



BABLER FAMILY MATTERS

ROCKWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT
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The Gift of Family

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This holiday season, while you are flooded with images of toys, gadgets, and games to purchase for your loved ones, remind yourself that you have everything you need in yourself and in your family. The best present you can give your child is the gift of family. Many studies show that children who are more involved with their families are less prone to violence, drug and alcohol abuse and low self-esteem than children who lead increasingly separate lives.

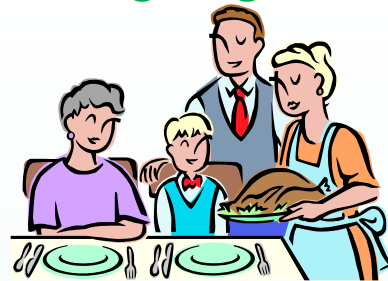
Family involvement plays a crucial role in a child's development and sense of security. It is from this base that they feel confidence in their ventures in the community. Listed below are some ideas of activities to promote family bonding experiences.



Cooking Together

Specifically during the holidays, include your children in holiday preparation. Try inviting your child into the kitchen to help you cook. Preparing meals with your children helps children to view eating healthy foods as fun! Aside from the quality time you will be spending together, your child will feel a sense of accomplishment for helping to create the family meal. Children particularly enjoy stirring and mixing ingredients. What a great chance to practice those math skills too!

Eating Together



*Research shows that children who ate dinner with their families (five or more dinners per week with a parent) were less likely to use drugs and alcohol. Family meals were also associated with fewer mental health problems (low self-esteem, depression, suicidal thoughts, and suicidal attempts). In fact, meal time at home was the single strongest predictor of better achievement scores and fewer behavioral and emotional problems. So if family dinners are associated with academic success, psychological adjustment, and lower rates of alcohol, drug use and suicidal risk, how can we make dinner time more fun?

Volunteer!

Teach your child the value of helping others by becoming involved in a volunteer project. You can join a walk for a cause, help out at "Alex's" Lemonade Stand, and deliver a food basket to the elderly or stock shelves in a food pantry. Ask your child to select one toy or game that they do not use often to donate to a child who may not be receiving any gifts this holiday season. Find a cause that feels right to your family. Discuss how good it feels to give to others and help your child develop empathy for others.





The Special Plate

One thing you may do at dinner is have a "special plate." It can be a different looking plate bought from a dollar store. At the start of each meal, you may take turns around the table with each person stating one thing they love about the person who has the special plate. Everyone gets a turn with the special plate. It may be passed to the next person on a predetermined rotation schedule. If a special occasion occurs (birthdays, someone wins an award etc.), then that person receives the special plate that night. You may continue back to the rotation schedule the next night. This activity instills the importance of letting others know how significant they are to you, and how much you love them. The "special plate" can also be used to signify a lost family member or person significant to your family as a way to honor their life.

Exercise!!

Work off some of those holiday sweets. You can complete a workout video together, take a brisk walk together around the block, or you might just stick with some good old fashioned dancing! Sledding and ice skating are other fun winter time activities that involve burning some calories.



FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Plan one night over the winter break to simply stay home and do nothing but play games together. Many families find that a weekly game night is just what is needed to begin communication about other issues in the home.

Some other family bonding activities include:

- ♥ Drive around town to find the most "unique" decorations on a house.
- ♥ Create and complete a scavenger hunt in the community to do together.
- ♥ Host your own family crafts party.
- ♥ Sign up for a class together.



Bedtime Stories

Reading a bedtime story together is a great way to build your child's love of reading. Remember to remind your child that you love them each night. What follows is a list of books all about families.

For Children

- "The Family Book" by Todd Parr
- "Every Kid's Guide to Handling Family Arguments" by Joy Berry
- "How to Deal with Parents: A Child's Practical Guide" by Richard Powell
- "Weird Parents" by Audrey Wood
- "Take Time to Relax" by Nancy Carlson

For Adults

- "Escaping the Family Time Trap: A Practical Guide for Over Busy Families" by B. Degrote-Sorensen
- "The Simpler Family" by Christine Klein
- "Traits of a Healthy Family (Epiphany)" by Dolores Curran
- "Making Ordinary Days Extraordinary: Great Ideas for Building
- "Family Fun and Togetherness" by Gloria Gaither

Counselor Highlights...



This month counselors will be working on career development and focusing on responsibility as one of our important character traits. The goal for our responsibility lesson is to remind our students they are inevitably "responsible" for being a serious learner...and if they can start here, oh the places they will go!

December is an exciting month as your Counseling Team will be hosting Buddy Day! We are so excited to get to work with each and every one of the kids on this fun filled day! December's guidance units will look further into our relationships to one another to reinforce the message in our previous bullying units. **Wishing all of you a joyous holiday season!**

