dad of two boys. Hear how he's learned what works and how he's managed to have fun while doing it! Presented by Pete Yocum.

Special Events

Thursday evening, May 29, 2008

Foster Family Picnic

Myrick Park - large shelter

Thursday evening, September 18, 2008

Foster Parent Banquet

Drugan's

Thursday evening, October 2, 2008

Torchlight Parade

Thursday evening, November 20th

Holiday Open House

Children's Museum

Mark Your Calendar!

Special Events (continued)

Saturdays at 10:00am beginning Jan. 26

Frosty Flicks Winter Film Festival

Marcus Theatres, 2032 Ward Ave, La Crosse 608)791-1999

All seats only \$2.50 which includes FREE popcorn.

1/26 The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything

2/23 Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium

2/2 Alvin and the Chipmunks

3/1 Bee Movie

2/9 Daddy Day Camp

3/8 Arctic Tale

2/16 Evan Almighty

3/15 Waterhorse: Legend of the Deep

STEM Saturdays

305 Morris Hall, UW-La Crosse

\$29 per class

STEM Saturdays are designed to give youth a chance to explore the wonderful world of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math in a fun, hands-on way. Gives youth an opportunity to advance their interests and abilities in science and technology to make informed academic and career choices. To register for the following sessions go to <http://www.uwlax.edu/conted/stem/> for a printable registration form. For more information call the UW-L Continuing Education and Extension Office at (608)785-6508. Enrollment limited to 20 students so register early! For students in grades 4-8.

April 19 9:00am-12:00pm

Paper Rockets

Rocketry is an exciting and educational way for people of any age to learn more about aerospace and science. In this session, you will design, test and fly your own rocket!

Instructor: Jason Marcks, Executive Director, Space Education Initiatives

Respite Form Deadline!

All **2007** respite forms must be turned in no later than **January 30, 2008**.

Quick Tips for Parents: Label the behavior, not the child

Have you ever heard yourself telling your son to "be a good boy" before you send him off to school? What exactly does that mean? You might know in your mind what you expect, but does your son? Instead of labeling your child as "good" or "bad," try labeling the behavior instead. That message tells your child that he is a good person, but some of the behaviors he chooses may not be. Separate the child from the behavior. Target the inappropriate actions, not the child.

So, the next time you plant a going-out-the-door kiss on your little one's cheek, try saying, "Remember to do what the bus driver says." Positively focusing on the behavior goes a long way.

www.fosterparentcollege.com

What's the Difference between AD/HD and ADD?

ADD, AD/HD, hyperkinesis? It gets confusing, doesn't it?

This condition has been known for more than a hundred years, but it hasn't always been called the same thing. In the past, different labels have been used for what we now call attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD).

Why the change? The American Psychiatric Association publishes the official guidelines for naming and diagnosing mental disorders. This book (called the DSM, or "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders") is regularly updated as scientists learn more and more. Research in the 1970s and 1980s began to show there are different types of attention deficit. Although they have major differences, the types are more alike than different. Doctors began to see that the different types are all part of the same major condition. In 1994, the DSM changed the name from ADD (attention deficit disorder) to AD/HD because of the advances in research. There are three types of this one condition called AD/HD. They are: inattentive, hyperactive/impulsive, and combined.

Some doctors and mental health professionals still use the term ADD. If this is your or your child's diagnosis, it most likely means you or your child have the inattentive type of AD/HD. This is not the child who is "bouncing off the walls" or "simply can't sit still." Rather, it's the individual who seems to be always daydreaming, is forgetful, is easily distracted, is disorganized, and just can't seem to pay attention.

Source: The National Resource Center on ADHD, a Program of CHADD.

CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) is the nation's leading non-profit organization serving individuals with AD/HD and their families. The local La Crosse chapter is offering a new support group for parents and caregivers of children and teens with AD/HD. The next meeting will be Thursday, February 7th from 6:00-7:30pm at the Onalaska Gundersen Lutheran Behavioral Health Building (123 16th Ave. S., Onalaska). Dr. PJ will be joining the group for a 15 minute talk on medications for AD/HD. For more information about this support group contact Tanya or Kari at lacrosse-area@chadd.net. Meetings are free and open to the public and you do not need to become a CHADD member to attend.



(Fun Family Winter Activities, continued from front page)

- **Igloos and Snow Caves.** For igloos, try using molds like aluminum bread pans.
- **Bake cookies.** If your not excited about the outdoors in frigid temperatures, try this inside activity. Have a little fun with kids and take them into the kitchen. Check out page 7 for a fun recipe!
- **Build a Bird Feeder.** Help your feathered friends through the winter. Kids can make an easy bird feeder by spreading peanut butter on a bagel, dipping it in bird seed, and hanging it on a tree branch. Watching the birds feast on their creation can be a fun activity all by itself.
- **How About an Indoor Fort?** It can be as easy as using chairs and a few blankets. Grab a flashlight, some books, and a snack for a fun experience.

Don't be discouraged by the weather in finding things to do with your children. You are bound only by your imagination, and theirs.

From www.fatherhood.about.com

fostering perspectives

Sponsored by the NC Division of Social Services and the NC Family and Children's Resource Program

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The effects of grief and loss on children in foster care

by Selena Berrier

All children in foster care have experienced tremendous loss. Even in the very best of foster care placements, children will experience loss of their familiar home surroundings, at least some disruption of daily routines, loss of personal belongings, pets, and family members – parents, siblings, and kin.

Even when the plan is reunification, and there is a good possibility that they will be returned home, children experience profound loss while they are separated from their caregivers. How a child experiences loss depends on many factors, including:

- The child's developmental level
- The significance of the people separated
- Whether the separation is temporary or permanent
- The degree of familiarity of the new surroundings

Of these factors, a child's developmental level will most deeply impact his or her understanding of the situation, and therefore influence how he or she behaves while in foster care. The following is a brief summary of how a child's developmental level will affect his or her response to grief and loss.

Infancy

A child's major developmental task during infancy is establishing trust. When an infant experiences the profound loss of a parent or primary caregiver, the infant is at risk of losing his or her basic sense of trust in adults, and the world at large. Specific grief and loss related behaviors include crying loudly, withdrawal, apathy, and mournful crying. Foster parents can help reduce an infant's experience of loss by maintaining the infant's routines (as best as possible). Infants also find comfort in familiar smells—although sometimes it goes against our instincts not to wash all of the infant's belongings, it gives the infant a sense of security to keep something that smells of the infant's home.

Preschool: Two Years to Five Years of Age

At this age, children have not developed logical thinking abilities, and do not understand cause, effect, or permanence. Children of this age who experience loss may feel sadness, hopelessness, denial, and guilt. The fear of further loss may make the child clingy, anxious, and stubborn. Foster parents can help reduce the stress of loss by answering the child's questions honestly, providing loving, stable interactions, and patiently attempting to connect with the child.

(continued)

School Age: Six Years to Eleven Years of Age

During this period, children are developing their ability to understand cause, effect, and time. They are beginning to form concrete and logical thoughts. Grief will show itself in school or learning problems, and preoccupation with the loss of caregivers and or related worries. Foster parents should be available, sympathetic listeners and help teachers and other significant adults understand that the child's behavior and performance is related to his or her overwhelming sadness.

Adolescence: Twelve Years to Nineteen Years of Age

At this stage, children understand permanence and will grieve like an adult, following the five stages of grief described by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (Shock/Denial, Anger/Protest, Bargaining, Depression, Resolution). Complicating the grief process is the adolescent's primary developmental task: forming his or her own identity. Issues of independence, resistance, and separation are already occurring—profound loss adds a tremendous amount of stress to his or her maturation process. When faced with loss, adolescents can turn to destructive behaviors such as substance abuse, eating disorders, depression, etc. Foster parents can help adolescents deal with their conflicting emotions by helping them maintain their sense of identity, allowing them to make choices (that are not harmful), and by encouraging safe expressions and experiences of freedom and independence.

Foster children are often in a state of "limbo." When initially placed into care, it is often unknown whether the child will or will not return home. Until a birth parent's rights are relinquished or terminated, it is difficult for a child to complete the grief process. Foster parents who are providing care during this time of limbo need to help children maintain attachments with their caregivers. Continual contact between birth parents and the child (even if it is not face-to-face) is recommended. Through contact and visits, the child's family can reassure the child he or she is safe and loved.

When separation from the birth family is permanent, it is the foster parents' responsibility—along with the social worker—to help the child feel safe, secure, and prepared for the future. Honest, developmentally appropriate communication is essential. Social workers and foster parents need to work closely together to develop a plan to help the child grieve and adapt during this transitional time between permanent homes.

Selena Berrier is an educational specialist with the Family & Children's Resource Program at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work.

Resources for Foster Parents

A Child's Journey Through Placement. This highly readable book is a must for social workers and foster parents. Dr. Vera Fahlberg explains the impact of separation and loss on attachment and includes concrete tips and examples for helping minimize the trauma of moves, managing behavior problems, and communicating with children. (Fahlberg, V. (1991). *A child's journey through placement*. Indianapolis, IN: Perspectives Press.)

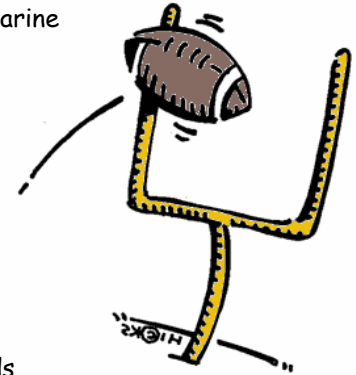
Helping Children Cope with Separation and Loss. In this classic book, author Claudia Jewett provides detailed information about helping children (of different ages and developmental stages) cope with separation and loss. (Jewett, C. (1982). *Helping children cope with separation and loss*. Harvard, MA: Harvard Common Press.)



Chocolatey Football Bites

Get ready for the Super Bowl with this fun and tasty recipe!

- 4 cups Cocoa Pebbles cereal
- 6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate baking squares
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- white cake decorating gel



1. Place cereal in large bowl.
2. Microwave chocolate, corn syrup and butter in large microwavable bowl on HIGH 2-1/2 minutes, stirring after 1-1/2 minutes.
3. Stir in vanilla.
4. Pour chocolate mixture over cereal; mix well.
5. Shape into 18 (3-inch long) football shapes, using slightly moistened hands.
6. Place on waxed paper; cool completely.
7. Use decorating gel to add lacings to footballs.

From www.recipezaar.com

Search For Words

Find and circle the words. The run right to left, left to right, bottom to top, top to bottom, and diagonally top to bottom or bottom to top.

snowplow	blizzard	ice	snowflake	winter	hat
warm	boots	gloves	cold	snow	sled



Winter Animal Trivia

Can you guess which of the following statements are false?

- A. In the winter, a gopher's heart beats only 5 times a minute.
- B. Some frogs freeze solid in the winter and can stay in this "living dead" state up to two weeks waiting for warmer weather to thaw them out.
- C. The grouse grows warts on the sides of its toes to help it walk on top of the snow without sinking in.

h	d	r	d	c	b	l	i	z	z	a	r	d	e	s
f	a	c	h	r	m	i	t	g	k	g	l	w	a	n
w	p	t	d	g	l	o	v	e	s	s	m	o	r	s
i	o	r	a	s	s	t	o	o	l	d	e	p	u	n
n	m	a	o	n	e	d	l	e	e	r	n	i	n	o
t	a	d	u	s	r	c	o	l	d	c	s	n	o	w
e	n	d	t	c	e	d	o	t	o	p	y	o	i	f
r	n	r	w	a	r	m	p	g	d	y	s	u	j	l
y	e	s	i	o	p	w	r	i	w	e	w	r	a	a
u	r	i	i	c	s	l	f	a	i	r	n	e	s	k
s	s	d	e	i	e	i	n	b	o	o	t	s	u	e
s	r	g	c	o	w	b	l	n	v	e	s	n	g	t
s	n	o	w	p	l	o	w	o	r	g	r	s	i	s

ANSWER: They're all true!

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Connections



LA CROSSE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
300 4TH SREET NORTH
LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN 54601

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Pass the word on!

Do you know anyone who's interested in being a foster parent? Orientation sessions for those who'd like to learn more about the program are held the first Monday of every month from 6:00 - 7:00PM. Those interested in attending should call Rhonda Rude at 789-4834 to sign up.

Is there anything you'd like to contribute to our newsletter?

Please send it to:
Attn: Sharon McHugh
La Crosse County Human Services
300 N. 4th St.
La Crosse, WI 54601
mchugh.sharon@co.la-crosse.wi.us
(608) 785-6056

We welcome any feedback or suggestions you may have!



Foster Care & Adoption
Resource Center

Looking for information on foster care or adoption? The Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center provides the following services:

- Resource lending library
- Links to training opportunities and resources
- *Fostering Across Wisconsin* quarterly newsletter

Visit their webpage at www.wifostercareandadoption.org or contact them at their toll free number 1-800-947-8074 .