



Billings Community Playgroup

Where fun and family go hand in hand!



Volume Four, Issue Four

December 2008

Dates to Remember in December

The Fall session of Playgroup ends on Thursday, December 18! There will not be Playgroup on December 23, 25, 30 and January 1. The Winter/Spring session will begin Tuesday, January 6. Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Join in the Fun--Sharing is Caring!

Join us on Thursday, December 11 as we spend the morning thinking of others! Bring in a non-perishable food item to donate to the Billings Food Bank along with a tray of two dozen homemade treats for a cookie swap among Playgroup families! (Please no nuts or nut butters.) We will have a special art activity that's "for the birds," and after playtime, we will read stories and sing songs related to sharing and caring about others. Participation in the cookie swap is optional; playgroup will carry on as usual! If you wish to participate in the cookie swap, please add your name to the sign-up sheet at Playgroup.

Holiday Fun at the Zoo

A number of fun family activities will be taking place at Zoo Montana later this month. Santa Claus will be visiting the zoo on Friday, the 19th and Saturday, the 20th from 10 am to 4 pm along with a holiday craft fair, where children can choose to do art projects that are free or have a \$1 fee. On Sunday, the 21st to Tuesday, the 23rd, Santa will be hosting a winter carnival at the zoo. Each evening at 6 pm, Santa will read a story, followed by games and merriment until 9 pm. Don't forget to check out the Festival of Lights and the sleigh rides to the Sensory Garden while you're there! For more information, please call Zoo Montana at 652-8100.

Great Teddy Bear Reads

We had a lot of fun and furry visitors at our Teddy Bear Tea Party last month! Here is a list of great teddy bear books to share with your child.

Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear? by Nancy White Carlstrom

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Illustrated by Michael Hague

Where's My Hug? by Amy Hest

Happy Birthday, Moon! by Frank Asch

The Three Bears by Byron Barton

Corduroy by Don Freeman

Little Bear by Elsie Holmelund Minarik

Seeking Input for the Next Session

If you have any ideas or suggestions for Playgroup activities for the Winter/Spring 2009 session, please talk with Julie before Dec. 18. She will incorporate as many ideas as possible into the new schedule!

Ho, Ho, Ho!

On the evening of Wednesday, December 10, local children can receive a phone call straight from the North Pole! Between 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., Santa will be "making his list and checking it twice." If your child is old enough to be able and willing to talk on the phone, and you would like to have him/her receive a phone call from Santa, send a letter with your child's name, age, names of siblings and pets, and a few Christmas wishes to "Billings Parks and Recreation Dept., Attn: Santa, 390 N. 23rd Street, Billings, MT 59101. Letters must be received by the end of the business day on the 9th. No faxes or emails will be accepted. Call 657-8371 for more information.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Expand Your Child's Horizons

Come join in the fun at Global Village's Art for Understanding Workshop for preschool and school aged children on Saturday, December 13 from 10:30 am to 11:30 am. This month's focus will be on the Swedish celebration of St. Lucia Day. Listen to a story, do an art activity, have a snack--and it's all free! Workshop is held in the office building adjacent to the Global Village store, located near the intersection of 3rd Avenue and Broadway, diagonally across from the Alberta Bair Theater. Please call Kiah at 259-3024 to RSVP or for directions.

Deadline for Story Time Felt Order

If you would like to order any of the Story Time felt sets, please let Julie or Heather Monsen know by December 5th.

Thought for the Month

If you're still trying to decide what to give your child(ren) for Christmas or Hanukkah this year, here's a list of inexpensive ideas... Many, like "F", "T", and "Y", are especially relevant this time of year.

Children Need ... by Meifi Stewart

APPRECIATION, for all they bring into our lives.

BALANCE, somewhere between too little and too much.

COMMITMENT, it's the little things we do each day that matter.

DREAMS, to touch the future.

EMPATHY, remember what it was like to be a child.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS, everyone needs someone to love.

GUIDANCE, actions speak louder than words.

HEALTHY HABITS, to nurture body, mind, and spirit.

INSPIRATION, to explore beauty, wonder, and mystery.

JOY, sprinkle laughter and happiness daily.

KINDNESS, to learn to care for others as they are cared for.

LIMITS, set boundaries and fair consequences.

MENTORS, to give wings to their aspirations.

NATURE, to delight in rainbow butterflies and shooting stars.

OPPORTUNITIES, to discover what truly makes their hearts sing.

PLAY, the "work" of childhood.

QUIET TIME, to recharge their batteries.

RESPONSIBILITIES, to build self-esteem and self-confidence.

SECURITY, feeling safe is essential for growth.

TRADITIONS, keep the family tree alive and sprout new branches.

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE, for who they are, not what they do.

VALUES, live yours and encourage them to find theirs.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT, "you can do it, I believe in you".

XOXOXO'S, hug and kiss them each and every day.

YOU, your presence more than your presents.

ZZZZZZ'S, a good night's sleep.