MILFORD FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

The Infant and Toddler Times

JUDY LOBDELL, EDITOR

November 2017

Dates to Remember

November

4th. Preschool Showcase 11 AM-1 PM Milford Public Library **5th.** Daylight Saving Time ends. Turn clocks back.. **7th.** Election Day.

Center closed. **22nd-24th.** *Thanksgiving holiday.*

Center closed.



December 2nd. Holiday Concert (see page 5)

Please see page 2 for important information about the Milford Family Resource Center Funding

The Milford Family Resource Center @Mathewson School 466 West River Street Milford, CT 06461 (203)783-3626 mfrc@milforded.org

Milford Family Resource Center Staff:: Program Manager: Peggy Kelly Parent Educators: Kathy Aspinwall Judy Lobdell Anne Mundy

Simple Thanksgiving Ideas by Jessica Efird (from PBS.org)

In the chaos between Halloween and the winter holidays, Thanksgiving often becomes an afterthought, a "How did this sneak up on me?" sort of holiday. It is easy to understand why; as soon as the candy has been passed out on October 31, the holiday music, advertisements and store decorations come out in full force. But gratitude and pausing to focus on the blessings of life are important! This year, consider adding a new emphasis to your Thanksgiving Day celebration. Begin your own family tradition to give Thanksgiving its well-deserved and special meaning.

Create a Thanksgiving centerpiece. Julie Fraley, a mother to two elementary-aged children in North Olmsted, Ohio, was looking for an inexpensive centerpiece years ago when she decided to "make a centerpiece by getting a branch from the yard and putting it in a vase. Then I cut out leaves from colored construction paper and put string on each one." Fraley shares that this centerpiece has become an annual tradition in which each person at the table "has to take a few leaves, write their name and date on one side and what they are thankful for on the other side, then hang them on our 'Tree of Thankfulness' in the center of the table." Fraley then saves the leaves each year and reads ones from prior years during the meal. The tree also serves as a way to record your children's growth. As Fraley recalls, "I used to write for them when they were little. Then (there are) the years when they first started writing on their own—barely legible, but totally precious. Now they are getting older and their leaves are growing with them—more thought out and expressive."

Record blessings from year to year. Use an inexpensive plain tablecloth and a few permanent markers to record your family's blessings each Thanksgiving. Begin by lining your table with either butcher paper or newspaper to protect the tabletop and then drape the tablecloth on top. Pass around a permanent marker during the meal. Guests can either write or draw a picture of that for which they are thankful, along with their name and the year. Be sure to assist little ones, so that their marker drawings stay on the tablecloth. Use colorful markers to make the tablecloth look festive and be sure to instruct everyone to only write over a small portion of the fabric. After the Thanksgiving meal is over, you can use the tablecloth during family gatherings as a way to remind yourselves of gratitude. Then, when Thanksgiving rolls around again, bring out the tablecloth and add a new year's worth of blessings. By making it an annual tradition, you'll have a very special tablecloth to use each year.

Serve those less fortunate. Perhaps there is no better way to feel truly blessed than to serve someone else in need. Whitney Ingram, a mom to three young children in Levi, Utah, explains, "When I was younger, my mom would talk to someone at church who was in charge of humanitarian projects and service projects. She would get a project for us to do before and after Thanksgiving dinner."

Even small children can grasp the concept of helping others and perform simple tasks with your family. Ingram recalls that even as a young child, "I always liked the concept of us giving back after we [had] been given so much."

Get active before the meal! Consider participating in a "Turkey Trot" or create your own Thanksgiving morning run or walk together as a family. Many towns and cities host family-friendly races on Thanksgiving morning that often include "Tot Trots" or one-mile walks that are fun for the whole family, usually supporting a nonprofit or charitable cause. Getting up and being active together as a family can help remind you to be thankful for just being healthy. It also can help start the biggest day of eating of the year on a healthful note. As you walk or run, you can even reflect on the year and express gratitude. No matter what tradition your family chooses for your Thanksgiving Day celebration, anything small or large can help create a sense of community and belonging among your Thanksgiving guests. Ingram remembers about the service projects she and her family completed, "that they always had us sitting around the living room together, chatting and laughing and having a good time. Isn't that always how service goes?"

Even simple things like an annual breaking of the turkey wishbone or verbally sharing your blessings, when done in a mindful way, will help make Thanksgiving a special moment on your holiday calendar.

Check out the information on pages 7 - 9 for a convenient way to locally make the holidays a little warmer for those in need.

Family Resource Centers in Connecticut Funded

The Milford Family Resource Center is happy to announce that funding for the continuation of the Family Resource Centers in the State of Connecticut has been approved by the Senate and House of Representatives.

We, at the Milford Family Resource Center, are appreciative of the support of the Milford Legislative Delegation, the Milford Public School System, Mayor Blake and the families who contacted our legislators to request continued support of the Family Resource Center.

What is important to note is that because of the support of the Milford Public Schools, the program continued to offer services to the families of Milford through the Summer and into the Fall.

We look forward to offer ongoing Personal visits, Playgroups, Parent Seminars, Resource and Referrals, Monthly Newsletters, Ages and Stages Questionnaires, Parent Education, Preschool Information and Referrals and the Parent Warm Line.



Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

It's amazing what one person can do! If you want to make a real difference, The Parent Leadership Training Institute is a **free** educational experience that will prepare you to become an effective advocate and an agent of change for all children – in schools, communities and government.

A new session of PLTI is set to begin in Milford in January, 2018. Parents, grandparents and other adults who wish to improve the lives of children and families in our community are encouraged to participate. Applications are now being accepted for a class that will be limited to 25 participants. For more information please contact Lesley Darling at the Milford Health Department. Phone: <u>203-783-3383</u>

Email: <u>ldarling@ci.milford.ct.us</u>

You can also register at the following link: <u>http://www.ci.milford.ct.us/health-department/</u>webforms/plti-online-registration

"I had a great experience with Milford's PLTI program. There are few programs as uniquely designed to put people in touch with their communities. It was an extremely empowering experience."

--Augie Harrigan, Milford PLTI Class of 2012











Halloween Fun 2017





































LIVE IN CONCERT "A CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY JOURNEY" featuring:



Hosted by the Milford Family Resource Center Saturday, December 2nd, 2017 at Mathewson Elementary School

466 West River Street Milford, CT

Schedule of Events: 10:00 - 11:00 AM. A VISIT FROM SANTA, FACE PAINTING, and A READING CORNER.

11:00 - Noon

THE LEARNING STATION Concert

Noon - 1:00 PM.

A VISIT FROM SANTA, FACE PAINTING, A READING CORNER, and BAKE SALE TICKETS: **\$5.00** No charge for children under two. Call 783-3626 or EMAIL the Milford Family Resource Center at MFRC@MILFORDED.ORG

DID YOU KNOW THAT

*Reading is an extremely important way to help babies learn to speak and understand language. It also helps to cultivate attachment as it is an activity that is shared with positive emotion. It is not as important what you read to babies, just that you read something to them! Luckily, babies are very interested in books. They may try putting books in their mouths or simply carry books around with them. For ideas on books that are especially helpful for infants, toddlers or preschoolers, talk to your local librarian and visit the following websites: www.reachoutandread.org and www.scholastic.com

(* This information is from the cdhi.org publication, 'Promoting Healthy Child Development' Vol 2)







November 2017 calendar Milford Public Library Children's Department 203-783-3312; milfordlibrary.org

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30am. Come to the library and enjoy stories, a craft and new friends. For ages 3 and up with a caregiver.

TODDLER TIME Every Thursday at 10am and 11am Let's all share fingerplays, songs and stories together. Come and meet new friends at the library! For ages 2 and under with a caregiver. LEGO© BUILD-A-THON Tuesday November 7 from 5:30-7pm For ages 5 and up. The library will provide the LEGO© bricks, you provide the imagination! Creations cannot be taken home, but may be displayed in the library. LEGO© Build-a-thons will be held the first Tuesday of every month. **This is a library program and not affiliated with LEGO© Corp.*

NAVIGATING THE SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS: A PROGRAM FOR PARENTS Wednesday November 8 at 7pm. The school special education process can be overwhelming for many families. Education attorney Amy Vatner will help you learn how to effectively advocate for your child and give you the tools to navigate the special education system. Amy Vatner is an education attorney with the Pellegrino Law Firm and a clinical instructor at the Yale Child Study Center Developmental Disabilities Clinic. She helps parents of children with disabilities obtain appropriate services and placements.

CHESS CLUB Tuesday November 14 from 6:30pm-7:30pm Sponsored by Milford's Promise and The Milford Police Union, for players in grades K-12 of all skill levels. Sets will be provided or you may bring your own. A presentation on the fundamentals of chess will be shown. The Chess Club at the Library meets the second Tuesday of every month. Registration required.

STARRY NIGHT STORIES Wednesday November 15 at 6:30pm An evening storytime for ages 3 and up. Siblings always welcome. Make sure to come dressed in your pajamas. Starry Night Storytimes will be held the third Wednesday of the month from September-December.

TEDDY BEAR JAMBOREE Saturday November 18 at 10:30am for ages 4 and up. Bring your bears for a fun morning of activities and snacks. Don't forget to snap a souvenir photo in our Teddy Bear photo booth. Local author Jane Evans will share her book, *The World of Teddy B*, which will be available for sale for \$12.

FUN FALL CRAFT in the Brain Station Saturday November 18 from 3pm-4pm for ages 7-12. Create a whimsical mixed media paper tree. Reservations required. <u>milfordbrainstation@gmail.com</u>. TRADITIONS OF CHINESE ACROBATICS Friday November 24 at 2pm. You will not believe your eyes! Renowned acrobat Li Liu will dazzle the audience with feats of water bowl manipulation, foot juggling, hand balancing and more. You may even be called upon to show off your own ribbon dancing and plate spinning skills.

MUSIC TOGTHER Thursday November 30 at 6:15pm. Ages 0-5. This is an opportunity for caregivers and children to share music, instruments and movement together. Children of all abilities are welcome. Space is limited. Registration required.

Milford Salvation Army Service Unit @Milford Family Resource Center 466 West River Street Milford, Connecticut 06461 203-783-3627

The Milford Salvation Service Unit Special Appeal

As we approach the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday season, it is so heartening to see how generous the Milford community is to families with young children, adults and seniors living alone who are in need of food for the holidays. Individuals, businesses, schools and organizations generously contribute to Boy Scout Food Drive that help hundreds at Thanksgiving. Non-profit groups, such as Women's Inc., local churches, companies and individuals help with dinner on Christmas Day, as well.

Sadly, we at the Milford Salvation Army Service Unit, receive requests each week for food gift cards. Many of the requests are from working families who are not eligible for the Connecticut Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; or if they do have SNAP, run out of food by the end of each month (particularly if the family has growing children). Some of the families access the Milford Food Bank or other food banks within the community. However, all families need eggs, milk, margarine, fresh vegetables, fruit and bread.

It is with knowing that many of Milford families are in need of support each month, we are asking members of the Milford community to contribute a gift card to the Milford Salvation Service Unit to help us help the families beyond holiday time.

You may mail or drop off a gift card to Stop & Shop or Shop Rite to the address above. Please indicate your name and contact information so that we can acknowledge your kind assistance.

Thank you,

Margaret E. Kelly, Service Unit Chair, Milford Family Resource Center Lesley Darling, Service Coordinator, Milford Health Department Joan Canavan, Treasurer Jean Kaluzinski, Milford Senior Center Bob Lessard, St. Mary's Parish Outreach Committee



All members of the Service Unit are volunteers.





NEED DIAPERS?



BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN DESERVE TO BE DRY!

- Applicants must be residents of Milford.
- The child (or children) receiving diapers must be under 4 years of age (expectant mothers are welcome to apply).
- Children with Special Needs/ Disabilities welcome to apply.
- Financial/other eligibility guidelines apply please contact the Diaper Bank for more information and an appointment/application.

For more information, please contact the Diaper Bank -<u>diapers@teaminc.org</u> 203.878.9153





5TH Annual Holiday Benefit and Silent Auction Sponsored by The Milford Kiwanis Club

\$60.00 per person

Dinner. 2 Hour open bar, silent auction, Live auction, LIVE MUSIC , Door prizes & much more

www.keepingmilfordwarm.com

December 9th 2017 6:30PM - 11:00PM

Grassy Hill Country Club 441 Clark Lane Milford, CT 06460