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PSN Family Resource Center NEWSLETTER

24 Fun Things to Do With Kids in Winter

Got cabin fever? You're not alone. Being stuck indoors all winter will make anyone antsy. Instead of going stir crazy, try these 24 fun things to do with kids in winter.

1. Make homemade hot cocoa with marshmallows.
2. Go sledding together. (Don't forget to bundle up and bring the bike helmets for added safety!)
3. Make paper snowflakes and hang them up in unexpected places around your home.
4. Go bowling. If your kids are young, try the 'duck pins' for little ones.
5. Use your phone's camera to make a slow-motion video of the snow accumulating outside your window. Then send it to family members via email to show them how deep the snow really is!
6. Make a graph showing each day's high and low temperatures for the week. Then make predictions about next week and see who's closest to each day's actual temperature.
7. Make ice cream using snow.
8. Go roller skating at an indoor rink that plays your favorite music.
9. Have a snowball fight. If your kids are different ages/sizes, set a few 'ground rules' up front.
10. Play board games together, and be sure to introduce the kids to some of your favorites!
11. Make a pine cone bird feeder using peanut butter and birdseed. Then hang it outside a window where you'll get to see the birds enjoy the treat each day.
12. Take a guess at how much snow is on the ground. Then grab a ruler and go measure it to see how much snow you've gotten this year.
13. Make greeting cards for residents of a local nursing home. Then take a 'field trip' to deliver them together.
14. Make snow angels in your yard and watch the snow fall together.
15. Buy a kid-sized shovel and shovel the driveway or sidewalk together. (If the snow is really deep, be sure to carve out a 'lighter' area for your kids to work.)
16. Visit your local library and check out books on winter themes. Then come home and take turns reading to one another. Bonus: use your phone to record one another reading and then save the recordings for bedtime stories on a night when you're extra exhausted.
17. Draw and color a mural showing a winter scene. Then hang it up in your living room where the kids will enjoy seeing it every day, or mail it to a family member who lives in an area of the country unaccustomed to snow.
18. Build a snow fort together. Or, if it's too cold outside, build your own super fort indoors out of blankets, pillows, and large boxes.
19. Take a knitting class at your local craft store and make hats for each other.
20. Fill a spray bottle with colored water and write in the snow. This is a great way for young kids to practice their letters.
21. Bundle up and take a walk during a snowstorm.
22. Make a snowman sun catcher and hang it in a window that catches the bright morning sun.
23. Collect old winter coats from family members and friends. Then donate them to a local charity.
24. Use the back side of some leftover wrapping paper to draw and color life-sized pictures of one another.

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MLK Day of Service: What it is and how to get involved

As the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday comes in January, on the third Monday of the month, the day is not just a day off of work or school, but has become a day for people to volunteer and serve their community. Here is some information about the holiday.

What is the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service?

According to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), legislation made King's birthday a national holiday in 1983. In 1994, Congress designated the federal holiday as a national day of service. It is the only federal holiday with such a designation.

Why is the holiday a day of service?

"The MLK Day of Service is a way to transform Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and teachings into community action that helps solve social problems," the CNCS website says. The King Center outlines the Triple Evils, poverty, racism and militarism, as barriers toward the Beloved Community, which was coined by philosopher-theologian Josiah Royce, who founded the fellowship of reconciliation.

King was also a member of the fellowship and pushed the term into the mainstream. King has described the Beloved Community as the end goal of protests and boycotts, in which the Triple Evils would not exist and good would prevail over them.

What type of service is done on this day?

Any form of service that makes efforts toward King's Beloved Community is encouraged. It could "meet a tangible need, or it may meet a need of the spirit," according to the CNCS. Services include but are not limited to delivering meals, building homes for those in need, helping others with financial literacy skills and collecting food and clothing.

How can people get involved?

The CNCS has a website where people interested in participating can find volunteer opportunities in their area at serve.gov. People can also plan their own volunteer opportunities and register them as an MLK Day event at the National Service website, nationalservice.gov/mlkday.

For a list of events in Kenosha during Kindness Week, visit the Kenosha Coalition for Dismantling Racism facebook page.

Upcoming Programs & Training Opportunities

Spotlight on Parenting—Seminar

Triple P is for parents of children 0-12 years old and gives ideas to deal with big and small problems of family life. Sessions will be held on **Wednesdays from 5:30pm—7pm in January at the Northside Public Library, 1500 27th Ave.**

Topics include:

- Jan 10—The Power of Positive Parenting
- Jan 17—Raising Confident, Competent Children
- Jan 31—Raising Resilient Children

FREE dinner and child care provided. Children over 5 will participate in a STEAM activity.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Register online at <https://goo.gl/forms/6XrxuqpcNbYDYfgy1> or by calling Erin at 262-697-4628.

Homestead Tax Credit Seminar

Wednesday, January 24, 2018

11am—12pm OR 1pm—2pm
at the PSN Family Resource Center,
8600 Sheridan Road, Kenosha.

Come learn tips on how to file your homestead credit and claim extra dollars you may be eligible for through your tax return.

This free seminar is offered by United Way of Kenosha County's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Limited space, RSVP Required.

Register online at <https://goo.gl/forms/9dG31D6uRe6JF5Rb2> or call Erin at 262.697.4628 to reserve a spot.

Spotlight on Parenting—Group

Triple P is for parents of children 0-12 years old and gives ideas to deal with big and small problems of family life. Sessions will be held on **Mondays from 4:30pm—6:30pm in March at the Northside Public Library, 1500 27th Ave.**

Topics include:

- March 5—Fighting and Aggression
- March 12—Dealing with Disobedience
- March 19—Hassle-free Shopping
- March 26—Developing Good Bed Time Routines

FREE dinner and child care provided. Children over 5 will participate in a STEAM activity.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Register online at <https://goo.gl/forms/05eO3YSR3u3wWiVh1> or by calling Erin at 262-697-4628.

New Year, New You? 5 Practical Tips to Help Your Family with New Year's Resolutions

The new year is a great time to encourage your children to set goals. Achieving goals is an important life skill, one that can teach both short and long term planning as well as persistence. However, sometimes poorly thought-out or unrealistic goals can undermine the desired lessons and may lead to feelings of frustration and failure. Here are 5 tips to help your child experience success in her New Year's Resolutions.

1. Family goal-making party

You are much more likely to keep a goal if someone else knows about it.

Have a family meeting and brainstorm potential goals. At this stage, no goal is too big or too small. Have fun with it. Suggest ridiculous goals. Get your kids laughing.

Once you have a decent list, **have each child narrow their list to one or two things** they would like to accomplish.

Write them down as a family. Point out to your children that some goals may feel too embarrassing or too personal to share with everyone. Let them know they are welcome to talk to you in private, or keep the goal to themselves but write it down in their journal. Even if you don't share your goal with another person, writing it down still makes you more likely to focus and succeed.

2. Define the goal

Once your child has decided on a goal, make sure he knows exactly what it means. This may seem obvious but often when we make goals, we use general, overarching words that are hard to clearly define.

For example, *being kind to sister* is a wonderful goal but it is a little vague. We all know what it means to be kind but your child will have a better chance of success if you encourage him to think exactly about how and when he will be kind. Have him list specific actions that he will do. For example, *I will share my toys with my sister, or When my sister asks me to leave her alone, I will.* These concrete examples will give your child concrete ways to reach his goal.

3. Start small

Often when children make goals, they think too big. My own daughter suggested that her New Year's Resolution would be to "Never. Eat. Candy. Again." Not very likely.

Help your child make a goal she will be able to keep. If eating less sweets is the goal, suggest picking two days per week where it is okay to eat treats but hold off on the other days. Also help your child to start where he is.

For example, if your son wants to practice the piano more but currently doesn't practice at all, don't let him make a goal to play every single day. Suggest starting with two or three days per week which is still a huge achievement. You want the goals to be a stretch, but also to be attainable.

Another way to start small is to break the goal into smaller steps at first. So, if your son wants to keep his room clean, start by making a goal to keep the clothes put away. Once he is consistently doing that he can build on his goal. This way he is more likely to be successful.

4. Set the stage

When you are trying to change a habit, you should do everything you can to set the stage in your favor. What exactly does this mean? Well, it means you should **help your child think about what happens right before the desired behavior change.**

For example, if your daughter makes a goal to be on time to school, help her brainstorm reasons why she is often late. This might include not getting up when her alarm rings, or staying up too late. It also might help to lay out clothes the night before. The point is to do everything you can to support the completion of the goal, before the situation happens. Set the stage for success.

5. Track progress

Another huge key to successful goal keeping is to track progress. **Tracking progress allows your child to easily see her successes and to quickly notice if she needs to work a little harder.**

Help your child come up with a system that works. This could be a daily sticker chart or a weekly check in with you to assess how it is going. Let your child decide what makes sense. **Whatever you choose to do, your child should be in charge.** If you decide on a sticker chart, help your child make the chart and buy the stickers but she gets to decide when and if she earns the stickers. This means that you should not argue with her decision. If she feels she was successful, she puts on a sticker. You may find that she is harder on herself than you would be. Remember, the point of making goals is to learn to change your own behavior. You want the power to stay with your child. Of course, check in and be supportive but let your child be the one keeping track.

These five tips should help your child make and keep her New Year's resolutions. They may even help you make and keep yours.

One last note of caution: It may feel tempting to reward your child with a small toy or present for reaching his goals. I would caution against it. You want the motivation to keep goals to come from within your child. I think it is fair to have a family party (movie night or ice cream trip) to celebrate the whole family's success at keeping New Year's resolutions but I would let your child own his own goal setting and success. If he is struggling, you could suggest ways he could reward himself. For example, committing to save his screen time until after his room is clean or waiting to use his allowance until he has met his goal for a week.

PSN Family Resource Center

The mission of the PSN Family Resource Center is to provide programs and services that build on family strengths through prevention, education, support and networking in collaboration with other resources in the community.

The PSN Family Resource Center is located in the Kenosha County Human Services Building, 8600 Sheridan Road, Kenosha, Entrance B.

Drop-in hours are available every Tuesday and Thursday from 2pm—4pm.

Talk with someone about parenting concerns, pick up information about community resources or find out about services of PSN.



Meet Our Staff

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Like us on Facebook for up-to-date Parent Talk Lunch schedules and other program information or visit our website: www.PSNFamilyResourceCenter.com.

Did you miss a past issue of the PSN Newsletter? Find it here:
<http://www.kenoshacounty.org/Archive.aspx?>

THANK YOU!

On behalf of all the staff at the PSN Family Resource Center, along with the families we serve, we'd like to extend a huge THANK YOU to Casondra Webb and her mom, Christiane Webb.

This year, instead of asking her friends to bring her gifts to her 13th birthday party, Casondra asked all of her guests to bring a toy for a child between the ages of 0—12. Casondra and her guests were so generous that two large boxes of toys were collected.

Casondra's mom, Chrisitane, visited the PSN Family Resource Center to donate the toys to the families we serve in the community.

Because of their kindness and generosity, many families in Kenosha County had an even more amazing holiday than they were expecting.

Thank you, Casondra! We wish you the best 13th year!!

