

SERVING 47 COUNTIES IN
NORTHEAST AND NORTH
CENTRAL NEBRASKA
~ SINCE 1998 ~



Building Blocks 2017 Annual Holiday Party

Over 300 children and adults attended the festivities at the Lifelong Learning Center on December 2nd. The party featured a catered meal, entertainment by ventriloquist, Kevin Horner, glitter tattooing, games, gifts and visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Elsa and Anna, Frosty and clowns!



Door Prize Winners

Angela Osborn, Brenda Erwin, Laura & Dave Stoltz, James & Megan Johnson, Todd & Marsha Drury, Nicole Henderson, Al & Michelle Pruter, Phyllis & Bud Cunningham, Kelci Long, Tina Dahir, Jamie Schapmann, Ben & Heather Larsen, Ryan & Gale Mehaffey, Brenda & Kyle Galvan, Scott & Nicole Halligan, Shelly Wortman, Eric & Jessica Rogat, Caleb & Dena Jeppesen



*30 Bikes for
30 kids
Thanks to
J & J Sanitation
of O'Neill*

SEPTEMBER WAS NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT MONTH

Building Blocks hosted fall festivals at Poppies Pumpkin Patch in rural Norfolk and Helgoth's Pumpkin in rural St. Libory in appreciation of National Foster Parent Month on September 30th.



*Building Blocks
Receives Grand
Marshall and 2nd in
the Civic Division at
the Harvest of
Harmony Parade*



“FOR THE LOVE OF READING”

**Children’s Day Festival
Sunday, February 11, 2018
1:00-4:00 p.m.
Sunset Plaza Mall**

**Free family fun will be provided by the following
businesses, organizations and service clubs:**

Authier Miller Pape EyeCare
Bright Horizons
Building Blocks Foster Care
Elkhorn Valley Museum
Faith Regional Theraplay
First Baptist Church
Keep Norfolk Beautiful
Kiwanis Emerging Leaders
Midtown Health Center
Mosaic
NENCAP Head Start
Nebraska State Patrol

Norfolk Daily News
Norfolk Family Coalition
Norfolk Family YMCA
Norfolk Lions Club
Norfolk Morning Kiwanis
Norfolk Noon Optimists
Norfolk Public Library
The Salvation Army
Trinity Lutheran School
United Healthcare
US92 / KNEN 94.7 / NCN 35
WellCare of Nebraska

Aging & Disability Resource Center
Animal Shelter of Northeast Nebraska
NPS Early Development Network / Sixpence
Norfolk Elks Lodge #653 / Boy Scout Troop #653
WJAG / Lite Rock 97.5 / 106 KIX

Approximately 1,500 children’s books will be given away this year!

Financial Sponsors

Nina Bahm
Building Blocks Foster Care
Elkhorn Valley Bank & Trust
Faith Regional Theraplay
First Baptist Church
Midtown Health Center
NPS Early Development Network
Norfolk Catholic Schools
Norfolk Family YMCA
Norfolk Lions Club
Norfolk Morning Kiwanis
Norfolk Noon Optimists
Trinity Lutheran School

**Presented by
Read Aloud Norfolk**



In-Kind Supporters

Culver's of Norfolk
NECC Student Education Association
News Channel Nebraska 35
Norfolk Daily News
Norfolk Public Schools
Sunset Plaza
US92 / KNEN 94.7
WJAG/Lite Rock 97.5/106KIX

**Read Aloud Norfolk wants to thank
all of our sponsors and supporters
as well as the families of Northeast
Nebraska who help make this event
happen each year!**

Children's Literature Festival



Green Eggs and Ham

Saturday, March 17, 2018

9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.

O'Neill Public Elementary School

Children ages 2-10

Schedule

9:00 – 9:30 - Green Eggs & Ham Breakfast

*****Breakfast will only be served from 9:00 – 9:30*****

9:00 – 10:15 - Clown Entertainment, Face Painting, Glitter Tattoos and Games

10:15 - 10:30 - Green Eggs & Ham Story

10:30 – 11:00 - Storytelling & Activities

Ticket Information

Green Eggs and Ham will be a Freewill Donation this year.

There will be no advanced ticket sales.

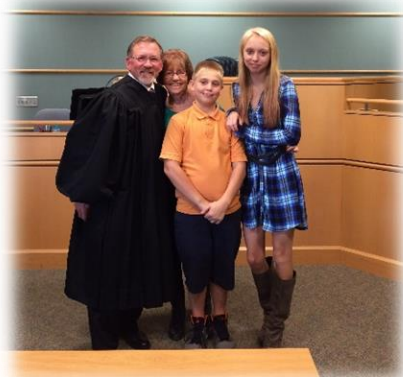
For more information call Rachael Kallhoff: 402-336-4841

Sponsored by Building Blocks for Community Enrichment

Adoptions



Novotne -8/18/17



Hultgren-10/16/17



Hansen-10/19/17



Ellis-11/20/17



Hegemann-12/19/17



Koepke-1/10/18



November 18, 2017

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the more than 110,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. This annual, one-day event has made the dreams of thousands of children come true by working with policymakers, practitioners and advocates to finalize adoptions and create and celebrate adoptive families.

7 Ways to Beat the Post-Holiday Blues

Learn how to spot changes in your child's moods to help him feel better after the holidays are over.

By Corinne Schuman

A marathon of holidays, beginning with Halloween and ending with New Year's, means a flurry of festivities, leisure time, late nights, and loads of sweets. But what goes up must come down, and after having lots of fun and leisure time with family, kids may feel sad returning to their pre-holiday life. The decrease in celebrations and excitement can affect kids' moods, causing disappointment and even more serious melancholy feelings. Here are seven ways to help kids cope with symptoms of the post-holiday blues or avoid them altogether.

Know the Signs

Kids tend to show their feelings through their actions, rather than explain them with words. Look for common signs of the blues such as lack of appetite, trouble sleeping, moodiness, an inability to control impulses, skipping activities that normally interest them, apathy, and tantrums. Kids may go through phases where they feel really sad but then bounce back. "If it lasts much longer than three weeks to a month, you want to keep an eye on it and talk to your pediatrician," says Jennifer Kolari, child and family therapist and author of *Connected Parenting*. By knowing what to look for, parents can be better prepared to address concerns and support kids having any difficulties.

Listen to Your Kids

The more we can validate our kids' feelings and experiences, the more likely they will feel supported. "As parents, we have a hard time with our children's sadness," Kolari explains. "We tend to try to talk our kids out of their feelings and that just makes them more blue, so in our attempt to fix it we sometimes make it worse." Instead, listen to your kids and empathize. "You want to mirror them a bit and say, 'You know, it's hard. It's hard to go from being free and seeing Mommy and Daddy every day and to getting up early and having school and homework.'" Show that you understand your kids' disappointment but that you have confidence that they'll get through it. By doing this, you demonstrate that you trust them, which ultimately teaches them to trust themselves.

Keep the Connection

Creating fun activities to do together after the holidays will keep the family close and connected. Spend time together making an art project or a scrapbook of photographs that showcases your memories and experiences. Even simple playing and having hands-on fun with your kids can strengthen the bonds. Kolari describes surprising her daughter with a meal underneath the dining room table one day. "She couldn't believe how much fun that was."

Spending time together in nature can also be a mood lifter. "We tend to stay inside a lot over the winter, which can contribute to the blues," says Christine Carter, Ph.D., a happiness expert at UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center and the author of *Raising Happiness*. "Even looking out a window or just being in daylight can improve your mood." Bundle up and go for a walk together or engage in winter sports. A new year brings a host of new opportunities, so make room for family activities and continue the spirit of togetherness.

Stay with a Structure

Between school vacations, parties, and travel, it's easy to let the daily structure slide, but kids thrive on routine, so try to maintain some normalcy when it comes to meals, playtime, and sleep. "Sleep is the main routine that families let go and a lot of behavioral problems are related to sleep deprivation. It's tempting to think 'Oh, it's a holiday, let's all relax and free-flow,' but there are some kids that just cannot free-flow. It only makes them antsy and anxious and miserable," Kolari warns. With all that's going on during the holidays, "kids rack up a considerable amount of sleep debt. We know that as little as a decrease in 20 minutes of sleep per night, for three to five days, is enough to affect kids' cognition or their ability to learn," Dr. Carter says.

Maintain structure by creating a schedule for the day and lay out what's happening next. You can write it out and keep it on the fridge. "Kids, particularly those who are high-energy, love to have a schedule. They like to know what's happening next," Kolari says. While the daily routine will be somewhat different over a holiday break, "the schedule needs to be predictable for kids. Know that the structure is what kids need to feel good," Dr. Carter advises. Keeping some familiarity throughout the day can help kids feel more balanced.

Create New Traditions

Sprinkle in some new traditions that won't end just because the holidays do. "We have friends who have a tree un-decorating party," Dr. Carter says. "The tree is by their front door and everyone takes an ornament off, wraps it, and puts it in the box."

Reclaiming the space that has been rearranged and cluttered can feel rejuvenating. Also, continue any gratitude practices you might have started over Thanksgiving. "People who consciously practice gratitude tend to be considerably happier than people who don't. It's something you can teach your kids to do year-round," Dr. Carter says. Make a point after the holidays to reflect on what you each enjoyed most. Dr. Carter's family has a tradition of telling jokes at Christmas dinner. "So when we ask, 'What did you love about Christmas? What are your favorite traditions? What do you want to do next year?' nobody mentions their favorite toy. They always mention which joke they loved." By incorporating a post-holiday tradition of thankfulness, kids will experience long-term emotions of joy and happiness, and feel the spirit of the holidays for months to come.

Get Healthy

After months of consuming endless cookies, cakes, and sweets, get your kids involved in creating and eating healthy dishes. Load up the fridge with fresh fruits and veggies, look for snacks that are low in sugar and high in whole grains, vitamins, and minerals, and be sure to encourage your kids to stay hydrated by drinking lots of water—all of this can improve and boost moods. Flip through a cookbook and make nutritious recipes together. And encourage movement: "Exercise helps to release endorphins, which are the best instant mood lifter that we have. It also helps kids sleep better," Dr. Carter explains. Kids can often feel restless and edgy when their system is out of balance. "If you build play into your day, like wrestling, hide-and-seek, something physical that has a positive kind of adrenaline, you can often ward off some pretty bad tantrums," Kolari says. Getting back to healthy eating habits and physical activities can increase good feelings and decrease frustrated behaviors.

Give Back

Acts of kindness and generosity are mood lifters no matter the season, so involve the family in charity service projects. Volunteer at a soup kitchen or donate gently used clothes and items. Instead of receiving personal gifts, the kids in Dr. Carter's family are given charity gift cards. "Each one gets ten dollars to give away to one of 200 charities of his or her choice," she explains. "The kids spend time researching which charities they want to give to, and they don't do it until after the new year, so the feeling lasts after the dust settles." Service projects don't have to be complicated. There are plenty of simple ways to teach kids about the spirit of giving, from sending cards to children in the hospital to deciding which old toys should be re-gifted. Visit bigheartedfamilies.org to find accessible volunteer projects. When the focus is on giving to others, it's difficult to stay in a slump.



2018 Great Easter Egg Hunt
Norfolk YMCA
Saturday, March 24th @ 1 p.m.
Over 10,000 Eggs to Hunt
with prizes for all!

The Building Blocks Foster Care Closet is available for your foster child's clothing and accessory needs.

To fulfill your foster child's clothing needs, download a form from our website www.buildingblocksforkids.org and submit the completed form to your Foster Care Specialist

or

Contact Tonya @ 402-851-1097 or tonya@buildingblocksforkids.org

~ Offered free of charge ~

Building Blocks is looking for additional foster homes to provide care for high needs children including teens, sibling groups, kids with severe behaviors and those exiting higher levels of care. Building Blocks will be offering a reward to anyone that recruits a new foster home willing to take placements of this population that completes the licensing process.

For information contact the office at 402-336-4841.



A Friendly Reminder . . .

DHHS Regulations require that each foster parent get at least 12 clock hours of Department Approved In-service training annually within the effective dates of his/her license. (DHHS Compliance Review Form).

Each Building Blocks location has a lending library as well as various self-directed study materials for your assistance. Our website also maintains a current and upcoming training schedule. For your convenience, your Resource & Licensing Specialist will be sending you a quarterly update of the number of hours remaining for the year.

Don't forget to check out our website,
www.buildingblocksforkids.org for updated information on events,
resources, in-services and pre-service training.
Provide your e-mail addresses to Tonya Bauman at:
tonya@buildingblocksforkids.org or 402-851-1097
for enrollment in our online training services.

Upcoming Trainings & Events

January

January 22nd – Board of Directors Meeting

February

February 2nd – Groundhog Day

February 11th – Children's Day Festival

February 13th – Columbus Support Group

February 14th – Valentine's Day

February 16th – West Point Support Group

February 19th – President's Day

March

March 11th – Daylight Saving Time begins

March 13th – Columbus Support Group

March 17th – St. Patrick's Day

March 17th – Green Eggs and Ham

March 20th – West Point Support Group

March 24th – Great Easter Egg Hunt

March 26th – Board of Directors Meeting

April

April 1st – Easter

April 10th – Columbus Support Group

April 17th – West Point Support Group

Visit us on Facebook at:

Building Blocks for Community Enrichment



Foster Parent Support Groups

Please join us for training and fellowship

WEST POINT SUPPORT GROUP

(6:30PM – 8:00PM)

St Francis Memorial Hospital

Francis and Assisi Rooms

430 N. Monitor St.

West Point, NE 68788

****CHILDCARE AVAILABLE****

January 16, 2018

February 20, 2018

March 20, 2018

April 17, 2018

May 15, 2018

June 19, 2018

July 2018 - OFF

August 21, 2018

September 18, 2018

October 16, 2018

November 2018 – OFF

December 2018 – OFF

COLUMBUS SUPPORT GROUP

(7:00PM – 8:30PM)

Peace Lutheran Church

2720 28th St.

Columbus, NE 68601

****CHILDCARE AVAILABLE****

January 9, 2018

February 13, 2018

March 13, 2018

April 10, 2018

May 8, 2018

June 2018– OFF

July 2018– OFF

August 14, 2018

September 11, 2018

October 9, 2018

November 13, 2018

December 2018 - OFF

Join Us for ...

**Building Blocks Foster Care
Open House and Ribbon Cutting
Friday, March 2nd, 2018
10 am–12 p.m.
1300 South Locust, Suite F
Grand Island, NE**



Building Blocks for Community Enrichment
118 North 5th Street
O'Neill, NE 68763

Return Service Requested

For more information:

www.NEAPA.org www.FFTA.org www.nebraskachildren.org www.ATTACH.org www.fostercare.org

Building Blocks for Community Enrichment

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Program Director—Rachael Kallhoff
Financial Officer—Traci Ober
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FCS & Placement Supervisor—Cristy Brooks
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Foster Care Specialists—Katie Williamson
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Ruth Matthews-Mott

Offices:

118 N. 5th Street, O'Neill—402-336-4841
Fax—402-336-4640
101 East Wilson Avenue, Norfolk
Fax—402-379-1056
1312 Dakota Avenue, Ste. A, S. Sioux City
Fax—402-404-8315
1300 South Locust, Ste F, Grand Island
On-Call: 402-394-5736