

Thrive update



Enhance Inspire
Inform healthy kids make better learners

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

>> What's really important is the relationship

In our busy day-to-day existence, we can easily get caught up in the details and lose focus on the big picture. As parents, we try to make sure our children are meeting their responsibilities at home and in school. If we're not careful, however, the majority of our interaction with our children can become nightly conflicts around getting homework done and getting to bed on time. As couples, we can get very focused on our partner's faults and annoying habits, allowing those issues to begin to drive the relationship far off course. And as individuals, we can get so focused on the needs of others, that we begin to neglect our own self-care. That's why it is important to periodically take a moment to step back, reflect on the relationships that we have with others, and determine if a course correction is needed.

Our most important relationship is the one we have with ourselves. If your own well-being is compromised by significant emotional issues (e.g. depression, anxiety, anger, etc.) the negative impact on your relationships with others is inevitable. Like the airline safety message about putting the oxygen mask on yourself before your child, it is important to first take care of yourself and your own emotional health in order to be able to take care of others. This is something that we also want to model for our children.

Parenting is such a challenge that it's easy and perhaps inevitable to focus on the little things and lose sight of the big picture. That's why it's important to break free from the negative parent-child cycle and make a conscious effort to have positive quality time as a family and balance the criticisms and consequences with positive feedback and words of love and encouragement. If there are significant conflicts between parents, dysfunctional relationships between most/all family members are likely.

By refocusing our energy on strengthening our bonds with others, and ourselves, we can begin to focus on what's really important – the relationship.

To strengthen your relationship with your partner, participate in the upcoming free community workshop:

by Dr. Jan Hittelman
Licensed Psychologist

From Room Mates to Soul Mates

Identify common obstacles and learn effective strategies to enhance your relationship.

When: Tuesday, October 15th, 6:30-8 p.m.

Where: Louisville Library (951 Spruce Street, Louisville)

Facilitators: Kat Austin, LPC, LMFT, Jeremy Dion, LPC, & David Robbins, LPC

More info: www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Have the Conversation!

Empathy – The key to successful parenting

Many articles on healthy and positive parent-child relationships refer to empathy. Why is that? What is empathy? What does it look like?

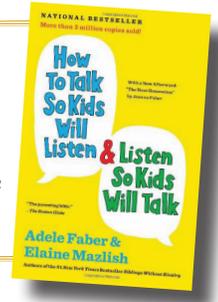
Many experts believe that empathy is the most important parenting skill. Empathy can be thought of as connection or attunement, sensing what our child is feeling and experiencing and being present with them.

Marshall Rosenberg, developer of Non-Violent Communication, says that empathy is a respectful understanding of what our child is experiencing and that it occurs only when we have successfully shed all preconceived ideas and judgments. That is the hardest part about empathy, because we all have preconceived ideas and judgments about our children and those make it difficult for us to be genuinely present with our child's experience and be able to see it from their point of view. When we are able to shed our preconceived ideas and judgments, we are then able to focus full attention on our child's message and be totally and genuinely present with them. That is empathy!

In the classic parenting book *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, they caution that our attitude is crucial. If our attitude is not one of compassion, then whatever we say will be experienced by our child as phony or manipulative. They suggest we resist the temptation to give advice and instead stay with accepting feelings, focusing on recognizing what they are feeling. They remind us that the more we try to push our child's unhappy feelings away, the more our child will become stuck in them; whereas, the more comfortably we are able to accept their bad feelings, the easier it will be for them to let go of them.

Resources:

- The Center for Nonviolent Communication - www.cnvc.org
- "How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk," by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
- "The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind," by Daniel Siegel, MD and Tina Payne Bryson, PhD.



What does it look like to respond with empathy? Listen with full attention; make eye contact, keep your voice soft and stay connected. Acknowledge their feelings and help them name their feelings. Put yourself in their shoes and try to experience their point of view.

No matter how many parenting strategies and tools you learn, if they are applied without empathy, they will not be as effective, so make sure to start from a place of empathy when communicating with your child.

by **Stephanie Bryan, LCSW, CAC III**
Clinical Social Worker and Parent Coach
www.REALparenting.com

>> Bonds that last a lifetime – Supporting adoptive relationships

Children who are adopted, whether at birth or later in childhood, often require that increased attention be paid to attachment needs. Spending time focusing on ways to support your child feel respected, unconditionally loved, and valued can both strengthen your relationship together and provide a basis for healthy relationships for them with peers and partners in the years to come. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Set-aside time to spend together without distractions. Give the televisions, computers, videogames, and phones a rest. Children who are adopted may have missed out on early emotional connections and this can be a great time to join with your child, helping fill in some of these earlier needs.
- Hang in there. As with all children, you will be faced with different behavioral challenges. Children who are adopted may test to see if you will continue to love them "no matter what." In the teenage years, youth explore their role within the family and what kind of person they want to be, while also discovering who they are in relation to their birth family.
- Provide your child with a listening ear and an opportunity to answer their questions. If they ask about their birth family, provide age-appropriate information, or if you do not know the answer let them know "I don't know." Addressing questions helps youth feel heard and validated, and respects their desire to know more about their family of origin.
- Adopting a child is an adjustment for all relationships within the family. Key in on needs of siblings, your relationship with your partner, and your own self-care.

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

>> Boulder Digital Arts offers scholarships for free classes

Since 2004, thousands of people have benefitted from BDA's training in all the creative digital arts - Photoshop, web design, filmmaking, and more. As a way of saying thanks to the community, BDA is giving back by offering free classes to BVSD students, teachers and staff.

How to apply: Visit www.boulderdigitalarts.com/about/scholarship.php to create a BDA profile and submit an on-line application. Once you apply, you'll receive an automated confirmation email and will be notified if you were granted a scholarship within 15 days of your application. Due to the processing time of reviewing applications, please make sure the class you are applying to take is being held at least two weeks from today's date. All applications will be evaluated by BDA's scholarship committee which is composed of members of BDA staff, along with volunteer members of the community. Scholarships are good towards all of BDA's regular lecture-style workshops and are awarded based on financial need along with strength of motivation. Upcoming workshops include "Copywriting for the Web," "Fundamentals of Web Design," "Getting Started with Adobe Photoshop," "Portrait Photography," and "Production and Lighting Techniques for Video."

See www.boulderdigitalarts.com/training/ for full schedule.



>> BVSD Lifelong Learning classes for kids, teens and you

BVSD Lifelong Learning offers enriching and enjoyable learning opportunities for kids, teens and adults. We welcome you and your family to join us on a journey of enrichment and discovery.

For kids: Lifelong Learning has a large selection of afterschool classes in the areas of science, LEGOs® art, cooking, chess, languages, fitness, and more. And if you're looking for camp options on Oct. 14 and over the Thanksgiving and Winter breaks, we provide opportunities for kids to play, learn and develop new friendships on their days away from school.

For teens: Our popular classes in Driver's Education, ACT Prep, SAT Prep, and Writing the College Application Essay are sure to start your teen off right this school year. And just for fun, we're also offering Introduction to Metalsmithing for grades 9-12 on Oct. 9.

For adults: From art to computers, from languages to gardening, we have classes to cover all of your interests. This fall we're excited to offer a series of one-session healthy cooking and eating classes taught by BVSD's Chef Ann Cooper: Eat Your Veggies (on Oct. 9), Thanksgiving Takeover (on Nov. 13), and Soups, Stews & Chilis Galore (on Dec. 11). Each of these classes is only \$39. For more information on all of our classes, visit www.bvsvd.org/LLL or call 720-561-5968.



>> BVSD Harvest Festival cancelled

BVSD Food Services and the School Food Project has cancelled the BVSD Harvest Festival scheduled for Sunday, October 20th. We believe that it is a time to focus on rebuilding the parts of our community most affected by the floods in September. We plan to host the festival in the future, and will provide details for the event at that time.



>> YMCA – Growing healthy families

The family that plays together, stays together. The family that dines together, shines together.

At the Y, that's our attitude on building healthy bonds among family members. Spending regular quality time as a group is one of the best ways to improve your family's health and wellbeing.

For some, this might mean slowing down, putting away technology and changing a home's culture. For others, it means prioritizing and planning structured activities. Find an hour a day when your entire family has an opportunity to connect and share. When you can make this a part of your approach to healthy living, the relationships will blossom.

Children need adult time and attention as much as they need healthy food and playful activity. When it is missing, a child may find other ways of getting attention—sometimes resulting in negative behavior and stress on the relationship. Connection and bonding doesn't always just happen. It takes some effort, but it will help your child learn, grow and thrive.

What does this look like? Take an ongoing class together, plan Saturday bike rides or cook dinner as a family each night. The family meal is also a great time to catch up on news and discuss plans. Try to eat at least one meal together every day. Planning family meals in advance will help accommodate busy schedules, and preparing them together will strengthen family bonds. Establishing rules and rituals will make mealtimes memorable and create lessons that last a lifetime.

Healthy Eating Tip

Once each week, gather the family around with healthy snacks and hold a meal planning party during which everyone gets to have input. The first time you try this, an adult will need to do a little preliminary work so that you can present the kids with healthy choices that fit within your family's budget.

The YMCA of Boulder Valley supports the community through programs that focus on health living, youth development and social responsibility. Financial assistance is available.



>> Strengthen relationships with your family and make new friends at CU Athletic games in October

CU Soccer

Sunday, October 6 is family day at Prentup Field so bring your family and friends out to the CU Soccer vs. Oregon match! The match begins at 2 p.m. and will feature a variety of family activities. Also, be sure to arrive early to see Ralphie run pregame. For a complete schedule and more information on the season, visit CUBuffs.com/soccer. Remember all games are played at Prentup Field, located at 33rd and Colorado, and admission and parking are free!

CU Volleyball

All kids 8th grade and below are invited to come to the Coors Events Center to Trick or Treat with CU Student-Athletes from 3-4 p.m. before the CU Volleyball vs. Arizona State game on Sunday, Oct. 27. Meet new friends and participate in activities such as a kids costume contest, pumpkin painting, candy giveaways and more! Those that attend the event will receive FREE admission to the game. For a complete schedule and more information visit CUBuffs.com/volleyball or call 303-49-BUFFS.

Pink games

CU Athletics is recognizing Breast Cancer Awareness on Friday, Oct. 25 and Saturday, Oct. 26. Come cheer on your Colorado Buffaloes, wear pink and help support breast cancer awareness!

Friday, Oct. 25

CU Soccer vs. USC at 3 p.m.

- The first 500 fans will receive a free pink CU rally towel

CU Volleyball vs. Arizona at 7 p.m.

- Early arriving fans will receive a pink giveaway item!

Saturday, Oct. 26

CU Football vs. Arizona, time TBA

>> International Walk to School Day

BVSD students and staff will join millions from around the world to celebrate International Walk to School Day on Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2013. This annual event raises awareness for safe walking and bicycling routes to school and emphasizes the importance of physical activity, pedestrian safety, reduced traffic congestion and environmentally friendly transportation alternatives.

The day builds connections between families, schools and the broader community as we celebrate walking and bicycling to school as a simple way to bring physical activity into our daily routine. The intention is to walk more, move more and play more with friends, be healthy, reduce traffic, and keep the air fresh.

Fire Up Your Feet is our motto! We hope you'll show your support by strapping on your sneakers and joining thousands of BVSD students and parents from across the district in honoring walking and biking to school on Oct. 9.

Everyone is also invited to walk all week in the BVSD Fire Up Your Feet challenge from Oct. 7-11, or walk all month in the October Activity Challenge brought to you by Fire Up Your Feet Colorado. This statewide challenge is designed to engage students and parents to move more. Participating schools will be eligible for drawings to win up to \$1000 to improve gym equipment, provide bike racks, or create creative programs that get kids active. To get involved, register here!



In the spirit of building global community, please donate your used shoes to the BVSD Eco-Cycle Shoe Collection drive, Oct. 7-11. These shoes will be distributed and reused all over the world! There will be collection boxes at most BVSD schools. Go to bvsd.org/toschool for more information or contact your school's walk coordinator for more details.

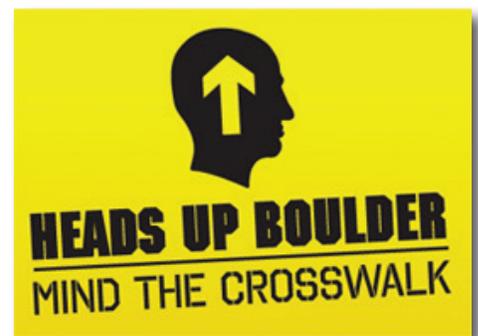
>> Heads UP crosswalk safety program continues

The City of Boulder, in partnership with Boulder Valley School District, will continue to promote its crosswalk safety program for the 2013-14 school year.

"Heads Up: Mind the Crosswalk" teaches kids safe crossing practices, raises awareness of crosswalk ordinances and reminds cyclists, walkers and drivers of their role in crosswalk safety.

Heads Up campaign highlights will include:

- CW- The 9'6" mascot will make appearances at schools and throughout town this fall.
- Assemblies – A team will deliver a fun and interactive crosswalk safety assembly at up to six elementary schools.
- Art Project – Julie Ireland, local artist and parent, will work with art teachers on a creative "spoon project," culminating in a community art installation.
- Giveaways – Students at targeted schools will receive reflective stickers, temporary tattoos and reflective leg bands, which are especially helpful during dusk and early evening hours.
- Posters at every school and more...



For more information, visit www.bouldersafeststreets.com or bvsd.org/toschool.

>>Calendar of classes & events

OCTOBER 2013

Monday, Oct. 7, 7-8 p.m.

Adoption Parenting Challenges

BVSD Ed Center Board Room, 6500 Arapahoe, Boulder

Learn about the unique questions and challenges that face adoptive parents. A Pathways to Parenting Success Presentation - Live! Be a part of the live audience, watch on Comcast Ch 22 or watch online at www.bvsd.org/bv22/Pages/default.aspx and click the Watch BV22 Now! Visit www.boulderpsychologicalservices.com for more information.

Wednesday, Oct. 9

International Walk to School Day

Lace up your shoes and join millions around the world to celebrate walking, cycling, and health. Walk all week in the BVSD Fire Up Your Feet challenge and donate your used shoes to Eco-Cycle, Oct. 7-11.

Go to bvsd.org/toschool for more information or contact your school's walk coordinator for more details.

Monday, Oct. 14

BVSD District Professional Development Day: No school for students

Tuesday, Oct. 15, 6:30-8 p.m.

From Roommates to Soulmates: Enhancing Couples' Relationships

City of Louisville Library, 951 Spruce Street, Louisville

Identify common obstacles and learn effective strategies to enhance your relationship. A Pathways to Success Workshop – Free and open to the public.

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Monday, Oct. 21, 6:30-8 p.m.

Parenting Successfully in a Blended Family

Mamie Doud Eisenhower Library, 3 Community Park Road, Broomfield

Learn about effective parenting strategies for families that include children from previous marriages/relationships.

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

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

NOVEMBER 2013

Monday, Nov. 4, 7-8 p.m.

Are Holidays Stressful? Reduce Family Conflict, Over Indulging, and Seasonal Moodiness

BVSD Ed Center Board Room, 6500 Arapahoe, Boulder

Learn how to really have happy holidays this year, by avoiding the common pitfalls.

A Pathways to Parenting Success Presentation - Live! Join us live or watch on Comcast Ch22 or streamed on www.BVSD.org www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

Tuesday, Nov. 5, 6:30-8 p.m.

Are You an Exhausted Caregiver? Steps You Can Take to Revive Yourself

Meadows Branch Library, 4800 Baseline Rd., Boulder (Behind Safeway)

How to take care of your needs while caring for others.

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

www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com

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