



Parent Newsletter

November 2011

SMALL STEPS...BIG CHANGES



For a number of years, CFO, with support and guidance from Healthy Peninsula, has worked in a variety of ways to help parents who want to reduce their use of tobacco or the impact of secondhand smoke on their young children. This work has been so successful that CFO annually declares the month of November as Tobacco Awareness Month.

Many parents have shared stories of their journey toward living tobacco free. For some parents, this has meant quitting; for others, it has meant making a commitment to keep their homes smoke-free. And for

still others, it has meant finding ways to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke in places their children regularly visit. We recognize that everyone is in a different place with this, yet we know that everyone wants to keep their children as healthy as can be. So each year, we encourage our staff and parents to share information, resources, and their own stories as many more families begin this journey.

Please look for information in your centers during the month of November, and think about one small step you can commit to or help another person. Together, we can all make a difference.

It's Not Too Late to Apply

We are still accepting applications for Head Start and child care in all of our centers. We currently have openings in Ellsworth, Machias, Calais, Stonington, Sedgwick and Bucksport for either Head Start or child care for eligible children. If a center is full the applications are placed on a waitlist. Applications are pulled from the waitlist as soon as an opening becomes available. Our number is 667-2995 or 1-800-834-4378 (toll free).



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- Pictures
- Center Events
- Trainings
- Parent Nights
- Volunteering
- Enrollment Information
- Stories
- Discussions

Parent Policy Council News

Policy Council met for its regular monthly meeting in October. We sadly said good-bye to some of our long term representatives—Renaud Cloutier, Stephanie Moores, and Jenn Prout. Their numerous contributions over the past few years have been greatly appreciated! We are excited to welcome new representatives to the council and remind you it is not too late to join.

The next meeting will be on Monday, Nov. 28th from 9:30-12:30 in Milbridge. Car pooling is available; just speak to your center staff. Interested Council members will be joining agency leadership staff to attend the New England Head Start Conference in Nashua, New Hampshire in early December. There are special tracks designed just for parents. We are looking forward to the conference and all that it brings.

A Cold Weather Reminder

Children and center staff spend time outdoors each day, weather permitting. If your child is too ill to play outside, please keep him/her home. In cold weather, please make sure your child has warm clothing marked with his/her name. Snowsuits or coats and snow pants, boots, hats and mittens are needed everyday. Remember to assume that each day the children go out, so dress them accordingly. In muddy or wet weather, please expect some dirty clothes, as the children love to play outside--and they can get dirty.



SOME FLU SEASON REMINDERS:

If your child has flu-like symptoms (fever-oral temp of 100 degrees F or greater), cough and sore throat they need to stay at home until they are **24 hours fever free**. Encourage children to wash their hands with soap and water. Antibacterial soaps and gels should not be used in place of soap and running water. Remind them to cover mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing with the crook of their arm, not to share cups etc. and to avoid touching their eyes. Contact your primary care physician for more information.

Our Health and Family Partnership Managers, Pam Gagnon and Ellen Savage can answer questions you may have about health issues/policies at CFO. Your Center Staff can help you reach Pam or Ellen when they are scheduled visit your center, or you may call the Ellsworth Office at 667-2995 or 1-800-834-4378.

NOVEMBER

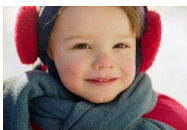
Day of Thanks: All of our centers and the Central Office in Ellsworth will be closed in observance of Thanksgiving on Thursday November 24th and the Friday after, November 25th.

Veterans' Day: Friday, November 11th, Veterans' Day, is a closure date for all our part-year programs. Child care will be available at our Ellsworth, St. Croix and Flaherty centers on the 11th.

Bath Salts & Opiate Forum **What's happening in our local communities?**

Monday, Nov 14, 2011
Blue Hill Town Hall 5:30-7:30 pm
Participants include:
Acadia Hospital - Blue Hill Memorial Hospital
Maine Drug Enforcement Agency
Open Door Recovery Center
For more information contact
Healthy Peninsula
at 359-2441.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS



- * Dress infants and children warmly for outdoor activities. Several thin layers will keep them dry and warm. Clothing for children can consist of thermal long johns, turtlenecks, one or two shirts, pants sweater, coat, warm socks, boots, gloves or mittens and a hat. The rule of thumb for older babies and young children is to dress them in one more layer of clothing than an adult would wear in the same conditions.
- * Set reasonable time limits on outdoor play to prevent frostbite. Have children come inside periodically to warm up especially during extremely cold weather.
- * The sun's rays can still cause sunburn in the winter, especially when they reflect off the snow. Make sure to cover your child's exposed skin with sunscreen.
- * The viruses that cause colds and flu tend to be more common in the winter when children are in closer contact with each other. Frequently hand washing and teaching your child to sneeze or cough into the bend of the elbow may help reduce the spread of colds and flu.

...WHEN BUYING TOYS



Choose your child's toys with care. Keep in mind the child's age, interests and skill level. Look for quality design and construction in all toys for all ages. Make sure that all directions or instructions are clear—to you and, when appropriate, to the child. Plastic wrappings on toys should be discarded at once before they become deadly playthings. *Be a label reader.* Look for and heed age recommendations, such as "Not recommended for children under three." Look for other safety labels including: "Flame retardant/Flame resistant" on fabric and "Washable/hygienic materials" on stuffed toys and dolls. Parents may check the CPSC website for a listing of toys containing lead. (www.cpsc.gov)

...WHEN MAINTAINING TOYS

Check all toys periodically for breakage and potential hazards. A damaged or dangerous toy should be thrown away or repaired immediately. Edges on wooden toys that might have become sharp or surfaces covered with splinters should be sanded smooth. When repainting toys and toy boxes, avoid using leftover paint, unless purchased recently, since older paints may contain more lead than new paint, which is regulated by CPSC. Examine all outdoor toys regularly for rust or weak parts that could become hazardous.

...WHEN STORING TOYS



Teach children to put their toys safely away on shelves or in a toy chest after playing to prevent trips and falls. Toy boxes, too, should be checked for safety. Use a toy chest that has a lid that will stay open in any position to which it is raised, and will not fall unexpectedly on a child. For extra safety, be sure there are ventilation holes for fresh air. Watch for sharp edges that could cut and hinges that could pinch or squeeze. See that toys used outdoors are stored after play—rain or dew can rust or damage a variety of toys and toy parts, creating hazards.

SHARP EDGES ... SMALL PARTS

New toys intended for children under eight years of age should, by regulation, be free of sharp glass and metal edges. With use, however, older toys may break, exposing cutting edges. Older toys can break to reveal parts small enough to be swallowed or to become lodged in a child's windpipe, ears or nose. The law bans small parts in new toys intended for children under three. This includes removable small eyes and noses on stuffed toys and dolls, and small, removable squeakers on squeeze toys.

LOUD NOISES



Toy caps and some noisemaking guns and other toys can produce sounds at noise levels that can damage hearing. The law requires the following label on boxes of caps producing noise above a certain level: "WARNING— Do not fire closer than one foot to the ear. Do not use indoors." Caps producing noise that can injure a child's hearing are banned.

CORDS AND STRINGS ... SHARP POINTS

Toys with long strings or cords may be dangerous for infants and young children. The cords may become wrapped around an infant's neck, causing strangulation. Never hang toys with long strings, cords, loops, or ribbons in cribs or playpens where children can become entangled. Remove crib gyms from the crib when the child can pull up on hands and knees; some children have strangled when they fell across crib gyms stretched across the crib. Toys which have been broken may have dangerous points or prongs. Stuffed toys may have wires inside the toy which could cut or stab if exposed. A CPSC regulation prohibits sharp points in new toys and other articles intended for use by children under eight years of age.

Projectiles ...ELECTRIC TOYS



Guided missiles and similar flying toys can be turned into weapons and can injure eyes in particular. Children should never be permitted to play with adult lawn darts or other hobby or sporting equipment that have sharp points. Arrows or darts used by children should have soft cork tips, rubber suction cups or other protective tips intended to prevent injury. Check to be sure the tips are secure. Avoid those dart guns or other toys which might be capable of firing articles not intended for use in the toy, such as pencils or nails.

Electric toys that are improperly constructed, wired or misused can shock or burn. Electric toys must meet mandatory requirements for maximum surface temperatures, electrical construction and prominent warning labels. Electric toys with heating elements are recommended only for children over eight years old. Children should be taught to use electric toys properly, cautiously and under adult supervision.

INFANT TOYS

Infant toys, such as rattles, squeeze toys, and teethingers, should be large enough so that they cannot enter and become lodged in an infant's throat.

ALL TOYS ARE NOT FOR ALL CHILDREN



Keep toys designed for older children out of the hands of little ones. Follow labels that give age recommendations—some toys are recommended for older children because they may be hazardous in the hands of a younger child. Teach older children to help keep their toys away from younger brothers and sisters. Even balloons, when un-inflated or broken, can choke or suffocate if young children try to swallow them. More children have suffocated on un-inflated balloons and pieces of broken balloons than on any other type of toy.

Child Friendly Dinners

Family dinners are a great time to introduce your child to the foods that you like to eat. While you do have to cater somewhat to young children's ability to chew solid foods, you don't always have to cook traditional kid foods such as macaroni and cheese and hot dogs. Your little one will learn to enjoy a variety of foods by being exposed to new foods and watching you enjoy them. Remember it is the parents' responsibility to buy, prepare and serve nutritious food to their children and it is up to the child to determine what and how much food to eat. Let the child decide what to put on their plate and try not to comment if they refuse a food, if the food you are serving is nutritious it won't matter which food the child chooses. It works best for the child if food is not used as a reward or a punishment any time during the day. If you are concerned that your child is a picky eater and may not be getting all of the recommended amounts try using snack time as a way to increase the intake of certain food groups. Fruits and vegetables, cheese and yogurt, nuts, seeds and cold meat, or whole wheat crackers, breads or muffins make excellent snacks.

At Head Start we have been successful getting children to eat a variety of foods that you may think they don't like. If you would like helpful hints to improve your child's eating habits, please speak to the Food Service Technician at your center.

Healthy and Easy Turkey Picante Tacos (adapted from Cooks.com)

- ⇒ 1 pound lean ground turkey
- ⇒ 16 oz Picante Sauce or Mild Salsa
- ⇒ Shredded Cheese Monterey Jack or Mild Cheddar
- ⇒ Whole Grain Flour Tortillas
- ⇒ Greens for topping spinach or lettuce
- ⇒ **Optional:** chopped green or red peppers, onions, and cucumbers combined with the greens

Brown the turkey, drain and add the salsa/sauce, about 12 ounces. Simmer 8 to 10 minutes. Meanwhile shred lettuce and sprinkle with grated cheese. Spoon the mixture on the warmed tortillas—fold or roll-up then top with greens and cheese and serve. Makes enough for 5 to 7 people.



* TEN TIPS FOR FATHERS *

- **Be there** — Children want and need your physical presence, from infancy onward.
- **Listen**—Being there means more than being present physically.
- **Support your partner** — Work together on behalf of your child whether you are living together or not.
- **Learn to disagree appropriately with your partner** — Disagreement is a normal part of parenthood. It is how you resolve those differences that matter.
- **Get to know and be known to the people in your child's world** — Teachers, caregivers, doctors — all of them are an important part.
- **Get to know and be known to your children's friends and their parents** — Its important and fun to get to know other children and families.
- **Play with your children** — One of the best ways to learn about and develop a lasting connection with your children is to play with them — to enter their world.
- **Teach by example** — Children follow what you do more than what you say.
- **Discipline with love** — To discipline means to guide or bring out the best in your child and that is best done with love.
- **Keep your sense of humor** — Nobody said fatherhood would be easy. if you can survive fatherhood, you can survive anything!

Save Money on Winter Heating—source The Consumer Credit and Budget Counseling (www.cc-bc.com)

As Old Man Winter approaches our thoughts are turning towards home heating costs. Although prices may be lower than last year, you may be paying twice as much as you did a few years ago. Here are some tips that will help you save:

1. Get your heating systems serviced, poorly tuned units use more fuel. Clean your filters to make the system more efficient.
2. Install a programmable thermostat and program it to a lower temperature while you are away or sleeping.
3. Add weather stripping and caulking around doors and windows.
4. Use compact florescent light bulbs, they give off the same amount of light at one third the energy and last up to 5 years.
5. Use the power of the sun, it's free energy. Open up the drapes during the day and let the sun heat your home. At dusk, close them to keep the heat inside.
6. Consider sealing off rooms you don't use.
7. Use an energy-efficient space heater to warm up areas where you spend the most time.
8. Use plenty of blankets on your bed or sofa. They allow your home to stay fairly cool while you stay warm and snug.
9. Try flannel sheets, buy long underwear and keep a toasty comforter on the sofa to use while reading or watching television.
10. Cook more, using your oven and stove top can warm the house a bit.
11. Invite visitors, they will bring body heat with them.
12. Turn down the temperature on your water heater, consider insulating the heater.
13. Wash your clothes in cold water.
14. Schedule an energy audit for more detailed, expert advice on your home as a whole.

Target Recall of Children's Frog Masks due to Suffocation Hazard The plush frog masks lack proper ventilation. When in place across a child's face will present a suffocation hazard. The recall involves child-sized frog-themed animal masks. The mask is green with yellow and red highlights. The UPC code is 06626491474. They were old from August to September 2011 for about \$1.00. Please do not let children use the masks; return to a Target store for a refund.

Musical Wooden Table Toys Recalled due to Choking Hazard Small pegs on the xylophone toy can loosen and detach, posing a choking hazard to young children. Battat's Musical Wooden Table Toy stands about 7 inches tall with 3 supporting legs. The instruments on this table include a xylophone, cymbal, drum and 2 drumsticks. They were sold nationwide from September 2006 to October 2010 for about \$30. Immediately take the product from children and ask for a free replacement. Call Battat at (800) 247-6144 or visit the website at www.battatco.com.

Drop Side Crib Repair by Shermag of Quebec, Canada The drop-side rail hardware can break or fail, allowing the side to detach from the crib. Then a hazardous gap is created in which infants or toddlers can become wedged or entrapped. The model numbers are 202647, 211047, and 272547. The cribs were sold separately or as part of the collections names "City Lights" - "Fairy Tales" - or "Dormez Vous." Immediately stop using these cribs and contact the firm for a free repair kit. Contact Shermag at 800-567-3419.

Little Tikes Workshop and Tool Sets These are oversized, plastic toy nails that can pose a choking hazard to young children. They were sold by retailers nationwide from 1990 to 2004 for between \$25 and \$100. Immediately take this toy away from young children and contact the firm for a free replacement of toy nails. The number is (800) 321-0183 or www.littletikes.com. For a complete list of model numbers, product name and dates, visit the CPSC website. You will find a link to the recalls at the CFO website.