

TOGETHER WE CAN FAMILY NETWORK

416 BOSTON POST RD E, UNIT 8, MARLBOROUGH, MA 01752

SPRING 2011 Newsletter

Serving the towns of Berlin, Boylston, Hudson, Leicester, Marlborough, Northborough, Shrewsbury, Southborough, and Westborough.

Snow Much Fun!



Spring officially begins on Sunday, March 20th! Just one month away! However, if you look out your window, you're probably still surrounded by 2-3 feet of snow and snow mounds at even higher heights. Well don't just sit there! If the kids are bouncing off the walls, bundle them up and get out of the house. Instead of watching yet another movie, keep physically active in the remaining weeks of winter by utilizing the snow. Cozy up to these snow activities:

- Snow Art-Fill spray bottles with water and food coloring and decorate your front yard.
- Snow Fort Building-Use various sizes of buckets to stack up blocks of snow or just have fun digging in the snow with summer sand shovels.
- Snowball Toss-Set up a hula hoop at an appropriate distance from your child. Have your child toss snowballs into the circle and count how many times he/she gets it in.
- Animal Tracks-Walk along the edge of your property or around a local park and search for animal tracks in the snow. Go online and print photos of local animal tracks and check them off as you find them.
- Treasure Hunt-Half bury a carrot or bright ball in the snow. Give your children hot or cold clues as they search for the item.
- Make a Bird Feeder-Using a pine cone, peanut butter or shortening, and bird seed or cheerios. Hang on a tree branch or just outside your window to view the different birds that snack on the treat.
- Make a Snow Mini-Golf Course-Set plastic cups down into the snow's surface. Have the children tap snowballs into the cups. Go for the hole-in-one!
- Follow the Leader-Have your children follow behind you in your footprints and then for a change, jump with two feet or another unique movement.
- Pin the Nose/Buttons on the Snowperson-After you build a smaller version of your most fabulous snowperson, play a game to add the nose or body buttons.

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Older Children might enjoy these activities I found at www.tlc.howstuffworks.com:

- Make Your Own Icicles
- Find Out How the Snow Can Actually Keep You Warm
- Learn How to Make Snow Ice Cream
- Or How to Examine Snowflakes

Continued on next page...



The Together We Can Family Network provides FREE family education and support to all families with children age pre-birth through 8 years. This program is administered by the YMCA of Central Massachusetts-Boroughs Family branch with funding from the Department of Early Education and Care.

Snow Much Fun Continued...

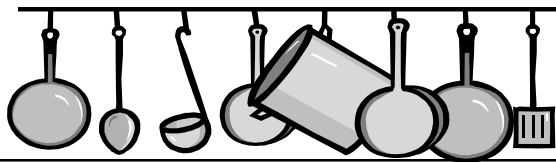
If you have really young children at home and do not want to venture outside, then bring the snow inside. Fill the tub or fill a basin for your child to manipulate the snow in their high chair or on the kitchen floor. Let them explore the snow with cups, wooden spoons, spatulas, etc.

On our twcfn.org website you will find indoor activities to do with your children should the temperature drastically fall, especially how to make a paper snowflake. We will continue to update these activities if you happen to miss a week of programming or just need another idea to keep your children busy. Also, keep in mind the drop-in playtimes and special events that happen here at our family center when you need to get out of the house.

As we transition into the longer days and warmer temperatures that April will bring, think about attending the Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children Workshop as described in the parenting workshop section of this newsletter. This is a special presentation made possible through the MassWildlife Education Program. All parents are welcome to attend.

I will keep all of you posted of my upcoming 5K runs as another opportunity to get outside and cheer me on! I really need help in reducing my personal run times!

Enjoy the rest of winter! May your spring be beautiful and peaceful! May you find ways to keep active and play with your children! And then read to them before they go to sleep! Warmly, Cindi.



Yummy and Easy Dinner

Sweet and Sour Kielbasa Over Rice:

Ingredients: Kielbasa, French Dressing, Instant Rice.

Slice kielbasa into thin circles. Add to crock pot on high temperature. Add one small bottle of French Salad Dressing to the pot. Stir to cover the meat. Let simmer for at least three hours. Liquid may separate, but will return to regular consistency once mixed. Cook instant rice and pour kielbasa and sauce over the rice.

WISH LIST

This is just one way parents can participate in our family network or a way to show their appreciation of our FREE programs and services.

- Tissues, toilet paper, or paper towels
- Trash Bags (13 or 30 gallon)
- Disinfectant wipes
- Various back-up snacks (Goldfish, Animal Crackers, Nilla Wafers, Cheez-its)
- Children's music CDs
- Parent or Child Development DVDs (Breast Feeding, Potty Learning, or Discipline)

Cindi and Tina would like to extend their deepest gratitude to those families who donated items or personal time to the Family Network. Here are their names for winter session: Sastry Family, Dailey Family, Fraser Family, Noonan Family, Weatherall Family, Donahue Family, Eiben Family, Ibaraki Family, and the Nagera-Salguero Family. Thank you so much!

Play Space Hours

The current drop-in hours for the play space for newborns—kindergarteners are:

Tuesdays 2:30 PM-4:30 PM

Thursdays 2:30 PM-4:30 PM



Please note that the play space is limited to 12-15 children at a time, depending on ages. A sign will be posted on the front door if open play is at full capacity. There are no structured activities or a facilitator during drop-in.

The family center will be closed on April 18th through April 22nd. Cleaning Week is February 28th -March 4th. Please let Cindi know if you can assist in this process. Free coffee for all helpers!

Parent Planning Meeting

Our first meeting was held in February. Parents discussed their hopes and wishes for the family center heading into spring sessions. Many of these requests have been added to the programming of playgroups, parent workshops, and springtime events. If you'd like to participate in our next meeting, it will be held on Friday, April 1st, 1-2pm. Raffles for attendees and entertainment for the children! Please call Cindi to R.S.V.P. with your interest. Limited child care will be available, please call to reserve space. Thank you in advance!

Parent Resource Library

Scholastic is Fantastic!

By participating in the Scholastic Book Clubs online we have earned so many new books and toys for our family center! Every time parents order children's books online, our family center earns \$3 in books. It makes a huge impact on our whole center and to families enjoying the new books! Most recently we were able to order the following items:

- Valentine's Manipulative Game
- Dental Pack
- Happy Valentine's Day Mouse by Laura Numeroff
- Going to the Dentist by Usborne Books
- Little Critter Visits the Dentist
- Dinosaur Opposites Board Book
- Open Wide



Ordering online is fast, easy, and 100% secure. You can use your credit or debit card to pay. Just register at www.scholastic.com/bookclubs. During your first visit you will need to use our Class Activation Code, DVQVW. Then, just browse the catalogs and choose what is best for you child. Orders are usually placed during the third week of the month and are delivered within a week. Cindi calls all families as soon as the book orders are ready.

Thanks so much to all of the families that have already placed orders through our class activation code. Order forms and the class code are both situated under the Family Center's world map. Please help yourself during your next visit. Keep on reading for life! Cindi

Playgroups and Parent/Child Activities

Title and Description	Days/Times
Music Playgroup: (18 months +) Explore and learn the foundations of music (rhythm, dynamics, tempo, etc.) and the different genres of music by playing instruments, listening activities, motor play and singing.	Mondays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
Indian Culture Playgroup (All Ages): Indian families have many languages, traditions, celebrations, and cultural expectations with similarities and differences. Let's connect to share your experiences and how you blend Indian with American culture.	Mondays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM (Facilitator Needed)
Preschool Playgroup (2.9 years through 6 years old): Focuses on the abilities/needs of this age group with young siblings welcome.	Mondays 1:45 PM–3:00 PM
Science Playgroup (18 months +): Basic science concepts will be introduced to the young scientists with fun activities, experiments, and related children's literature.	Tuesdays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
All Ages Playgroup: All ages are welcome, birth through 6 years old.	Tuesdays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Spanish Playgroup: All ages are welcome to this new playgroup for Spanish-speaking families.	Tuesdays 1:00 PM–2:15 PM
Community Playgroup (18months—3 years): This group will be facilitated by an Early Intervention Specialist, allowing children the opportunity to participate in developmentally appropriate activities supporting growth in the areas of language, cognition, play, social/emotional, and motor skills. Parents have the benefit of meeting other adults and furthering their knowledge of child development through the expertise of the facilitator.	Wednesdays 9:30 AM–11:30 AM
Grandbuddies Read to Me: (2.5 years +) With the residents of the Marlborough Hills Health Care Center, located at 121 Northboro Road E, children will share snack, listen to stories, and dance to some fun tunes provided by Merry Go Music and Miss Carrie.	Wednesdays 10:00 AM–11:00 AM Marlborough Hills
Lunch Bunch: Your child brings a bagged lunch to enjoy with friends and a facilitator as you chat and eat with other parents in a separate space.	Wednesdays 12:00 PM–1:00 PM
Art Adventures (3 years +): Explore art and literature through hands-on activities. Younger and older siblings are welcome to attend as well.	Wednesdays 1:15 PM–2:30 PM
Toddlers Playgroup (15 months—2.6 years): Age-appropriate activities provided for this unique age group.	Thursdays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
Around the Town Adventure Trips (3 years +, no strollers for siblings): Educational Tour of the Marlborough Post Office at 20 Florence Street on April 13, 11:30 AM-noon. This can be combined with any other playgroup registration. More to come for spring session II!	Thursdays Time Varies Once a Month
Dance Group (18 months +): Introduce your child to the joy of movement and self-expression. Tots will learn dance steps and songs, as well as, develop coordination, flexibility, balance and focus.	Thursdays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Animals 'R Us (All Ages): Each week will focus on a different cuddly creature with age-appropriate activities. Share the joy of your child's passion through this exciting playgroup!	Fridays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
All Ages II Playgroup: All ages are welcome, birth through 6 years old. PCHP families are given priority in this group!	Fridays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM

About Playgroups

Each of these literacy playgroups will focus on a particular subject every week through books, songs, art, and movement. There will be time for snack, socialization, and networking. Remember to bring a beverage for your child as we are not able to provide drinks. During the first week feel free to sign up for snack duty where you simply provide a yummy treat for your group. The Family Center provides snack for the first week of groups. As always, younger or older siblings are welcome at specific aged groups.

Parent Workshops

See following page for descriptions

All YMCA workshops are held at 4 Valente Dr., Westboro, off Rt. 20 across the street from the Christmas Tree Shop

Title and Facilitator	Dates/Times	Location
Eating Healthy Without Hassle Heather Masera, Beginning Years Family Network Presenter and Busy Mom	Tues., March 8 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Effective Discipline Dr. Glenn Kessler , Psychological Associates	Tues., March 15 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Do I Have To?: How Chores Empower Families Susan Tordella, Author of Raising Able	Tues., March 22 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
What Makes Your Child Tick: Understanding How Sensory Input Impacts Your Child's Behavior Julie Brown Dalbec, Pediatric Occupational Therapist, Licensed Herbalist and Acupuncturist	Thurs., March 24 <u>6:00</u> -8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Toilet Learning Amy LeClaire, M.Ed	Tues., March 29 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children Pam Landry, MassWildlife Education Coordinator	Thurs., April 14 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Early Literacy Development Renee Thompson, Dir. of Positively Preschool in Westboro, Wheelock College Graduate, and Children's Literature Enthusiast	Tues., April 26 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro

Spring Fundraiser

This year TWC will be selling the Breathe New Hampshire 2011 Fun Pass. This children's coupon book contains incredible discounts on amusement parks, water parks, zoos, farms, museums and other New England family attractions for only \$30! There is over \$1,500 in savings! Many of the attractions included in The Fun Pass Book cannot be found in any other local paper or coupon book such as Davis Farmland or Story Land. Brochures will be distributed at each playgroup during the week of March 14th and we ask that you sell just one book per family. Checks can be made out to the YMCA and then we submit the order as an organization. In addition to helping the TWC Family Network purchase a new couch for our new space, we assist in the efforts of Breathe New Hampshire. Also, feel free to stop by the center to fill out a brochure if you are not attending any groups. More information on The Breathe New Hampshire Fun Pass can be found at www.breathenh.org. Thank you in advance for your support!

Health Policy

Please be mindful that if your child has cold or flu-like symptoms, they may be contagious. If you're not sure, feel free to call us and we'll help you sort out what would be best for all. Kindly respect the health of other children when deciding whether or not to have your children accompany you to the play space.

We require that your child be fever and diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours before returning to playgroup, attending an activity, or coming for child care.

Thanks for understanding!

Cancellations

We will close if the Marlborough Public Schools close or delay when the school system has a delay. If we are able, we will post information on our calendar regarding openings/closings. For all other emergency situations, parents will be contacted by the facilitator or director.



PARENT WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Eating Healthy Hassle Free

Does your child refuse to eat many nutritious foods? Come learn and share ways to make meal time healthier and happier. Based on the books “The Sneaky Chef” and “Deceptively Delicious”, you will leave with strategies and recipes to try at home.

Effective Discipline

This workshop will focus on setting limits around children’s behaviors along with the use of following through with consequences. Before the evening ends, everyone will walk away with ideas and practical suggestions for dealing with their child’s behaviors.

Do I Have To?: How Chores Empower Families

Parents of tots-to-teens will benefit from this workshop. It teaches how chores empower their children and make them confident young people. The best way to craft a positive parenting plan is by practice and patience.

What Makes Your Child Tick: Understanding How Sensory Input Impacts Your Child's Behavior

This workshop addresses children that find themselves having a difficult time paying attention in the classroom; are oversensitive to odors, textures or criticism; may have difficulty integrating the basic five senses and the three complex systems. Come learn about Sensory Processing and experience first hand how your body and your children's bodies interpret the world around them!

Toilet Learning

Discussion on children's readiness for toilet learning with strategies for helping them.

Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children

Parents will be introduced to the wonder of nature from a child’s viewpoint and learn how to explore wildlife and the world around them. This workshop will provide a foundation for developing positive impressions about nature while also building lifelong social and cognitive skills through a wide range of activities and experiences (crafts, art projects, music and much more).

Early Literacy Development

In this workshop Renee Thompson will discuss the importance of literacy development from infancy through kindergarten. Parents will learn early literacy skills that play a supportive role in language, cognitive and social-emotional development.

TWC FAMILY NETWORK SPRING 2011 REGISTRATION FORM

This registration form may be mailed to TWCFN at 416 Boston Post Rd. E, Unit 8, Marlborough, MA, 01752 OR dropped off at the same address by **Monday, February 28th, 5 PM**. The lottery will be held on **Tuesday, March 1st, 10AM**.

Lottery Instructions

Please **print clearly** and include all requested information. Registration for TWCFN programs will continue as a lottery registration policy. Any family who did not participate in a winter program will have first priority for a spring I parent/child playgroup and their registration lottery will be processed before our general lottery. All other families who participated in a winter program will be drawn at random during the general lottery. Families will be entered into one parent/child program or placed on a waitlist. You will receive a phone call only if your first choice is closed or you are on a waitlist. If you get your first choice, you will not get a phone call. Call Cindi if you need clarification on this process.

Parent's Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email: _____

Note: Email is for TWCFN use only and will not be shared. It will also help with reducing our mailing costs.

Children's name & dates of birth (those who will attend group): _____

CHECK ONE: Our family is new to Family Network Our family is not new, but we were not in a Winter program

Parent/Child Play Groups:

Families are welcome to register for only ONE 7-week session of a parent/child group. Please indicate all choices by priority (1,2,3) in case your first group is closed. **You will receive a phone call only if your first program choice is closed or you are placed on a wait list.** You will NOT receive a phone call if you are registered in your first program choice.

Session I—March 7-April 29

MONDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Music with Jenn
- ___ 10:45-12:00 Indian Culture
- ___ 1:45-3:00 Preschool-K

TUESDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Science
- ___ 10:45-12:00 All Ages
- ___ 1:00-2:15 Spanish Speaking

WEDNESDAY

- ___ 9:30-11:30 Community
- ___ 10:00-11:00 Grandbuddies at Marlborough Hills
- ___ 12:00-1:00 Lunch Bunch
- ___ 1:15-2:30 Art Adventures

THURSDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Toddlers
- ___ 10:45-12:00 Dance
- ___ Around the Town: Marlborough Post Office, April 13th, 11:30-12:00. It is OK to combine this with any of the other parent/child playgroups.

FRIDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Animals 'R Us
- ___ 10:45-12:00 All Ages II, PCHP Priority

There will be no playgroups April 18-April 22.

Free and Awesome Parent Workshops:

Families who register for a workshop will receive a phone call or e-mail (add yours above) before the workshop with a reminder about the date, time and topic of the workshop. If using childcare, please arrive 5-10 minutes before the workshop to drop children off in playroom. Thank you! Please check all you plan to attend (see descriptions of workshops on previous page):

I will attend on my own

I will attend with my significant other

___ Eating Healthy Hassle Free

___ Toilet Learning

___ Effective Discipline

___ Growing Up WILD

___ Do I Have To?

___ Early Literacy Development

___ What makes your child tick?

Yes, I need child care for my child(ren): ___(names)_____

No, I do not need child care: _____

Contact Us!
Together We Can Family Network
Cindi Arroyo, Director
774.463.0214 • carrroyo@ymcaofcm.org
www.twcfn.org



Are you currently researching where to send your child to pre-school or kindergarten this fall? Did you know that TWC has Informational Binders loaded with tons of resources? We have an Preschool Binder and a Kindergarten Binder listing hours, fees, ages and the application process for your convenience. Also, at our front door we provide for FREE the Scholastic Parent & Child Magazine. Take one home the next time you visit.

Business Address:
YMCA
766 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01610



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