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CARING FOR THE FACES & SPACES OF CLARK COUNTY

**September
2010**

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**Young Families
Newsletter**

A free newsletter edited by Julie Simek-Heggebo, Family Living Agent Clark County UW-Extension

Dear Young Family,

The more we learn about breakfast, the more we realize it is probably the most important meal of the day. Starting your day with a healthy meal increases your ability to learn and concentrate. Eating breakfast helps increase your child's ability to learn, improves behavior, improves the quality of a child's diet and may decrease the risk of being overweight in children and adults.

Despite the proven benefits, many school age children don't eat breakfast on a consistent basis. Lack of time, crazy morning schedules and lack of economic resources or limited access to healthy and nutritious foods are contributing factors to low breakfast consumption for many children and adults in Wisconsin.

The number of children eating breakfast has been declining overtime. One option to ensure that your child has a nutritious breakfast is the school breakfast program.

Any child is able to purchase breakfast if it is available in their school regardless of income. The school breakfast program is similar to the school lunch program. Both programs offer a free or reduced price. Depending upon if the student's breakfast or lunch is reduced or free, the USDA pays the school back for some of the meal cost.

For more information contact your local UW-Extension office or visit the Department of Public Instruction School Breakfast website at <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/fns/sbp1.html>. To sign-up for the school free and reduced breakfast and lunch program, contact your child's school office. They will help you in determining if you qualify for free or reduced breakfast and lunch.

Sincerely,

Julie Simek-Heggebo
Family Living Agent



P.S. The Young Families Newsletter is now available on the web at www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/clark. Check this web site to view parenting resources and support services for Clark County families.



PARENT SELF-CARE

As a parent of a preschooler, you have stress: lack of time, lack of money, lack of sleep, too much to do. Parenting stress is directly related to high workload, low social support, fussy-difficult child, negative life events, and child caretaking hassles. Even daily hassles such as losing your keys or a child's illness add to stress to make life feel overwhelming.

Parenting stress is linked to preschoolers' social competence and behavior problems. Children of over-stressed parents have less favorable outcomes. For example, stressed parents are more likely to miss a child's doctor appointment, be unaware of their child's immunization schedule, or not have the poison control center phone number handy.

To buffer parenting stress, take care of yourself. Being constantly stressed out is not healthy. When you don't take care of yourself, you are more likely to get sick and to be in accidents. If you are ill or injured, it's more difficult to parent your preschooler. When you are tired and stressed, it's harder to think and act quickly and creatively. You are more likely to react to situations without thought. Parenting positively requires conscious thinking, energy and vision, all of which are hard to do if you are barely keeping your head above the stress.

It's vital to manage stress levels before anger or fatigue gets the best of you. Sometimes the onset of anxiety or a sudden drop in mood can be traced to your having forgotten to eat. Other times, you might be holding resentment or feeling lonely, or you are just plain tired. When you have these feelings, it's hard to be the parent you want to be.



Four sure signs you need a break.

- When you are **hungry** and **angry**, you are likely to give orders and be “short” with your preschooler.
- When you are **lonely** or **tired**, you are likely to give in to your child.

Post the letters H A L T where you can see them. Use it as a reminder to take care of yourself.

Practice Self-Care

Carve out personal time, cut back on the load of responsibilities and incorporate activities that bring passion and happiness into your life.

Self-care is not just going to the spa or working out. Think about what makes you happy and incorporate that passion into your life. Each person is different. It could mean getting a part-time job cutting back hours at work or taking guitar lessons. Ask yourself what you want out of life, and don't go by what other people have to say or what you think what others will say about your decision. If you are fulfilled in your own life, it will make it easier for you to be a positive parent.

Parenting

the

Preschooler

<http://parenting.uwex.edu/parenting-thepreschooler/>



PARENT SELF-CARE

If you are cranky or grouchy, these emotions and actions spill over to your children. On the other hand, if you are content, positive and loving, then you will have an upbeat mood that affects everyone in the home. You set the tone for how your family works.

Being connected to others who can support you in your parenting is vital. Find other with similar values where you can feel supported. Today's busy lives make this a challenge, but connecting to others can really help you care for yourself. Take advantage of organized parent programs in your community and also make informal connections with others where you live and work.

Four Dimension of Self-Care

When you find yourself "running on empty" take time out for self-care. Self-care involves four dimensions: intellectual, spiritual, emotional/social, and physical needs. The intellectual dimension is defined as the need to expand one's mind. Spirituality includes uplifting or inspirational aspects of life including those that relate to your core value system. The emotional/social aspect involves learning about oneself, especially through relating to others. The physical dimension is concerned with taking care of one's body. It's essential to renew yourself in these four realms. Parents listed the following ideas for each dimension. Think about yourself. What can you do to renew yourself in each dimension? When did you last do something in each category to meet your needs?

Intellectual needs:

- go to the library
- take a class or workshop
- watch documentary/informative program
- listen to a radio program
- talk with other people about ideas
- read
- think

Spiritual needs:

- participate in organized faith community
- visit a natural area of beauty
- attend a performing arts event or museum
- meditate
- take a bath while listening to music
- volunteer
- watch a sunrise or sunset

Emotional/Social needs:

- talk with old and new friends
- spend time alone
- avoid activities you think are a waste of time
- take time with your spouse/partner
- join a parent group
- use friend as a "sounding board" to cope
- do journaling

Physical needs:

- take a walk
- exercise
- eat right
- get enough sleep and/or take "power naps"
- walk or bike to work
- incorporate exercise into family activities
- do stretching exercises or yoga

Write down your goals for self-renewal and personal growth in each of the four dimensions. Remember time spent taking care of yourself is not selfish. Taking care of yourself, helps you be a better parent.

References:

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Scott, E. (2007). How to combat parenting stress. Retrieved from <http://stress.about.com/od/stressmanagementtools/a/parentcare.htm>

For more information on Parenting and Child Development, contact: Joan E. LeFebvre, Area Family Living Agent, University of Wisconsin-Extension, 330 Court Street, Courthouse, Eagle River WI 54521-8362, 715-479-3653, FAX 715-479-3605, E-Mail joan.lefebvre@ces.uwex.edu

September 2010



FAMILY TIME WORK TIME — A BALANCING ACT

Why We Need Nature

Spending time with nature can have a positive effect on your life. It can be healing during times of stress for both adults and children.



Examples of ways you and your family can enjoy nature are listed below:

- After a hectic day take time to sit outside and look at the stars in the evening. If you have fireflies in your area spend time watching and being enchanted by their flickering lights.
- Go for a walk in the woods. Just being in the shade of trees can be relaxing.
- Sit and watch butterflies flutter around the flowers in your garden. If you sit still for a while you may even see a hummingbird.
- Watching fish in a fish bowl or aquarium is another way to relax.
- Spending time watching the flames in a campfire or fire in a fireplace can be soothing. Make sure your child is closely supervised around fire.
- Take your child to the zoo to look at the animals.
- Go to local parks. Enjoy what's available to do and see.
- Playing with pets can be fun and relaxing.
- Just being by rivers, lakes, streams, and at the sea shore can be a tranquil experience. Children gain from peaceful times playing in the sand and exploring beaches with you. As always, children need to have an adult close by when they are near any source of water.

Support Your Child Care Provider

The person who cares for your child while you are at work is important to both you and your child. Are you aware that child care providers are required to earn training hours every year? This is true for both center and home-based providers. Providers learn more about child

development and children so they can become even better caregivers. Many also go beyond the minimum requirements and work on an early childhood degree or their CDA — Child Development Associate Credential. This takes many hours of study beyond the time they spend

caring for your child. Recognize this by letting them know you value and support their efforts. A note or thank you card and even a drawing from your child can let your child's caregiver know you appreciate all she does.

Fitness Counts



There are many concerns these days about children spending too much time sitting in

front of the television or computer and not getting enough exercise. With rates of childhood obesity

rising in our country, parents need to make sure their children are getting enough active times every day. Set limits for time at the computer or in front of the television. Become a fit family. Take walks and ride bikes together. Encourage your child to play outdoors as often as possible. You can play some sports together such as playing ball or swimming. You can play tennis or basketball with older children. Do

jobs around the house together. Your child can help put groceries away, dust the furniture, and put laundry away.

Fitness counts. Your whole family will be healthier by being physically active and can have fun while doing things together.



FAMILY TIME WORK TIME — A BALANCING ACT

Afterschool Programs for Children and Youth Make a Difference

Good after-school programs benefit children from ages five to eighteen. Studies show that youth who participate in these programs improve their attitudes and feelings towards school. They have more positive social behaviors, aggressive and other negative behaviors are reduced, and there is less drug use. There is also an increase in school and achievement test scores.

Positive outcomes for children and youth in afterschool programs are best when there is:

- Accessibility to the program and regular participation of the child

- Quality programming
- Appropriate supervision
- Structured activities and intentional programming
- Well-trained staff
- Parent involvement
- Collaboration with school and community organizations

More information about quality in afterschool programs is available at www.psaydn.org, Pennsylvania's Statewide Afterschool/youth Development Network (PSAYDN).

School Bus Safety

Here are some safety tips for children riding school buses and walking to and from their school bus:

- Stay out of the street while waiting for the bus.
- Allow enough time to walk to the bus stop.
- Wear bright clothing to be seen.
- Remain seated at all times while the bus is moving. Keep aisles

clear. Put school bags under the seat.

- Do not shout, yell, or sing. It distracts the driver.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before exiting.
- Avoid the DANGER ZONE. Walk ten giant steps in front of the bus so the driver can see you clearly. Never try to retrieve anything that falls under the bus.
- Wait for the driver's signal before

crossing in front of the bus.

- Be sure to look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT to see that all cars have stopped.



Contact the PA Traffic Injury Prevention Project for more information about children's safety issues at 1-800-CAR-BELT or their website at www.pakidstravelsafe.com/

Homework Before Kindergarten



Do you have a child going to kindergarten this year? You want your child to get off to a good start. Here is some

homework for you to do to find out if your child is really ready for school. Some things to look for are listed below:

- To do well in school children need to be able to take turns and share with others.
- Can your child sit still and pay attention for things like reading

a story or playing a game?

- Being able to problem solve is an important skill for all children to have. This means being able to solve a conflict by talking about it instead of using aggressive actions.
- Children need to be able to follow directions.
- Does your child work well with others? Your child should also be able to work alone on a project and complete it.
- Good listening skills are important.
- Is your child able to communicate

well with others?

- Can your child dress herself? How about using the bathroom and washing her hands by herself?

These social and self-control skills are important. Take some time to see if your child can do these things. Practice those that your child needs to work on. You may notice that academics skills such as ABCs and counting are not listed. They are important and your child may know them now or will learn them soon, but the ones listed above are equally important. They will help your child do well in school and in life.



LEAD

Lead is a metal that was used in paint, gasoline, pipes, and other products before to 1978. Even though these products are no longer used today, lead may still be in and around your home. Homes built prior to 1978 may contain lead paint that could put children at risk for lead poisoning. Lead can also be found in old furniture or toys, food and liquids stored in lead crystal, lead-glazed pottery, or porcelain. Hobbies such as working with ceramics, stained glass, making pottery, or refinishing furniture can also increase the risk of lead exposure. Adults who work with lead can bring lead home on their clothes and shoes. Lead can be found in drinking water because some plumbing may have lead or lead solder. Soil can contain lead if it has been contaminated with lead paint or leaded gas.



Lead enters the body through breathing in dust that contains lead, eating lead paint chips, eating contaminated soil, or most commonly putting hands or toys that have lead dust on them into the mouth. Children are at a greater risk for lead poisoning because they are more likely to eat dirt or paint chips. They also crawl and play on the floor where they may get lead dust onto their hands or toys which they then put into their mouths. Children also absorb lead more readily into their bodies.

Growing children have nervous systems and brains which are more susceptible to the damaging effects of lead. A child who is lead poisoned may have damage to the brain and nervous system, learning difficulties, hyperactivity, behavioral problems, slowed growth, hearing problems, and headaches. It is recommended for children to have their blood tested for lead at the ages of 1 and 2. If the child has high levels of lead it is also recommended for those living in the home to be tested as well. Adults who are affected can have reproductive problems, nerve disorders, high blood pressure, memory problems, and joint and muscle pain.

If you are living in a home built prior to 1978 it is very important you know about the risks of lead poisoning. To reduce the risk of lead poisoning make sure to wash your children's hands frequently and always wash their hands before eating to reduce the risk of lead dust entering their body. If you are concerned your home may have lead in it and you are pregnant or have children 6 years old or younger the Clark County Public Health Department offers free home lead testing. If your home has high levels of lead and you are planning to renovate or remodel the Clark County Public Health Department can also assist you in finding a contractor who is Lead-Safe Certified. For more information and to set up an appointment to have your home tested for lead, please call the Clark County Health Department at (715)743-5105.

COATS FOR KIDS PROJECT

Do you have any coats or winter clothing (hats, gloves, snow pants, etc.) that you no longer use? We want them for those that might do without in the Loyal community.

- Coats of ALL SIZES are needed — infant to adult
- Only new or in good condition / clean used items

We will distribute coats and winter outerwear to any member of the community in need on:

Saturday, October 30
Neillsville American Legion Post 73
10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 6
Loyal High School Gym
10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

If you have any questions/concerns contact:
Nancy Olson 715-613-9533,
Amanda Hensiak 715-937-4354, or Erin Gurney 715-937-4330.



Thank you for your contribution to this cause.



UPCOMING EVENTS

BECOMING A LOVE AND LOGIC PARENT

Put the fun back in parenting!

This four-week course help parent s and children establish a rewarding relationship built upon love and trust. Topics include:

- Responsibility
- Control
- Ownership
- Setting limits
- Empathy
- Consequences



The material covered is appropriate for parents, grandparents and care providers of children age birth to 18 years.

Plan on attending all four sessions.

The Clark County UW-Extension and Clark County Family Resource Center will be offering two classes.

Wednesday Evenings:

- October 6, 13, 27 & November 3rd at the Tiny Tigers Intergeneration Center in Marshfield from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
- November 10, 17 and December 1 & 8 at the Neillsville Public School from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

For more information or registration information contact the Clark County UW-Extension office at 715-743-5121.

NEILLSVILLE NURSERY SCHOOL “KIDS IN MOTION”

Starts Fall 2010

Monday and/or Wednesdays

Curriculum focuses on health and wellness! Children will cook healthy foods and learn kid friendly exercises and aerobics.

8:15 a.m.—3:15 p.m.
(early drop off available)

Fee: Full day \$25.00 / Half day \$15.00 (lunch provided)

Program is for children ages 3-5 who are toilet trained.

Call the Neillsville Nursery School to register at 743-4490. Located at 413 Court St, Neillsville WI 54456.



Sponsored by:
Neillsville Nursery School,
UW-Extension and Clark
County Family Resource Center

(The board of directors reserves the right to adjust the preschool schedule depending upon enrollment)

SEPTEMBER WIC SCHEDULE

- Sept. 1 Neillsville Clinic 9-4
- Sept. 7 Neillsville Clinic & check pick-up 9-4
- Sept. 8 Abbotsford Clinic & check pick-up 9-4
- Sept. 13 Owen Clinic & check pick-up 9-4
- Sept. 14 Abbotsford Clinic 9-4
- Sept. 15 Neillsville Clinic & Late check pick-up 9-4
- Sept. 16 Thorp Clinic & Check pick-up 9-4
- Sept. 22 Abbotsford Clinic & Late check pick-up 9-4
- Sept. 24 Owen Clinic & Late check pick-up 9-12



VEGETABLE AND HERB OF THE MONTH

Tomatoes

Tomatoes are one of the most popular summertime vegetables in home gardens, with hundreds of cultivated varieties including heirlooms that have been grown for generations.

Tomatoes can be classified by type: cherry, grape, beefsteak, plum (paste), slicing, and pear tomatoes, based on their size, shape, and color.



To grow your own, plant transplants 2-3 weeks after the average date of last frost and keep well watered. Pick individual fruits when they are firm (not hard or squishy) and appropriately colored for the variety. Several diseases affect tomatoes.

When purchasing tomatoes, look for those that are well-formed, smooth, and free from blemishes. Heirloom and beefsteak tomatoes will likely be more irregular in shape and color than other varieties.

Tomatoes are a good source of vitamin C, fiber and potassium.

Cilantro

Cilantro is used in a great many different dishes, particularly Mexican and Asian dishes, but despite the growing popularity for this dish in cooking, you do not see cilantro growing in the home garden as much as you do other popular herbs. This may be due to the fact that many people think that growing cilantro is difficult. This is not the case at all. If you follow these few tips for growing cilantro, you will find that you will be successfully growing cilantro in no time at all.

Spanish Pasta Salad

Ingredients:

- 4 cups cooked colorful macaroni
- 1 1/2 cups salsa, separated
- 1 cup chopped red onion
- 2 cups tomato
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1 cup cooked black or red beans
- 1 cup cooked corn
- 1 Tbsp cilantro

Directions:

In a bowl, mix macaroni and 1/2 cup salsa. Cool in refrigerator for 30 minutes, then add rest of ingredients. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.



SEPTEMBER SNACK & ACTIVITIES

What's With Fall?

For those of us who live in this part of the world, the fall season brings many changes. It's a great time of year to help children observe what is going on in the outside world. It is a season of changes. The weather becomes cooler.

Days become shorter. We need to wear warmer clothing. Things in nature make major changes. Fruits and vegetables in the garden are ripe and ready to eat. Animals prepare for winter. We get ready for some fall celebrations. For some people it's Halloween and Thanksgiving. Others have fall religious holidays to celebrate.



changes in nature with plants, animals, and the weather.

There are many interesting things you can do with the children this time of year, many of which can be done outdoors. They can learn about the



Pumpkin Bars

1 cup shortening
1 2/3 cup sugar
4 eggs
2 cups cooked, mashed pumpkin
2 cups flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
2 tsp. cinnamon

Seasonal Learning Tree

Bring a large tree branch inside and place it in a stone-filled container to keep it upright and in place. You can use it throughout the year to hang things related to each season.

Some examples of ways to use your "learning tree":

- Hang colored leaves the children collect in the fall. They can also cut leaves out of colored paper to hang on your "tree."
- Have the children hang acorns and pinecones they collect on nature walks.
- Put some stuffed animals, such as squirrels, cats, and others that can climb on the branch as a nature lesson.
- Place pictures or drawings of birds we see in winter on the tree branch.
- Make paper snowflakes to hang in winter.
- As a science lesson, have the children look closely at the branch to see the tiny buds called winter buds that are formed. These stay on trees all winter to become new leaves next spring.
- Make some green leaves and leaf buds when spring arrives.
- There are many ways to make paper fruit blossoms for the tree. Place pictures of birds, some bird nests, and insects on the branch. Be sure to include some butterflies. The children can use all kinds of paper and even some play dough to create things that can be found on trees in spring and summer.

Cream shortening and sugar in bowl until light and fluffy. Add eggs and pumpkin. Mix well. Add flour mixture to the eggs and pumpkin. Mix well. Pour into a greased 8 x 12 inch baking pan. Bake at 350° for 20 to 25 minutes. Makes 24 bars.



IT'S SNACK TIME!

This month's snack highlights are great for both older kids and adults. We often go through the day "too busy" to eat, forgetting to do so (or even worse, get hungry later and eat candy or donuts). Snacking keeps our blood sugar more stable, which leads us to think more clearly, helps to chase away grumpiness and even helps us to get more done! These two snacks don't need refrigeration and are very portable. They're full of protein, vitamins and minerals to help keep you going! You can mix these snacks with a piece of fruit for extra nutrition.

GRANOLA BARS

- 3 C oatmeal (old fashioned)
- 1/2 C wheat flour
- 1/2 C chopped nuts, such as walnuts or pecans
- 1/2 C dried fruit
- 1/2 C peanut butter (or other nut butter)
- 1/2 C honey
- 3/4 C water

1. Preheat oven to 250°. Put oats, flour, nuts, and dried fruit into a large mixing bowl.
2. Mix honey and nut butter in a large cereal bowl; slowly stir in water until mixed well.
3. Pour liquid mixture into dry ingredients and stir until well coated. If not very sticky, add water 1/4 C at a time.
4. Spread on bar pan or cookie sheet
5. Bake for 25-30 min.

TRAIL MIX

Mix 3/4 C each of 5 or 6 of the following ingredients (some from each category) and store in a washed glass pasta sauce jar in your desk drawer or car. Each time you make a new batch, change up the ingredients to try new flavor combinations.

FRUIT: dried cranberries • dried blueberries • dried cherries • raisins • coconut flakes • dried mango

NUT/SEED: whole almonds • pecans • walnuts • peanuts • cashews • shelled sunflower seeds • chocolate covered peanuts • pumpkin seeds • chocolate covered raisins

GRAIN: cereal, such as *Kashi Crunch* or *Cherrios* • pretzel sticks • sesame sticks • animal crackers • small cheese crackers

SNACKING CAN BE GOOD FOR YOU

The word snack sometimes gets a bad rap. Snacks are often thought of as unhealthy eating. That's because people often associate snacks with junk food. Snacks can be healthy and children can benefit from them. Here are some ideas for healthy snacks:

- Fruit shakes can be made with low-fat milk and fresh fruit such as bananas, berries, or peaches.
- Yogurt sundaes are refreshing and healthy. Top some low-fat yogurt with fresh fruit.
- Freeze fruit juice for a cool summer treat.
- Keep a supply of fresh vegetables cleaned, cut up, and ready to eat in your refrigerator for last-minute snacking. If your child enjoys a dip with veggies, make one from either cottage cheese or yogurt mixed with dried ranch dressing.
- Celery spread with cream cheese or peanut butter is a favorite. It can be sprinkled with raisins or shredded carrots.
- Sliced apples or banana chunks make good snacks.
- Cheese cubes make a tasty snack.
- Avoid sugary drinks. The best drinks for children are water and low-fat milk.



Be creative and use healthy foods for your child's snacks. Many can be prepared ahead of time and kept in the fridge ready to eat.



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An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements.

If you need an interpreter, materials in alternate formats, or other accommodations to access any programs, activities, or services, please contact the program coordinator at 715-743-5121 as soon as possible (10 days is reasonable) preceding the scheduled event so that proper arrangements can be made in a timely fashion. YF

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

If you have access to the World Wide Web and like using computers, we invite you to download/ read "Young Families" Newsletter online at <http://clark.uwex.edu/>, click on Family Living and then scroll down to Parenting. This would help us decrease our ever-expanding printing costs.

If you decide to access you newsletter via the web please e-mail us (theresa.hediger@co.clark.wi.us) so we can remove your name from our snail mail list. Also, if the "Young Families" newsletter does not meet your informational needs and you no longer want to receive this newsletter please contact Theresa at the above address or by email.

We appreciate you help!

Julie Simek-Heggebo, Clark County Family Living Agent
julie.simek@ces.uwex.edu

Office hours Monday — Friday
8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.