

# Thrive update



*Enhance Inspire*  
*Inform healthy kids make better learners*

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BVSD Community Connections

Look for us on the web!  
[www.bvsd.org](http://www.bvsd.org)

## >> Why Recess May be the Most Important Part of the School Day

There's a big difference between skills and abilities. While we are born with certain natural abilities, skills are learned and require practice to develop. It is important to remember that our children are not born with good social skills, but learn these skills through modeling and practice. There are numerous research studies that highlight the importance of healthy social skill development and its impact on academic development, school success, as well as success later in life. Conversely, children with poor social skills are at increased risk of difficulties in interpersonal relationships, peer rejection, poor academic performance, signs of depression/aggression/anxiety, and are at higher risk of involvement in the criminal justice system as adults. Social skill deficits can also impact school safety and have been a factor in the recent rash of school shootings.



In addition to focusing on developing good academic skills, we must also prioritize our children's development of healthy social behaviors. Important components of good social skills include: nonverbal communication skills, empathy, problem solving skills, and conflict resolution skills. Here are some strategies parents can use to promote healthy social skill development:

- Cultivate good role models. A lot of what your child knows regarding social interaction is learned at home, not just from parents but also from siblings. Making conscious efforts to discuss, practice, and reinforce pro-social skills can make a huge difference.
- Provide opportunities for social interaction. Ensuring that your child has plenty of unstructured time to play and interact with others, as well as involvement in structured afterschool activities, will provide them with the critical opportunities for practice.
- Teach problem solving skills. Help your child develop problem solving skills by following these simple steps: Identify the problem, brainstorm possible solutions, predict the probable outcome for each solution, and choose the one that has the highest probability of success; if it fails, choose another solution.
- If needed, consider enrolling your child in an effective social skills group. Find a licensed therapist in the community who offers structured social skills training for your child's age group.

Perhaps we need to start thinking about the four "Rs" in education: Reading, wRiting, aRithmetic, and Relationships. I've never met an elementary student who didn't feel that recess was too short or a secondary student who didn't wish that they had less homework in order to socialize more with friends. Maybe they're onto something.

**Dr. Jan Hittelman, Ph.D.**  
Boulder Psychological Services

## >> Colorado DACA Project gives resources to immigrants

For many young people who immigrated to the United States as children, life is lived in the shadows. They are unable to obtain a driver's license or work legally. Their ability to attain higher education is limited. They live in fear of being found out.

Despite wanting to thrive and to give themselves a better life, they are given few opportunities to pull themselves out of the shadows, out of poverty.

The YMCA's Colorado DACA Project gives young immigrants resources, knowledge and support as they apply for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, a renewable two-year authorization to live and work in the United States. The Colorado DACA Project, a program of the YMCA of Boulder Valley, aims to educate and break down the legal and financial barriers to deferred action for thousands of eligible Colorado immigrants. DACA offers them an opportunity to become contributing members of our community and the nation — and to come out of the shadows.

To learn more about DACA or to see the requirements for DACA, visit [ColoradoDACAProject.org](http://ColoradoDACAProject.org).



## >> YMCA encourages you to put down your devices

Have you ever looked around a room and found that everyone is looking at their phones? Is it a waiting room? Or restaurant? Is it your own dining room?

Chances are, it's all of the above.

According to the Pew Research Center, 90 percent of American adults own a cell phone. Nearly all use their phone to text message, and 29 percent of cell owners describe their cell phone as "something they can't imagine living without."

For families, that has meant a better ability to stay connected, new educational resources and even more entertainment. But it doesn't mean that it's always healthy.

In a recent study, anthropological researchers observed family interactions at a fast food restaurant. Not surprising, just 15 of the 55 groups studied had no device. For those parents observed with no devices, there was an increased amount of interaction with their children. For the parents with devices, there was a lack of connection with and attention toward their children.

That can be frustrating for a child. While you are emailing or picking a new profile photo, your child may be in need of some of some good ol' fashioned parenting. Kids can grow sad, angry, mad and frustrated when they have to battle a device for a parent's attention. It's like a whole new kind of sibling rivalry — except the rival is your iPhone.

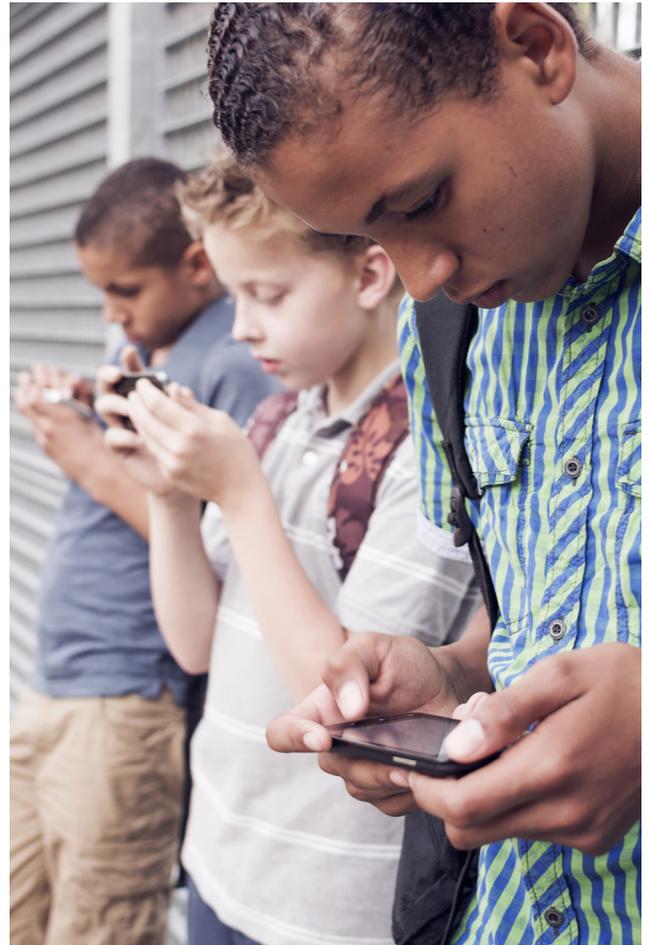
### Tip From the Y

First, put down your device and slowly walk away. A least for a little while. Make sure your child gets some honest-to-goodness bonding time with you. Pay attention to the moments when you are focused on your phone — and not your family. You may soon realize all that time Instagramming adds up.

Secondly, incorporate meaningful, engaging, screen-free activities into your family life regularly. A game of basketball followed by ice cream. Kick it old school and fly a kite. Build something together. Even if it's just for five minutes, take an opportunity to disconnect from a device and reconnect with your children.

The Y is currently registering for before- and after-school programs, enrichment classes through BVSD Lifelong Learning and youth sports. Register now at [ymcabv.org](http://ymcabv.org).

*Andra Coberly is the communications director for the YMCA of Boulder Valley. The Y supports the community through programs that focus on healthy living, youth development and social responsibility. Financial assistance is available.*



## >> You don't have to be a Superwoman to be someone's Hero

From the neighborhoods of Boulder, Lafayette, Louisville and Longmont, approximately 120 children ages newborn to 18 years are currently in the Boulder County foster care system. You may have seen stories on the news about these kids. Here is one child's perspective:



*“My mom and dad could not be the parents my little sister and I needed to stay safe. As the older sister, I felt that it was my duty to protect my younger sister and make sure no harm came her way. I wasn't always successful but I did my best. When I was six years old the courts ordered me and my sister into foster care while our parents got help. I was so afraid to leave my home and even more afraid to go to a 'foster home.' When we first arrived at the foster home, I felt instantly relieved to be welcomed by a warm, loving face. Our new home was clean and inviting. I felt safe for the first time in my life. I liked our new foster mom right away and knew immediately that my sister and I would be safe here. I didn't know how I knew, but I felt a sense of calmness and knew that I could finally relax and be a kid without having to worry about my younger sister.” Elizabeth, age 16*

Kids just like Elizabeth need a safe place to call home. They also need mentors, tutors, and safe adults to engage with. And foster families need your help too.

There are many ways to help:

### **Volunteer**

By volunteering with Boulder County's Foster Care & Adoption Team, you are helping to educate the Boulder County community about the realities that children in foster care face in our own community, while also supporting the county in finding the families to care for them.

### **Be a Foster Family Helper**

As a Foster Family Helper, you will be matched with a foster family to use your unique set of skills to support this foster family and the children they care for. A helper's duties may include transporting a child/ adolescent to practice or tutoring, providing supportive time in the home to give the caregiver time alone, grocery shopping/light errands, and/or calling on resources and activities. Roles are agreed on by both the family and the helper in advance.

### **Become a certified Foster Care Provider**

As a foster care only provider, you will provide a temporary home for a child in foster care while supporting family reunification.

### **Become certified as a Foster to Adopt Provider**

As a Foster to Adopt Provider, you open your home to a child in foster care while supporting reunification efforts and you are willing to adopt that child should efforts to reunite be unsuccessful.

### **Adopt a teen**

Adopt a legally freed Boulder County youth.



Getting started is simple. Register to attend a Boulder County Foster Care orientation at [www.bouldercountykids.net](http://www.bouldercountykids.net) or call Samantha Frazee at 303-441-1081. Orientations occur twice monthly. This 2.5-hour information session is a chance to learn more and get general questions answered. Dinner is provided!

BVSD has a designated Child Welfare Liaison to help link students in foster/group home placement situations with school supports. Contact Ema Lyman at 720-561-5925 or [ema.lyman@bvsd.org](mailto:ema.lyman@bvsd.org).

## >>Calendar of classes & events

### NOVEMBER 2015

#### Tuesday, Nov. 3, 6-9 p.m.

#### Beauty Mark - PEN documentary film showing

Hosted by cinebarre, 1164 W. Dillon Road, Louisville, CO

This is a fresh, honest film about self-image and the disconnect between our minds and our bodies. Beauty Mark exposes the myriad of emotional, cultural and psychological influences that compel us to measure ourselves against an elusive standard of physical perfection – sometimes at the price of our own health. Tickets: \$10 adults/\$5 youth. Contact Kathy Valentine at 303-810-6456 or [kathy.valentine@penbv.org](mailto:kathy.valentine@penbv.org). [www.parentengagementnetwork.org/events-2](http://www.parentengagementnetwork.org/events-2)

#### Wednesday, Nov. 4, 6-8 p.m.

#### BVSD Special Education Parent Network Group: Parents of NeuroDiverse Learners

BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe Road, Boulder

Parents meet monthly to re-engage their dreams for the child/teen's future, connect with community resources and work to create individual action steps towards those dreams. Focus for this group is on supporting child/teens independent skills. For more information, contact Anna Stewart at 720-561-5918 or [anna.stewart@bvsd.org](mailto:anna.stewart@bvsd.org).

#### Thursday, Nov. 5, 7-8:30 p.m.

#### Introduction to Executive Functioning: Navigating Your Child's Pathway to Success

Presenter: Lori Kochevar, LPC/Brighten the Brain

Dreamcatcher Learning Center, 2300 Central Ave A1, Boulder.

Learn about cutting-edge approaches to helping kids with Executive Functioning challenges such as planning, organizing, impulsivity, emotional regulation, etc. Program integrates best-practices EF skill and capacity building, with current, proven brain-based technology. [www.brightenthebrain.com](http://www.brightenthebrain.com)

#### Sunday, Nov. 8, 2:30 p.m.

#### Reynolds Teen Advisory Group (TAG)

Reynolds Branch Boulder Library, 3595 Table Mesa Drive, Boulder

Teens are invited to plan teen events, earn volunteer hours and have fun at the same time! Meets the second Sunday of each month. Grades 6 and up.

[lackoffh@boulderlibrary.org](mailto:lackoffh@boulderlibrary.org)

#### Monday, Nov. 9, 6-7:30 p.m.

#### Strengthening Parent-Child Communication at Different Developmental Stages

Horizons K-8 Charter School, 4545 Sioux Drive, Boulder

Effective parent-child communication is key to a healthy relationship. Increase your understanding of developmental changes and their impact on communication. A Pathways to Success Workshop – Free and open to the public.

[www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com](http://www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com)

#### Tuesday, Nov. 10, 9-10:30 a.m.

#### Sensory Integration - An important key to your child!

INcahoots Meeting Place, 4800 Baseline, Suite A-112, Boulder  
(Meadows Shopping Center, southeast corner)

This presentation is geared towards parents who have difficulty understanding their child's reactions to various stimuli, struggle to manage their child at home, and are interested in learning more about sensory processing disorder. Presenter Natalie McKechnie, OTR/L, works in her piano studio with children diagnosed with sensory processing disorder, autism spectrum disorder, and developmental delays. Sponsored by Hillside School. Free and Open to all. [hillsidelearning.org/hilltopics](http://hillsidelearning.org/hilltopics)

### THRIVEupdate for BVSD Parents

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Written by local experts  
and parents

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Look for us on the web!  
[www.bvsd.org](http://www.bvsd.org)

# >>Calendar of Classes & Events

## NOVEMBER 2015 EVENTS CONTINUED

**Wednesday, Nov. 11 – Veterans Day** – No School in BVSD

**Thursday, Nov. 12, 6-8 p.m.**

**BVSD Special Education Parent Network Group: Parents of Teens**

BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe Road, Boulder

Parents meet monthly to re-engage their dreams for the child/teen's future, connect with community resources and work to create individual action steps towards those dreams.

Focus for this group is on accessing adult services. For more information, contact Anna Stewart at 720-561-5918 or [anna.stewart@bvsd.org](mailto:anna.stewart@bvsd.org).

**Friday, Nov. 13, 4:30 p.m.**

**Meadows Teen Advisory Board (MTAB)**

Meadows Branch Boulder Library, 4800 Baseline Road, Boulder

Teens are invited to play a role in designing library programs and services for the teens in our community. This important work can also fulfill a student's need to do volunteer hours! Meets the second Friday of the month. Ages 10 and up. [lulla@boulderlibrary.org](mailto:lulla@boulderlibrary.org)

**Tuesday, Nov. 17, 6-7:30 p.m.**

**The Fatherhood Journey**

Louisville Library, 951 Spruce Street, Louisville

Learn about the important role that fathers play in their children's lives and how fathers can connect more deeply. A Pathways to Success Workshop – Free and open to the public. [www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com](http://www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com)

**Wednesday, Nov. 18, Noon-1 p.m.**

**Webinar: The Power of Equine Therapy**

Learn about the equine therapy approach and how it benefits a wide range of clients and issues.

A Pathways to Success FREE Webinar. Register by going to [www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com/free-webinars](http://www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com/free-webinars)

**Wednesday, Nov. 18, 6-7 p.m.**

**Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Parent Education Meeting**

BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe Road, Boulder

Presenter Dennis Rastatter, BVSD Director of Special Education, will speak about Transition services including vocational opportunities, practice with independent living skills, and Project Search (a multi-agency vocational training program in partnerships with Boulder Community Hospital. Free and open to all. For more information, contact SEAC Coordinator Anna Stewart at [anna.stewart@bvsd.org](mailto:anna.stewart@bvsd.org) or 720-561-5918.

**Thursday, Nov. 19, 4-5:30 p.m.**

**Moving Images-Moving Forward: Becoming Literate in a 21st Century World**

Boulder Public Library, Flatirons Meeting Room, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, CO

Presenter: Laurie Chin Sayres, Director of Media Literacy Education @ Labragirl Film Project

This workshop explores the importance of becoming fully literate in a 21st century world. Participants will come away with an understanding of why media literacy is important, what media literacy is, and how to integrate media literacy education into K-12 education. Cost: \$5; free with promo code: Labragirl. **Event Information and Registration**

**Link** — <http://labragirlfilmproject.org/free-workshops>

**Monday-Friday, Nov. 23-27 – Fall Break** – No School in BVSD

## DECEMBER 2015

**Friday, Dec. 4, 6 p.m.**

**Beyond Measure: What Counts Can't Be Counted (movie)**

Platt Middle School Auditorium, 6096 Baseline Road, Boulder

From the team that brought you Race to Nowhere, this is a film about transforming our education system from the ground up. Tickets may be purchased online for \$17 each. The book Beyond Measure will be available for purchase at the event or may be pre-ordered online. For more information, download event flyer at [www.bvsd.org/Documents/BeyondMeasureFlier.pdf](http://www.bvsd.org/Documents/BeyondMeasureFlier.pdf). The flyer includes links to purchase tickets and books.

## >> BVSD Lifelong Learning holiday camps

As hard as it is to believe, the holiday breaks are fast-approaching. BVSD Lifelong Learning has you covered with opportunities for kids to play, learn and develop new friendships on their days away from school. Lifelong Learning's high-quality Thanksgiving and Winter break camps are fun and engaging for kids; and they provide safe and convenient enrichment options for parents. Kids in grades K-5 will love Lifelong Learning camps in visual arts, dance, sports and fitness, equine learning, LEGO®, Challenge Island, and more. Kids up to age 12 can register for several of the popular Horse Play camps. Most camp hours are 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 12:30-4 p.m. Camps are held in BVSD schools as well as other locations.

For busy teens, the holiday breaks can be a great time to complete important courses. BVSD Lifelong Learning is offering ACT Prep from November 23-25 and Driver's Ed classes from November 21-24, December 19-22, and December 27-30.

Visit [www.bvsvd.org/lili](http://www.bvsvd.org/lili) to see the full schedule classes, or call 720-561-5968.



## >> BVSD Community Connections

Find resources, services and events in BVSD Community Connections, an online guide for families found at <http://guide.bvsvd.org>. This school year, Community Connections has a brand-new feature: Deals! Here, visitors to the guide can find discounts offered by advertisers (a \$20 discount on an eye exam, for example).

Please note: BVSD does not endorse organizations and individuals listed in Community Connections (other than BVSD programs). Individuals and organizations pay a fee to advertise in this guide and have not been screened in any way.

To learn more about Community Connections or to discuss advertising options, please contact Marla Riley at 720-561-5977 or [marla.riley@bvsvd.org](mailto:marla.riley@bvsvd.org).

