



THE PARENT PRESS *ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER*

Programs for Parents, Inc. monthly newsletter features family focused articles and resources on parenting, health, policy, and community information

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THE POWER OF CHILDREN'S LOVE: NURTURING EMOTIONAL BONDS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

Children's love is a remarkable and significant aspect of their emotional development. It encompasses the affection, attachment, and deep emotional connection that children develop towards their parents or caregivers. Children's love is characterized by its purity, innocence, and unconditional nature. As children grow and develop, their love expands to include other family members, friends, and even pets. In this article, we will explore the importance of children's love, its impact on their emotional well-being, and how parents and caregivers can nurture and reciprocate this love.



THE FOUNDATION OF CHILDREN'S LOVE

Children's love is built upon a foundation of trust, security, and the sense of being loved and cared for. When children feel loved, they develop a strong emotional foundation that supports their overall well-being. Love provides them with a sense of belonging, acceptance, and emotional security. It nurtures their self-esteem and helps them develop a positive self-image.



EXPRESSING CHILDREN'S LOVE

Children's love is expressed through a myriad of ways, such as hugs, kisses, laughter, and affectionate gestures. Their desire for closeness and comfort from their parents or caregivers is a testament to the strength of their love. Children's love is often pure and genuine, free from judgment or conditions. They are capable of giving and receiving love unconditionally, embodying the true essence of love in its simplest and most innocent form.

EXPANDING LOVE BEYOND PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS

As children grow, their capacity for love expands to include other family members, friends, and pets. They learn to express love through acts of kindness, sharing, and empathy. This widening circle of love allows children to develop their social and emotional skills, fostering positive relationships and a sense of interconnectedness with others. It is through these connections that children learn the values of compassion, empathy, and mutual support.

**CHECK OUT THIS
FREE UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENT**

A movie night poster for 'The Six Triple Eight'. The poster features a film camera on the left, a clapperboard on the right, and a central image of the movie's cast in military uniforms. The text on the poster includes: 'IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH: YOU'RE INVITED TO A MOVIE NIGHT! COME, RELAX, AND ENJOY A MOVIE WITH US. JOIN US FOR A COZY MOVIE NIGHT! POPCORN, DINNER, GAMES AND PRIZES'. It also provides registration information: 'TO REGISTER PLEASE SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW OR GO TO OUR LINKTREE HTTPS://LINKTR.EE/SHANIBARAKAWRC'. The date is 'FEBRUARY 28 2025' and the time is '04:30 PM TO 7:30 PM'. The location is 'SHANI BARAKA WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER 300 CLINTON AVE NEWARK, NJ 07108'. There are also icons for a ticket and popcorn.

NURTURING CHILDREN'S LOVE

Parents and caregivers play a vital role in nurturing and reciprocating children's love. By providing a loving and supportive environment, parents can help foster and strengthen the bond of love with their children. Here are some strategies to nurture children's love:

- 1. Create a Loving Environment:** Foster a home environment where love and affection are openly expressed. Encourage open communication, active listening, and frequent displays of affection. Let your children know that they are loved, valued, and supported unconditionally.
- 2. Spend Quality Time Together:** Dedicate meaningful time to engage with your children. Participate in activities they enjoy, such as playing games, reading books, or taking walks. Quality time allows for deeper emotional connections and creates lasting memories.
- 3. Show Affection:** Physical expressions of affection, such as hugs, kisses, and gentle touches, are powerful ways to demonstrate love. Make it a habit to express your love through physical contact regularly.
- 4. Practice Active Listening:** Create a safe space where your children feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and emotions. Practice active listening by giving them your undivided attention, maintaining eye contact, and reflecting back on what they say. This validates their feelings and fosters a deeper understanding of their needs.
- 5. Validate Their Feelings:** Acknowledge and validate your children's emotions, even if you don't always agree with them. Let them know that their feelings are important and that you are there to support and understand them.
- 6. Be a Positive Role Model:** Model love and compassion in your own actions and relationships. Children learn by observing their parents or caregivers, so demonstrating love, kindness, and empathy in your interactions with others sets a powerful example for them to follow.
- 7. Encourage Acts of Kindness and Empathy:** Teach your children the value of kindness, empathy, and compassion towards others. Encourage them to engage in acts of kindness, such as sharing, helping, and comforting others. This nurtures their capacity to love and care for others.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Family Child Care Program (FCC)



What is a Family Child Care (FCC) Provider?

A Family Child Care (FCC) provider is a registered childcare professional who offers care in their home for a small group of children, allowing them to care for up to five children per session.

Many parents choose FCC providers because they offer:

- Small group sizes for more personalized attention
- A home-like setting that feels safe and familiar
- Flexible hours to accommodate busy schedules

FCC providers are registered through a sponsoring organization and follow all state regulations to ensure a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment for your child.

Interested in becoming an FCC provider? If you or someone you know wants to start a home-based childcare business, our team provides guidance on registration, training, background checks, and more!

Contact us today to learn more!

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FEBRUARY FAMILY SUNDAYS



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 12-4PM
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 12-4PM

Winter is the perfect time for indoor fun!

Timeline of Activities

12pm & 2pm | Planetarium Show: The Little Star That Could

Appropriate for ages 5+

Journey with Little Star as they travel through the Milky Way in search of planets and a name of their own.

1pm & 3pm | Planetarium Show: Navajo Skies

Appropriate for ages 12+

Watch and listen to a Navajo family teach their children and grandchildren about the night skies through story and music. Navajo Skies features authentic Navajo astronomy stories told in Navajo and English.

Note: According to traditional Navajo protocol, cultural stories of the Night Sky, including stories of the Sun, the Moon and the stars, can be told only during the winter months.

1-4pm | Family Drop-In: Honoring Black History Month

Appropriate for ages 5-12 and families.

Location: Engelhard Court

Honoring the great contributions of artists of color, let's explore materials used to create masterpieces in our Arts of Global Africa gallery!

Don't leave the Museum without seeing our new family-friendly exhibition [Animal Kingdom!](#)

NURTURING CHILDREN'S LOVE



Children's love is a powerful and beautiful force that shapes their emotional well-being, relationships, and overall development. It is built upon trust, security, and the sense of being loved and cared for. As parents and caregivers, it is our responsibility to reciprocate and nurture this love. By providing a loving and supportive environment, demonstrating affection, engaging with our children, and fostering their social and emotional skills, we contribute to their healthy emotional development. Let us cherish and nurture the gift of children's love, for it is a precious bond that holds immeasurable value in their lives.



Health/Nutrition

FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH: WHAT ARE SOME THINGS PARENTS CAN DO TO KEEP A HEART HEALTHY CHILD?

Here are some tips that families can implement to prioritize your child's heart health:

- Children should get 60 minutes of physical activity each day.
- Encourage healthy eating habits, include nutritious foods and vegetables.
- Add more whole grains and products made up mostly of whole grains.
- Minimize processed foods.
- Limit salt in food preparation.
- Limit foods and beverages with added sugar.
- Parents should limit screen time to one hour per day for toddlers; this helps to ensure adequate physical activity and social interaction.
- Make sure your child gets adequate sleep each night. Sleep deprivation can lead to a weakened immune system and can take a toll on your child's heart.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

WEST ORANGE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Where Bright Ideas Begin!

Winter/ Spring Session:
Tumbling Tots Storytime

Thursdays at 11am
starting January 23 - May 1

A story time filled with rhymes, music and movement, early language development & adventure for caregivers & children ages 2-5

10 Rooney Circle West Orange NJ 07093 | (973) 736-4998
extension 6 youth@westorangelibrary.org | www.wopl.org

WEST ORANGE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Where Bright Ideas Begin!

Sensory Frenzy Playtime

Wednesday, February 5 & 19
at 4:00pm

Stimulate your child's mind from newborn - 5 years old through various sensory activities.

Sand Magnetic Tiles and more...

10 Rooney Circle West Orange NJ 07093 | (973) 736-0198 extension 6
youth@westorangelibrary.org | www.wopl.org



MURPHY ADMINISTRATION UPDATES PUBLIC ON STEPS BEING TAKEN TO TRACK AND RESPOND TO H5N1 AVIAN INFLUENZA



Outbreak Reported in Localized Wild Bird Populations, Public Health Threat Remains Low

TRENTON – The Murphy Administration reminded the public that state agencies continue to aggressively monitor occurrences of H5N1 avian influenza, also known as Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), in domestic and wild bird populations. While there have been recent confirmations of deaths in localized wild bird populations in parts of New Jersey, there have been no recent reports in domestic poultry or cattle and no human infections in the state.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has declared that the ongoing nationwide H5N1 outbreak is primarily an animal health issue that poses low risk to the health of the public. The three principal state agencies involved in monitoring and responding to avian influenza are the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the New Jersey Department of Health and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, which provide the following updates:

- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection reports that avian influenza is suspected to have caused localized deaths of multiple wild birds, predominantly snow geese and Canada geese, in parts of the state since the end of December. The last previous confirmation of H5N1-related deaths in wild birds in New Jersey was in April 2024. If you encounter sick or dead wild birds report the finding to the DEP hotline at 877-WARN-DEP (877-927-6337).
- New Jersey Department of Health – Seasonal influenza activity continues to increase, as expected for this time of the year. However, there are no reports of human novel influenza cases, including H5N1 bird flu, in New Jersey at this time.
- New Jersey Department of Agriculture reports that there have been no reported H5N1 cases in domestic poultry or livestock throughout 2024 and thus far this year.



Connections Matter is a healing-centered curriculum that teaches adults how to use the power of connections to help develop healthy brains and supportive relationships, prevent and heal from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), promote Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs), and strengthen communities.



When:

Thursday, February 20th 2025
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
via Zoom

To register



Registration Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6upp6d>

Benefits of Participation

- Learn how ACEs adversely affect development and brain outcomes
- How caring connections serve as a primary buffer against the negative effects of trauma
- How to build more resilient compassionate and healing centered communities

Contact

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GOVERNOR MURPHY ANNOUNCES SUITE OF NEW PROPOSALS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES

During his 2025 State of the State Address, Governor Phil Murphy announced his support for two policy initiatives that will ensure more families than ever can enjoy the benefits of expanded access to early childhood education.

“During my State of the State Address, I announced that our The Administration will be taking a new step to ensure that every school district in New Jersey offers free, full-day kindergarten. Paired with a second initiative to codify preschool funding, we are paving the way for both universal pre-k and free full-day kindergarten in our state,” said Governor Murphy. “By working with our partners in the State Legislature, including Majority Leader Ruiz and Assembly Members Katz and Stanley, we are going to strengthen early childhood education, alleviate the burden of child care costs on parents, and ensure all children in New Jersey benefit from the same strong start when it comes to their education. We owe it to the children and families that call New Jersey ‘home’ to continue building a public education system that lifts up every single one of our state’s children – no matter their zip code or their family’s socioeconomic status.”

“The research is clear: access to early childhood education is an educational imperative, crucial for the development of our youngest learners while providing relief to our state’s working families,” said Acting Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer. “These legislative initiatives will provide every child access to full-day kindergarten and detail the continued expansion of preschool to all of our communities – this underscores our commitment to ensuring every student has the strong foundation they need to thrive academically and beyond. Together, we are paving the way for a brighter future for all New Jersey children.”

Since the beginning of his Administration, Governor Murphy has made it a priority to set New Jersey firmly on course for achieving universal, free preschool in all school districts. Over the past seven years, funding for public preschool has increased by over \$550 million, with New Jersey currently spending \$1.2 billion to stand up and sustain programs in communities across the state. Since year one of the Administration, 229 additional districts have been added to State-funded preschool programs; meaning now, 293 or about half of New Jersey’s elementary-serving school districts offer free, high-quality preschool, whether that is in partnership with childcare providers or in elementary schools.

The Governor’s Office is coordinating with legislative partners, including Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz, Assemblywoman Andrea Katz, and Assemblyman Sterley Stanley, on legislation to advance the following initiatives:

Codify Preschool Funding: Preschool Education Aid is currently distributed through budget language. By enacting separate legislation, we are making the program more reliable for the future; Require access to full-day kindergarten: All five-year-old students will be ensured access to free, full-day kindergarten;

Strengthen Mixed Delivery: The Department of Education will develop a mixed delivery handbook to clarify and standardize the process of forming agreements between school districts and private providers;

Create the Preschool Teacher Pipeline Investment Program: The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education would have to publish guidance on dual admission programs for Early Childhood Education studies. The Departments of Human Services and Children and Families would have to publish joint guidance for childcare centers to implement graduated salary scales for private teachers working towards preschool certification.

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<https://programsforparents.org>

Programs for Parents is a non-profit organization that works to ensure that children get the best possible start in life. It does so by supporting children, families, and child care providers in Essex County through advocacy and action, providing education and referrals, sharing best practices and helping families access available financial resources.

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