

Thrive update



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

>> Making the most of the holiday break with your family

The holiday break brings with it a sense of excitement, but it can also be a stressful time for some children and families. Here are a few suggestions to help keep your child and family on a healthy track.

Time around the holidays can elicit many emotions, not only for parents, but children too. Acknowledging these emotions can go a long way in supporting your child and easing family tensions when everyone is together under one roof for extended periods of time.

- If the holidays are a reminder of sadness in missing loved ones you used to spend time with, acknowledge this aloud and make time for processing the loss of not having them with you. Make a favorite meal you used to eat together, or have younger children draw pictures of a time they remember everyone being together.
- Start, or continue, a family tradition. Whether it's a certain meal you make, spending time volunteering, or going for a winter hike; this can be something special for your family.
- Schedule time together. Set aside time to do family activities such as board games, charades, listening to music, or decorating your home.

Children function best when life is predictable, this increases a sense of safety where they are better able to understand what to expect.

- Try to keep a general routine to your day. While it won't be as structured as when school is in session, it helps children to know what the plan is.
- If you have special events you're going to, let your child know by writing it on a calendar so they can check to see if there's something coming up.
- Return to regular bed time routines a few days before school starts again.

Get outside! Nothing is worse than being cooped up for days on end. The body releases endorphins (happy hormones) when outside, so getting outdoors can naturally help ease tension building at home.

- Go for a hike and allow time for exploration.
- Do a scavenger hunt in the back yard or neighborhood park - how many different colors can you find? What sounds do you hear?

These days will pass quickly. Take time to slow down and enjoy one another's company.

by **Debbie Mayer, LCSW**
Boulder Psychological Services

>> Why Talk about Alcohol?

Alcohol use typically begins in early adolescence, around ages 12-14, rises steeply during adolescence and levels off around age 21. A person who begins drinking as a young teen is four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than someone who waits until adulthood to use alcohol.

Colorado ranks ninth in the nation for teen binge drinking (binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in a row within a couple of hours, 2011 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey).

According to the Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center, in 2009 underage customers consumed 16.9 percent of all alcohol sold in Colorado, totaling \$397 million in sales (in 2010 dollars).

From the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism:

- Alcohol-related traffic crashes are a major cause of death among young people.
- Teens who use alcohol are:
 - more likely to be sexually active at earlier ages, to have sexual intercourse more often, and to have unprotected sex than teens who do not drink.
 - more likely than others to be victims of violent crime, including rape, aggravated assault, and robbery
 - more likely to have problems with school work and school conduct.
- Researchers have identified the cerebellum, the limbic system and the cerebral cortex as the areas of the brain most vulnerable to the effects of alcohol. Changes and/or damages to these areas of the brain can impact motor coordination, memory, emotion, and the ability to plan, solve problems, remember, and learn.
- Binge drinking and long-term drinking can cause the heart to beat too rapidly or irregularly.

The good news is that parents remain important in the lives of an adolescent as they move toward adulthood and their family values inform their choices, including their choices around alcohol use.

Have the Conversation!

Why? According to the Boulder County Youth Risk Behavior Survey, approximately 69 percent of BVSD high students have tried alcohol and 42 percent report drinking alcohol regularly. Boulder County high school students who don't think their parents would disapprove if they drink alcohol regularly are eight times more likely to have ever drunk alcohol and four times more likely to have drunk alcohol before age 13 than students who think that their parents would disapprove.

What do I say or do?

- ALL AGES: Treat your child with respect. Praise positive behaviors. Doing so helps promote positive self-esteem and shows your child that you love him/her. Set specific expectations and be consistent in applying consequences when expectations are not met.
- Ages 4-7: Find a convenient time to talk to your child, like when watching TV and seeing a commercial about alcohol. Kids this age are still focused on the present, so let them know the ill effects that alcohol can have immediately on a person and in day-to-day life.
- Ages 8-12: This is the key time to teach your children how to set boundaries. Role playing can be extremely effective. Keep talking about the effects, both long- and short-term, that alcohol can have on one's body.
- Ages 13-18: Keep the lines of communication open and ensure that you continue discussing your expectations regarding alcohol use. Show your teen that you trust him/her and avoid excessive lecturing. Focus on your love and concern for your teen.

Did you know?

- Providing alcohol to teens at a party at your home because it seems "safer" can lead to serious legal consequences. "Aiding to the delinquency of a minor" is a felony offense.
- If you provide alcohol to teens at a party at your home and someone is hurt as a result, you can be held liable.

For more information go to:

http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/MakeADiff_HTML/makediff.htm or www.speaknowcolorado.org

>> Twelve Parenting Resolutions for the New Year

As we look toward our goals for 2013, here are 12 strategies that parents can focus on each month:

1. **Express love and affection.** We could all benefit from more positive feedback. Communicate your positive feelings to your child through words and actions.
2. **Teach responsibility through empowerment.** Including your child in the decision making process regarding rules and discipline will teach them to take responsibility for their behavior.
3. **Practice being a good listener.** In discussions with your child, try to listen more than talk. You will better understand your child's feelings, thoughts and motives, which will make you a better advisor.
4. **Improve self-esteem by fostering success experiences.** Providing opportunities to engage in activities that your children enjoy, will lead to pride in their accomplishments.
5. **Shift from control to advice.** As children get older, parents need to shift from controlling to advising. This will help your child learn to be a responsible adult and reduce conflict in adolescence.
6. **Choose your battles.** If the offense is relatively minor provide brief feedback, a consequence (if needed), and then move on.
7. **Asking versus telling.** Be aware of your language- "Would you please get ready for bed" implies a choice, while "Please get ready for bed now" does not.
8. **Catch your child being good.** Too often we focus our attention on negative behaviors. Provide positive feedback when your child behaves appropriately.
9. **Stop nagging.** Repeating requests over and over trains children to tune parents out. At the third request, clearly state the consequence for noncompliance and follow through.
10. **Reduce debating.** Debating negotiable issues can often be healthy and productive. For nonnegotiable issues, calmly reflect back your child's feelings and reassert your position (e.g. "I understand that you feel ____ about ____, but ____").
11. **Visiting the school of hard knocks.** Allowing natural negative consequences to occur instead of protecting your children from them fosters healthy learning from their mistakes.
12. **Go easy on yourself.** Parenting is easily one of the toughest jobs you'll ever have. Be forgiving of inevitable mistakes, while giving yourself credit for your hard work and dedication to your children.

The above excerpts are from Dr. Hittelman's book: "Parenting Essentials: Seven Steps to Parenting Success," available at no charge at www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com. Click on "Library" and then put "Parenting Essentials" in the search box.

by Dr. Jan Hittelman
Licensed Psychologist

>> Lifelong Learning Winter Catalog

This year I'll try something new!

That's the theme of BVSD's Lifelong Learning winter catalog. We're offering great classes for many areas of interest, including options to improve the health and wellbeing of you and your family. Here are some of our classes to jumpstart your new year:

- Green Cleaning: Create Your Own Environmentally Friendly Soaps
- Yoga of the Brain: Priming the Neural Pathways for Health and Wellbeing
- Recipe-Free Vegetarian Cooking From Within
- Seven Priorities That Will Positively Change Your Life
- Organic Vegetable Gardening for Beginners
- End Distracted Driving: Keeping Your Kids Safe (a free event for adults and teens)



Visit our website at www.bvsd.org/l3 for a complete list of adult winter classes. And make sure to check back with Lifelong Learning in mid-December to see all of the fun, engaging and educational classes we have for kids and teens.

>> Being supportive of LGBT youth

According to Growing Up LGBT in America—the Human Rights Campaign's groundbreaking research among more than 10,000 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) identified youth ages 13 to 17—youth who are out to their immediate family or out at school report higher levels of happiness, optimism, acceptance and support through multiple measures.

Among youth who are out to their immediate families, 42 percent say their families are “very accepting” of LGBT people and 7 percent say their families are “not at all accepting;” among youth who are not out to their immediate families, 16 percent say their families are very accepting and 24 percent say their families are “not at all accepting.”

Family rejection affects health and mental health. Research shows that LGBT youth who were rejected by their families because of their identity had much lower self-esteem. They had fewer people they could turn to for help. And they were more isolated than youth who were accepted by their families.

According to the Family Acceptance Project, some family behaviors that reduce your LGBT child's risk for health and mental health problems and help promote their well-being Include:

- Talk with your child or foster child about their LGBT identity.
- Express affection when your child tells you or when you learn that your child is gay or transgender.
- Support your child's LGBT identity even though you may feel uncomfortable.
- Advocate for your child when he or she is mistreated because of their LGBT identity.
- Require that other family members respect your LGBT child.
- Bring your child to LGBT organizations or events.
- Talk with clergy and help your faith community to support LGBT people.
- Connect your child with an LGBT adult role model to show them options for the future.
- Welcome your child's LGBT friends & partners to your home.
- Support your child's gender expression.
- Believe your child can have a happy future as an LGBT adult.

Boulder Valley Safe Schools Coalition works to promote the safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning (LGBTIQ) youth, staff, and parents in the Boulder Valley School District. To find out more information or get involved, find us at www.bouldersafeschools.org.

GLBTQ Harassment: The Dark Side of the Rainbow

Personal Experience Panel - Youth and Adult Speakers

2:55-4:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 8
New Vista High School Auditorium

Topics to include GLBTQ youth issues such as depression and suicide prevention, harassment at school, and supporting students in coming out. How do we best address these issues? Why are allies crucial? How can we develop them?

Panelists: Daryn Copeland, B. Mann, Reina Ross, Dorothy Rupert, Daniel Sobrevilla, and Ivette Visbal.

Organized by the Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (YOAB), a group of 15 diverse high school students from five different schools (New Vista, Boulder High, Fairview, Watershed, and Alexander Dawson). YOAB works with the City of Boulder to plan events that help meet youth needs.

>> BVSD District-wide Energy Challenge

BVSD's Office of Sustainability and the Student Accountability Advisory Committee (SAAC) have partnered the past three years to offer an energy challenge to select schools throughout the district. This year the voluntary challenge has been further refined and is open to all BVSD schools. There are incentives for each of the top two performing schools at each grade level, and the winning school will receive SAAC's travelling trophy.

The Energy Challenge began November 1, 2012, and runs through the end of March 2013. Winners will be announced and celebrated in April and May of 2013. We hope this will be an ongoing annual Challenge available to all schools.

The competition remains tightly aligned with goals outlined in the Sustainability Management System, the document which outlines BVSD's comprehensive plans for incorporating sustainability into our operations and curriculum district-wide and which is supported by BOE Policy ECF. The competition also supports district heat mitigation efforts. Learn more at the greenBVSD website: www.bvsd.org/green.



>> Eco-Cycle Education Program

Nov. 1 letter from Cyndra Dietz, Program Manager for Eco-Cycle's Boulder County School Recycling and Environmental Education Program:

This past school year was a record breaking year for the program. An impressive 1,595 presentations and field trips on a wide variety of environmental topics were given in Boulder County and Broomfield County schools to 48,142 students and staff. This equates to 8.5 presentations or field trips per day for the entire school year.

There are also now 31 Green Star Schools in Boulder County, and every elementary school in the City of Boulder is now a Green Star School! It is the hope of both school districts and Eco-Cycle that every public school in the County will eventually have the chance to practice Zero Waste.

A heartfelt thank you to all of you as our funders and partners! You really do make this project possible!!

Eco-Cycle's Annual Report about the School Recycling and Environmental Education Program is available on the BVSD website at www.bvsd.org/newsletter/PDFs/EcoCycle-AnnualReport2011-12.pdf.

>> Personal Investment Enterprise

Individual Development Account Program of Boulder County

The Personal Investment Enterprise (PIE) Program is currently recruiting new applicants for our matched savings program.

Community Action Programs and Foothills United Way cosponsor PIE, a matched savings account program designed for low-income families and individuals to save toward first-time homeownership, post-secondary education, small business capitalization and Early Child Care Education or bilingual childcare* (*Participants must be bicultural and bilingual English/Spanish). The program matches the savings of the family or individual up to \$4 for every \$1 deposited by the participant. Maximum savings of \$1,000 for a total matched funds of \$4,000 is provided only once to each participant family.

To qualify for the PIE program, an individual must fulfill the following:

1. Minimum age of eighteen (18)
2. Maximum household earned income depending on household size (i.e. family of four cannot earn more than \$46,100 (federal funding). Maximum household net assets of \$10,000
3. Resident of Boulder County or Broomfield County (one year minimum)
4. Social Security Number
5. Participants must work 30 hours per week. Disabled, elderly, receiving TANF, or full-time student head of household allowed to work less than 30 hours.
6. Preference is given to participants of our referral agencies.

It is necessary for people to attend an orientation in order to apply for this program. If you are interested or know any individuals or families who would be interested in and are qualified for this program, please visit our website at www.bouldercountypie.org for the orientation's schedule. Call Nino Gallo at 303-441-3998 to RSVP or more detailed eligibility guidelines.

>> Youth Opportunities from CU Athletics

Colorado Athletics is celebrating National Girls and Women in Sports Day on Sunday, January 20. Kids eighth grade and under can participate in skills and fitness stations run by CU female student athletes. All kids who participate (along with an accompanying adult) will receive free admission to the CU Women's Basketball game vs. Arizona!



Activities Schedule - Sunday, Jan. 20

- Noon** Doors Open (must enter through northwest entrance for stations)
- 12:15-1:45 p.m.** Skills & Fitness stations hosted by CU Female Athletes (stations designed for kids 8th grade and under)
- 2:00 p.m.** CU Women's Basketball vs. Arizona

**Everyone must enter by 12:45 PM to receive free admission to the skills stations and game.*

For more information please visit CUBuffs.com or call 303-492-6414.

Ralphie's Kids Roundup (RKR) and Chauncey's Kids Roundup (CKR) provide opportunities for Colorado kids to experience women's and men's college basketball, respectively. Children who are 13 years of age and under will be eligible to visit the University of Colorado-Boulder and enjoy Colorado Men's and Women's Basketball at the Coors Events Center.



Our purpose as a university is to continue our active participation in the Colorado community and we wish to encourage young children to pursue their dreams of higher education and potential athletic and extracurricular involvement. For more information on this opportunity to bring your group, visit CUBuffs.com, click on "FAN ZONE," then click on "Kid's Corner" or call the CU Athletic Marketing Office at 303-492-4356.

>> Improving the nation's health and well-being

The Y believes that everyone has the desire to be well and that well-being is best cultivated by providing supportive relationships and environments. We also believe that all people should have the opportunity to be well in spirit, mind, and body. Being healthy means more than simply being physically active. It's about maintaining a balanced spirit, mind and body. The Y is a place where you can work toward that balance by challenging yourself to learn a new skill or hobby, fostering connections with friends through our enrichment programs, or bringing your loved ones closer together through our many family-centered activities. 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. Beyond fitness facilities, we provide educational programs to promote healthier decisions, and offer a variety of programs that support physical, intellectual and spiritual strength.



More than physical activity and healthy eating, YMCA healthy living encompasses a holistic approach to well-being that significantly enhances the lives of individuals, families, and communities. At the Y, a supportive community is a big part of wellness. At every age and every level of activity, you'll find people just like you looking to live a little bit healthier. We provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for all ages to become healthier and stay well in spirit, mind, and body. Through meaningful programs such as family time, health and wellness and sports and recreation, the Y shares resources, expertise and support for the nation's health and well-being.

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

>>Calendar of Classes & Events

DECEMBER 2012

Monday, Dec. 3, 6:30-8 p.m.

Preparing for Adolescence: From Tween to Teen

Presenters: Dan Fox, LPC, and Harmony Barrett Isaacs, LPC

Increase your understanding about adolescent development and its impact on child behavior and family interaction.

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

Meadows Branch Library, 4800 Baseline Road, Boulder

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Tuesday, Dec. 4, 4-6 p.m.

PEN Open House

95a Bistro, 1381 Forest Park Circle, Lafayette (95th & Arapahoe)

Welcome by Rosalind Wiseman, Author of Queen Bees and Wannabees

www.parentengagementnetwork.org

Wednesday, Dec. 12, 6-7:30 p.m.

BVSD/CU STEM Lecture Series - Polymers for Biomedical Applications

Presenters: Chris Bowman and Stephanie Bryant

Monarch High School, 329 Campus Dr, Louisville

Presented by the Bioscience Discovery and Evaluation Grant (BDEG) Educational Outreach program. Community members welcome.

Questions: kristin.donley@bvsd.org.

Wednesday, Dec. 12, 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, Dec. 17, 7-8 p.m.

Challenges for Youth with LGBTIQ Sexual Orientation

Hear from students and other community members to better understand the unique challenges that LGBTIQ youth face. Moderator: Leisha Conners Bauer, MPA.

A Pathways to Parenting Presentation - Live!

BVSD Ed Center Board Room, 6500 Arapahoe, Boulder

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

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

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

>>Calendar of Classes & Events

DECEMBER 2012

Thursday, Dec. 20, 6:30-8 p.m.

Strengthening Reading Confidence and Skills

Presenter: Iris Lee

Bring your elementary-age children, a fun book, and learn effective strategies for reading.

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

City of Louisville Library, 951 Spruce Street, Louisville www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

JANUARY 2013

Wednesday, Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m.

SEAC (Special Education Advisory Council)

Board 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, Jan. 14, 6:30-8 p.m.

Stress Reduction

Presenters: Susan Denison, LCSW, and Jeremy Dion, LPC

Stress can impact us physically as well as emotionally. Learn how to reduce stress and improve your quality of life.

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

Meadows Branch Library, 4800 Baseline Road, Boulder www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Wednesday, Jan. 16, 6-7:30 p.m.

BVSD/CU STEM Lecture Series - Biology of Heart Disease, Therapeutic Drug Discovery and Medicinal Chemistry - Presenters: Leslie Leinwand and Hubert Yin.

Boulder High School, 1604 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder

Presented by the Bioscience Discovery and Evaluation Grant (BDEG) Educational Outreach program. Community members welcome. Questions: Kristin.donley@bvsd.org.

Thursday, Jan. 24, 6:30-8 p.m.

Understanding and Dealing with Teen Depression

Presenters: Elizabeth Matthews, LPC, and Susan Denison, LCSW

Colorado leads the nation in adolescent depression. Learn how to recognize the symptoms and what to do about it.

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

City of Louisville Library, 951 Spruce Street, Louisville www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Monday, Jan. 28, 7-8 p.m.

Race to Somewhere: What We're Doing Right

Moderator: Dr. Jan Hittelman

A follow-up discussion to the Race to Nowhere movie. What we're doing right and strategies for the future.

A Pathways to Parenting Presentation - Live!

BVSD Ed Center Board Room, 6500 Arapahoe, Boulder

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

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Wednesday, Jan. 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

HOPE Event – presented by PEN and the HOPE Coalition

Broomfield High School, #1 Eagle Way, Broomfield

An interactive gathering for youth and adults on depression and suicide awareness. Donations welcome.

www.parentengagementnetwork.org www.hopecoalitionboulder.org