

# Winter Newsletter

December 2007

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## What's Inside

Songs, Santa and Science	2
Recipes, Games and Poems	3
Holiday Survival Guide	3
Holiday Travel with Children	4
New Ontario Blind—Low Vision Early Intervention	5
Looking for Child Care?	6

### Deck the Halls with Concentration

1. Cut rectangular "cards" out of red and green construction paper.
2. Cut slightly smaller rectangles from wrapping paper (two from each kind) or use stickers instead of wrapping paper.
3. Glue to coloured construction paper.
4. Laminate and play Memory Concentration.



### The Great Gift Un-Wrapped

Place a candy cane for each child inside a small cardboard box and gift-wrap it.

Continue placing the wrapped box inside a larger wrapped box, until the package is as large as a child can handle. The larger, the better, for the children.

#### **To Play:**

Have everyone sit in a circle. Play holiday music and pass the package around. When the music stops, the player holding the package may begin to unwrap the gift. If the music starts, the box keeps going around even if the paper is hanging off of it! Continue until the candy canes are found and share them with everyone!



## Winter Songs

### Snow is Falling

(Tune: "Frère Jacques")

Snow is falling,  
 Snow is falling.  
 To the ground,  
 To the ground.  
 See the snow falling,  
 See the snow falling.  
 All around,  
 All around.

### I'm A Little Snowman

(Tune: "I'm a Little Teapot")

I'm a little snowman  
 Short and fat.  
 Here are my buttons,  
 Here is my hat.  
 When the sun comes out,  
 I run away.  
 Before I slowly melt away!

### FALLING SNOW

See the pretty snowflakes  
 Falling from the sky;  
 On the wall and housetops  
 Soft and thick as they lie.  
 On the window ledges,  
 On the branches bare;  
 Now how fast they gather,  
 Filling all the air.  
 Look into the garden,  
 Where the grass was green;  
 Covered by the snowflakes,  
 Not a blade is seen.  
 Now the bare black bushes  
 All look soft and white,  
 Every twig is laden—  
 What a pretty site!

## Science

### **OBSERVING SNOWFLAKES**

Give your child(ren) a piece of black paper and go outside together when it is snowing and catch a few snowflakes. With a magnifying glass, encourage them to observe the shape and uniqueness of the snowflakes. Explain that snowflakes are frozen water drops.

### Creative Art

#### **SNOWY WINDOWS**

You can simulate snow any time by letting your child paint a window or mirror with a special crystal paint. Just mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Epson salts (available at drug stores). When the mixture dries it will form crystals on the surface simulating snow or frost!



## Games, Poems and Recipes For You

### POTATO LATKES

4 large potatoes  
 1 small onion, grated  
 1 egg  
 2 tsp. Matzo meal  
 1 tsp. salt  
 Dash of pepper and cooking oil.

Grate the potatoes and press out as much liquid as possible. Mix in onion, egg, seasoning and matzo meal. Cover the bottom of the frying pan with oil. Heat. Carefully drop large spoonfuls of mixture into hot oil. Fry each side until crisp and brown.

**We wish you quiet moments, happy times, exciting reading and time for family and friends.**

### Snowball Toss

Cover the bottom and sides of a cardboard box with construction paper. Paint or glue a picture of Santa's face with a big open mouth on the box. Cut out the large mouth. Have the children scrunch white paper into tight snowballs. Place Santa box against a wall and take turns trying to get the snowballs into Santa's mouth.



### **Reindeer Pokey (Tune: "The Hokey Pokey")**

**You put your antlers in.  
 You put your antlers out.  
 You put you antlers in  
 And you shake them all about.  
 You do the Reindeer Pokey and  
 you turn yourself around.  
 That's what it's all about!**

**You put your hooves in....  
 You put your red nose on.....**

### **Sense of Smell**

**Fill decorated baby food jars with cinnamon, cloves, pinecones, candy canes, scented candles, etc.**

**Pass jars around and see who can identify what they smell.**

**Ask lots of questions!**

### Silly Tongue Twisters:

**How to play: Say each phrase three times as fast as you can!**

**Chocolate cocoa cravings cure colds.**

**Santa sings shining star songs.**

**Grumpy Grinch goes grizzly gus.**

**Candy cane cookies keep kids coming.**

**Sally skis super slow.**



### The Snow

The snow had fallen through the night,  
 With a silence deep and white.  
 Every pine and hemlock tree,  
 Was ridged with pearls for all to see.

I watched it fall down from the sky,  
 As snowbirds whirled like leaves gone by,  
 And I was filled with such delight.  
 That snow had fallen through the night.

Anon.

## HOLIDAY SURVIVAL GUIDE

The holiday season is once again upon us. Remember, this time of year is magical for our children. Stop and take a moment and remember your favourite holiday memories. What tradition was your favourite? Decide how you want to share your holidays with your family. What new traditions do you want to start with your family? Here are some helpful hints to help you prepare for this busy time of year.

- **Plan ahead:** With your family present, mark on a calendar the holiday events that are coming. Use stickers for different events. Each morning take a moment to look at the calendar to see what is happening that day.
- **Pick your parties:** Be realistic in what you and your children can do. One way to reduce stress is to be more selective about the parties you go to. If it's fun for your family, go ahead, but if it's a duty and a chore, think twice.
- **Take a break:** Stop and spend time as a family. Cuddle up on the couch and read a story. Enjoy a holiday movie together. Most important, try to maintain your sleeping routine. If everyone is well rested, everyone is prepared to enjoy the holiday events.
- **Do it together:** Ask your children to help you prepare a travel box with books, games and snacks. Eat healthy and nutritious meals. Cook a meal together. If your children want to do the vegetable tray, let them help. This will give them real joy and pride.

And most of all...have fun and enjoy this magical time of year.

### Holiday Travel With Young Children

A long trip to visit a family member or friend can be stressful, but it is also a wonderful opportunity for parents and children to enjoy each other's company. Capitalize on this time to laugh and play games. This will not only make a tedious journey more entertaining, but you will also get a better understanding of how your child is thinking and what is important to them.

**Guessing Games** – these games encourage young children to observe and think about how objects function in their environment, as well as give practice in language. You start the game, but then let your child

take the lead so that you have to guess what they're thinking. Some examples include: "I Spy with My Little Eye – something that is (name a colour)", "I'm a spoon – what am I used for?" and "I'm thinking of something that starts with the sound (name a sound)".

**Storytelling** – listening to a story without a picture book takes a lot of concentration and imagination. Create your own story together by starting off with "Once upon a time there was a girl who ...". Invite your child(ren) to add a sentence to the story. Respond with a new sentence, and so on until the end of the story.

**Creating Silly Rhymes** - use the "phonic families" to devise funny sentences, e.g. the cat sat on a hat looking for a bat; the goat put on his coat and swam to the boat which wouldn't float.

Go to [www.investinkids.ca](http://www.investinkids.ca) to view the entire Tip Sheet "Ease your Family's Holiday Stress with Comfort, Play & Teach Tips" or for information about Comfort, Play & Teach: A Positive Approach to Parenting.

## Gingerbread Man

(Action Poem)

Stir a bowl of gingerbread

(stir as in bowl)

Smooth and spicy brown

Roll it with a rolling pin

Up and up and down

(Pretend to roll)

With a cookie cutter

(pretend to cut out)

Make some little men.

Put them in the oven

Till half past ten!



**HATS OFF TO OUR  
VOLUNTEERS!**

**To all our volunteers who have worked so tirelessly helping us throughout the year, our heartfelt thanks!**

## New Ontario Blind—Low Vision Early Intervention Program

Ontario's Blind-Low Vision (BLV) Early Intervention Program is designed to give children who are born blind or with low vision the best possible start in life. Starting this fall, specialized, family-centred services are funded by the province and are available for children from birth to Grade one.

Children who are blind or have low vision need to be introduced to the world around them through their other senses so they can learn in a different way. For a child with visual impairment, touch, hearing and the use of remaining vision are critically important for learning and development.

The new Ontario Blind-Low Vision Early Intervention Program provides education and support for parents so they can encourage the healthy development of their children.

Parents will learn to help their chil-

dren develop the skills they need for daily activities at home and in early learning and care settings. The BLV program's Early Childhood Vision Consultant teaches parents, through hands-on and indirect support, how to support their child's development in the following areas:

- Intentional movement (orientation and mobility)
- Motor skills
- Daily living skills (e.g., eating, dressing, toileting)
- Concepts
- Social and emotional development
- Language and communication
- Making the most of residual vision
- Using all the senses to promote development

Child care providers also receive support to help the child in their other learning environments.

A public and professional education strategy will be launched in the near future to promote early identification of visual impairment and to provide more information about this new program.

Children from birth to school entry who have been diagnosed by an ophthalmologist as being blind or having low vision are eligible to receive these specialized services. For further information, call the Southeastern Ontario Blind-Low Vision Early Intervention Program at KFLA Public Health at 613-549-1232 ext 145 or 1-800-267-7875 ext 145.

Submitted by:

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KFL&A Public Health

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## MISSION STATEMENT

**The Ontario Early Years Centre -  
Leeds and Grenville is committed to  
responding to the needs of parents,  
caregivers and young children, in  
partnership with the community,  
to encourage healthy child  
development and positive outcomes  
for all.**

## Looking for Child Care?

The Ontario Early Years Centre-United Counties of Leeds and Grenville can help you make an informed decision. The OEYC has information on the following:

- Licensed Child Care Programs
- Child Care Fee Subsidy
- Private Child Care Providers



Don't forget to ask about our Parent Information Package. This package is designed to help you make the right choice for your family.

### **NEW RESOURCE IS AVAILABLE TO HELP PARENTS MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT CHILD CARE.**

In August 2007 the province launched a website to help parents make informed decisions about child care. The website is easily accessible at [www.ontario.ca/licensedchildcare](http://www.ontario.ca/licensedchildcare). This search tool allows parents to search for child care by city, postal code, and type of program, age group, program name, operator name or language of service delivery. The Ministry will enhance the site in the future with additional resources for parents.