

TOGETHER WE CAN FAMILY NETWORK

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

Winter 2010 Newsletter

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

Family Traditions for a Lifetime

Family traditions are the glue that binds one generation to another. They give kids and parents something to look forward to, as well as something to count on during the hectic holiday season...and throughout the year. Here is a collection of some favorite family traditions.

Holiday

Practice random acts of kindness. Each time a family member does a good deed, they tie a red, gold, or white ribbon on the tree. Each ornament means something, and the practice encourages giving, too.

Give all the kids new pajamas on Christmas Eve.

Make a family event out of choosing the Christmas tree. My husband has fond memories of that day...getting together with family and friends, finding the perfect Christmas tree, playing in the snow, and coming home to a feast.

Secret Santas. Play Secret Santa to another family or to each other. It's even more fun if the other party isn't in on the plan.

Keep a journal for your family from Thanksgiving to Christmas. Record thoughts, events, and memories. Young children can dictate stories and make collages, and they'll love writing their wish list in the journal. Then wrap it and share it on Christmas morning. Record thoughts, events, and memories. This journal is bound to be a keepsake, and you can use add to it next holiday season.

Celebrate New Year's Eve with the family. If your kids are too young to stay up until midnight, turn the clocks back and celebrate before their bedtime. Just before the hour, make some family resolutions.

Year Round

Special meal menus. We have prime rib on Christmas Eve. A fondue feast between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Chicken and dumplings on my husband's birthday. Food is a great way to mark an occasion...or create a brand new occasion.

Camping trips. Choose a special weekend of your own--it doesn't have to be the Fourth of July or Labor Day. Sleeping under the stars is a great way to regain perspective. We took our daughter on her first camping trip when she was 6 months old. She had the time of her life, and we have memories we'll never forget.

Day trips together. In our family, everyone goes skiing on New Years Day.

Nighttime walks. Songs and stories before bed.

Article from www.momscape.com

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.

My Family Traditions

The front page article really rang true for me. My family has countless traditions that probably go three or four generations deep. If you have read any of my blogs or have known me for a few years, I am sure you know that my mom died tragically seven years ago. It is so very important to me that my family does not forget her and for me to honor her at every holiday as she made every event so special. By following traditions, I remember my grandparents and keep my childhood memories alive.

For the last 10 years, we have gone to Russell's Nursery in Wayland to take family photos the day after Thanksgiving. These photos are included in our cards (that usually have a dove or angel to honor my mom). At our home we decorate the windows, outside bushes, and the tree with blue lights just like my pop-pop used to do. I also decorate my own wreath as my dad still does and his dad did every year. I bake my nonnie's biscotti and her risotto. For my brother who lives in Virginia, I send him the cookies our mom used to make every year, along with all of his other favorites: Mentos, Maypo, and ribbon candy.

Most recently, we instituted Christmas Eve at our house where we attend church and then enjoy Rachel Ray's Christmas Pasta with my dad and his better-half. This year, however, my aunt has asked that we have Christmas Eve at her house to return to a tradition lost when my mother passed; recreating the manger scene with all the children and adults. So, of course, I agreed. And, I am still bringing the "delish" pasta dish! Maybe, some tissues too! Since I met my husband, we have added an ornament to our family collection every year related to our personal tastes. Since we lost my mother, we try to find an angel or dove ornament as a gift to her. Find meaning in everything that you do for or with your family and you will understand that through love we all give and receive the best gift anyone could ever share!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all TWC families! Warmly, Cindi

Low-Fat Snack Ideas for Super Busy Moms



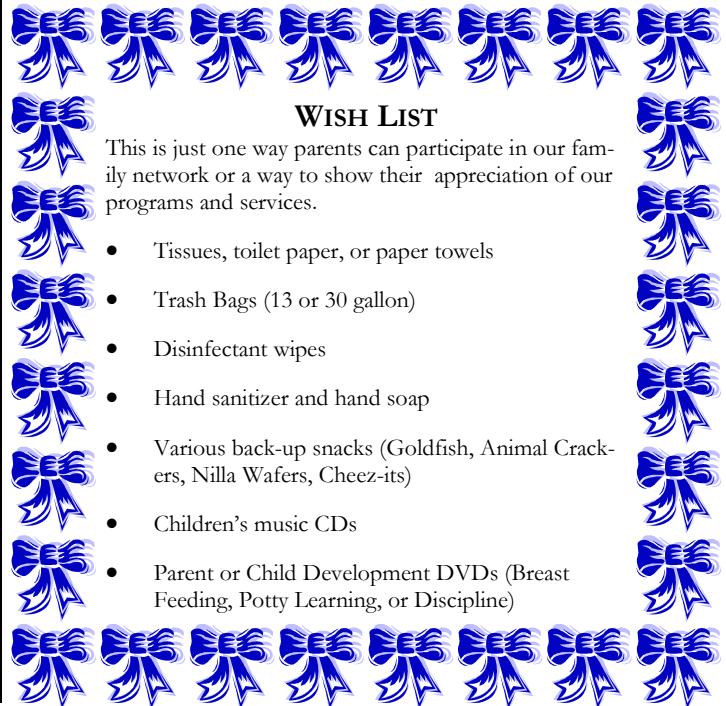
Under 4 years old:

- Fresh Fruit Pieces/Dried Fruit
- Dry Cereal/Cereal Bars
- Soy Crisps
- Smoothies
- Instant Oatmeal



4 years old and older:

- Edamame Snack Packs
- String Cheese
- Almond or Walnut Packs
- Microwave Popcorn



WISH LIST

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

- Tissues, toilet paper, or paper towels
- Trash Bags (13 or 30 gallon)
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer and hand soap
- 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 to the Family Network. Here are just a few of their names: Fraser Family, Crocker Family, Eiben Family, Barnum Family, Ott Family, Crozier Family, Lee Family and Cronin Family. Thank you all so much!

Play Space Hours

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

Tuesdays 2:15 PM-4:15 PM

Thursdays 3:00 PM-5:00 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.

January 3rd through January 7th we will be open for Drop-In Playtimes, 9am-noon. Also, February 31st through March 4th is the next registration week where we will hold only drop-in playtimes and spring cleaning.

Parent Planning Meeting

Another way to get involved with the Family Network is through the Parent Planning Meeting. This meeting will be on **Friday, February 4th, 1pm-2pm**. It will be held at the family center. Parents will discuss social and community events for the spring sessions, fundraising, workshop options and any other topics of interest.

Limited child care will be available, please call to register and reserve a space, 774-463-0214.

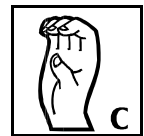
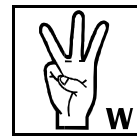
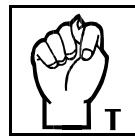
Parent Resource Library

Keeping Busy at Home When the Weather Storms

Did you know that the Together We Can Family Network has take-home materials to utilize in the comfort of your own home? The kits are kept on the two bottom shelves of the book shelving units in between the parenting books and children's books. There are some basic science kits and then some literature packs. The science kits are clear and blue plastic backpacks for your carrying convenience. Included in most packs you will find a children's book, some type of manipulative, and activity cards. Some of the topics include: Lacing, Magnifying, Patterning, Sink/Float, Size, Sounds, Weather and Writing.

The literature packs are in clear bags with red handles and can be found in the cardboard boxes. These kits include a children's book and the recorded story on tape. Some titles include:

- "Corduroy"
- "Five Little Ducks"
- Five Leo Lionni Classics with VHS Video
- "Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come" with VHS Video
- "No Moon, No Milk"
- Phonics Introduction
- "Sing and Sign for Fun" with VHS Video
- Spanish Introduction
- "To Market, To Market"



Playgroups and Parent/Child Activities

Title and Description	Days/Times
Art Adventures (2 years +): Explore art and literature through hands-on activities.	Mondays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
All Ages Playgroup 1: All ages are welcome, birth through 6 years old.	Mondays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Fairy Tales (3 years +): Each week we celebrate a fairy tale. You can come dressed as your favorite fairy tale character and enjoy the most popular stories, imaginative play, crafts and discussions on what we learn from the characters.	Mondays 1.00PM–2.00 PM
Science Playgroup (18 months +): Basic science concepts will be introduced to the young scientists with fun activities and related children’s literature.	Tuesdays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
All Ages Playgroup 2: All ages are welcome, birth through 6 years old.	Tuesdays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Dance Playgroup (18 months +): Introduce your child to the joy of movement and self-expression. Tots will learn movements and songs as well as develop coordination, flexibility, balance and focus.	Tuesdays 1:00 PM–2:15 PM
Community Playgroup (18months—25months): 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
All Ages Playgroup 3: All ages are welcome, birth through 6 years old.	Wednesdays 1:00 PM–2:15 PM
Music Time (All ages): Explore the foundations of music (rhythm, dynamics, tempo, etc.) and the different genres of music by playing instruments, listening activities, motor play and singing.	Thursdays 9:15 AM–10:30 AM
Around the Town Adventure Group (3 years +, strollers not appropriate for siblings): Introduction to The Marlborough Public Library on January 12th, where not only will you see what happens at the library, but learn how your family can sign up for a library card. On February 17th, visit the new Marlborough Savings Bank on Granger Boulevard where your family can begin a college savings plan and learn about money. Sign up for one tour only and it is OK to combine with any other playgroup.	Thursdays 10:00 AM–11:00AM Once a Month
Toddlers Playgroup (15 months—2.6 years): Age-appropriate activities provided for this unique age group.	Thursdays 10:45 AM–12:00 PM
Let’s Be Green (2.6 —5years): Do you want to make the earth a cleaner, greener place to live? How can you help to protect the air, water, and land? Together, let’s explore ways we can protect our planet everyday, through stories, songs and crafts using the 3 R’s (RRR = reduce, reuse, recycle).	Thursdays 1:30 PM–2:45 PM
Animals ‘R Us (6 months-15 months): Each week will focus on a different cuddly creature with age-appropriate activities for this age group.	Fridays 9.15AM–10.30AM
All Ages Playgroup 4: All ages are welcome, birth through 6 years old.	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.

Parent Workshops

See following page for descriptions

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

Title and Facilitator	Dates/Times	Location
Effective Discipline Dr. Glenn Kessler , Psychological Associates	Tues., Jan 18 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	Tues., Feb. 1 6:00-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
“Do You Know?” Discussion of Free/Low Cost Events in Your Area Sharon Riddle, Founder of SPED Child & Teen Newsletter and Website, www.spedchildmass.com	Tues., Feb 8 6:30-8:00 PM	Family Center Marlboro
Behavior Potpourri Jeanine Fitzgerald, Certified Human Behavior Specialist and Author of “The Dance of Interaction”	Thurs., Feb 17 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Eating Healthy Without Hassle Heather Masera, Beginning Years Family Network Presenter and Busy Mom	Tues., Mar 8 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro
Toilet Learning Amy LeClaire, M.Ed	Tues., March 29 6:30-8:00 PM	YMCA Westboro

Special Winter Events

Cultural Pot Luck Dinner and Musical Entertainment by Carrie Rowan, January 27th, 5-7pm at the First Church of Marlborough, 37 High Street, off of Bolton St/Rt.85
Share a little piece of your culture with all the TWC families at this event by bringing your favorite family dish. Together we will eat, sing, dance, and be merry! Registration is required.

Peace, Love, and Joy PJ Story Time, February 10th, 6:30pm-7:15pm at the TWC Family Center

Show your love of reading and Valentine's Day by wearing your favorite red pajamas and listening to some sweet stories. A small after-dinner snack and art activity will be provided. Registration is required.



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 refer to our website calendar on questionable weather days. For all other emergency situations or snowy parent workshop nights, parents will be contacted by the facilitator or director.



PARENT WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

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.

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!

“Do you Know?” Discussion of Free and Low-Cost Family and Disability Events in Your Area

Sharon Riddle, the founder of SPED Child and Teen's newsletter and website has been collecting, organizing and sharing her knowledge of Massachusetts family and disability events and resources with parents and professionals since 2007. Discover accessible sports, community programs, recreation, parent workshops, support systems, seminars, and free or low cost movies, fairs and events right here in Massachusetts. Hear about Sharon and her family's journey of connecting to caring support and personal insights from her information “links”.

Behavior Potpourri

In our parenting, we often run across snags that can put us into a state of disequilibrium. This session is about those questions you always wanted to ask so you can achieve your goals for yourself and your children. All parents have two goals in common: to do what is in the best interest of their child and to lead their child along the pathway to success. Together, we will problem solve solutions to your most pressing concerns.

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.

Toilet Learning

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

TWC FAMILY NETWORK WINTER 2010 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, January 3rd by 5PM**. The lottery will be held on **Tuesday, January 4th beginning at 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 fall program will have first priority for a winter parent/child playgroup and their registration lottery will be processed before our general lottery. All other families who participated in a fall 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, group or training at 774-463-0214.

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 Fall 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.

Winter Session—January 10–February 25

MONDAY

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

TUESDAY

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

WEDNESDAY

- ___ 9:30-11:30 Community
- ___ 1:00-2:15 All Ages 3

THURSDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Music Time
- ___ 10:45-12:00 Toddler
- ___ 1:30-2:45 Let's Be Green

Around the Town: January 12/Library__ or February 17/Marlborough Savings Bank__ (one choice only please). It is OK to combine with any of the other parent/child playgroups though. Tours will begin at 10 AM, so please arrive by 9:45 in order to begin on time.

FRIDAY

- ___ 9:15-10:30 Animals 'R Us
- ___ 10:45-12:00 All Ages 4, (Priority given to Parent Child Home Program families)

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

___ Effective Discipline

___ Eating Healthy

___ Sensory Integration

___ Toilet Learning

___ "Did You Know?"

___ Behavior Potpourri

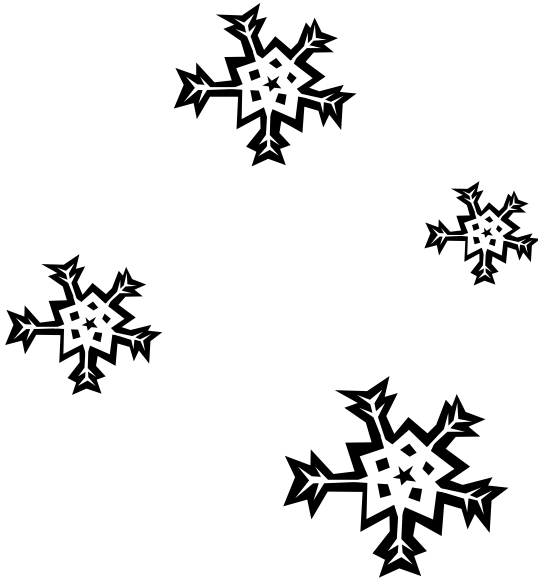
Yes, I need child care for my child(ren): ___(names)_____

No, I do not need child care: _____

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



One little snowflake with nothing to do.
Along came another and
Then there were two.
Two little snowflakes laughing with me.
Along came another, and
Then there were three.
Three little snowflakes looking for some
more.
Along came another, and
Then there were four.
Four little snowflakes dancing a jive.
Along came another, and
Then there were five.
Five little snowflakes having so much fun.
Out came the sun, and
Then there were none!



Business Address:
YMCA
766 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01610
www.twcfn.org

**Nonprofit Organization
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 241
Worcester, MA**



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