

Social Worker Snippets November 2017

I want to personally thank each and every one of you who have participated in the family events we have had so far this year. You are the most important people in your children's lives and they love spending time with you. So far this year, we have had a fathers bring your children to school day and a math night. For those who were unable to attend those events, I want to personally invite you to our **Art Night on December 4**. More details will be coming out about it; however, I want you to know that we want EVERYONE to attend. I know some people did not want to attend math night because math is hard for them. It's OKAY! We understand. We still want you to come to events with your kids. It's the family time and the connection with the school we are after. We won't quiz you we promise...if you still don't believe us, ask someone who attended math night. ☺ So, even if art isn't your thing, come anyway and enjoy the night with your family.



On a more serious note, there have been some traumatic events in our country over the course of the school year, so I wanted to take a moment to help answer some questions about how to talk with your children about traumatic things that happen in the world. The events as of late are the devastating hurricanes and the mass shooting in Las Vegas. Here at school, we do everything we can to always make sure your kids feel safe and secure. Teachers have explained to younger children that we don't have hurricanes here and we have gathered donations for residents of Florida, Texas, and Puerto Rico to help them during this time. These are two ways we are helping your students cope with some of their feelings about the hurricanes. For the Las Vegas shooting or any other bad news your child may experience or hear about, here are some tips from the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Center for Mental Health Services.



Tips for talking to kids after a trauma

- Allow kids to ask questions: They are scared and need to ask questions.
 - Answer questions at their level: Kids don't need to know everything and all of the gory details. Keep it factual, keep their ages in mind, and don't give them information that will scare them more.
- Allow kids to talk about other fears and concerns they might bring up as well
- Do not generalize about a particular group of people
- Do not be afraid to admit you don't know all the answers to their questions. Adults don't know it all. Sometimes we have to tell kids we don't know why something happened.
- **Monitor children's television watching. It is a good idea to limit your children's exposure to graphic or troubling scenes and if you allow them to watch the news, be there with them to answer questions and change the channel if necessary. These things are difficult for adults to process which means it is even more difficult for kids to do so.**
- **In addition to the tragic things they see, help children identify good things, such as heroic actions, families who unite and share support, and the assistance offered by people throughout the community. Show them how people come together and explain how their own community has helped someone.**

A parent's guide for surviving fall:

- **Attend conferences.** It is so important for you to talk to your child's teacher directly and have face to face communication. Not only do you hear from the teacher, but it gives you a change to advocate, if needed, for your child as well.
- **Sign kids up for winter extracurricular activities.** Now's the time. If your kids are interested in basketball, swimming, wrestling, dance, art, music, you have to sign them up. If you need help financially, please reach out to me (Carly George) at either the primary or intermediate buildings and we will see how we can help.
- **Enjoy the leaves.** Nature is free. Go for a walk around the neighborhood or the park to enjoy the changing colors of fall. Go for a car ride and look at the leaves. Gather some leaves up, take them inside, and have kids look up what kinds of trees the leaves are from. Rake and leaves and let the kids jump in them. **You jump in, too!!**
- **Warmer Clothes.** Time to get out the warmer clothes. Go through closets and drawers to see what you already have and what you need to get. If you need help buying new school clothes or play clothes, coats, boots, etc. please contact me and I will work with you to see what assistance we can find.
- **Make Chili.** With your kids, make a large pot of chili and enjoy a meal time with your family on a chilly evening.

Don't have a recipe? Here's one I've tried from Clean Eating Magazine that is delicious:

Ingredients

2 tsp oil
1 pound ground turkey or chicken (3.49)
2 tsp chili powder (1.00)
1 tsp each ground cumin (can be left out)
1/2 tsp salt
1 large yellow onion, chopped (0.49)
2 cups stemmed and chopped kale (0.89)
4 green onions, chopped (0.79)
1 stalk celery, chopped (1.49/bunch)
4 cloves garlic, minced (0.99)
2 cups chicken broth (0.50)
1 15-oz can great northern beans, drained and rinsed (0.49)

In a pot on medium-high, heat 1/2 tsp oil. Add turkey, chile powder, cumin, and salt and cook, breaking up turkey with a spoon, until no longer pink, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer turkey mixture to a plate and set aside. In same pot, heat remaining 1 1/2 tsp oil. Add yellow onion, kale, green onion, celery, and garlic and cook, stirring, until softened, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in turkey mixture, broth and beans. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook, stirring, until heated through and slightly thickened, 1 to 2 minutes.

Makes 4 servings for \$10.13

**Prices based on Kroger and may be cheaper at Sav-A-Lot or Aldi

