

# Thrive update



*Enhance Inspire*  
*Inform healthy kids make smarter students*

Volume 4 | Issue 3

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2011

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## >> Remembering What's Important This Holiday Season

Most of us take what we have for granted. Not until we have lost it, do we truly appreciate what we had. Consider this: It is only when we go camping (or encounter plumbing problems) that we start to appreciate something that we take for granted everyday; that soothing warm shower. A shower never feels so good as the day we return from the camping trip and truly experience that shower, as if for the first time. Predictably, however, we are back to taking it for granted days later.

As we recover from our Thanksgiving festivities, prepare for the winter holidays, and reflect on the year that is coming to a close and the one about to begin, we might want to consider the many things we take for granted.

My friend Bonnee Oderberg profoundly brought this lesson home to me. We first met in 2005 when we helped form what is now the Hope Coalition ([www.hopecoalitionboulder.org](http://www.hopecoalitionboulder.org)), whose mission is to educate, engage, and empower the community about depression awareness and suicide prevention. Bonnee's son Gabe played for the CU football team between 1999-2002 until back injuries ended his career. On September 21, 2004 at the age of 23, Gabe committed suicide (to learn more about Gabe and the impact he had on others, go to: [GabeOderberg.com](http://GabeOderberg.com)) The chilling lesson that I learned from Bonnee is how easy it is for us to take our children for granted, until they are tragically taken from us. As parents there is nothing more precious to us than our children. Despite this, how many of us can honestly say that we don't take our kids for granted from time to time? This is often reflected in the relatively minor parent-child conflicts that consume so much of our time. If we were truly conscious of the amazing gift that our children are to us, would we put so much energy into the small stuff instead of focusing on nurturing the relationship?

So consider taking stock in the long list of precious treasures that are often taken for granted. In doing so, make an extra effort to simply enjoy and revel in the opportunity to be with your children and other loved ones this holiday season. Think about it every time you're taking that soothing warm shower. Bonnee and so many parents like her are praying that we do.

by Dr. Jan Hittelman  
Licensed Psychologist

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

# >> The Pillars of a Healthy Family Home - A YMCA Initiative

At the Y, our focus is healthy living. We believe it begins at home. The relationship between an adult and child can be the primary source of health in a young person's life and a powerful motivator for adults to build more health into their own lives. Healthy Family Home is a YMCA initiative designed to support adults and families in their efforts to practice the art and science of healthy living. Every family can be a healthy family. By focusing your family's efforts to live healthier around the Y's pillars of a healthy family home and taking small steps, your family can feel stronger and live healthier.

## ■ Eat Healthy

At the Y, we believe that small steps lead to big changes. With a balanced approach, even the busiest families can discover ways to eat healthier and feel better.

## ■ Play Every Day

Play may be the best way to prevent childhood obesity. By putting more play into your family's day, you will soon find yourself getting the activity that will have your family feeling energized and strong.

## ■ Get Together

Strong relationships are one of the cornerstones of health and well-being, and few relationships are as important as those between adults and children. The time and attention that you invest now will help your children learn, grow and thrive.

## ■ Go Outside

Good things happen when we unplug and go outside to play together. Kids and adults benefit from contact with nature as well as unstructured play and exploration.

## ■ Sleep Well

Sleep is an essential part of healthy living. So many good things happen when our minds and bodies are resting.

For more information, or to register for YMCA programs, visit [www.ymcabv.org](http://www.ymcabv.org). We offer financial assistance for membership and programs to those that qualify.

**YMCA of Boulder Valley - One Membership, Two Locations:**

**Mapleton Center Y** • 2850 Mapleton Ave., Boulder • 303.442.2778

**Arapahoe Center Y** • 2800 Dagny Way, Lafayette • 303.664.5455



by Susan Coker  
YMCA of Boulder Valley

**Saturdays starting October 29 through December 3, 2011, 4:30-6:30 p.m.**

**Dance and Girl Empowerment Workshop for ages 10-15 years old**

Alchemy of Movement Dance Studio, Boulder

Each girl will learn movement through dance and learn a choreographed dance that will be performed at the end of the workshop as a "flash mob." Empowerment learned through dance will directly correlate to material covered in friendship exercises addressing bullying at school, conflict resolution, social media use and authentic self expression to promote confidence. At the end of this six-week workshop, each girl will be evaluated to measure results in confidence, connection with other girls in their friendships and physical fitness. Cost is \$150 per girl. Please contact Audre with questions or to register at [info@girladrenalineproductions.com](mailto:info@girladrenalineproductions.com).

**December 2011**

**It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play**

**A Colorado Shakespeare Festival Production**

One lonely Christmas Eve, George Bailey, a twentieth-century Everyman, is at the end of his rope, but the arrival of an unexpected visitor teaches George why his life truly matters. In a 1940s radio studio, five actors recreate Frank Capra's classic film, *It's a Wonderful Life*, in a live broadcast replete with commercial breaks, hilarious sound effects and applause signs. This radio play is bound to delight theatergoers of all ages. Several weekday matinee performances are available for school fieldtrips. There are also many evening (7 p.m.) and weekend matinee performances throughout the month of December. For more information, go to [www.coloradoshakes.org](http://www.coloradoshakes.org) or call 303-492-0554.

# >> Tips for Homework Success

Getting your child to complete their homework on a consistent basis can be a challenge. How can parents be disciplinarians and still maintain a positive relationship with their kids? Too much discipline and your kids can lock you out, but if you are too soft they may never learn the lessons they need to be successful. If you have difficulty finding this balance, try some of the following tips:

- **Get Organized.**

Make sure your student is using their daily planner to write down homework assignments. Create folders and notebooks for each subject area.

by Eric Mattys

Lead Instructor,

Dreamcatcher Direct Instruction Centers

- **Designate a particular time and uncluttered space for homework each day.**

Ask your child what times would work for them, but be firm in setting aside an agreed upon time each evening during the week. During this time there should be no TV, video games, computer games, or anything that will distract from learning.

- **Check in, but don't hover.**

A check in can be as simple as saying, "How's the homework going? Do you need help with anything? Keep up the good work." If they aren't doing their homework, remind them they agreed to use this time for school work and that they can play after they finish.

- **Help your child only when they want help.**

Forcing help on a student can put unnecessary strain on your relationship.

- **If they say they don't have homework, ask to see their planner.**

Ask about each subject area and if there are any long-term projects on which they can get started.

- **Reinforce your child's success/completion of homework.**

This could be a break, a snack, a game or some fun activity after finishing a part of their homework.

*Use these tips when you need help and remind your child that the work they do now will multiply their success later.*

# >> Community Connections: A Student Resource Guide

BVSD's **Community Connections: A Student Resource Guide** can be found at [www.bvsd.org/guide](http://www.bvsd.org/guide). The guide is filled with enriching activities and services that support the health and wellbeing of children and youth. Categories include athletics, health and support services, camps and classes, tutoring and the arts. Paper copies can be found at schools or you can request a copy in English or Spanish from Marla Riley at 720-561-5250, [marla.riley@bvsd.org](mailto:marla.riley@bvsd.org).

## >> Pretty Packages + Deadly Content: New Dissolvable Tobacco Products

The good news is cigarette sales have been declining over the past few years. Unfortunately, the tobacco industry has responded by introducing new products that are likely to be highly attractive to youth. The new packaging is pretty, but the contents are still deadly.

Boulder County is part of a test market for the second phase of testing of Camel Sticks, Strips, and Orbs – products designed to dissolve in the mouth. They're sold in packs of 12 and look like toothpicks, breath strips, or mints.

They come in appealing, well-designed packages that look similar to a pack of gum or mints. They are mint-flavored, easy to open, and simple to use. The new products are inexpensive and easily concealed in pockets and backpacks. Unless parents know what to look for, use of these products may be difficult to detect.

by Jennifer Kovarik  
Boulder County Public Health  
Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership

Health care advocates often mention the harm the more than 2,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke can do, but often do not stress the danger of nicotine. Nicotine is highly addictive, and stresses the cardiovascular system – our heart and blood vessels. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said that teenagers who use smokeless tobacco are three times more likely to smoke cigarettes later in life.

These new dissolvable tobacco products come without the tell-tale signs of cigarettes – no bulky cigarette packs, no butts to dispose of, no smoke odor left on hair or clothes, and no spitting. Simply put, they make it easy for youth to use them any time, but they are still detrimental to good health.

These new products are not a safe alternative to smoking or chewing. For more information about these products and what we are doing to keep all tobacco products out of the hands of Boulder County's children, please visit [www.BoulderCountyTobacco.org](http://www.BoulderCountyTobacco.org) or call 303-413-7524.

## >> Are you concerned that your teen may be using alcohol or drugs?

*You can make a difference. Boulder County Public Health can help.*

It may not seem like it, but research shows that parents have the greatest influence on their teens' decisions about alcohol and substance abuse.

Our four-week Teen-Parent class focuses on adolescent development, substance use and the brain, family history, and communication skills. The class can help you and your teen:

- Improve communication
- Set realistic expectations
- Increase coping skills
- Prevent or decrease alcohol and drug use

Delaying the use of alcohol and drugs decreases the likelihood of future use or dependency by 40 percent. Find out more about all of our classes for teens and adolescents. [www.bouldercountyalcoholdiversion.org](http://www.bouldercountyalcoholdiversion.org) 303-413-7547



## >>Calendar of Classes & Events

### NOVEMBER 2011

**Monday, Nov. 7, 7-8 p.m.**

#### **How to Reduce Family Conflict**

*Pathways to Parenting Success Series - Live from the BVSD Board Room!*

BVSD Ed Center Board Room - 6500 East Arapahoe Road, Boulder

Families all experience conflict. Avoid common pitfalls and learn easy strategies to make your family life happier and healthier. **Moderator: Leisha Conners Bauer, MPA. Panelists: Kat Austin, LAC, Dan Fox, LPC, Elizabeth Matthews, LPC, and Dr. Elizabeth Olson.** Join the live audience in the BVSD Board Room, watch it on Comcast Cable Channel 22, or stream from your computer at <http://bvsd.org/BV22/Pages/PathwaystoParentingSeries.aspx>. Go to [BPSBoulder.com](http://BPSBoulder.com) for more info.

**Wednesday, Nov. 9, 5:45-8:45 p.m.**

#### **PEN Event - Celebrating Family Relationships**

BVSD Ed Center, Aspen/Black Diamond Room, 6500 E. Arapahoe Rd., Boulder

Boys and Girls Relate Differently; Celebrating Family Relationships

Speak Out, Speak Up! Dinner, inclusive panel of women/youth/men

Michael Vladeck [www.connectwithyourteen.com](http://www.connectwithyourteen.com)

Shari Leach [www.womenswilderness.org](http://www.womenswilderness.org)

**Sunday, Nov. 13, 1-5 p.m.**

#### **Colorado Ocean Coalition presents : Making Waves in Colorado**

*Ocean Symposium at Boulder Public Library*

Panel discussions, teacher workshops, children's activities, and a day of learning about ocean issues including plastics pollution, marine protected areas, sustainable seafood and watersheds. FREE

*Ocean Celebration at the Rembrandt Yard*

An evening fundraising event for Colorado's ocean supporters - \$75

Contact [ColoradoOceanmail@gmail.com](mailto:ColoradoOceanmail@gmail.com)

**Wednesday, Nov. 16, 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

#### **Anxiety, Worry and Stress in Children and Teens: Practical Information and Tools for Parents**

University Memorial Center, CU-Boulder

**Guest speaker: Stacy Shaw Welch, Ph.D., Founder and Director of the Anxiety and Stress Reduction Center of Seattle, Washington.** This talk will teach parents about what scientists know about childhood fears and anxiety and ways we can help. In an accepting, warm atmosphere we'll discuss:

- the difference between stress, anxiety, and an anxiety "disorder"
- when to worry about your child's worry
- things you can do to support and help your child
- when to seek professional help for your child and what to look for in a mental health provider

Free community talk sponsored by the University of Colorado, Boulder's Women's Mental Health & Wellness Clinic. For more information, see [psych.colorado.edu/crest](http://psych.colorado.edu/crest) or call 303-492-7378.

### THRIVEupdate for BVSD Parents

Published by BVSD  
Written by local experts  
and parents

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

# >>Calendar of Classes & Events

## NOVEMBER 2011

**Monday, November 28, 6:30-8 p.m.**

### **Minimizing Drama & Enhancing Harmony in the Family**

Learn to identify and prevent the triggers of relationship drama.

*Facilitator: Elizabeth Matthews, LPC*

*A Pathways to Parenting Success Workshop - Free and open to the public.*

Meadows Branch Library, 4800 Baseline Road, Boulder [www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com](http://www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com)

**Wednesday, November 30, 6-8 p.m.**

**Interdependence** - *Young adults with disabilities live an interdependent life and this session addresses the living skills necessary to create a meaningful life.*

BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe Road, Boulder

### **Part of the On the Road: Transition to Adulthood Series for Students with Disabilities.**

Co-sponsored by Boulder Valley School District and Association for Community Living in Boulder County, Inc. *Youth are invited to attend. We will have some concurrent sessions for them in the next room led by staff from the Center for People with Disabilities. Youth cannot be dropped off.* For more information, contact BVSD Parent Liaison **Anna Stewart** at 720-561-5918 or [anna.stewart@bvsd.org](mailto:anna.stewart@bvsd.org) or ACL Executive Director **Ailsa Wonnacott** at 303-527-0888 or [awonnacott@aclboulder.org](mailto:awonnacott@aclboulder.org).

## DECEMBER 2011

**Monday, December 5, 7-8 p.m.**

### **Our Body-Image Obsession**

*Pathways to Parenting Success Series - Live from the BVSD Board Room!*

BVSD Ed Center Board Room - 6500 East Arapahoe Road, Boulder

An interactive discussion with youth, parents, counselors and community groups about a challenge that can ultimately become life-threatening if not treated. Join the live audience in the BVSD Board Room, watch it on Comcast Cable Channel 22, or stream from your computer at <http://bvsd.org/BV22/Pages/PathwaystoParentingSeries.aspx>. Go to [BPSBoulder.com](http://BPSBoulder.com) for more info.

**Monday, December 12, 6:30-8 p.m.**

### **Got Concerns About Your Teen?**

Determining when your adolescent needs additional support and how to find it.

*Facilitator: Linda Cain, MSED*

*A Pathways to Parenting Success Workshop - Free and open to the public.*

Meadows Branch Library, 4800 Baseline Road, Boulder [www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com](http://www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com)

**Thursday, December 15, 6-8 p.m.**

**Middle/High School Planning** - *Learn what post-secondary/ transition goals are and how to ensure your child's IEP reflects who they are and where they are going.*

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