

TOGETHER WE CAN FAMILY NETWORK

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

SPRING II 2011 Newsletter

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



Family Dinner, Family Time, Family Meeting

Whatever you decide to call it, you should be holding a family meeting at least once a week. After reading two “Covey” books and attending two parent workshops recently, it has come to my attention that, even with all of my training and current positive parenting practices, my family still does not hold family meetings. We do hold informal discussions in the car or chat during the commercials of “Idol”.

During these small bursts of time, we cover only minor details of the week to come. When is basketball practice? Where are the basketball games? When does momma work late? Or what do I want for my birthday? I now know through the readings and trainings that formalized family meetings can create a family that is more structured, efficient, and loving. What am I waiting for?!!!!!!

These are not excuses, but some reasons as to why forming a weekly family meeting is difficult for today’s families. If there are two working parents in the household, balancing work and family life is an ever-present challenge. We try our best to leave work at the office and vice-a-versa, however it is stressful to want to do our best in both areas without slacking in one of the areas. When I am home, I make my family the priority. Even during the work day, I give my family what they need first, even if this newsletter is a day late. Obviously, I understand this will not last long in some careers, but I will never get another chance at helping my child to develop into an intelligent, productive, and self-sufficient being. Ever!

Then, on top of raising children, parents must juggle the cooking, cleaning, sports/physical fitness, homework, yard work, and volunteer commitments. How on earth will you find time for a meeting at home? You just do. Pick a time when your whole family is usually together and make at least 20 minutes of it structured meeting time. This could happen during a dinner or while baking cookies or on a picnic in your child’s room!

Convincing family members that holding family meetings is important may be another challenge. If they do not know its purpose or direction, it will be hard to hold their attention. Have a plan of discussions and stick to it. Make it fun with games or role playing! Offer special treats at the end, like brownies!

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Family Meetings Continued...

Here is my plan for my first family meeting: start this Sunday, the 20 minutes right after dinner, begin with a game, review upcoming week, address our To-Do-List. The To-Do-List will consist of issues, concerns, and other “heads-up” topics that arise. I am sure these will prompt hearty discussions where together we can develop some creative resolutions and plans of attack. As the weeks progress, we will add minutes as discussions deepen. These are my opening discussion points; plan a short vacation, create a timeline for yard clean-up and planting seedlings, find new dinner ideas, and tell a favorite family story. Eventually, I’d like to work our way up towards creating monthly goals and individual vision boards (thesecret.tv).

Family meetings will provide structure, efficiency, and love to your already fabulous family. With structure, every member will know what to expect and transition easier. Planning ahead allows families to foresee road blocks, create alternative plans, and adjust smoothly over these bumps. Family meetings help us to see that by working together as a team, we can accomplish more tasks. We will have cleaner homes, clearer minds, and open hearts. Efficiency within our homes and families will create more bonding opportunities for parents and children. Through open discussions, understanding feelings, and acknowledging concerns, families will build trust, respect, and most of all, a stronger love for one another. Best wishes!


With Smiles, Cindi.



Easy Microwave Play Dough

Ingredients:
2 cups of flour, 2 cups of water, 1 cup of salt, 4tsp. of cream of tartar, 2 tbsp. oil, and a few drops of food coloring as desired.


1. Mix all ingredients in a bowl.
2. Microwave 3-5 minutes, stirring every minute, until you cannot stir anymore.
3. Cool 5 minutes and then knead until smooth.
4. Store in a zipper bag. Squeeze out excess air before closing.



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 spring session: Clemons Family, Uysal Family, Fraser Family, Lafavour Family, and Kuo 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.



We Need You! Here's How!



- Volunteers for cleaning weeks
- Event Planning Volunteers
- Packers and “Unpackers” (if we move to a new site in Marlboro)
- Donations of crafty materials, DVDs, or CD

It is with your enthusiasm and participation in our program that TWC succeeds! Your ideas and decisions make the family center a better place, a better community. We look forward to upcoming parent planning meetings, future fundraisers, and planning community events. Sign up sheets will be posted at the center and other announcements will be posted on our website. Thanks in advance for your assistance!

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:

- Spring Lacing Set
- Our Tree Named Steve
- Little Critter's Earth Day
- Up, Down, and Around

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

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
Hudson Library Playgroup: (2-4 years) Join us locally at this neighborhood library for our newest group! Just right for you and your young child!	Mondays 9:30 AM–10:30 AM
Second Time Mom, Baby, and Me: Jill Vetstein, LICSW, Developmental Specialist, and Infant Massage Instructor will lead this fun interactive class for your baby and older child. While older siblings are working on their own activity, moms and babies will focus on their specialized motor, cognitive, and social abilities. There will also be discussion topics about everything from child development to the joys and challenges of motherhood.	Mondays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Preschool Playgroup (2.9 years through 6 years old): Focuses on the abilities/needs of this age group with young siblings welcome.	Mondays 1:15 PM–2:45 PM
Just Messing Around (18 months +): Roll up your sleeves for this ooey-goey playgroup! Prepare to get slightly messy as you make your own bubbles, squish homemade goop, and dig in the dirt!	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
Art Adventures (3 years +): Explore art and literature through hands-on activities. Younger and older siblings are welcome to attend as well. Please dress appropriately.	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
Soccer Playgroup I(3 years +): Ghiloni Park, backyard of Rec. Center, next to skate park area. Parents need not participate, but must remain near practice site. Introduction to stretching, kicking, dribbling, passing, blocking, scoring, and a lot of running! Other fun activities mixed in at the end of each practice!	Wednesdays 11:00 AM–12:00 PM
Soccer Playgroup II(3 years +): Ghiloni Park, backyard of Rec. Center, next to skate park area. Parents need not participate, but must remain near practice site. Introduction to stretching, kicking, dribbling, passing, blocking, scoring, and a lot of running! Other fun activities mixed in at the end of each practice!	Wednesdays 1:30 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 Trip (3 years +, no strollers for siblings): Educational Tour of the Marlborough Savings Bank on Granger Boulevard with goodies and treats! Here, your family can begin a college savings plan and learn about money on May 11th at 3:45pm. Combine with any other playgroup registration.	Thursdays Time Varies Once a Month
On the Road to Reading: This group will follow the “Get Ready to Read” curriculum. Parents and children will review print knowledge, emergent writing, linguistic awareness, and many great books! 6-week program.	Thursday 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Careers ‘R Us (2.5-5): Each week will focus on a different career with visitors from our community! This group will be enhanced with age-appropriate activities. Siblings are welcome to attend.	Fridays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
Grandbuddies Read and Sing with 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 educational songs and music provided by a specialist from Apple Tree Arts.	Fridays 10:00 AM–11:00 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
Happy Trails Playgroup: (Walkers or backpack children welcome) This group will meet at a rotation of parks/trails, light rain or shine! On very wet days meet at Family Center. You will be mailed a list of sites after registration.	Fridays 1:00 PM–2:15 PM

On June 9th, 10:45 AM–12:00 PM, Mandy Roberge of Seedlings, will offer an introductory class on PARENT/CHILD YOGA. This group can be combined with any other playgroup above. For all ages!!!

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
Love and Limits: Positive Approaches to Discipline Series Introduction to Discipline: From the Parent to Child and Back Again (Sign up for one, two, three or all in this series!) Marilyn Buckler, Families First Facilitator	Tues., May 10 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Love and Limits: Positive Approaches to Discipline Series Things Kids Do that Drive Us Nuts: Understanding Motivation and Behavior, Marilyn Buckler, Families First Facilitator	Tues., May 17 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Love and Limits: Positive Approaches to Discipline Series Positive Approaches to Discipline: Expanding Your Repertoire Marilyn Buckler, Families First Facilitator	Tues., May 24 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Love and Limits: Positive Approaches to Discipline Series Setting Limits and Acknowledging Feelings: Practice Marilyn Buckler, Families First Facilitator	Tues., May 31 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Life Balance Michele Bredice Craemer, Speaker and Author from Power Pack Presentations	Thurs., May 19 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Understanding and Managing Your Child's Emotions Julie Casella, LMHC	Tues., May 31 6:30-8:00 PM	TWCFN Family Center
Transition to Kindergarten Marilyn Buckler, Families First Facilitator	Thurs., June 9 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro



Blooming Good Family Fun



On Wednesday, May 18th, 2pm—Springtime Musical Concert with Miss Carrie Rowan at the Marlborough Hills Health Center, located at 121 Northboro Road East. Registration Required in workshop listing. See our website for more family activities under the Fun Things To Do heading. Also, our webmaster has a blog of all of her recent trips with her children.

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!

Gentle Reminders

- Please supervise and attend to your children at all times.
- Refrain from using cell phones during playgroups.
- "Extreme" climbing and jumping off of the climber is dangerous.



PARENT WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Love and Limits: Positive Approaches to Discipline (4 part series)

Marilyn Buckler, Families First, Cambridge, MA

Parents learn positive and effective ways to help children learn self-control.

Session One (5/10)-Introduction to Discipline: From the Parent to Child and Back Again
This session helps parents define discipline and adapt approaches that match their child's temperament, developmental age, and specific situations.

Session Two (5/17)-Things Kids Do That Drive Us Nuts: Understanding Motivation and Behavior

This session explores why children engage in frustrating behaviors with specific strategies to help parents communicate with their children to change behavior.

Session Three (5/24)-Positive Approaches to Discipline: Expanding Your Repertoire

This session will focus on alternatives to yelling and punishing, and offer positive discipline strategies that parents can use in responding to children's teasing, hitting, whining, and other challenging behaviors.

Session Four (5/31)-Setting Limits and Acknowledge Feelings: Practice

This session helps parents acknowledge feelings while addressing problematic behavior. This allows parents to set clear limits and promote self-discipline in children.

Understanding and Managing Your Child's Emotions

Julie Casella, LMHC

Children's ability to manage their feelings is an important part of their development and can greatly impact behavior. Young children need help and practice managing their emotions. This workshop will focus on ways to help your child identify feelings and give you techniques to help your child manage the way they feel. Parents will leave with a list of children's literature as a resource to aid you and your child in the exploration of feelings.

Life Balance: "Working From The Center"

Michele Bredice Craemer, MS, Power Pack Presentations

What images does the word "balance" bring to mind? Come and learn how to create a strong, positive and productive image of balance. Through exploring the roles and responsibilities as moms and wives, participants will learn about the current balance in their lives. Then, strategies for balancing these roles through methods of stress management and time management will be discussed. The importance of building a strong foundation and finding strength from within will be emphasized.

Transition to Kindergarten

Marilyn Buckler, Families First

This workshop helps parents of upcoming kindergarteners understand and evaluate the changes in kindergarten of recent years and make decisions about their children's readiness for this big transition. Strategies for helping children (and adults) feel prepared for and successful at making the transition to kindergarten are also shared.

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, April 25th, 5 PM**. The lottery will be held on **Tuesday, April 26th, 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 Spring I 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. Visit our website after lottery as we will post remaining openings. Then, families can sign up for a second playgroup by calling the family center on a first come, first served basis.

Spring Session II—May 2 through June 17

MONDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Music with Jenn
- ___ 10:45-12:00 Second-Time Moms
- ___ 9:30-10:30 Hudson Library
- ___ 1:15-2:45 Preschool-K

TUESDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Messing Around
- ___ 10:45-12:00 All Ages
- ___ 1:00-2:15 Art Adventures

WEDNESDAY

- ___ 9:30-11:30 Community
- ___ 11:00-12:00 Soccer
- ___ 1:30-2:30 Soccer II

THURSDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Toddlers
- ___ 10:45-12:00 On the Road to Reading, ends one week earlier than all other programs.
- ___ June 9th, 10:45-12:00, Parent/Child Yoga with Amanda Roberge from Seedlings
- ___ Around the Town: Marlborough Savings Bank, May 11th, 3:45pm. OK to combine with any other playgroup.

FRIDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Careers 'R Us
- ___ 10:00-11:00 Grandbuddies at Marlborough Hills and Music with Apple Tree Arts
- ___ 10:45-12:00 All Ages II, PCHP Priority
- ___ 1:00-2:15 Happy Trails. This group will meet at Family Center on really wet days!

There will be no playgroups on May 31st.

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
- ___ Love & Limits: Introduction
 - ___ Love & Limits: Positive Approaches
 - ___ Life Balance
 - ___ Kindergarten Transition
 - ___ Love & Limits: Things Kids Do That Drive Us Crazy
 - ___ Love & Limits: Setting Limits
 - ___ Managing & Understanding Your Child's Emotions
 - ___ **Springtime Concert**

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

No, I do not need child care: _____

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Business Address:
YMCA
766 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01610
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Worcester, MA

About Playgroups

Each of the 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.



Session II playgroups run Monday, May 2nd through Friday, June 17th.

We will be closed on Monday, May 30th for Memorial Day. Heartfelt appreciation to all who serve our great country!



Contact Us!

Together We Can Family Network

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www.twcfn.org