

FAMILY Ties



Success at School

HELP YOUR CHILDREN SUCCEED

Most parents want their children to be successful in school. You can make a big difference in the attitudes your children have about school and learning. If you are constantly learning new things, you are modeling to them that learning is an ongoing and enjoyable experience.

Parents can make their home a learning place. Show your children you love to learn and involve them in fun and interesting learning experiences. Read books and magazines. Take classes. Talk about things that interest you -- gardening or fixing cars or baking. Encourage your children to develop hobbies that will help them learn and feel successful. Woodworking, drawing, even collecting bugs can encourage their creativity and spark an interest in learning.

Parents can tell their children about new and interesting things they learn and ask them about the things they learn in school. During meal times family members can talk about things they've learned recently. Ask your children what questions their teachers are raising in class. Notice your children's interests and praise them for what they are learning.

Keeping many good books in the home also is encouraged. Some can be bought cheaply at used book stores, library sales or even garage sales. Talk and ask questions about things you see on television. But also turn off the TV and make quiet time for reading.

Ask your children questions, for example, 'How do you feel about that?' 'What do you think that means?' Listen carefully to what they say. When children are involved in talk about the 'why' and 'how' of things, they are more likely to become active thinkers.

Another good learning experience is writing letters. With very young children, let them tell you what they want to say, and write it for them. Provide paper, crayons and markers and encourage them to make signs, to draw, to scribble and to write.

Everyday situations can help children understand math. Ask them to help you count. Play with adding and subtracting things, dividing into groups, and other math concepts.

As children get older they can take more responsibility for their own learning. You can help them by asking questions and providing learning opportunities and resources. Parents should encourage children to think, to listen, and to follow directions.

Support your children in their school reports by helping them find and use resources and find interesting ways to complete assignments. However, don't do their work for them -- that sends the message 'I don't think you can do this.'

You can also help your children by being understanding when they experience failures. Everyone makes mistakes. Everyone mispronounces a word. Everyone fails in something once in a while. It helps children when you offer understanding and support. It discourages them when you expect perfection. And, above all, make learning fun and interesting.

NORTHWEST AREA Family Newsletter

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Questions & Answers

TRANS FATS

We know they're not so good for us.. but what is a trans fat? Recently some cities have even banned local restaurants from using them, but why are they so bad? Let's look at some of the facts:

QUESTION: What is trans fat?

ANSWER: Trans fat (also known as trans fatty acids) is a specific type of fat formed when liquid oils are made into solid fats like shortening and hard margarine. This process is called hydrogenation, and it is during this process that trans fat forms. Trans fat behaves like saturated fat by raising low-density lipoprotein (LDL or "bad") cholesterol that increases your risk of coronary heart disease. Note that a very small amount of trans fat is found naturally in some animal based foods.

QUESTION: What foods contain saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol?

ANSWER: Saturated and trans fats can be found in some of the same foods, such as vegetable shortenings, some margarines (especially margarines that are harder), crackers, candies, cookies, snack foods, fried foods, baked goods, and other processed foods made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. High amounts of saturated fat are found in animal products, such as beef and pork, chicken skin, butter, whole milk, and cheese. Foods high in cholesterol include liver, other organs meats, egg yolks, and dairy fats.

It is important to choose foods with the lower combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat and the lower amount of cholesterol.

QUESTION: What actions can consumers take to lower their intake of saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol?



ANSWER: Try these simple steps everyday to reduce trans fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol intake:

-- Choose vegetable oils (except coconut and palm kernel oils) and soft margarines (liquid, tub, or spray) more often because the combined amount of saturated and trans fats is lower than the amount in solid shortenings, hard margarines, and animal fats, including butter.

-- Consider Fish. Most fish are lower in saturated fat than meat. Some fish, such as mackerel,

sardines, and salmon, contain omega-3 fatty acids that are being studied to determine if they offer protection against heart disease.

-- Limit foods high in cholesterol such as liver and other organ meats, egg yolks, and full-fat dairy products, like whole milk.

-- Choose foods low in saturated fat such as fat free or 1% dairy products, lean meats, fish, skinless poultry, whole grain foods, and fruit and vegetables.

QUESTION: Is it better to eat butter instead of margarine to avoid trans fat?

ANSWER: No, because the combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat (the cholesterol-raising fats) and cholesterol for butter is usually higher than margarine, even though some margarines contain more trans fat than butter.

It is better to eat softer or liquid margarines that contain a lower combined amount of saturated fat and trans fat and a lower amount of cholesterol. For a healthful alternative, nonstick cooking spray can be substituted for other fats when "greasing" the pan.

It's Cold Out

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE

Although the weather has not seemed like winter, your community action agencies are gearing up for winter activities. The Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LiHEAP) is designed to help low income families meet the higher winter heating cost. This program is funded through the Iowa Department of Human Rights and has been established to help qualified low-income homeowners or renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs.

Applications are accepted on a first come/first serve basis from November 1, 2007 through April 15, 2008. Please call your **local** community action agency for questions or information on where to apply in your area. If you are unsure what your local community action agency is please call the 800 number for additional information.

- For Lyon, Sioux, Plymouth, Ida, and Cherokee call Mid-Sioux Opportunity at 1-800-859-2025.
- For Clay, Osceola, O'Brien, Dickenson, Buena Vista, Emmett, Palo Alto, Pocahontas call Upper Des Moines at 1-800-245-6151.
- For Sac call 712-662-3226, Calhoun- 297-7721 and Carroll 712-792-2832. They are affiliated through Community Opportunities. Toll Free number : 800-642-6330.
- For Monona call 712-423-2603, and Crawford 712-263-3538 Their Community Action Agency is West Central Development Cooperation Carroll 712-792-2832.
- For Woodbury call 800-352-3725 Community Action Agency of Sioux land.



Income Eligibility is based on your gross household income and number of family members. For example a family of 4 could earn around \$30,000. Some medical expenses **may** be able to be used to lower your income. This is taken on a case by case situation.

What do you need to bring to the office? Proof of income as well as you most recent heating, electric, and telephone bills. This would include total household gross income from all sources for the past three months (13 weeks), the past twelve month, or the most recent calendar year tax refund. Fixed income which would include social security benefits, SSI, ADC or FIP, Veterans Assistance, Unemployment Insurance and Pensions. Provide a copy of your most recent check or a bank statement showing automatic deposits. Social Security numbers of family members are needed as well.

Each Community Action Agency may vary in your area. It is best to call ahead and ask specifics before coming to apply for fuel assistance. Elderly and handicapped homes can apply starting October 1 and all others are served on a first come first serve basis starting November 1 through April 15th.