



Billings Community Playgroup

Where fun and family go hand in hand!



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Mark Your Calendar

The Winter-Spring session of Playgroup runs through Tues., May 20. The new activity schedule for the Winter-Spring session is ready and will be posted on the Parks and Rec website, www.prpl.info under "Youth Enrichment." Copies will also be available on the front table at Playgroup.

THINK SNOW! The date for our annual attempt at Sledding Day is a floating one this year. The first day of Playgroup when there is a significant amount of snow (a reasonable amount for sledding) will be our Sledding Day. So bundle up, bring your sled, and get ready for some winter fun!

Thought for the Month

"Every child is an artist. The challenge is to remain an artist once they grow up."

--Pablo Picasso

Great Books for the Snowy Season

Cuddle up with your child, and enjoy some great books on these chilly days!

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

Tracks in the Snow by Wong H. Yee

Snowballs by Lois Ehlert

The Snowman by Raymond Briggs

Snow by Uri Shulevitz

The Snowy Day by Anna Milbourne

Sledding by Elizabeth Winthrop

One Winter's Night by Christina Butler

The Three Snow Bears by Jan Brett

Snowsong Whistling by Karen Lotz

Be on the List to Be in the Know!

With it being the prime time of year for sickness and snowstorms (well, at least most years!), it is a good idea to be on the Playgroup email list in order to find out about any last minute cancellations that may occur. Email is the easiest way for me to notify the group when I am unable to find a substitute in the event of sickness in my house, when there is a mechanical problem at the center, or if the weather is so bad that I don't dare to venture out! I always try to provide as much notice about cancellations as possible, but as we all know, with children things can change in an instant. Email is also the environmentally-friendly way to receive the monthly newsletter!

Free Children's Concert

Don't miss out on all the fun at the annual Billings Symphony's free children's concert at the Alberta Bair Theater on Saturday, January 26. The concert entitled, "Magic & Flute," will be presented at 11:00 am and 12:30 pm. Seats are free but fill up quickly so arrive early!

Many Thanks from Julie

Thank you so much for the gift certificate that people pooled together for as a gift for me for Christmas. I will enjoy spending some quiet time (if I remember how ☺) making my selections at Hastings.

As many of you know, creating and running Playgroup has been a labor of love for me, but our success is due in large part to the support given by the families who enjoy the program. I am grateful for all the help that people continually offer and for the words of appreciation that people express. Truly, the program would not exist without your interest and efforts. Thank you so much for spreading the word about Playgroup with your friends and relatives; word-of-mouth is the most powerful type of advertising available! I look forward to the time that we spend together twice a week, making the most meaningful investment that I believe that we can make as parents, that of spending time laughing, learning, and growing with our children.

Bundle Up and Stay Warm

As you know, Zimmerman Center is an old building with a furnace that doesn't like cold winter days! Please feel free to bring slippers for the really cold days when we struggle with the thermostat to keep a steady temperature inside.

Rhyme Time

Animal crackers and cocoa to drink;
That is the finest of suppers, I think.
When I am grown up and can have what
I please;
I think I shall always insist upon these.

--Christopher Morley

Art Activity Idea for a Chilly Day

Mmm....what's better than warm homemade bread with soup on a cold winter's day? Here's a fun idea to do in

the morning and then serve with a bowl of soup for lunch! From: Preschool Art.

Bread Sculpture

1 pkg. dry yeast
1 c. water
1 tsp sugar
2 c. flour
1 tbsp. oil
1 tsp. salt

Wash hands before beginning. Mix the water, sugar and yeast in a bowl until the yeast softens (about two to three minutes). Add one cup of flour and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon. Beat the mixture until smooth and add one tbsp. of oil and one tsp. of salt. Next add the second cup of flour to the dough. Pour the thick batter onto a floured board and add more flour slowly while kneading the dough. Keep a coating of flour on the dough to prevent sticking. Knead for about five minutes. The dough should be smooth, elastic, and satiny and should bounce back if a finger is poked into it. Place the dough in an oiled bowl and cover with a clean towel. Set the bowl in a warm place for dough to rise for about forty-five minutes. Punch the dough down and work it into a smooth ball. Divide the dough into portions for various parts of the bread sculpture or for different children to use. Create sculptures with the dough. Create any shapes or designs. Bake the sculptures for fifteen or twenty minutes in the lower part of a 400 degree oven. Large forms may take longer. Bake until golden and baked through. Cool the sculptures on a rack. Eat and enjoy! Hint: Keep a bowl of flour handy to keep hands powdery while sculpting.