



Connections



SEPTEMBER

La Crosse County
Human Services

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INSIDE THE MINDS OF SCHOOL-AGED KIDS...

You know, I remember after getting through a bumpy patch with my son during the sassy preschooler stage thinking, "Phew, things should get a bit easier for a while." Boy, was I wrong.

Don't get me wrong, the behaviors got easier to deal with, but the issues got deeper, e.g., not fitting in, being left out, bullying, etc. I think sometimes we as adults forget how hard it can be to navigate the elementary school years from a kid's point of view. I add that last phrase as often, we see these issues as "nothing big" to quote a well intentioned dad I know. Of course, to our kids these issues are huge. Navigating the social strata of the school environment can make the remainder of their school experiences a blessing or a curse.

The question is, how do we help our kids through tough times in school? I think the biggest road block is finding out what is going on at school. Oh sure, they will tell us about the comings and goings of kids and who got in trouble during casual conversations in the car or at the dinner table. But how often do they share the things that are worrying them most? It takes a conscious effort on our part to seek this information out as well as finesse to do so in a way that makes our children open to sharing their biggest fears.

Case in point, Thing One has been in a funk mood for about a week. He has just been more emotional and somewhat sullen or melancholy. It was apparent to my husband and I that he was stressed about something. It took one of our pillow time talks (which admittedly has not been occurring as frequently as they should) and some well worded questions to open the flood gates. So many worries were swirling around that little head! After about an hour of listening and empathizing, he was able to get out all his worries and I am happy report that my little guy is back to his happy self.

So, I thought I would share some tips on how to get inside the mind of school aged kids. One of the best ways to do so is to ask open ended questions. I know, this sounds like common sense, but it can be tricky.

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"You learn something every day if you pay attention."

~Ray LeBlond



Mark Your Calendar!

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR FOSTER FAMILIES

*9th annual Foster Parent Recognition Banquet
Thursday, September 24, 2009 Social Hour 5:30pm, Buffet Dinner 6:30pm
Seven Bridges Restaurant, Onalaska*

Torchlight Parade

Thursday, October 1 | 7:00pm | La Crosse-Northside

Contact Rhonda Rude (789-4834) to sign your family up for walking in the parade and for line-up information.

Holiday Open House

Thursday, November 19 | Children's Museum, La Crosse

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Saturdays

3rd Saturday of each month, September 2009 through April 2010 | 9:00am-12:00pm | UW-La Crosse Campus

Designed to give youth a chance to explore the world of science in a fun, hands-on way. For students in grades 4-8.

Upcoming sessions include "Crime Scene Investigation", "Chemistry Cuisine" and "Shards of the Past: Experimental Archaeology". For more information or to sign up visit www.uwlax.edu/conted/stem or call 785-6508.

A Special Day for Special People (Hosted by local Kiwanis Clubs)

Saturday, September 12 | 12:00-3:00pm | Copeland Park, La Crosse

For individuals with disabilities ages 5 and older. Activities include a visit from the Screaming Eagles Band, clowns, games, police car, fire truck, hay wagon rides, music and more! Each person attending will have an individual host; parents are welcome but not required to stay. For registration information call Lorraine Wilson at 784-9550.

Chad Erickson Memorial Du Run Run Kids' Duathlon

Sunday, September 20 | 8:00am-12:00pm | Riverside Park, La Crosse

Event is open to kids ages 2-12 and consists of a run, bike, run duathlon. This is also a day of family fun with kids' games, create-your-own healthy snack table, inflatable games, face painting, music and more. Event benefits Special Olympics Wisconsin. For more information call 789-7596 or visit www.specialolympicswisconsin.org.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

FOUNDATIONS

Fall 2009 Session

Saturdays: October 17 | 9:00am-3:30pm | La Crosse County Human Services building—basement auditorium

October 24 | 9:00am-3:30pm

November 7 | 8:30am-4:00pm

November 14 | 8:30am-4:00pm

Trainers are Mike Heal, Suanne Kraft and Richelle Zimmerman. Call Rhonda Rude at (608) 789-4834 to sign up.

LA CROSSE COUNTY FOSTER PARENT TRAININGS

↩ RSVP for these trainings by calling Rhonda Rude at (608)789-4834. ↪

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Tuesday, September 8 | 6:00-8:00pm | La Crosse County Administrative Center—basement auditorium

Gayle Tylka from CESA 4 will be here to discuss the IEP process.

Confidentiality Training

Tuesday, September 15 | 6:00-8:30pm | La Crosse County Human Services building—basement auditorium

Presented by Megan DeVore (La Crosse County Corporation Counsel) and Richelle Zimmerman (Alternate Care Unit Social Worker).

Mark Your Calendar!

Everything You've Wanted to Know About CPS Ongoing But Were Too Afraid To Ask

Tuesday, September 22 | 6:00-8:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services building—basement auditorium

This training will provide an overview of Child Protective Services Ongoing case management; Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and how it applies to cases; safety and its relationship to placement, visits and return home; roles of CPS, other units within the department, and foster parents/relative caregivers; and permanency for children, including Termination of Parental Rights.

Trainers: Michelle Winter and Jenny Schroeder, La Crosse County Child Protective Services-Ongoing

Children with Special Needs Unit II

Date to be determined | La Crosse County Human Services building—basement auditorium

Topics will include crisis services and other community resources for children with special needs.

Trainers: Kristi Herold and Sarah Wagner-Barton, La Crosse County Children with Special Needs Unit II

Topic TBA

Tuesday, November 10 | 6:00-8:00pm | La Crosse County Administrative Center—basement auditorium

Foster Parenting the Juvenile Offender

Thursday, November 12 | 9-11am and 6-8pm | La Crosse County Human Services building—basement auditorium

Wayde and Jim will provide a basic summary of the Juvenile Justice system, a description of the type of youth they place, and lead a discussion on roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the placement.

Trainers: Wayde Anger and Jim Fox, La Crosse County Juvenile Justice

First Things First: An Introduction to Initial Assessment

Tuesday, December 1 | 6:00-8:00pm | La Crosse County Human Services building—basement auditorium

This presentation will explain the role and responsibilities of Initial Assessment workers, the course of a case beginning at the point of Access, the referral screening process, screening decisions, response times, and the course of the investigation. There will also be a brief discussion on jurisdiction versus safety.

Trainer: Serena Breining, La Crosse County Child Protective Services-Initial Assessment

COMMUNITY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

REMEMBER...per policy all training hours earned from outside resources must be pre-approved and verifiable (must provide a copy of the training certificate and/or pamphlet or agenda from the training.)

Kid Friendly Snacks

Thursday, September 10 | 6:30-8:00pm | Family Resources, 1500 Green Bay St., La Crosse

Learn how to use MyPyramid as a guide to plan fun and healthy snacks for kids. Samples will be available! Presented by Mary Hoefl-Leithold, La Crosse UW-Extension. To register call (608)784-8125.

Creating Your Family Mission Statement

Thursday, September 24 | 6:30-8:00pm | Family Resources, 1500 Green Bay St., La Crosse

Who do you strive to be as a family? What do you truly value? Come learn strategies for creating your own family mission statement. Presented by Stacy Shapiro, Shapiro Strategies. To register call (608)784-8125.

Misbehaving or Missing Sleep?

Thursday, October 8 | 6:30-8:00pm | Family Resources, 1500 Green Bay St., La Crosse

This workshop will focus on sleep needs and offer practical ideas for helping children get the rest they need. Presented by Lois Fredrick, Family Resources parent educator. To register call (608)784-8125.

911...Fire Preparation Ready!

Thursday, October 15 | 6:30-8:00pm | Family Resources, 1500 Green Bay St., La Crosse

October is Fire Prevention Month! Come give some worthwhile attention to keep your home and families safe and free from fire. Presented by the La Crosse Fire Department. To register call (608)784-8125.

Mark Your Calendar! (Community Trainings, continued)

Midwest Autism Conference: Putting the Pieces Together — Parent Evening

Sunday, October 18 | 7:00-8:30pm | La Crosse Center

"Getting It Together", presented by Craig and Alyson Beytien of Dubuque, IA.

Maintaining a relationship can be difficult when a child is diagnosed with autism. The stress of diagnosis, creating treatment and educational plans, negotiating with systems, financial strains, parenting and communication differences, and basic sleep deprivation can impact and change the relationship between loving partners. Married for 22 years and parenting three teenage sons with autism, Craig and Alyson will share their insights, experiences, ideas for staying together, staying focused, and staying happy.

Cost is \$15. To register or for more conference information visit www.uwlax.edu/conted/mac/index.html.

Wisconsin Foster and Adoptive Parents Association (WFAPA) 2009 Fall Conference

Friday-Sunday, October 23-25 | AmericInn, Ashland, WI

This year's theme is "Back to Basics" in Foster Care. For more information or for a copy of the registration form visit www.wfapa.org. Registration is due by September 23rd. Cost is \$65 per person.

("School Aged Kids"...continued from front page)

For example, "what's wrong" is often followed by "I don't know." Not that it works all the time, but sometimes you can follow that up with a trick question such as "If you did know, what would it be?" This question often throws kids off so much that they are able to answer it.

Ask them about their worries or concerns. This type of questioning is a great way to get kids talking. Phrasing such as "I wonder if you have any worries or concerns about anything?" If they seem confused, it often helps to clarify that question such as "You know, worries or concerns. Like this week, I am worried about whether I am going to be able to get everything I need to get done before the party at our house on Friday." You can ask the question according to location, e.g., "I wonder if there is anything that worries or concerns you at school" or "at home" or "during baseball practice," etc. Kids carry worries and concerns just as we do.

Be a good listener. We often want to go into "fix it" mode or solve the problem for them which often falls on deaf ears. Imagine telling a co-worker about a really concerning question and they go right into "Well, all you have to do is..." Chances are you are going to feel that they don't get you or understand what you are feeling. The key to being a good listener is to be empathetic. If your child says they are being left out of games at recess, follow up with an empathetic statement, e.g., "That must make you feel lonely?" When kids realize that we "get them," they are going to be more willing to share those worries and concerns and to consider any suggestions we might have for them on how to handle the situation. Of course this works with grown ups too. One of my favorite sayings is "People don't care what you know until they know that you care."

On that last point, ask permission to share advice. Nobody likes feeling lectured, especially our kids. If you have some advice to share, ask them if they want to hear it first. Nine times out of ten, they will say "yes." By asking permission, you are letting them know that you want to help but respect their right to solve the problem on their own.

Keep in mind that as parents, kids often don't get that we had the same experiences in school. When we try to share the "when I was a kid" stories, they often shut down. Despite this, your childhood experiences can be helpful especially if you share the stories with a twist. For example, instead of using "when I was a kid" make it about "I once new a kid who..." Sometimes it is easier for our children to envision other kids having similar experiences versus their parents who they see as invincible.

Article by Jill Urbane, [The Mentor Mom](http://TheMentorMom.com). www.activityvillage.co.uk

WELCOME NEW FOSTER PARENTS



Please welcome Kathy Meyer to our foster care community. Kathy lives in Holmen, WI with two of her four daughters. She has raised her children to adulthood and is nearing the end of her "empty nesting" years. Everyone in the family is excited about providing care for children in the Meyer home. Kathy hopes to provide ongoing care to children of either sex up to the age of 5 years old. She gained some experience in helping families with the care of their children when she was an in home child care provider in the recent past. She has also provided informal respite for a family in need. Kathy has already attended the Pre Placement training that is offered by this agency so she is ready to accept children in her home. If you should see her at any of the up and coming trainings this fall and winter please welcome this new "Everyday Hero".

Please welcome Anne and Stephen Foust to the world of child foster care. Anne and Stephen live with their son on the south side of La Crosse near "Ten Mile Hill". Children who love animals will love this home as the Foust's have a menagerie in their home consisting of three dogs, a cat, four birds, two guinea pigs, a gerbil, and multiple gold fish. They come to foster care with the hope of providing care to children birth to 5 years of age. They are interested in becoming an emergency foster care provider as Anne is currently a stay at home parent. The family is already familiar with some of the Human Services systems as they have been involved in kinship in the past. Anne and Stephen have attended the Pre Placement training that is offered by this agency and they are already making plans to attend the Foundations and Confidentiality trainings that are being offered in the near future at this agency. When you see them at up and coming trainings and events such as the Foster Care Banquet near the end of September please welcome them to our foster care community.

fostering perspectives

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

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The Story of a Child in Foster Care

by Isaiah, age 10

Being in foster care is not hard, but it is hard at the same time.

Leaving your parents is hard. Staying with nice people is not hard.

Sometimes I feel like I can just cry because when you leave a foster parent you don't want to go. That's what happened to me. I liked staying with my last foster parents until I had to leave. We might meet again somewhere, somehow, but I don't know.

Now I live at Ms. E's and that's a real blast. For now everything is all dizzy and fuzzy, but I'll get used to it.

One day I hope I'll grow up to be a successful man of the future.

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HEAD LICE CONTROL

Facts about Head Lice:

- Lice are parasitic insects with six legs including two front claws that feed on human blood. They are found on 6-12 million people worldwide.
- Signs and symptoms of head lice include itching (caused by allergic reaction to the saliva of the louse when it bites, irritability and sores on head from scratching).
- Lice is spread by having contact with an infected person, wearing infected clothing, using infected combs, brushes or towels, or by lying on a bed, pillow, carpet, or stuffed animal that has had recent contact with an infected person.



Treating and Removing Lice from Children:

- Remember treatments are pesticides! Most treatments are not recommended for children under age 2.
- Treat with a head lice product using the instructions provided.
- Re-treat in 7-10 days after the first treatment (or as directed).
- Manually remove all nits (lice eggs) and lice found. Put them in a trash bag and dispose of the trash after treatment.
When removing nits:
 1. Work under good light.
 2. Divide hair into sections.
 3. Use a nit removal comb.
 4. If the comb doesn't remove the nit, use your fingernails. Last resort is to clip that strand of hair out.
 5. Go through all of the hair.
 6. Re-check daily for at least two weeks.

Treating and Removing Lice from the Home

*All steps must be done on the same day of treatment or lice will continue to be a problem.

- Soak combs, brushes and hair accessories in hot water (150°) for 10 minutes or in lice medication for one hour.
- Wash and dry bedding including sheets, comforter, pillows, pillowcases, blankets, and mattress pads on the hot settings.
- Non-washable bedding should be placed in the dryer for 30 minutes on the hot setting, in the sun for 6-8 hours, or seal them in a bag for 14 days.
- Vacuum all mattresses or run a hot iron over them, especially around any buttons. Wipe waterbed mattresses with a damp cloth.
- Vacuum all upholstered furniture, throw pillows and carpet.
- Vacuum all upholstered seats and carpet in the cars (don't forget the car seat!)
- Wash and dry all jackets, sweaters, hats, and other clothing that has been worn or in contact with infected person's clothes or head.
- Throw away vacuum bag outside in a sealed trash bag when finished.
- Place non-washable clothes in a hot dryer for 30 minutes, seal in a plastic bag for 14 days, or put in the freezer for 48 hours.
- Notify all who have been in contact with the infected person within the last week.

Free head lice exams are available through the La Crosse County Health Department. Call 785-9723.

SOURCE: La Crosse County Health Department, Public Health Nursing



MAKE YOUR OWN PAPER

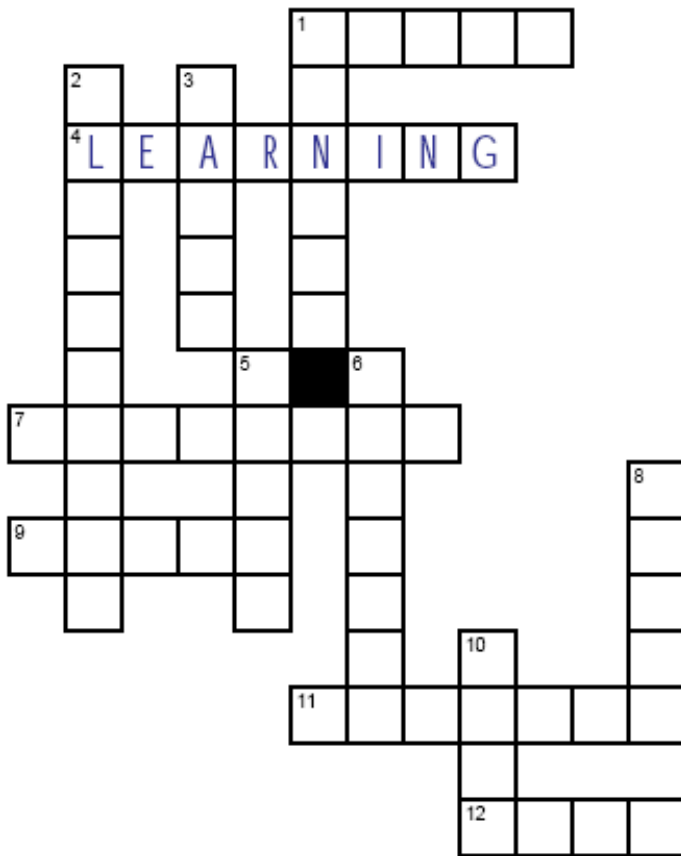
Materials needed:

Old paper, Blender, White glue, Water, Panty hose, Wire hanger, Sink, Food coloring (optional)

Instructions:

1. Create the drying screen by shaping the wire hanger into a square or rectangle. Stretch the panty hose over the wire being careful not to snag them.
2. Tear up your old paper into 2 inch or smaller squares (or shred in the paper shredder).
3. Place paper in the blender and cover with water. Allow it to sit and soak up some of the water. Add more water to keep the water level about an inch above the top of the paper. Run the blender on low speed. Once you have grey liquid, blend a few more minutes. When you are finished, the original paper should be completely broken down.
4. If you want colored paper, add a few drops of food coloring and blend until the color is distributed evenly. You can also get creative and add natural elements such as sticks, shells, or flowers.
5. Fill the sink with 4 inches of water. Add 2 tablespoons of glue to the water. Dump the contents of your blender into the sink full of glue water. Use your hands to mix it up. Make sure it is mixed well.
6. Place your screen at the bottom of the sink. Wait a few seconds and then very slowly begin lifting the screen. You should lift as slowly as possible, taking at least 30 seconds to lift it from the water.
7. Take your screen outside and dry it in the sun. It should be completely dry before you try to remove the paper. Very gently pull the paper off. To speed dry your homemade paper, you can try putting it in the oven on a very low setting. You may also want to iron your new paper to remove any wrinkles.

BACK TO SCHOOL CROSSWORD



Across

1. Write or draw on this
4. What school is all about!
7. It has a keyboard and screen
9. Please _____ your name on your work
11. You play with your _____ at recess
12. The teacher sits here

Down

1. Do you need to sharpen yours?
2. You write on this with chalk
3. Use brushes and paper to make pictures
5. Draw straight lines with this
6. She helps you to learn new things
8. Read these at school and home
10. You _____ a book.

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 5:30pm to 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 your ideas, comments, or suggestions 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



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 I-800-947-8074 .