

December 2017

Volume 12, Issue 4

Surviving the Holidays

By Chloe Learey, Executive Director

This time of year brings a multitude of holidays and celebrations from across cultures and religions, from Sweden to Mexico, Christian to Islamic. It is a time of year that brings joys and challenges for families and young children. Knowing this can help alleviate some of the stress that accompanies this roller coaster ride. Below are some common themes that may come up and thoughts about how to deal with them.

Routines are disrupted. Between special events at school and work, travelling to visit friends and family, and celebratory meals and gatherings, it is easy to get off schedule for meals, naps, and other regular activities. This can be part of the fun, and a great opportunity to practice developing skills around responding to change and being flexible. It is still important to eat as well as possible and to get good rest, it may just need to happen at different times. Maybe a cat nap at 2:00 will get your child through the rest of the day even if s/he usually sleeps for an hour in the afternoon. Or a hearty afternoon snack may look more like a meal if lunch time was crackers in the car. Children will pick up on the cues of the adults around them, so if parents are able to miss the typical bath night and take it in stride, it will help a child be able to "roll with it" too. Keep what routines you can, and anticipate how to meet needs in other ways when they are disrupted.



Trauma can be triggered. Certain times of year can bring up negative feelings for those who have experienced traumatic events such as the death of a close family member, separation from their family of origin, or divorce. Realizing that the season may be a trigger helps provide a framework for understanding what may be happening and reacting accordingly. While the experience of trauma and coping mechanisms will be individual, one recommendation that cuts across is the reminder to take a break and leave space in your schedule. Being open about needing space to either be alone and quiet or to go do something totally different, whether for you or your child/ren helps others be supportive. You do not have to be at every party, every concert, every meal, every gift opening. As noted below, all sorts of high expectations come up during holidays, and managing them can help minimize the stress of the season.

Expectations can be high. The holidays bring an abundance of opportunity for high expectations – around gifts, around showing up, around being happy, around showing gratitude. Identifying which expectations are self-generated and which are coming from external sources is the first step towards addressing them. Does your child expect the Christmas tree to be loaded with presents or is it your expectation of yourself as a parent to be able to give them everything they want? This is a wonderful opportunity to talk about values and what you want to do as a family to celebrate and appreciate the season. Establishing rituals together like volunteering, donating gifts to others, and supporting a charity or cause to support together creates the opportunity for shared expectations.

Financial worries can cause anxiety. Holidays can be a season of spending whether it is gifts, travel, or food and drink for gatherings. It is easy to lose track of all the expenses, and they can add up quickly. The pressure to create a perfect holiday for our children is heavy, and remembering the importance of the holiday is not found in fancy decorations and expensive gifts helps lighten the load. Having a frame for gift giving can help, too. A parent in a radio interview shared that she gives just four gifts to her children: "Something you want, something you need, something to wear and something to read." While this does not outline the size of the gifts it offers a way to limit giving and potentially expenses.

Ultimately the holiday season is time-limited, and keeping that in perspective helps make some of the above suggestions easier. Nothing is perfect, and sometimes our funniest family stories can be the mishaps that happen, like the time the dog ate all the pies off the counter. Perhaps the greatest opportunity of this time is that it helps us shine a light on our love and appreciation for each other, and expressing that is the ultimate gift.





The Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development provides inclusive education and family support to promote the success of children and families.

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UPCOMING EVENTS:



DECEMBER 18, 2017 HELPING CHILDREN DEVELOP HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS

6:00PM – 8:00PM

Scott Noyes

Retreat Education Conference Room

The results of children not getting enough sleep are astonishing. Sleep deprivation can have serious effects on physical health and mental impairments. Inadequate rest impairs our ability to think, handle stress, maintain a healthy immune system and moderate our emotions. The loss of one hour of sleep for a child each night is equivalent to two years of cognitive maturation and development. In addition, sleep-deprived people fail to recall pleasant memories yet recall gloomy memories just fine. This presentation will review the facts about the importance of sleep and how to help children establish and maintain healthy sleep habits.

Windham Early Childhood
 Educators Co-Op

windhamecec@gmail.com

**Calling all parents
 and caregivers of
 infants, toddlers
 and preschoolers!**

**Learn about the
 importance of sleep
 and how to
 establish healthy
 sleep habits!**

Amazing presenter

Scott Noyes!

PLEASE RSVP

**Childcare available –
 please let us know how
 many children will need
 care**

windhamecec@gmail.com

**Sponsored by Windham
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**RETREAT EDUCATION
 CONFERENCE ROOM
 1 Anna Marsh Lane**

DECEMBER FUNDRAISER AT HANNAFORD



All month, every **Hannaford Helps Bag** sold at the Hannaford store on Putney Rd in Brattleboro will generate a \$1 donation to support the Winston Prouty Center for Child Development! Hannaford Helps bags with the "Good Karma" message can be found on the reusable bag rack and at various registers. Thank you!

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

CHILDREN'S INTEGRATED SERVICES (CIS)

Alison Wheeler, CIS Coordinator

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Sally Pennington, CIS Nurse & Lactation Consultant

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CIS EARLY INTERVENTION

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Sueño LeBlond, Early Childhood Outreach Specialist

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Kristy Rose, Food Program Specialist

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FAMILY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Crystal Blamy, Family Supportive Housing Coordinator

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Supporting Families in Need with Toy for Kids

You can make a child's winter bright by donating a new toy to the Toys for Kids campaign. Drop off a new, unwrapped toy to one of the following businesses, and the US Marine Corp. will deliver it to participating families:

- Barrows & Fisher Oil
- Brattleboro Autobody & Detailing
- Brattleboro Memorial Hospital
- Faith's Ford
- Member's First Credit Union
- River Valley Credit Union
- Summit Chrysler
- The Auto Mall

Would you like to apply for donations for your family? Call Toys for Kids - Brattleboro Detachment & Auxiliary Unit 798, Marine Corps League - 802-377-7084



Green Up Your Gift Exchanges

The Winston Prouty Center now has a GREEN TEAM whose mission is to educate and inspire the Prouty community to make small changes to help preserve natural resources for future generations.

Here are this month's tips from the team to help you save money, reduce waste and help young children learn about their impact on the environment this holiday season:

- Get creative with wrapping paper: use an old calendar, newspaper, map, atlas, fabric scraps, magazines, or grocery bags.
- Instead of bows and ribbon, use natural finishing touches like pine cones and ever-green branch tips
- Unless it's lined with foil, wrapping paper is recyclable! (But remember to take off the bows, which are not)
- Mailing a gift? Use recycled packing materials like junk mail or shredded magazine strips

3SquaresVT for Better Health

Submitted by SEVCA

We need to stop the thinking that health is something we get at the doctor's office, but instead accept that it's something that starts where we live, learn, work, and play, and in the air we breathe, the food we eat and the water we drink. Put more healthy food on your table with 3SquaresVT, formerly known as food stamps. Tens of thousands of Vermonters rely on 3SquaresVT every month to help them afford groceries to feed their families. Thanks to this program more Vermonters are able to buy healthy food. A family of four earning up to \$3,793 a month may be able to get benefits. Those that qualify for the VT earned Income Tax Credit are automatically eligible for 3SquaresVT. Households can have a savings account or an asset like a car or home and still qualify. Getting benefits means your children can get free school meals and it also qualifies you for phone assistance. These added benefits mean more of your money is freed up to pay other bills and results in less stress in your life.

Good nutrition is also very important. It helps you stay active and helps prevent sickness. The high cost of food, fuel and health care are making it hard for many to put good food on the table. Vermonters who take part are not taking money away from others in need, there is enough for everyone. 3SquaresVT comes either on an EBT, debit card or as cash directly deposited into your bank account.

For a single able-bodied individual age 18 or older, who receives 3SquaresVt, you may be able to participate in the Jobs for Independence program that could lead to training and employment.

You can also use your food benefit and double your money at many farmers' market locations. Spend \$1 on your EBT card at the market and get a free \$1 of crop cash, up to a free \$10 in market crop cash per market/per customer. You may also receive crop cash if you get a cash benefit. Look for the Manager's Table when you get to the market. Crop cash may be available at the Winter Farmers Markets as well.

SEVCA's Family Services staff is available to assist households to apply for 3SquaresVT. To schedule an appointment, call 1-800-464-9951 and you will be directed to a Family Service staff person in your area. You may also visit www.vermontfoodhelp.com for more information or you can apply online. 1 in 8 Vermonters get 3SquaresVT, have you applied yet?

Wishlist

Size 7 Boys PJ's

Safety gates for stairs

Recipe: Chewy Chocolate Chip Granola Bar

These homemade bars are a fun and easy cooking project that children can help with and enjoy!

Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons honey
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups quick-cooking/instant oats
- 1-3/4 cups crispy rice cereal
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup flax meal or wheat germ
- 1/3 cup mini chocolate chips or dried fruit



Instructions

1. Line a 9 x 13-inch baking pan with aluminum foil. Spray the foil lightly with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large pot, combine the butter, brown sugar and honey. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Lower the heat and simmer until the sugar dissolves and the mixture is slightly thickened, about 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the vanilla and salt.
3. Add the oats, rice cereal, almonds and flax meal (or wheat germ) to the pan and fold with a rubber spatula until well combined.
4. Transfer the mixture to the prepared pan and press down lightly with a rubber spatula to even out. Sprinkle the chocolate chips over top, adding more or less to suit your taste, and press down firmly with the spatula so the chips stick. The mixture should be tightly compacted in the pan. Place the pan in the refrigerator for 1-1/2 - 2 hours.
5. Transfer the uncut bars to a cutting board. Cut into bars and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator (use parchment paper between layers).
6. Note: If you are substituting dried fruit for the chocolate chips, mix it in along with the other ingredients as opposed to sprinkling over top.

Source: www.onceuponachef.com

EARLY LEARNING CENTER

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Angela Hoag, ELC Administrative Coordinator
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Paul Rossi, Liz Martin, Kitchen & Lunch Support

Kathy Wright, Floating Teacher

Colleen Quigley, Willow Room Lead Teacher

Bob Peebles, Susan Mandell, Volunteers

Acorn Room

Nancy McMahon, Mandi Martin / Ext. 218

Email: nancy@winstonprouty.org



Practicing our gross motor skills!

Dinner in the Great Room for our Family Circle. There will not be a Family Circle in December, but we hope to see you at January's Circle. It's a great way to connect and learn from each other!

Maple Room

Amy Fulton, Mindy Brennan, Sara Fradkin / Ext. 205 / Email: amy@winstonprouty.org



Enjoying books with Shyanne, Brattleboro Union High School student who is gaining some real-world experience as part of her early childhood education studies.

Preparing some pumpkin pie while learning math concepts and practicing our fine motor skills!



Elm Room

Susan Heimer, Allie Barrett, Brianna Root / Ext. 207 / Email: susan@winstonprouty.org

In November it was a busy month. We celebrated five Birthdays! Happy Birthday to Rue, Payton, Alex H, Alex D, and Cortland, as they all turned two! We cooked some yummy cookies and did a food collage for Thanksgiving. We also did some doll washing and everyone enjoyed naming their body parts. Through December, the theme will be glitter which we will incorporate through many different activities. We also have been introducing rhythm sticks at circle where they love to follow the leader through movements.



Here the children are enjoying doll washing with shampoo and wash cloths



Choosing from many different foods to put on our food collage



We love our books and reading them to friends and with teachers



We cooked some yummy cookies and a parent brought in some cupcakes for the birthdays



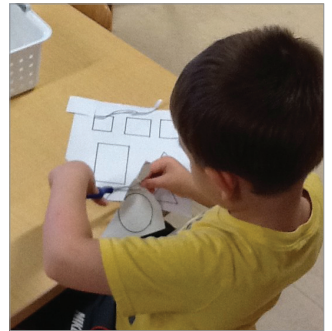
We sure love our puzzles

Oak Room

Sarah Bemis, Alyssa Kelly / Ext. 217 / Email: sarah@winstonprouty.org



The month of November we learned about different community helpers. Our dramatic play center was transformed into a doctor's office and friends worked to use the stethoscope, x-ray machine, and administer shots to sick patients. This month we enjoyed playing 'fire math'. Fire math is a game where numbers 1-20 were written on flames. Children worked to put out the fire by squirting the flame with a spray bottle and counting together the numbers they saw. For Thanksgiving we created turkey art by painting the feathers and assembling their bodies. On each feather we wrote something that we were thankful for in our lives. At the writing center we have started to assemble a classroom book about our favorite thing to do with our families. We have also been working hard to learn



our classroom rules and show our friends what it means to have a safe body. In the afternoons we have been working to strengthen our fine motor skills by playing with plusplus toys, pegboards, and geoboards. In the month of December our theme is 'All Around the World: Cultural Celebrations'. We will explore some of the winter celebrations that are celebrated during this festive time of year.

Birch Room

*Jamie Champney, Kim Jacques, Alfred Hughes, Jr.
Ext. 220 / Email: jamie@winstonprouty.org*

It has been another fun month in the Birch classroom! The highlight of the month was our Stone Soup Harvest lunch. We invited families to come to our classroom to come for lunch to share our stone soup and to celebrate all we are thankful for.

The children worked hard and had so much fun preparing for the Stone Soup harvest lunch. We read different versions of the story "Stone Soup," found a recipe, and found a stone in the woods to use for our soup. The children each created their own invitations for their families, helped decorate the classroom, and many families brought in ingredients to use for the soup. All of the children helped prepare the stone soup and banana bread we ate at the meal. The soup and banana bread were delicious and everyone had fun. Thank you to everyone who was able to be a part of our celebration!



As always, we had another exciting month dressing up in dramatic play!

December will be a month of celebrating the upcoming colder months; learning about the change of season, hibernation, and winter animals. Happy December from the Birch classroom!

December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Nathan is 1! Henry is 1!	2
3	4 Sadie is 4!	5	6 The ELC closes at 3:30 for ELC Staff meeting	7 Tyler is 5!	8 Christine is 3!	9
10	11	12 Gemma is 5!	13 Desiree is 4!	14	15 Brayden is 1!	16 Happy Birthday Kathy H!
17	18 Gunnar is 2!	19 Adrianne is 3! Ali is 3!	20	21	22 The Center is Closed for Winter Break Erin is 2!	23 Quentin is 2! Coulson is 4!
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
The Center is Closed for Winter Break						
	Shiloh is 4!	Luna is 4!				
31 Amirah is 2! Molly is 2!						

UPCOMING
DATES:

Monday, January 1 - Center closed for New Year's Day Holiday
Monday, January 15 - Center closed for All-Staff In-Service