

Important Dates

December 9th —Elsmere Center Holiday Program

Please make plans to join us for our Annual Elsmere Head Start Children's Holiday Program. The event will be held at the Dietz Auditorium, located between Lloyd High School and Tichenor Middle School in Erlanger (behind Erlanger Police Department) from 7:00—8:30 PM. Special guests will include Bob Herzog from Local 12 and performances by local children. Please contact Orena Winn, Elsmere Site Manager, at 727-6232 for more information.

December 10th—Parent Meeting/Holiday Celebration

This meeting/celebration will be held at the Newport Administration building, 437 West 9th Street at 9:30 AM. Everyone is invited to attend. Please bring a covered dish and we will provide the rest. Contact your Site Manager if you need more information.

December 16th—Policy Council Meeting

The next Policy Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 9:30 AM at the Newport Administration Building, 437 West 9th Street. Contact Kimberly Woodall, 655-2940 for more information.



Plant Safety in your Holiday Decorating

Holiday decorations often include flowers and shrubs. Unfortunately, while these items are pretty, many of the most popular are toxic to humans or pets. Here is a list of popular holiday plants and their toxic effects:

Amaryllis *hippeastrum* Eating the bulb can cause abdominal pain.

Christmas Trees *Cedar* Ingesting the bark can cause abdominal pain. The sap may cause an itchy skin rash. Christmas trees are a bigger fire danger than poison danger.

Holly Berries *ilex* Eating 1 or 2 berries should be OK. More than 2 berries can cause nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. Minnesota Poison Control says 20 berries can kill a child.

Jerusalem Cherry *solanum pseudocapsicum* Ingestion can cause vomiting, skin redness, drowsiness or restlessness, and hallucinations. Seizures are possible, but rare.

Mistletoe *phoradendron* All parts of mistletoe contain toxins. If ingested, mistletoe can cause vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. One to two berries or leaves eaten by a child will NOT result in serious harm. If you hang mistletoe in your home during the holidays, place it in a piece of netting or a plastic sandwich bag to prevent leaves and berries from dropping to the ground where kids and pets can eat them.

Poinsettia *euphorbia* Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias have been considered safe for the holiday home since the 1970's. Eating several leaves can give you a stomach ache, and the sap can cause skin rash. Wash away sap with soap and water.

Pyracantha You can eat a large number of berries before getting a stomach ache. Like the poinsettia, this plant is considered safe by experts.

Rosary Pea or Jequirity Bean *abrus precatorius* These berries are very dangerous. They can be swallowed whole, but can be life-threatening if they are chewed prior to swallowing. Vomiting and abdominal pain occurs within a few hours after swallowing, followed by bloody diarrhea.

References:

"Winter Holiday Safety and Poison Prevention Tips." *California Poison Action Line*. 21 Nov 2001. California Poison Control System. 14 Nov 2006



December 2008



Northern Kentucky Community Action
Commission Head Start

Stronger Together Classes

The Stronger Together Program offers relationship enhancement classes to singles, couples and teens so that they may learn, develop and maintain healthy relationships while having fun. Participants will learn how to resolve conflict, communicate effectively, and learn what a healthy and unhealthy relationship looks like.

These classes will be offered throughout the year at various Head Start Centers. Food, childcare and transportation may be included so that parents can take advantage of this opportunity. Other incentives and prizes will also be offered during the after completing the classes.

To find out if a class is or will be offered at your Head Start Center, please call, 859-581-6607 and ask about the Stronger Together Program.

Stronger Together Classes at Elsmere Head Start
Every Thursday, December 4th & December 11th from 6:30-8:30pm
Dinner and Childcare provided. Participants receive a \$25 gift card after completion of classes.

Stronger Together Classes at Newport, 9th Street
Every Monday, December 1st, December 8th, December 15th from 5:30-7:30pm. Dinner and Childcare provided. Participants receive a \$25 gift card after completion of classes.

Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission

Head Start Centers

Covington: 392-2690

Dayton: 581-5868

Elsmere: 727-6232

Falmouth: 654-2958

Newport: 431-4177

Newport 8th: 292-2806

www.nkcac.org

Head Start Administrative staff can be reached at 581-6607



Employment Opportunities can be found on our website
www.nkcac.org

Holiday Safety Tips

The holidays are an exciting time of year for kids, and to help ensure they have a safe holiday season, here are some tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant."
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces, radiators or portable heaters. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.
- Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard.
- Be sure to keep the stand filled with water, heated rooms can dry live trees out rapidly.

Lights

- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use. To hold lights in place, string them through hooks or insulated staples, not nails or tacks.
- Check all tree lights—even if you've just purchased them—before hanging them on your tree. Make sure all the bulbs work and that there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections.
- Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.

Decorations

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens.
- In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid them from swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a young child to eat them.
- Remove all wrapping papers, bags, paper, ribbons and bows from tree and fireplace areas after gifts are opened. These items can pose suffocation and choking hazards to a small child.

Holiday Safety Tips continued...

Toy Safety

- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills and interest level of the intended child. Toys too advanced may pose safety hazards for younger children.
- Before allowing your child to play with a toy that he has received as a gift, read the instructions carefully.
- To prevent both burns and electrical shocks, don't give young children (under age ten) a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, buy toys that are battery-operated.
- Children under age three can choke on small parts contained in toys or games. Toys for children under age three cannot have parts less than 1 1/4 inches in diameter and 2 1/4 inches long.
- Watch for pull toys with strings that are more than 12 inches in length. They could be a strangulation hazard for babies.

Food Safety

- Bacteria are often present in raw foods. Fully cook meats and poultry, and thoroughly wash raw vegetables and fruits.
- Be sure to keep hot liquids and foods away from the edges of counters and tables, where they can be easily knocked over by a young child's exploring hands.
- Wash your hands frequently, and make sure your children do the same.
- Never put a spoon used to taste food back into food without washing it.
- Always keep raw foods and cooked foods separate, and use separate utensils when preparing them.
- Always thaw meat in the refrigerator, never on the countertop.
- Foods that require refrigeration should never be left at room temperature for more than two hours.

Happy Visiting

- Clean up immediately after a holiday party. A toddler could rise early and choke on leftover food or come in contact with alcohol or tobacco.
- Remember that the homes you visit may not be childproofed. Keep an eye out for danger spots.
- Keep a laminated list with all of the important phone numbers you or a baby-sitter are likely to need in case of an emergency. Include the police and fire department, your pediatrician and the national Poison Help Line, 1-800-222-1222.

Traveling, visiting family members, getting presents, shopping, etc., can all increase your child's stress levels. Trying to stick to your child's usual routines, including sleep schedules and timing of naps, can help you and your child enjoy the holidays and reduce stress.

2007 - American Academy of Pediatrics

