

# PREVENTION SERVICES NETWORK



*Partnering, Supporting, Nurturing*

January 2010

Volume 3, Issue 1

Prevention Services Network is a community wide collaboration dedicated to strengthening families, and helping them become resilient to child abuse and neglect. This newsletter is designed to reach out to families and providers with current research and information about community resources that support prevention.

## Good Job!

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The hectic holiday season is over. Did it go well for you? Did you get everything done? It is not uncommon to feel a let down at this time of the year. However, it is a new year that brings with it a fresh start. **Make this the year you celebrate yourself and what you do well.**

Teachers and parents know that children need to experience the joy of completing age appropriate tasks that grow in difficulty as the child ages. Just listen to the happy squeals of a young child who first puts her coat on "all by herself" or the proud announcement of a five year old, who has mastered the rather tricky task of tying his shoes. Such accomplishments build self esteem, foster curiosity, and increase brain development.

Adults can also need to experience the joy of a job well done. Sometimes adults are so overwhelmed that it seems they cannot do anything right. They try to juggle work and life and spend a lot of time dropping the ball. This can feel depressing. The following ideas are small ways that can help lift your spirits.

Each day create a 'to do' list. Make sure the items listed can realistically be accomplished in a day. Put at least one task on the list that relates totally to a personal interest. For example, list a 15 minute break to read a magazine. As you complete each task, cross it off the list. It should make you feel good to finish. Once you master small daily lists, try making weekly or monthly lists of bigger projects. The daily lists can work toward the bigger ones. You will see progress toward your goals.

Get a new calendar and enter appointments. It is amazing how keeping track of things you must do helps you remember and avoid last minute rushes. It relieves stress and helps you from becoming overbooked.

Search for a new hobby. Is there something you always wanted to try? The Kenosha Public Museum offers Saturday workshops on varied topics such as watercolor painting or stain glass window making. You can call the Museum for a schedule (262) 653-4140. Having something new to talk about with friends will help you feel more interesting and lift your spirits.

Avoid comparing yourself to others. You are probably right in the middle of the pack; some are better and some are worse. Make an effort to appreciate who you are, and enjoy a brand new year.

## Single Parenting

It is time to update how we define families. For example, do we really want to use the term, “broken home” to refer to a family where the parents are divorced? We are concerned about being politically correct in many areas, yet we continue to classify children as coming from a broken home. That does not seem right. Also, how does society define single parenting? Are unmarried couples living together single parents? Are non-custodial parents single parents? Wouldn't some married parents actually be single parents when only one spouse is responsible for all of the child rearing? Interesting questions to consider, but the fact is that raising a child alone, or with little support is difficult, no matter how you define single parenting. There are some practical ways you can seek help and find ways to strengthen your family.

Focus on the positive. Children and families do better when their situation is not thought of as faulty or broken. Many families headed by single parents do extremely well and experience less inner family conflicts. Concentrate on what your family does well and remain hopeful.

Develop a network of support. All parents need support. Attempting to go it alone because you are single will only add extra stress.

You are the boss. Make sure your children have clear guidelines and expectations. Children are smart and will play upon your emotions or attempt to play one parent against the other. Do not fall for this game. The children are no more your equals in a single parent home than they should be in a two-parent home.

Be available for your children. You are in charge, but you also need to recognize that your children may have conflicting feelings about what is happening. Be available to honestly answer questions or explain your living arrangement. Help them deal with insensitive peers and adults who unintentionally say hurtful things. Be there to make certain your children believe they are loved.

Take care of yourself. It is extremely stressful to raise children on your own. Make sure you have time to do those things you enjoy and learn relaxation or stress relieving techniques. Do not forgo all your hobbies. Trade babysitting with a friend or family member so you have time alone. If you are stressed, it is possible that you will pass the stress on to your children.

Be realistic. You cannot do everything. Many mothers learn the hard way that attempting to be super mom usually means you are barely super at anything. Set expectations and goals with your children and recognize your familial strengths. Focus on the future and those things that work well for your family. It is the only way you will enjoy parenting.

(Some of these tips came from an article by Shellee Darnell, “How to be the best single parent you can”, and from <http://singleparents.about.com>)

TO VIEW PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE PSN NEWSLETTER, LOG ON TO  
<http://www.co.kenosha.wi.us/dhs/Divisions/CFS/Newsletter/index.php>

# Parenting Classes

Are you feeling overwhelmed as a parent?  
Are you looking for a better way to manage your kids' behavior?  
If the answer to these questions is YES, check out the Kenosha Area Family  
and Aging Services, Inc. Nurturing Parent series  
These parenting classes are eleven weeks long and are held at the  
PSN Family Resource Center, 8600 Sheridan Rd., Kenosha.  
The classes are free, however, there is a \$10 mandatory book deposit.  
The \$10 will be refunded when the book is returned at the end of the session.

## *2010 KAFASI Parenting class schedule*

*Tuesday 1/19-3/30, 9-10:30 am Instructor/ Kathy Sullivan*

*\*\*Mon. 2/1-4/12, 5-6pm. Instructor/ Jomarie\*\*  
Spanish speaking only/ located at KAFASI office*

*Wednesday 3/10-5/19, 3:30-5pm. Instructor/ Katie Bohn*

*Tuesday 4/13-6/22, 9-10:30 am. Instructor/ Kathy Sullivan*

*Monday 6/7-8/16, 1-2:30 pm. Instructor/ Katie Bohn*

*Wednesday 7/14-9/22, 3:30-5pm. Instructor/ Kathy Sullivan*

*Tuesday 8/31-11/9, 9-10:30. Instructor/ Katie Bohn*

*\*\*Thurs. 9/2-11/11, 5-6. Instructor/ Jomarie\*\*  
Spanish speaking only/ located at KAFASI office*

*Any questions, please contact:  
Kathy Sullivan 658-3508 ext. 126  
Katie Bohn 658-3508 ext. 214  
Jomarie Coloriano (bilingual) 658-3508 ext. 121*



# The Importance of Reading

Children from low-income households nationwide are entering kindergarten without the early literacy skills needed for success. They start school behind their more affluent peers and they stay behind. It is an ugly fact and what is even more troubling is that it is entirely preventable.

Children need to be exposed to quality early learning experiences. The largest brain growth occurs from birth through age five and brain development is impacted by valuable experiences. Children who are exposed to early language and literacy experiences become better readers and better learners. Just as children develop language skills well before they learn to speak, they develop reading skills well before they learn to read.

An article written in the Washington Post stated that reading aloud to young children is so critical that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that doctors prescribe reading activities along with other advice given to parents at regular check-ups. It further stated that many pediatricians now believe that a child who has never held a book or listened to a story is not a healthy child.

Research continues to support that involved adults who read to children, discuss the stories, ask questions about content, point to and name pictures, and explain words help children gain language skills which is one of the foundations of literacy success.

The opposite is true for children who are not exposed to print. Early difficulties with language often signal future educational difficulties. About 10 million children have difficulty learning to read, 10 to 15 percent of them eventually drop out and only 2 percent complete a four year college program. This is a significant issue.

- Over the course of his or her lifetime, a high school dropout earns, on average, about \$260,000 less than a high school graduate.
- U.S. Senator Evan Bayh, from Indiana, once stated that determining the number of new prisons to be built is partially based on the number of second graders not reading at the second grade level.
- Increasing the graduation rate of male students in this country by just 5% could lead to a combined savings and revenue of \$8 billion a year by reducing crime related costs.
- Dropouts from the Class of 2008 alone will cost the nation more than \$319 billion in lost wages over the course of their lifetimes.

(Check these and other interesting facts at Alliance for Excellent Education at [www.all4ed.org](http://www.all4ed.org))

Those of us that are parents or work with parents can reverse this trend. There is an excellent publication from the National Institute for Literacy, called "A Child Becomes a Reader." It gives research based, practical tips on how to encourage language and reading from birth through age four. The book can be downloaded at the Literacy website at [www.nifl.gov](http://www.nifl.gov) or stop by the Prevention Services Network Family Resource Center and pick up a copy.



## Children and the Media

A preschool teacher observes boys and girls walking hand in hand, and she asks them what game they are playing. One of boys answers, “They’re our girlfriends. We’re on a date!” Another teacher watches a group of five year old girls dancing very sexy dance moves during dramatic play. She asks them where they learned the dances, and they happily answered that they had attended a “High School Musical” themed birthday party over the weekend. (Teaching Young Children vol.3, no.1, pg8).

What can we do if we are worried that our children are growing up too fast? Here are some ideas to help children be children.

Limit the time children are connected to entertainment outlets, including television, computers, and video games. The American Academy of Pediatrics is recommending one to two hours maximum for children over two.

Make a list with your children of things they can do instead of sitting in front of a screen. Let some of the activities be things they can do alone, like read a book, or do a puzzle, but make sure some of the activities are things you can do together. Let the younger children who cannot read, draw a picture, or something that will help them remember what they listed. At a recent Parent Talk Lunch, a health educator shared that she lets her children write down things they would like to do with her, and she puts them in a bowl. They get to take turns picking one out. If it is something that can be worked into that day, it is done immediately. If it is not, such as going out to dinner, and other plans have been made, then is it scheduled for a later time, and the child gets to pick again.

Schedule a weekly family night. It can be as simple as letting the children plan and help cook dinner, or could be more elaborate. Let the kids plan a play, make up a story, or take you on an imaginary trip.

Help your children become unique individuals. Read good books with your children that expose them to successful, confident people that are both male and female. Encourage life long hobbies; get them interested in science, and nature. Counter the fads they are destined to encounter away from home with strong, loving support in the home. Set an example by having interesting hobbies and pastimes of your own.

Network with family members and other parents to help preserve childhood. Agree to host parties that center on age appropriate fun instead of themes defined by the entertainment culture. Ask for clothes that are age appropriate and not watered down teenage clothing. Do your best to resist buying things that you know are not good for your children. It is not easy, but remember, parents are their children’s first and best teachers.

(These tips were taken from the magazine, “Teaching Young Children” vol. 3 no.1, a publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children).



# Family Time

## Make Time for Your Teen

Everyone is busy, including your teenagers, but finding time to spend together as a family is important. When you spend time with your kids, you let them know they are valued, and teens that are close to their parents are less likely to get involved in risky behaviors, including drug abuse.

Even though it does not always seem like they are listening, teens respond when parents talk. Research indicates that when kids know their parents would disapprove if they smoked marijuana, only 5% experimented. For teens that do not think their parents disapprove, 28% reported using in the past month.

Even with hectic schedules, you can find time to keep in touch with teens. It does not require a lot of planning. Just talking with your teen while cleaning up after dinner, or before bed, sends a message that you are interested and available. You can text them or leave them messages where they are sure to be found. Make an appointment to have a special dinner, or get a pizza at a favorite family restaurant. Try to be available if your teen opens the conversation. Much can be learned if the teen initiates the contact. It also means they trust you and are probably seeking advice.

For more tips and a wealth of information about helping your teen become resilient to alcohol and drug abuse, visit the interactive website at <http://www.theantidrug.com>

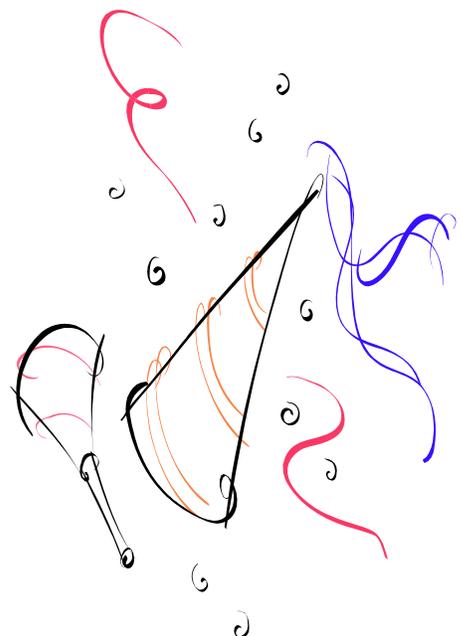
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### "Auld Lang Syne"

Did you know that Robert Burns, national poet of Scotland, first published the song, Auld Lang Syne, in 1796, after hearing it sung by old men in his homeland. So how did the song become synonymous with New Year's Eve in the United States?

It was bandleader Guy Lombardo who popularized the song and turned it into a New Year's tradition. Lombardo first heard "Auld Lang Syne" in his hometown of London, Ontario, where it was sung by Scottish immigrants. When he and his brothers formed the famous dance band, Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians, the song became one of their standards. Lombardo played the song at midnight at a New Year's Eve party at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City in 1929, and a tradition was born. After that, Lombardo's version of the song was played every New Year's eve from the 1930s until 1976 at the Waldorf Astoria. In the first years it was broadcast on radio, and then on television. The song became such a New Year's tradition that "Life magazine wrote that if Lombardo failed to play 'Auld Lang Syne,' the American public would not believe that the new year had really arrived."

This tidbit of New Year's information was taken from a New Year's Tradition website, at <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/newyearcelebrations.html>



# Women's Circle : Female Communication

**Are you free for lunch on Monday or Thursday?**

**Do you enjoy meeting new women and talking about what is important to you as a woman?**

If you answered yes to these questions, then you are a perfect candidate for Women's Circle.

NJM Management Services, Inc., a partner agency in the Prevention Services Network, is hosting 2 Series of Women's Circle this winter. Women's Circle is a facilitated discussion group that centers on the belief that women gain strength and friendship through conversation.

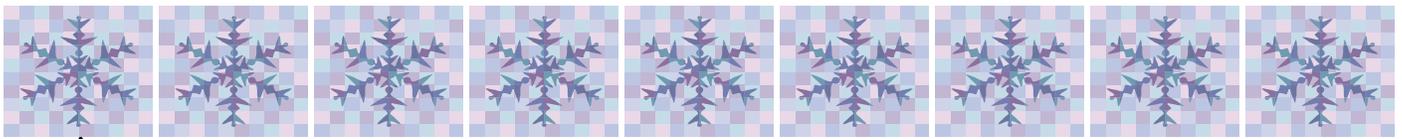
Series 1 is offered on Thursdays from 12:00 to 1:00. This series begins Thursday, January 14th and ends on Thursday, February 18th, 2010.

Series 2 is offered on Mondays from 12:00 to 1:00. This series begins on Monday, February 1st and ends Monday, March 15th.

Topics for these sessions are dedicated to a discussion of **Female Communication**. Weekly topics include **Listening, Ethics/Boundaries, Bark/Bite, Integrity, Affirmations, and Bonding**. Space is limited. It is expected if you enroll that you will attend all sessions.

To register, call Robyn Smercek at 697-4536  
Lunch is included at no charge.





# PSN Spotlight Series

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**January  
2010**

**Prevention Services  
Network  
Family Resource Center**

8600 Sheridan Road  
Kenosha, WI 53143  
262 697-4651



**Every Tuesday**

**1:00 to 2:00 PM**

• *January 5th*  
*"Resolutions*  
*and setting New Year's Goals"*  
*presented by*  
*Kathy Burns, PSN Outreach Specialist*

• *January 12th*  
*"Winter Safety"*  
*presented by*  
*Debbie Rueber, Division of Health*

• *January 19th*  
*"Early Literacy"*  
*presented by*  
*Nancy Willman, Director, A Child's Place*

• *January 26th*  
*"Talking to your pre-teen about sex"*  
*presented by*  
*Amy Bischel and Shawn Alexander, PSG*

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*Partnering, Supporting, Nurturing*

# January 2010 Parent Talk Lunch “FRESH STARTS”



Parent Talk Lunch is a community collaborative lunch sponsored by Prevention Services Network, the Kenosha County Division of Health, Goodwill Industries, Early Head Start and Kenosha Area Family and Aging Services, Inc. These organizations provide funds and staff time to bring a weekly lunch to parents served at the Kenosha County Human Services Building, 8600 Sheridan Road, Kenosha, WI 53143 in Room North Two.

**Each week a nurse from the Kenosha County Division of Health presents on a health related issue and the other partner agencies present on other issues of interest to families.**

**Wednesdays from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm**

**January 6th:           Setting Goals and Feeling Healthy**  
**January 13th:        Helping Your Children Experience Success  
                                  and Making a Health Folder**  
**January 20th:        Simplifying Your Life and Cold Weather Tips**  
**January 27th:        Resolving to Read and Getting a Check-Up**

**LUNCH is FREE but registration is required**

**Call A Child Place Child Care Center at 697-4754 to reserve a spot.**

There is no guarantee of lunch if you are not pre-registered.

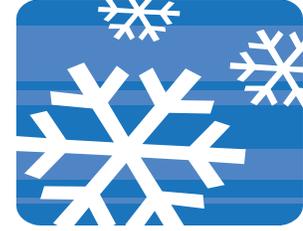
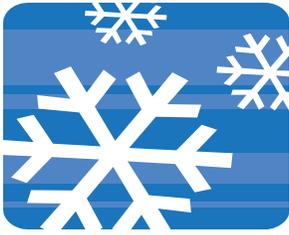
Child care is free if spots are available. Call A Child Place at 697-4754 to reserve a spot.

Call Kathy Burns, PSN Service Coordinator with questions: 697-4628.



**COME—LEARN—GROW**





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Some ideas for this calendar come from <a href="http://www.enchantedlearning.com">www.enchantedlearning.com</a> and <a href="http://www.holidayinsights.com">www.holidayinsights.com</a> and <a href="http://www.hisdates.com">www.hisdates.com</a>					1. Happy New Year! Best wishes for a happy, healthy year.	2. National Soup Month. Make a nice crock pot full of hearty winter soup.
3. J.R.R. Tolkien was born in 1892. Read the Lord of the Rings trilogy.	4. Louis Braille was born in 1809. He invented the Braille alphabet for the blind.	5. First woman governor, Nellie Ross, was inaugurated in 1925, in Wyoming.	6. National Tea Month. Brew a cup of tea, and curl up with a good book.	7. Galileo discovered Jupiter's four largest moons in 1610.	8. Elvis Presley was born in 1935.	9. National Static Electricity Day. Rub an inflated balloon on your hair and stick it to the wall. The kids will enjoy it.
10. First meeting of the United Nations in 1946 in London.	11. Milk Day. Milk was first delivered in bottles, door to door, in 1878.	12. National Work Harder Day. Feel fortunate you have a job. Give it your best today.	13. Make your dreams come true day. Talk with your children about their dreams.	14. Albert Schweitzer was born in 1875. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952.	15. Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday.	16. National Nothing Day. Take a day of rest and enjoy your family.
17. Ben Franklin was born in 1706. We have bifocals, odometers, and lightening rods thanks to him.	18. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is honored on this day.	19. Popcorn Day. A cheap, yummy snack that smells so good.	20. Eye Care Month. Get a check up for yourself and the kids.	21. Squirrel appreciation day. Put out some nuts for them to eat during this cold month.	22. National Hobby Month. Introduce your kids to a new hobby. Maybe start collecting pennies.	23. National Handwriting Day. Write someone a letter.
24. Compliment Day. Find something nice to say to everyone today.	25. Robert Burns, Scotland's national poet was born 251 years ago.	26. Australia Day. Learn something new about "the land down under."	27. Chocolate Cake Day. Nothing else needs to be said!	28. Ernie from Sesame Street first appeared in 1969.	29. National Puzzle Day. Making a puzzle is a nice way to spend a family evening.	30. First full moon of year. If it's a clear night, enjoy the splendor.
31. Jackie Robinson, major league baseball's first African American players was born in 1919.	<i>Happy New Year!</i>					