

Our current and past family newsletters are posted to our website. Check them out at <https://firststepscentralmn.org/for-families>

How to Talk to Young Children About Body Safety & Consent

(from <https://tinyurl.com/35bwzhnu>)

- Start body safety talk when your child is an infant. Tell your child that you are going to change their diaper and wipe their bottom. As they get older and whenever possible, ask their permission and give them privacy when going to the bathroom or changing clothes.
- Remind your child that their body is THEIR body and no-one else has the right to touch it, especially your private areas (those covered by a swimsuit).
- Talk about "safe" and "unsafe" touching rather than "good" or "bad" to reduce guilt or shame. Explain that if someone uses unsafe touch, they must tell you or another trusted adult and keep telling until someone helps them.
- Use age-appropriate words, as well as teach children proper names for body parts.
- Teach the difference between healthy secrets (surprise party) and unhealthy secrets (secret touching from others)
- Talk about what actions they can take if they feel worried or scared. Remind them that they will not be in trouble if they tell you or another trusted adult for help.
- Revisit this topic about body safety and consent often.

"With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts."
Eleanor Roosevelt

Embrace the Snow

Get outdoors and play in the snow! Here are some great activities to promote gross motor skills: (<https://tinyurl.com/ybe8m9jw>)

- Make a hopscotch path
- Build a snowman
- Go sledding
- Kick the snow on the ground or jump and land in a snow pile
- Make a winter obstacle course through the snow
- Pretend snow is sand and use any sand toys in the snow
- Throw snow



Family Safety Resources

- 911 (for all emergency or safety concerns)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
- Four County Crisis Response Team: 320-253-5555
- National Human Trafficking Hotline 888-373-7888 or text "HELP" to BEFREE (233733)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or text "START" to 88788
- Anna Marie's Alliance <https://annamaries.org/>
- This shelter is a safe place for survivors of domestic abuse. They can receive secure, safe, temporary residence for themselves, their children, and even their pets. 24 Hour Crisis Line 320-253-6900 or 800-950-2203
- Rivers of Hope <https://riversofhope.org/>
- Connects victims of family violence to safe and secure emergency housing and local shelters and assists clients with food, clothing and other personal items. 24 Hour Crisis Line 763-295-3433
- Central MN Sexual Assault Center <https://cmsac.org/>
- A 24 hour crisis intervention agency providing direct services to people affected by any form of sexual violence. 24 Hour Crisis Line 320-251-4357 or 800-237-5090
- Terebinth Refuge <https://www.terebinthrefuge.org/>
- A shelter and safe home that brings hope, healing services, and freedom to sexually exploited and trafficked women. Call/text Crisis Line 320-428-4707

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

RSV causes infections of the lungs and respiratory tract. It is most common in children under the age of 2, but can also infect adults. Those most at risk are premature infants, older adults, people with heart and lung disease, and anyone with a weak immune system.

Signs and symptoms commonly appear about 4-6 days after exposure to the virus. An infected person is most contagious during the first week or so after infection. But in infants and those with weakened immunity, the virus may continue to spread even after symptoms go away, for up to four weeks.

Prevention

- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid exposure
- Keep things clean
- Don't share drinking glasses
- Avoid smoking around your child or in environments your child is in.
- Clean toys regularly

Learn more about signs and symptoms, as well as risk factors and complications:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8ewvsk>



Hand-Foot-and-Mouth (HFM) Disease

HFM is a mild, contagious viral infection common in young children. It is characterized by sores in the mouth and a rash on the hands and feet. People infected may also experience fever, sore throat, loss of appetite, or irritability.

The usual period from initial infection to the onset of signs and symptoms is 3-6 days. The illness spreads by person-to-person contact with an infected person's:

- Nasal secretions or throat discharge
- Saliva
- Fluid from blisters
- Stool
- Respiratory droplets sprayed in the air after a cough or sneeze

A person is most contagious during the first week of illness, but the virus can remain in the body for weeks after signs and symptoms are gone.

There is no specific treatment for HFM. To reduce your risk of infection, wash hands often and avoid close contact with people who are infected. It is also important to disinfect common areas, including toys, pacifiers, and surfaces.

Find out more at:

<https://tinyurl.com/3zk7dnrf>

Influenza (Flu)

Influenza is a viral infection that attacks your respiratory system. It is different than a "stomach flu" that causes diarrhea and vomiting.

For most people, influenza resolves on its own. But sometimes, influenza and its complications can be deadly. Those at highest risk include:

- Young children under age 5, especially those under 6 months old
- Adults older than 65
- Pregnant women and women up to two weeks after giving birth
- People with weakened immune systems or who have chronic illnesses

Your best defense against severe flu symptoms is receiving the annual flu vaccine. Anyone over the age of 6 months can receive a flu vaccine. Receiving the flu vaccine during pregnancy is also recommended.

As always, remember to wash your hand regularly, get adequate sleep, eat healthy foods and remain physically active to strengthen your immune system all year long.

Find out more information about influenza at:

<https://tinyurl.com/y8438tc7>



Craft Corner

Snowman Paper Plate Masks

Supplies: paper plates, construction paper, glue, snowflake stickers, wood craft sticks, scissors
<https://tinyurl.com/ku4s4zu9>



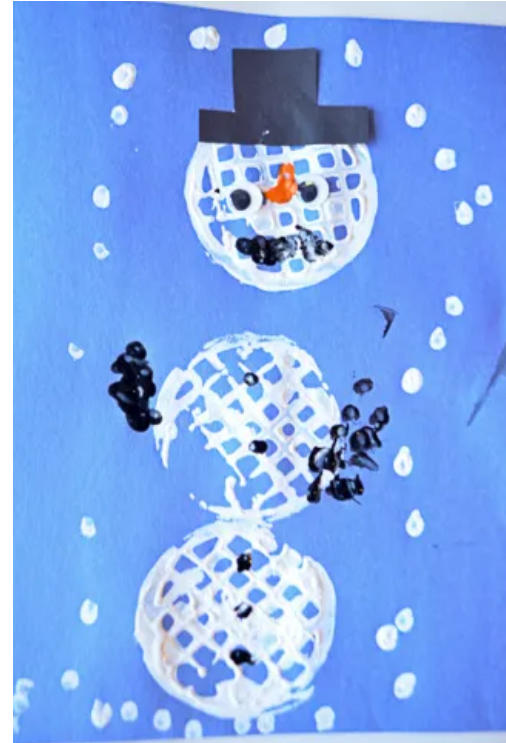
Crunchy Box

Supplies: plastic storage tub, stale food (pasta, cereal, crackers)
<https://tinyurl.com/55t3xa39>



Potato Masher Snowman

Supplies: paper, paint, glue, scissors, potato masher
<https://tinyurl.com/dhpnvjap>



Exploring Tunnels: Gross Motor Play

Supplies: paper, scissors, tape, toy cars
<https://tinyurl.com/2p84hwec>



Peeling Tape Fine Motor Baby Activity

Supplies: colored tape, flat surface (high chair, table, wall, floor)
<https://tinyurl.com/2rzkhutm>





Circle of Security® PARENTING SERIES

At times all caregivers feel lost or without a clue about what our child might need from us. Imagine what it might feel like if you were able to make sense of what your child was really asking from you. The Circle of Security® Parenting™ program is based on decades of research about how secure caregiver-child relationships can be supported and strengthened.

Learning Objectives of the Class:

- Understand your child's emotional world by learning to read the emotional needs
- Support your child's ability to successfully manage emotions
- Enhance the development of your child's self esteem
- Honor your innate wisdom and desire for your child to be secure in their relationship with you

Presented by: Pam Walz

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Cost: Free to Participants thanks to:

United Way
of Central Minnesota



Choose from one of these two options:

Evening Option: Wednesday evenings from 6:30-9:00pm (total of 4 sessions)

Dates: January 12, 19, 26, and February 2, 2022

Daytime Option: Wednesday afternoons from 12:00-1:00pm (total of 8 sessions)

Dates: January 12, 19, 26, February 2, 9, 16, 23, March 2, 2022

Who should attend: Parents, caregivers, foster parents, and guardians
(minimum of 5 caregivers, maximum of 15 caregivers)

Attending every week is important and expected! Families who attend every session will receive a gift of their choice (\$40 value) at the end of the class.

For questions or to register, please contact Cathy at Ellison Center:

320-406-1600, extension 0

or email: office@ellisoncenter.org

Please indicate if you want the Evening or Daytime option when registering.

Ellison Center
A place for growth, development, and reflection

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