

martha's vineyard community services · early childhood programs · family center

FAMILY MATTERS

FEBRUARY 2012

Family Matters is prepared monthly by the Martha's Vineyard Family Center, a program of Martha's Vineyard Community Services funded by grants from the Massachusetts Children's Trust Fund and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

Tips for Safer Sledding

Sliding downhill is an exhilarating winter sport. People of all ages can participate, and use all kinds of containers, from large toboggans to plastic disks or even cardboard boxes.

But unintentional sledding injuries are surprisingly common despite snow's cushioning effect. Children ages 5 to 9 are most susceptible to injury. Parents of young children should not let them sled alone. Older children should be taught to check for hazards.

The National Safety Council offers these guidelines for safe and fun sledding and tobogganing:

- Keep all equipment in good condition. Broken parts, sharp edges, cracks and split wood invite injuries.
- Dress warmly enough for conditions.
- Sled on spacious, gently sloping hills which have a level run-off at the end so that the sled can come to a halt safely. Avoid steep slopes and slopes located near streets and roadways.
- Check slopes for bare spots, holes and other obstructions which might cause injury. Bypass these areas or wait until conditions are better.
- Make sure the sledding path does not cross traffic and is free from hazards such as large trees, fences, rocks or telephone poles.
- Do not sled on or around frozen lakes, streams or ponds because the ice may be unstable.
- The proper position for sledding is to sit or lay on your back on the top of the sled, with your feet pointing downhill. Sledding head first increases the risk of head injury and should be avoided.
- Sledders should wear thick gloves or mittens and protective boots to protect against frostbite as well as potential injury.

Here's what dads are saying about Dads Playgroup at the Family Center:

"It is wonderful to watch Hunter and other children engaged in free play. There are few boundaries to inhibit, showing us Dads the wonders of play using their own initiatives. The children have such a good time, they are reluctant to go when the group comes to the end." – Larry Johnson & Hunter (age 4 ½)

"It's nice to spend time with my children while also talking with other fathers that I normally don't get a chance to see or talk to." – Damien & Amity (6) & Jacoby (3)

"It is a great opportunity to spend quality time with my son Dillon, and allows him to see friends on a regular basis. It also gives my wife some 'alone time!'" – Vasska Fondren & Dillon (4)

"Yes, Dad's night is a valuable option for both mothers and fathers. I have a lot of opportunity to pass one on one time with my son but the additional group setting continues to augment the social skills building." – Malcolm & Tennessee (4 ½)

"It's a great time to be with your child and share fatherly advice. Most of my friends don't have kids so it's nice to hear from other dads on how things are going." – Nate's Dad & Nate (5)

"Have made some long lasting friendships with both dads and kids. We all look forward to it every week." – Clark Myers & Teagan (6) & Hadley (2)

Join the fun every Tuesday night!



Damien Harris facilitates Dads Playgroup at the Family Center every Tuesday 5:30-7:00 p.m. Dads and their children enjoy playing together. Pizza dinner provided.

For more information call 508 693-7900 x288

February Activity Schedule

- 2/1 Teaching Children Self-regulation with Jeanine Fitzgerald 9:30-11:30 a.m. – Pre-registration required*
- 2/1 Exploring Positive Guidance with Jeanine Fitzgerald for Portuguese speakers 12:30-2:00 a.m. – Pre-registration required*
- 2/4 Saturday Open Playgroup 10:00-12:00 p.m. – Family Center
- 2/9 Building Connections 7:00-8:30 p.m. call for information 508 693-7900 x283
- 2/11 All Families Touched by Adoption Playgroup 10:30-12:30 p.m. – Family Center
- 2/20 Presidents Day Holiday – most programs closed
- 2/27 School Vacation Open Playgroup 10:00-11:30 a.m. – Family Center
- 2/28 School Vacation Open Playgroup 10:00-11:30 a.m. – Family Center
- 2/29 School Vacation Open Playgroup 10:00-11:30 a.m. – Family Center

Ongoing activities at the Family Center

- Open Playgroup** every Monday & Wednesday 10 – 11:30 a.m. except Monday 2/20
- Baby's First Year** every Monday 3 – 4:30 p.m. and Thursday 10:30 – 12:00 p.m. except Mondays 2/20 & 2/27
- Open Afternoon Playgroup** every Tuesday 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. except Tuesday 2/28
- Dads Playgroup** every Tuesday 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. except Tuesday 2/8
- Gym Time** every Thursday **NEW TIME** 10:30 – 12:00 p.m. Edgartown Boys & Girls Club
- Coffee & Conversation** Fridays 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. Pre-registration required*

What's New?



Food for Thought: The Impact of Nutrition on Behavior with Jeanine Fitzgerald is presented by Martha's Vineyard Community Services as part of their on-going speaker series on Tuesday, January 31st 6:30-8:00 p.m. For more information call (508) 693-7900 x283.

"All Babies Cry" Booklet and DVD helps you know what to do when your baby cries. Content covers normal crying, comforting your baby, self-care tips for parents, colic and how to cope and parent resources. For your free copy call (508) 693-7900 x283.

Child Booster Seats are available at the Family Center.



Heckscher Foundation for Children Grant Award!
MVCS Early Childhood Programs has received funding to work in collaboration with the *Island Grown Preschool Initiative* to improve the overall nutrition program at the MVCS Childcare Center. Daily breakfast, lunch and snacks will include more fresh fruits and vegetables; a greenhouse and garden will be developed; and exciting, hands-on nutrition education for children and parents will be implemented and more...
CONGRATULATIONS TO ECP!

For more information or to contribute to this page contact MVCS at 508-693-7900 ext. 283 · www.mvcommunityservices.com

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