

Thrive update



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Look for us on the web!
www.bvbsd.org

>> Technology's Effect on Child Development

In the fast-paced world of ever-evolving technology, it is difficult for parents to keep up. Children are spending more time in the virtual world resulting in less time for old-fashioned activities like having a face-to-face conversation, playing outside or going for a bike ride. We have yet to see what impact, if any, these changes in socialization patterns will have on children's development, but there are certainly reasons to be concerned. Like any skill, social skills are not inborn, but rather require practice to learn and develop. With shorter recess times and nightly homework, our children have fewer and fewer opportunities to simply socialize with peers and family members. The speed of this technological evolution often outpaces a parent's ability to develop effective strategies to address it. While we cannot stop technological progress, here are some ways to reduce technology's negative effects:

- **Be aware of your own behavior.** How much time do you spend in front of a screen, talking on your phone or watching TV? Like it or not, we are the role models for our children and need to practice what we preach.
- **Create technology-free days.** Set aside time in the evenings and/or the weekends for everyone in the family to turn off cell phones, iPods, televisions, video games, computers, etc. and actually interact with each other.
- **Discuss technology etiquette.** Make sure that your children understand appropriate uses of technology in terms of treating others with respect and only communicating in ways that would make you proud.
- **Make technology a privilege, not a right.** Consider having your child earn technology time as a function of meeting their responsibilities at home and in school. Imagine if every hour of technology was a function of actually interacting with others in the real world without plugging in to something!
- **Develop family rules regarding technology.** Include your children in discussions about turning their phones off after a certain time at night, how much is too much daily screen time, the importance of other activities like exercise and in-person social interaction, as well as how to prioritize other responsibilities with leisure pursuits.

To participate in a community conversation on this topic, tune in to the next Pathways to Parenting Success televised program:

Technology's Impact on Child Socialization

7-8 p.m., Monday, April 29

Watch on Channel 22, stream live at

BVSD.org, or join the studio audience in the BVSD Board Room!

by **Dr. Jan Hittelman**
Licensed Psychologist

>> April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Did you know:

- Underage drinking contributes to the three leading causes of death (unintentional injury, homicide, and suicide) among persons aged 12 to 20 years old?
- More than four alcoholic drinks per day for men and three drinks per day for women is considered heavy drinking?
- More than one in four BVSD high school students report binge drinking? (Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks of alcohol in a row or within a couple of hours.)
- Binge drinking is the most common pattern of alcohol consumption among high school aged youth and the prevalence increases with age and grade?

Some of the risks of binge drinking include:

- Alcohol poisoning, which can be life-threatening and affects the body's involuntary reflexes such as breathing and the gag reflex. Signs can include extreme confusion, low body temperature, slow/irregular breathing, and vomiting.
- Impaired judgment and the willingness to take more risks than they normally would, such as driving while drinking or having unprotected sex.
- Poor academic performance, disrupted sleep patterns and difficulty to concentrate.

Have the Conversation!

The Partnership at **Drug-Free.org** and the Treatment Research Institute offer six ways you can help reduce the chance that your teenage child will drink:

1. **Build a warm, supportive relationship with your child.**
An effective parenting strategy is to be warm and supportive and also to set clear boundaries and limits.
2. **Be a good role model when it comes to drinking, taking medicine and handling stress.**
Children learn by observing their parent's behavior, and your attitude can influence your child's attitude.
3. **Know your child's risk level.**
Some teens are more at risk than others; don't ignore risk factors or assume they will go away. Don't be afraid to seek professional help.

4. **Know your child's friends.**
Know and talk to your teen's friends. Talk about the importance of healthy, supportive relationships.
5. **Monitor, supervise and set boundaries.**
You don't want to inhibit your child's growing sense of independence, but know what they are doing and set reasonable expectations. Young adults actually desire boundaries and for parents to parent.
6. **Have ongoing conversations and provide information about drugs and alcohol.**
Talk early, talk often, be brief, be positive and LISTEN.

For tips on how to have the conversation, visit:

- <http://timetoact.drugfree.org/know-start-talking.html>
- www.speaknowcolorado.org
- www.samhsa.gov/underagedrinking/

*Sources: *Pediatrics, 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, reuters.com, kidshealth.org*

>> Parents Who Host

If my teen has friends over and I collect the keys, isn't it safer to let them drink in my home? Teens are going to drink anyway, why not teach them how to drink responsibly? When asked, in a 2012 survey how wrong they felt it would be for parents to host parties where alcohol is available to guests under the age of 21, 91 percent of BVSD middle and high school parents thought it would be wrong or very wrong. If you are considering hosting a party for teens in your home, consider:

- Parents can be civilly liable for any damages and emotional pain and suffering caused by hosting or allowing teens to drink in their home.
- Parents may be held responsible for underage drinking on their property even if they aren't home.
- An adult who knowingly helps a person under the age of 18 break the law, such as providing alcoholic beverages to minors, can be charged with a Class 4 felony. The penalties for a Class 4 felony conviction include two to six years in prison and fines ranging from \$2,000 to \$500,000.
- Providing alcohol to anyone under the legal drinking age (21) may also result in the provider losing driving privileges for six months.

by **Andy Tucker**

BVSD Coordinator of Counseling,
Student Engagement, and Post-Secondary Readiness

and

Leisha Conners Bauer

Boulder County Healthy Youth Alliance

>> Support for Adoptive Parents

The decision to adopt is one of the biggest decisions a family can make. Despite all the initial effort just to get the adoption arranged and finalized, your work as a parent is just beginning. "We had a big conversation about her adoption when she was 12," an adoptive dad recently shared. "She said then that she doesn't think about it or have an issue with it. But now she's 17, and five years feels like a long time. I'm sure her thoughts have changed. I ought to talk to her, but I'm not sure where to start." Actually, he had already started off well. It's easy to see adoption as an act that can be completed, discussed, processed, and resolved. But as this dad was discovering, adoption is more of an ongoing family journey. Two of our most important goals on this journey are creating a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self.

An adopted child will eventually wonder why his birth parents gave him up in the first place. She may not look like her adopted parents or have the same skin color as most of the kids in her class. When it comes to developing a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self, adopted children will have additional challenges to work through. As their feelings of belonging change and their sense of self keeps evolving, their thoughts and feelings about adoption will evolve too. That's part of the journey.

Pathways to Parenting Success

For an opportunity to explore the unique questions and challenges that adoptive parents face, join us at our upcoming Pathways to Parenting Success presentation:

Adoption: Unique Parenting Challenges

When: 6:30-8 p.m., Thursday, April 25

Where: Louisville Library (951 Spruce Street, Louisville)

Cost: FREE

For more information:

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

by Dan Fox, LPC
Boulder Psychological Services

>> Gender Variance in Children

Children develop a sense of their gender identity when they are toddlers. For most children, the answer is very simple. When given two choices – boy or girl – most kids feel strongly that they are one or the other. However, some children cannot so easily make this choice. Gender identity is unique and varies from children who strongly associate with the gender that they were assigned at birth to those who strongly associate with the opposite gender.

Is my child gender variant?

Gender variant children will often assert what toys they do and don't like, and what clothes they will and won't wear. Often, gender variant children will have preferences associated with the opposite gender. This does not mean the second a child has preferences with the opposite gender you should assume they are gender variant. But if you can look over time and see that your child has persistently and consistently made that assertion, it is probably not just a phase.

Is my child transgender?

Your daughter may say she is really a boy; your son, a girl. Your child may express this to you at age 4, 14, or even 24. When these proclamations don't change over the next few years, you can be pretty sure that you have a transgender child.

What is the difference?

A transgender child will assert firmly, over time, that their gender identity is the opposite of that which was assigned at birth. They will often insist that they are in the wrong body. One way to think about the difference is that while all transgender children are gender variant, not all gender variant children are transgender.

How can I support my child?

BVSD families are fortunate to have organizations available to assist youth and families. Families with gender variant and transgender children can find support through BVSSC, OASOS, and Transyouth Education and Support.

*Links for all resources listed in this article are available at www.bouldersafeschools.org.

article contributed by
Boulder Valley Safe Schools Coalition

>> Parenting a Child with Autism

"I have a child with Autism. Questions are appreciated. Parenting advice is not"... reads a statement on a T-shirt for parents of children with autism.

A new survey of parents conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found that one in 50 US schoolchildren have autism. According to NBC News, researchers have discovered that about one million children – that's 2 percent of US schoolchildren – have been diagnosed with some sort of autism.

I am a mother of one of these children, and you cannot imagine how many times my fellow parents of children with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) are questioned by others about their ability to parent their child based on what the people watching might see but do not know. Autism is and can be challenging and exhausting for the individual in the Spectrum as well as for parents and family members, but autism does not define our children or us as parents.

A study done some years ago found that "mothers of adolescents and adults with autism experience chronic stress comparable to combat soldiers and struggle with frequent fatigue." These moms also spend significantly more time caregiving than moms of those without disabilities. "This is the physiological residue of daily stress," says Marsha Mailick Seltzer, a researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Madison who authored the studies. "The mothers of children with high levels of behavior problems have the most pronounced physiological profile of chronic stress, but the long-term effect on their physical health is not yet known."

If you have a child with ASD, as you spend time with your child every day going to speech therapy, helping her/him with school homework or teaching them daily living skills, take a moment to breathe. Remember to take breaks, too ... just like our kids do.

In this hectic world, going for a cup of coffee with a friend, joining a support group or just going for a walk can do wonders ... anything that will allow you to keep going through this journey with a warm heart and bright hope for the future.

Today I am thankful for my fellow parents of children with ASD who have taught me to live and laugh, to love beyond limits, and to keep going through thick and thin.

In this Autism Awareness Month, I am honored to walk by your side.

by **Eugenia Brady**
Special Education Advocate
Autism Society of Boulder Board Member

>> BVSD Bike to School Day is April 18

The fifth annual human-powered event celebrates walking and biking to school as a way to take part in daily physical activity that is fun, refreshing and good for the Earth. This year's event will be simple and fun, a day all students and staff will enjoy. All registered participants will receive:

- A free school lunch and
- A chance to win prizes including a new bike, helmets, bike lights, bike tube bags, bells and more.

The school with the most registered participants, based on percentage, will be awarded a Twirl Yogurt Party! BVSD Bike to School Day registration opens on Tuesday, April 2 at **BVSD.org/TOSchool**. Be part of the fun!

BVSD Bike Collection

Donate your old bikes, parts, and accessories in any condition to benefit Community Cycles.

Tuesday, April 16, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Drop off at Boulder High School in the parking lot at Arapahoe Avenue and 15th Street.

Wednesday, April 17, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Drop off at Fairview High School in the horseshoe in front, off of Greenbriar Blvd.

Thank you to our partners: BVSD TO School Transportation Department, Safe Routes to School, BVSD School Food Project, Cateye, Community Cycles, Pedal to Properties, Full Cycle, Clif Kid and Twirl Yogurt.

by **Julie Ireland**
BVSD TO School Program -
Walk, Bike, Bus, Carpool



>> BVSD Lifelong Learning/YMCA Camps

BVSD Lifelong Learning and the YMCA of Boulder Valley have joined together this summer to offer fun and educational camp opportunities for youth in the community. There are six experiences to choose from, with three-hour programs in the mornings and the afternoons.

Attend a BVSD Kids Lifelong Learning camp!

Camps are three hours a day, from 9 a.m.–noon or 1–4 p.m. on Monday-Friday. Register with BVSD: www.bvsd.org/LLL or call 720-561-5968.

Do you need childcare beyond our camp times?

Make a full day of it! The YMCA offers games and activities before and after each learning program so your camper will have the best summer possible!



CAMP WEEKS	CAMP LOCATIONS – AT BVSD SCHOOLS				
	Lafayette Elementary	Monarch K-8	Kohl Elementary	Mesa Elementary	Foothill Elementary
May 28 - 31* July 1 - 5*	Summer Fun Academy	Create & Cook	Dance & Drama	Science Adventures	LEGO® or Visual Arts
June 3 - 7 July 8 - 12	LEGO® or Visual Arts	Summer Fun Academy	Create & Cook	Dance & Drama	Science Adventures
June 10 - 14 July 15 - 19	Science Adventures	LEGO® or Visual Arts	Summer Fun Academy	Create & Cook	Dance & Drama
June 17 - 21 July 22 - 26	Dance & Drama	Science Adventures	LEGO® or Visual Arts	Summer Fun Academy	Create & Cook
June 24 - 28 July 29 - Aug 2	Create & Cook	Dance & Drama	Science Adventures	LEGO® or Visual Arts	Summer Fun Academy

BVSD Kids Lifelong Learning also offers a selection of summer camps at other locations:

- Horseplay at Acres of Opportunity Ranch in Lafayette
- Fencing at Northern Colorado Fencers in Boulder
- Innovation Lab at Boulder History Museum
- YWCA Camps at YWCA of Boulder County in Boulder

If you're a parent of a teenager, we offer our popular teen classes in the summer, too. It's a great time of year for teens to focus on important topics such as Driver's Ed and test preparation (ACT and SAT).

For more information, visit www.bvsd.org/LLL or call Ivy Lee at 720-561-5968.

>> BVSD Provides Health Insurance Liaisons

Do you need health insurance for your kids? Or do you have to drop insurance for your kids because you can no longer afford the premiums? The school district has partnered with Boulder County to provide health insurance liaisons who work with families. The liaisons can enroll eligible children, parents, and pregnant women in the Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) and Medicaid.

The income guidelines for CHP+ are higher than Medicaid. The upper income limits of CHP+ are flexible since dependent care costs, adult health insurance premiums, medical expenses, child support, and alimony are deductible. For example, if a family of four has gross earnings of \$5,000/month, but is paying \$200 for deductible expenses, the family could qualify to have their kids covered under CHP+.

Megan Graham and Angel Torres are the liaisons for BVSD. If you have questions or would like to enroll, please call 720-515-1454.



>> Healthy Family Home Tips from YMCA

Being healthy means more than simply being physically active. It's about maintaining a balanced spirit, mind and body. At the Y, it's not about the activity you choose as much as it is about the benefits of living healthier on the inside as well as the outside.

Play Every Day

You don't have to be an athlete or in love with exercise equipment to practice healthy living. In fact, when your family makes play a priority, you'll probably find yourself having so much fun that you won't even notice how active you are. Adding short periods of playful activity to your day helps provide you with the energy that you need to live a full and balanced life. It is also one of the keys to avoiding a variety of chronic conditions down the road, and what better way to spend time with your kids now?



Families at Play for an Hour a Day

Playful movement is one of the keys to a healthy family home. It doesn't matter what you choose to do. Just think of all the many choices you have from walking to gardening to vacuuming the carpet, let alone the fun you can have with your kids swimming in a pool, going for a hike, shooting some hoops, or taking a favorite pet for a walk. To get 60 minutes of moderate activity throughout your day, just add 10 minutes here and 15 minutes there.

Turn It Up a Notch

Several times each week, spend a little more energy while moving. Try to engage in vigorous activities at least three times each week for 20 consecutive minutes, but don't worry if five or 10 minutes leaves you feeling wiped out at first. Small steps will get you there, so don't overdo it. When the play stops being about feeling good, take a break.

YMCA of Boulder Valley, www.ymcabv.org

- Mapleton Center Y • 2850 Mapleton Ave., Boulder • 303-442-2778
- Arapahoe Center Y • 2800 Dagny Way, Lafayette • 303-664-5455

>> CU Athletics Events in April

As we transition into spring, CU Athletics wants to remind you to encourage your kids to go outside and be active!

Spend the day with your family and the Buffs at some exciting events that CU Athletics has coming up. Admission to all of the following events is free!

CU Women's Tennis

Your CU Tennis team wraps up their season in April with three home matches:

- Friday, April 5, CU Tennis vs. Washington State, 11 a.m.
- Sunday, April 7, CU Tennis vs. Washington, 10 a.m.
- Saturday, April 20, CU Tennis vs. Utah, 11 a.m.

All matches are played at the South Campus Tennis Courts located off of Table Mesa Drive and Highway 36.

CU Track and Field

Last year track athlete Shalaya Kipp won the NCAA title in the Steeplechase at the 2012 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships. Come watch her and the CU Track and Field athletes this year as they strive to make it back to the 2013 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

- Friday, April 12 and Saturday, April 13, CU Invitational, All Day

Outdoor home meets are at Potts Field located at Colorado and 33rd.

CU Football Spring Game

Come watch the CU Football team this spring and get a sneak preview of the upcoming season as we transition into a new year with head football coach Mike MacIntyre.

- Saturday, April 13, CU Football Spring Game, 10:30 a.m., Folsom Field

For more information, visit www.CUBuffs.com.

>>Calendar of Classes & Events

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Saturday, April 6, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

League of Women Voters/Meet Your Legislators

Board Room of the BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe, Boulder
Boulder County League of Women Voters invites the public to meet your Colorado Legislators to discuss what's coming up in the next legislative session. This event is free and open to the public.

Monday, April 8, 6:30-8 p.m.

Anxiety Disorders

Increase your understanding of anxiety disorders from symptoms to treatment.

Facilitators: Susan Denison, LCSW, Debbie Mayer, LCSW, Elizabeth Matthews, LPC

Meadows Branch Library, 4800 Baseline Road, Boulder

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

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Tuesday, April 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Taming the Worry Monster: Anxiety in Gifted Children

Presenter: Dr. Dan Peters

Manhattan Middle School Auditorium, 290 Manhattan Drive, Boulder
Worry, fear and anxiety are common yet often quiet "monsters" which have significant negative effects on a child's academic achievement, social and emotional functioning, and self-esteem. Being aware of a gifted child's propensity to become anxious and being aware of effective interventions for reducing anxiety increases the likelihood of academic achievement and positive social-emotional adjustment. Sponsored by Boulder Valley Gifted & Talented (BVGT). Free (donations welcomed). Contact Info: www.bvgt.org/events or programming@bvgt.org

Tuesday, April 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

PEN Presents - High Performance Parenting

Presenters: Adam Fels, LMS Principal; Jennifer Jaworowski, LMS Counselor; and John Long, LMS Assistant Principal/Athletic Director.

Louisville Middle School, 1341 Main St., Louisville

Geared toward parents whose teens are transitioning into high school, this presentation will cover parenting techniques and applications, supporting positive partnerships for your teen, different parenting styles for high school men and women, creating a high performance parent goal, and planning for high school situations. For more information, contact Betsy Fox at 720-563-7007 or

Foxxbetsy123@msn.com.

Wednesday, April 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

PEN Presents - High Expectations: Youth alternatives to drugs and alcohol

Centaurus High School, 10300 S. Boulder Rd., Lafayette

Adults: \$10. www.parentengagementnetwork.org

THRIVEupdate for BVSD Parents

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Look for us on the web!
www.bvsd.org

>>Calendar of Classes & Events

APRIL 2013

Wednesday, April 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

SEAC (Special Education Advisory Council)

Aspen Room, BVSD Education Center, 6500 East Arapahoe, Boulder

SEAC is a district wide group open to all. Monthly meetings include forums with special education leadership team, parent education of BVSD services, and presentations from community organizations. We are looking for parent representatives from every BVSD school. Contact Anna Stewart, SEAC Coordinator, at 720-561-5918 or anna.stewart@bvsd.org.

Monday, April 15, 6:30-8 p.m.

Anxiety in Children and Adolescents

Facilitators: Linda Cain, MSED, Susan Denison, LCSW, Debbie Mayer, LCSW

Mamie Doud Eisenhower Library, 3 Community Park Road, Broomfield

Increase your understanding of anxiety disorders for children and adolescents from symptoms to treatment.

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

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Friday, April 19

BVSD professional development day - No school for students

Thursday, April 25, 6:30-8 p.m.

Adoption: Unique Parenting Challenges

Facilitators: Dan Fox, LPC, Jenny Key, LCSW, Debbie Mayer, LCSW, Karen Wilding, LCSW

City of Louisville Library, 951 Spruce Street, Louisville

An opportunity to explore the unique questions and challenges adoptive parents face.

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

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Monday, April 29, 7-8 p.m.

Technology's Impact on Child Socialization

Moderator: Dan Fox, LPC.

BVSD Ed Center Board Room, 6500 Arapahoe, Boulder

Social media is profoundly changing how children socialize. Join a discussion with local experts to understand its impact.

A Pathways to Parenting Success Presentation - Live!

Join us live or watch on Comcast Ch22 or streamed on www.BVSD.org.

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

MAY 2013

Saturday, May 4, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Parenting Safe Children - A workshop empowering adults to keep children safe from sexual abuse

Presenter: Feather Berkower, LCSW, trained at the Univ. of CA, Berkeley.

Sister Carmen Community Center, 555 Aspen Ridge Drive, Lafayette

Learn how to raise children who are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The Parenting Safe Children workshop uses a three-part prevention model developed over two decades in the field:

1. Parent Education - You will learn what makes children vulnerable to sexual abuse.
2. Child Empowerment - You will learn ten body-safety rules to teach your children.
3. Caregiver Screening - You will learn tools and techniques for screening caregivers effectively.

The first 50 people to register will get a special rate of \$27.40/ person (made possible by sponsorship from Harutun Law). Cost is \$53.75/person (materials included). Register online in advance at www.parentingsafechildren.com.

*Registration payment is non-refundable & non-transferable to other PSC workshop dates.