Dates to Remember

January

16th. Martin Luther King Day observed. Center closed
17th. Playgroups begin.
18th. Legislative breakfast. Milford Yacht Club. 8AM.
21st. Parent Leadership Training Program begins. (See page 3 for more info)

February

14th. Happy Valentine’s Day
20th-24th. Winter break. Center closed

We still have openings in our playgroups. You can call us at the number below for further information.

Quelling Cabin Fever

When the weather turns cold, cabin fever attacks. You know the symptoms:
- feelings of isolation
- restlessness
- irritation
- complaints of boredom

It’s a nasty fever that everyone tries to avoid catching. But adults as well as kids can become victims. If you’re stuck indoors and crave a change of scenery, try these home remedies for cabin fever.

Put toys and books down where youngsters can reach them. Your children can play without constantly having to seek adult assistance to pull a toy off a high shelf. This builds their independence and self-esteem.

Read, read, read! Snuggle under a blanket or by the fireplace with your children and read to them. Reading builds language and concentration skills. The undivided time with a parent nurtures a child’s love of books.

Play games. Preschoolers can begin board games such as Candy Land or Chutes and Ladders. Games teach valuable social skills — taking turns, being patient, and winning and losing gracefully. Learning cognitive skills, such as color and shape recognition and counting, is a bonus. Card games (try Old Maid) strengthen small hand and finger muscles. Older kids usually enjoy Yahtzee, Chess, Checkers and Trouble.

Pretend. Young children enjoy dressing up and role playing. Provide a basket with old hats, shoes, jewelry, etc. This may be the gentle nudge that tykes need for an afternoon of entertainment.

Produce artwork. Use crayons, markers, paper, chalk and chalkboard to stimulate creative juices. For youngsters under 3, avoid coloring books and demands to “color in the lines.” Instead, encourage freehand drawings. Phrases such as “Tell me about your picture” and “You are using red” are more helpful than the standard “I like your picture.” When your child finishes her masterpiece,

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Kindergarten Registration Time in Milford

If you have a child who is age eligible for Kindergarten, you can pick up your registration packet after the February break. Visitation dates to each individual school will be scheduled in March and April and will be posted on the school website and in the local paper.

The Milford Family Resource Center
@Pumpkin Delight School
24 Art Street
Milford, CT 06460
(203)783-3626
mfrc@milforded.org
How to Keep Your Children Safe

Never sprinkle moth balls in closets, attics, gardens or storage areas.

Use other methods to repel moths such as cedar chips.

If you do continue to use moth balls, choose a brand that contains paradichlorobenzene instead of naphthalene because it is less harmful. Cedar chips or sachets made with lavender, cloves, thyme and eucalyptus have been reported to help as well.

If clothing was stored with moth balls, wash and air out before allowing it to be worn by children.

Report any moth ball exposures to the Connecticut Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222.

For further information visit their website: www.ct.gov/dph

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display it on the refrigerator at her eye level.

Cut up catalogs. Use old catalogs or magazines to cut out pictures of people, pets and trees. To encourage cognitive skills, suggest children hunt for pictures of certain colors, shapes or seasons.

Plan playgroups. Model hospitality by inviting playmates to your home. Call friends to visit nearby parks or libraries together. To avoid play disputes, remember that toddlers need multiples of the same toy and plenty of supervision. Older children can play together with a little less supervision, but stay close by if you’re needed as a peacemaker.

Strategize an obstacle course. Place large empty boxes on the floor for your child to crawl in, on and through. Create more obstacles by using chairs, step stools, pillows and laundry baskets. Obstacle courses are a fun outlet for kids to use stored energy, motor skills and imagination.

Pitch a fort. Spread a large sheet across the room. Attach the corners to a sofa or an armchair so kids can hide under the sheet. A sheet tent is great for private reading or for planning a pretend raid.

Develop a music band. Kids like to make noise, so why not create a channel for them to do so by constructing instruments for a marching band? Empty oatmeal boxes, coffee cans or pots and wooden spoons make perfect drums. Pots and pan lids can be used for clanging cymbals. Cover one side of a wood block with coarse sandpaper; rub two sandpapered blocks together for sand blocks. Rhythm sticks can be two empty paper towel rolls or rolled up newspaper secured with masking tape. Making music is one way to stimulate brain development and future math skills.

Assemble paper blocks. Recycle large paper grocery bags by stuffing them with crumpled wrapping paper. Fold down the open end of the bag and tape it shut. Enlist older children to help younger ones. These paper blocks are great for jumping or sitting on, tossing and rolling.

Play in the ocean. Fill your bathtub with blue water (using a few drops of blue food coloring), add toys and watch your child’s imagination soar. Kids love water, and it’s a sneaky way to get them clean. (Food coloring does not turn little ones blue, and it does not stain tubs.)
The Parent Leadership Training Institute is scheduled to commence its next session on Saturday, January 21, 2012 with an enrollment of 19 students. The program will run for the next 18 weeks.

The Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) helps parents become leading advocates for children.

It is designed by the American Leadership Forum, Leadership Greater Hartford, and the Connecticut Commission on Children.

Definition of parent leadership
Parent leadership is the capacity for parents to interact within society with purpose and positive outcomes for children.

The public is increasingly alienated from government. Most parents are deeply concerned about the impact of schools, community and the environment on their children, but don’t know how systems function or how decisions are made within the public policy and budget domains. A democracy toolkit is needed to develop the skills of civic leadership.

PLTI has these goals:
• Help parents become the leaders they would like to be for children and families;
• Expand the capacity of parents as change agents for children and families;
• Develop communities of parents within regions of the state that will support one another in skills development and successful parent action for children;
• Facilitate systems change for parental involvement with increased utilization of parents in policy and process decisions; and

Increase parent-child interactions and improve child outcomes through parent involvement.

The Milford graduates of PLTI have joined several non profit boards of directors and offered their expertise in a variety of ways that has had a positive impact on the Milford Community.

The program is a joint venture of the Milford Health Department, Kids Count of Milford and the United Way of Milford.

Legislative Breakfast

Kids Count’s annual Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for, Wednesday, January 18, from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. at the Milford Yacht Club.

Mayor Benjamin Blake will be on hand to express words of welcome and support.

Elaine Zimmerman, Executive Director of the Commission on Children will be the guest speaker and will focus on the importance of supporting programs that promote a successful start, early education, early intervention and early learning.

Kids Count will present the Champions of Young Children Award to Deborah and Gerard Jamieson.

Jennifer Ramey and her third grade class from the Pumpkin Delight School will be there to sing the Milford Song.

Students from the Jonathan Law and Joseph A Foran High Schools will be acknowledged for their volunteer work in Milford.

Senator Gayle Slossberg, Representatives Paul Davis, Kim Rose and Richard Roy will offer their perspective on the upcoming legislative session as it related to the provision of support to early childhood education and programs.

The Parents’ Role in Education

Although a parent’s role in their children’s learning evolves as kids grow, one thing remains constant: we are our children’s learning models. Our attitudes about education can inspire theirs and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey.

As we all know, in the early years, parents are their children’s first teachers — exploring nature, reading together, cooking together, and counting together. When a young child begins kindergarten, the parent’s job is to show him how school can extend the learning you began together at home, and how exciting and meaningful this learning can be. As preschoolers grow into school age kids, parents become their children’s learning coaches. Through guidance and reminders, parents can help their kids organize their time and support their desires to learn new things in and out of school. In the coming months, parents will be focusing on Kindergarten registration and orientation. Important to the process is the parent’s support of the child, particularly helping alleviate stress or anxiety. Their journey to a successful beginning depends on their parents’ participation, guidance, and support.
We are also very grateful for all our sponsors and volunteers who, once again, helped to make our annual holiday concert with The Learning Station a success! We had great fun!!!

A VERY BIG THANK YOU to:

Berchem Moses & Devlin
Milford Pediatric Group
THE Milford Bank
Student Volunteers,
Santa and, of course,
All who attended.

You made it all possible

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to all the generous individuals, families and companies who sponsored families over the Christmas Holiday. Your gracious generosity was very much appreciated by each parent and SANTA’S visit was made real to every child!!!

The Milford Family Resource Center is funded by a grant from the Connecticut State Department of Education, sponsored by the Milford Board of Education, and affiliated with the Parents As Teachers National Center, Inc.