

Kids Holiday Crafts

magazine

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January 2004

Snow castles in the sky

Have a 'trivia'-I good time

How to have a great tea party

Indoor fun is no obstacle

Simple and fun snow science

Planning your baby's nursery

Winnie-the-Pooh fun

Helping kids play nice

A new method for discipline

And much more!



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From the Editor

Happy New Year!

I hope you and your family had a wonderful holiday season and a safe and enjoyable New

Year's celebration.

I have finally started getting settled into my new job. It has been an interesting experience so far and I'm looking forward to seeing where it will go as the year progresses.

Santa was very good to my daughter this year. She was, as usual, very spoiled. I did okay myself with a few DVDs of a favorite show, some silver crystal – and owl and some mice, and a Snowbabies. And Owen was, as usual, also spoiled with lots of imported English food, several new sweaters (or, as he calls them, jumpers), some new bits to go with the Dremel (which he's 'acquisitioned' from me!), a Spongebob t-shirt (from my daughter!), and some other odds and ends.

I am quite happy to report that the average number of visitors to the site in December was about 500 each day. That's quite an improvement and was a wonderful Christmas present. We're well over 300,000 hits since the magazine started back in August. Needless to say, I am quite pleased.

I can never thank those who help me with the magazine month after month enough for their support and work. Without them I wouldn't be able to get this thing done every month. Thank you so much!

I don't usually bother with this sort of thing but this year I thought I'd give myself a bit of focus and have come up with a few New Year's resolutions – some fun, some serious:

1. Try not to kill the cat. It isn't his fault he thinks he's a 4 year old little boy and wants to be part of everything that we do – from cooking and cleaning to taking baths with us and 'helping' with crafts. There are times when I really would like to hang him by his paws.

2. Spend more time with my daughter doing stuff like watching a movie together or playing games. We do lots of stuff together but there could be more done.

3. Attempt to finish and send out to publishers the two fictional books I've been working on for several years now. One about a dragon named Lizzie and another about a melting North Pole.

4. To really dig in on the non-fiction astronomy book about black holes that I want to write for 4-6 year olds. I've done a lot of research already, I just need to put it all together.

5. Write a book about emu (e-mew). Through work I've done a ton of research (mostly on my own time) and have found quite a lot of information that doesn't really seem to be anywhere else – at least not all in one convenient place and none for kids. I would love to write a book about emu for children.

6. Stay gluten free. In a week or so I'll be having a biopsy done to find out if I have celiac disease or not. I am really hoping that I don't and that I'm just allergic to the glutes.

7. Lose weight (see 6).

8. Try really hard not to kill the cat.

9. Continue with the personal changes that were started in the last quarter of 2003 and discover new ways to improve myself.

10. And last but not least, build this magazine up so that this time next year I am able to report that we've had more than 12,000,000 hits in the last year and have more than doubled our daily visitor count. Getting some advertisers would be nice too.

If you've followed through with this somewhat silly new year tradition, I hope you didn't make too many and that they're all reasonable!

For now, sit back and enjoy this month's issue. There's a lot of snow fun, some great coloring pictures, recipes and much more. Have a great 2004!

Nancy Cavanaugh

Letters to the Editor

If you have something to say about what you've seen here, good or bad, please send us a letter. Send your letters to editor@kidsholidaycrafts.com.

Cure Winter Doldrums with Snow Fun

By Tina Musial

You're stuck in the house with the kids and a case of the winter doldrums. Here are some ideas for outdoor activities you can do inside.

Snowball Fight

How about a snowball fight? Hee hee, yeah, it's pretend. And a whole lot easier than bundling up little fingers and toes and trudging outside.

To begin, you need a sturdy fort or two to hide behind. Don't skip this step; it's half the fun of making the huge mess! And don't plan this on a day when you will be having company or need the house clean.

A card table is a great start. Or couch cushions leaned against the couch. There isn't a real science to this, but make the kid feel like they are well hidden.

For snowballs, I use white Styrofoam balls, 3" diameter size. I watched the craft store and loaded up when they were on sale. Nerf or cotton balls would also work.

Divvy them up equally and go to town. I have found the balls provide an hour or so of entertainment. After throwing them, we usually end up rolling on them a while, bouncing them off walls, and stepping on them.

When an adequate amount of snow has melted (time passed) seal the balls away for next

time. If they are allowed to play with them, the novelty wears off much quicker.

'Ice' Skating

Do you like to ice skate? Here is a warmer version. Tear off foot size squares of aluminum foil. Place one square under each of your feet (wear shoes, it's less slippery) and skate away! Skating works well on wood, tile or shallow carpeted floors. Remember to have the hot cocoa after!



Snow Art

This activity keeps the little ones entertained, and also cleans the kitchen table. Clear everything off the kitchen table - I know, tough feat, but it is worth it. Using foam soap or shaving cream, squirts dabs in various parts of the table. Lets the kids use it as finger paint. Make your letters and numbers. Come up with funny pictures.

Refill table if necessary with more shaving cream. Wipe off when done.

Simple Science: Create a Snow Gauge

By Jaki Ryan

What you need:

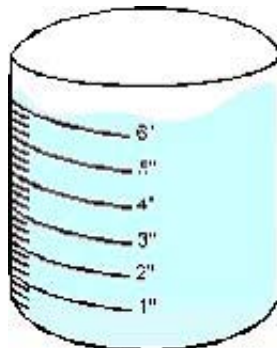
Large plastic bottle or clear plastic cut

Scissors or a craft knife

Permanent marker

What to do:

1. Cut off the top portion of a large plastic soda bottle or use a clear plastic cup. Parents or the teacher should do this part.



2. With a permanent marker, draw lines on the outside of container in 1/4" increments.

3. Place outside when snow begins to fall.

4. Record the snowfall from each storm.

5. Allow the snow to melt. How much water is there? Measure how much melted snow it takes to create water.

Are you surprised at the difference?

Tantalizing Trivia

By Sarah Eshelman

Celebrate National Trivia Day on January 4 by sharing these fascinating facts with your friends and family!

1. African pygmy hedgehogs have about 5,000 quills and can roll into a ball for protection.

2. An Etch-a-Sketch uses plastic beads and aluminum powder to make the designs you draw on it.

3. The scientific term for a sneeze is the "ster-nutatory reflex."

4. It takes about 50 licks to finish a one-scoop ice cream cone.

5. Honeybees fly at about 7 miles per hour, and a worker honeybee makes around 1/12 (one-twelfth) of a teaspoon of honey in its lifetime.



6. Blue whales are the largest animals that have ever lived – bigger than any dinosaur ever was. They can be up to 100 feet long and weigh up to 150 tons. A human could actually crawl through a blue whale's arteries.

7. The first Band-Aid Brand bandages were made in 1921, and they were three by eighteen inches long.

8. No two tigers have ever the same pattern of stripes. Their stripes are as unique as fingerprints!

9. A typical pencil can draw a line 35 miles long!

10. In 1993, Jackie Bellinger and Lisa Lomas hit a ping-pong ball back and forth 173 times in one minute.

11. More than a million packages of Jell-O are purchased every day.

12. If you were a cowboy, you probably would have called biscuits "hot rocks" or "soda sinkers," and if somebody told a tall tale, it would be called a "windy."

13. From 1976 to 1987, there were no red M&Ms.

14. Anoka, Minnesota is the Halloween capital of the world.

15. The first box of Crayola crayons was sold in 1903 for five cents. The colors included red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, and brown. Since then, over one hundred billion Crayola crayons have been made, and the crayon labels are now printed in 12 languages.

16. There really was a Chef Boyardee! He was born in Italy (his real name was Hector Boyardi) and opened his own restaurant in America, where he sold his popular spaghetti sauce.

17. In country homes in the 1800s, people often served apple pie for breakfast. (Don't try this at home!)

18. There are 336 dimples on a regulation golf ball.

19. Many American diners used to have special "lingo," or ways of talking. Milk was called moo juice, and doughnuts were called sinkers or life preservers. If you ordered a "houseboat," you would get a banana split. "Swamp water" was a soda made with all the flavors, and to "put a hat on it" meant to add ice cream. Ordering something "with legs" meant that you wanted it "to go." By the way, Americans eat more than 16 billion "bun pups" (diner talk for hot dogs) each year!



20. In 1850, a gold nugget found by John Orr weighed .68 ounces and was worth \$8.50. Today, an ounce of gold is worth around \$400. (The value of gold changes all the time.)



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How to Have a 'Tea'-riffic Party

By Jaki Ryan

Who among us hasn't grown up playing "tea party" with memories of dressing up, acting out plays and stories, and sampling tiny treats with friends? A tea party can be a private affair between a little girl and her favorite doll or stuffed animal or a dress-up affair with her friends. It is not the tea itself that makes the tea party special, it is the spirit of the tea party.

Children can dress in Victorian style clothes or simply wear their Sunday best. Dig through closets for old jewelry, scarves, gloves, and hats. Keep an eye out for dress-up clothes and accessories at thrift stores and garage sales. Don't forget the boys-gather old ties, sport coats, and hats. The children can have a fashion show where each is a star. Don't forget the Polaroid!

A few tea party themes are listed below, but the possibilities are endless.

Princess Tea Party - Guests can be transformed into princesses by creating crowns of jewels, beads, and sequins.

Victorian Tea Party - Accessorize with big hats, feather boas, gloves and lace fans. Play old-fashioned games, enjoy a craft activity from those listed below, and serve tea with china and linens.

Garden/Picnic Tea - If you're having your tea party outside, set the tables under a tree or in a shady place. Set tables with a floral tablecloth, garden plants and watering cans filled with wildflowers.



bear-shaped sugar cookies and treats.

Party Invitations

Create teapot invitations using colored cardstock and the template provided. Hand invitations to guests well in advance of your party. On

the reverse side of the invitation, write any special instructions. A template is also provided to create matching place cards.

Crafts

Hat & Glove Making - Decorate straw hats or gloves with flowers, lace, beads and ribbons.



Victorian Fans - Provide each guest with colored markers, cardstock, and paper doilies. Using glue sticks, attach doily to decorated paper and fold accordion style.

Games & Activities

Tea Cup Relay - Use a plastic tea set for a slow-motion relay.

Tea Pot Musical Chairs - Have guests sing "I'm A Little Tea Pot." When the song is finished, grab a chair!

Tea Cup Coin Toss

Decorations

Before everyone arrives, set the stage for your party. Decorate with floral or pastel tablecloths, napkins, paper doilies, streamers, tea cups and saucers, tea pots, and a plate offering finger foods. Don't forget to put out place cards to show where each person is to sit. Draw teapots and colored flowers on balloons with markers. Scatter silk rose petals along the table and play soft music in the background. Burn a scented candle or simmer potpourri for additional ambiance.

Food & Drinks

Serve finger sandwiches using cookie cutters, mini bagels with strawberry cream cheese, cupcakes with paper parasols, animal crackers, fruit kabobs, and fruit punch or fruit flavored decaffeinated tea.

Songs

Sing a rousing rendition of "I'm A Little Tea

Pot" that will widen the eyes of little ones and bring smiles to all present.

I'm A Little Teapot

I'm a little teapot, short and stout.

Here is my handle, here is my spout.

When I get all steamed up, here me shout.

Tip me over and pour me out.

Party Favors

Place a few inexpensive items (beads, costume jewelry, tea party stickers, and play make-up) within a white lunch bag. Fold down two corners and attach a string to a small piece of paper for the guest's name and staple to the top of "tea bag."



Tea Party Tips

- Keep the guest list for your party simple and limit the number of guests to eight. This will also keep the cost of your party reasonable.
 - The optimal age for guests is between five and nine.
 - Give yourself plenty of time, at least four to six weeks, to plan the details of your tea party.
 - Invite guests who are relatively the same age as your child. The more varied the ages, the more work it will be to please everyone.
 - Anywhere between one and a half and two hours is plenty of time for a successful tea party.
 - Make a list of what you would like your guests to be doing from the moment they arrive until the time they leave.
 - You only have two hands. Make arrangements with family members, friends or babysitters to assist you on the day of the party. With eight guests attending, two assistants will enable you to enjoy the party as well.
 - Involve your child in the planning of the tea party right from the start.
 - Keep your menu simple and serve finger foods. More importantly, make sure your menu includes food that your guests will like.
- Plan your tea party today, and enjoy an afternoon of magic and whimsy with your children!



Enlarge the pictures or download from the website, then print them out on cardstock and cut out. Decorate with markers, glitter and lace.

Click on the subscriptions link to sign up for our Yahoo! groups mailing list with magazine announcements and notification about the latest issue's release!

You're a Mathematical Genius, You Know

By Murdo Macleod

This may come as a surprise to you.

But the truth is, you really are good at mathematics.

You see, every day you solve complex problems by breaking them down into tiny little "baby steps".

And just like the world's most powerful computer or the greatest ever mathematical prodigy, it's this step-by-step process that enables you to do practically anything.

Let's see this process in action with a couple of examples:

Calculating Sales Tax

The sales tax rate varies around the world, but here in the UK it's 17.5%. Urgh! What kind of figure is that?

Let's look at it again and see how we can tame the beast by breaking it down.

17.5

It consists of 10, plus 5 plus 2.5, doesn't it?

And those numbers form a distinct sequence. In other words... "10, plus half, plus half again".

Now that we know this, we can do something really clever...

Suppose you want to calculate 17.5% of 40 UK pounds. How would you work this out? (Stop!

Don't even think of reaching for that calculator!)

Start with the 10. 10% of 40 is 4. Add half (2) and half again (1) and you get 7.

So you proudly announce to your colleagues... "So by adding 17.5% sales tax to our £40 product, the total retail price will be... £47."

They look on amazed.

Let's take another example and show how simple math really is...

Help Your Daughter with Her Homework

You arrive home and your daughter needs some help with her math assignment. It's those darn fractions again.

She just can't make sense of them.

"A half times a half is a quarter. So how, when you multiply things together, can you have LESS than you started out with!"

You explain that multiplication and division are two sides of the same thing, and you make it "real world" for her with a little analogy:

You get her to imagine a cake.

You remind her that "multiplying by half" is another way of saying divide by 2. So she pictures herself halving the cake, giving one piece half to her friend Jane, and keeping the other half.

Your daughter now has half a cake.

She multiplies her piece by a half (i.e. "divides it into two again") and she's left with a quarter.

She goes off to bed happy, dreaming about birthday cake. And you get to watch the ball game on TV.

Again, it's just a matter of simplifying.

Real world math is not about mental agony, or learning mechanical formulas that you follow mindlessly like a robot.

It's about common sense, seeing how numbers really work, and breaking things down.

You just need a little imagination. After all, that's what genius really is.

Let it Snow!

By Jaki Ryan

You will need:

Black construction paper
Magnifying glass
Snow

What to do:

1. Place a sheet of construction paper in the freezer for one hour or until it feels chilled to the touch.

2. With a magnifying glass in hand, rush outdoors while the snow is still falling

3. Allow snowflakes to fall on paper. Quickly examine each snowflake under your magnifying glass. No two are ever alike!

Do you like to write?

Kids Holiday Crafts Magazine is looking for writers. Click on the submission link for guidelines!

Make an Easy Sock Snowman

By Tina Musial

What you need:

- 1 white child' sock, new or used
- 1 colored infant sock
- 2 cups of dried peas, beans or rice
- 2 rubberbands
- Colored felt for mittens and carrot nose
- 8 inch strip of material or felt for scarf
- 8 inches green floral wire
- Tacky or hot glue
- Scissors
- Black and red markers
- Old buttons (or more felt)

What to do:

1. Turn white sock inside out and fill bottom 2/3 with dried peas or rice. Rubber band it shut, then keep adding dried rice to make head portion. Tie top shut with rubber band.
2. Tie scarf on second rubber band.
3. Stick floral wire in side where arms are. Pull so each arm is the same length and curl the ends with a pencil. Glue a felt mitten shape on each end, front to back, so wire is in the middle.

4. Pull infant sock over top as stocking cap. Add button or material scraps for embellishment if desired.
5. Glue on carrot nose.
6. Use black marker to add eyes and mouth.
7. Glue buttons down the front.
8. Add red marker for cheeks.



Create an Indoor Obstacle Course

By Deborah Shelton

Beat the winter blahs and get the family motivated with an indoor obstacle course. Set up several "stations" with different things for players to accomplish before advancing to the next station. It only takes a few minutes to set up each challenge, but the fun can last for hours!

1. Chairs, tables and stools: Drape sheets across the tops of chairs, tables and stools to form tunnels for crawling through. Pile stuffed animals into a tunnel to make crawling through it a little more difficult.

2. Pillowcases: Instead of running from one obstacle to the next, place your feet into a pillow-

case and hop to each challenge.

3. Play pen or small plastic pool: Fill a play pen or plastic kiddie pool with balloons. Hide a prize or a riddle at the bottom for players to find.

4. Dress up box: Fill a cardboard box or suitcase with play clothes (hats, shoes, big shirts and pants, etc.). Players must dress completely, layering a full set of play clothes over their own, before moving on.

5. Plastic soda bottles: Set up plastic bottles for a bowling obstacle. Players must knock down all of the bottles, using a tennis ball or other small ball, before proceeding to the next station.



Soup for Those Frigid Days

By Mary Emma Allen

As the temperature hovered around zero today and the wind blew outside our home, I decided that a hearty soup would be perfect for a meal. This reminded me of my childhood, too, when Mother simmered thick, hearty soups in the black iron pot on our wood cook stove.

Father and the hired man liked the home-made soup that contained more ingredients than liquid, the kind that "stuck to your ribs," they called it. So we'd make a meal of soup or stew, hot biscuits or bread. Perhaps Mother might make dumplings or steamed bread.

Steamed bread was one of my favorite accompaniments to stew or a thick soup. She laid slices of bread on top of the brew, then covered the pot and let it steam until the bread was moistened and had absorbed a little of the juices, but wasn't soggy.

Soup of Leftovers

The soup I concocted today consisted of leftover beef pot roast and vegetables. I cut the beef, potatoes, and carrots into small pieces, then placed them in a kettle with water to cover, about two cups. I added some of the thickened pot roast broth (which had been saved in a separate container).

Then I added 1 medium chopped onion, 1/2 cup frozen peas and carrots, 1/2 cup frozen green beans and 1 tablespoon beef bouillon powder. (The amount of bouillon powder you use will depend on how well seasoned your meat and gravy are.) This simmered until flavors were blended and the vegetables cooked.

I also like to add chopped celery, sliced mushrooms, cubed tomatoes, and/or corn for variation to a vegetable or vegetable/meat soup.

One cook explained how she put leftover vegetables into a container which she stored in the freezer. When she wanted to make soup, she simply thawed this and added to her soup pot.

"Easy" Baked Bread

I served the soup with freshly baked bread which I prepared the "easy" way. We often pur-

chase frozen pre-baked bread at the bakery of the local supermarket. Much of the bread they receive in these bakeries is partially cooked, then frozen, to be finished as needed.

We buy this bread and store it into the freezer until needed. Just thaw out the bread, pop it into a 350 degree F. oven for 15 minutes.

Healthy Soups

When making soups, be aware that you can cut the fat and calories in several ways:

- Remove the excess by chilling the soup until the fat solidifies on top of the soup. If you don't have time to chill the soup, skim as much fat off the top as you can.

- Another method of keeping soups healthier is to thicken with a vegetable puree instead of flour and milk or water. Simply puree a vegetable like carrots or potato and return to the broth. Some cooks like to thicken soup with instant mashed potato flakes.

Lentils for Protein

Lentils make a nice addition to vegetable soups and with meat/vegetable soups, too. However, since they're a good source of protein, lentils can add that factor to your vegetable soups.

This small, brownish green dried seedlike legume can be stirred into the soup mixture without soaking beforehand, like you must do with dried beans.

What soups are you creating these winter days?



Test Your Winnie-the-Pooh Knowledge

By Suzanne Miles

- Pooh is a
a. lion b. bear c. boy d. pig
- Eeyore is a
a. horse b. owl c. donkey d. bear
- Tigger is a
a. bear b. tiger c. kangaroo d. donkey
- Kanga is a
a. boy b. kangaroo c. pig d. Rabbit
- Pooh lives
a. at a zoo b. in the hundred acre woods
c. in the everwoods d. in Sherwood forest
- Christopher Robin is a
a. bear b. pig c. boy d. kangaroo
- Pooh's favorite food is
a. bread b. corn c. honey d. butter

Answers: 1. b; 2. c; 3. b; 4. b; 5. b; 6. c; 7. c

Create a Winter Wonderland

By Jaki Ryan

Celebrate the winter season by making six-sided snowflakes that will sparkle all year and never melt!

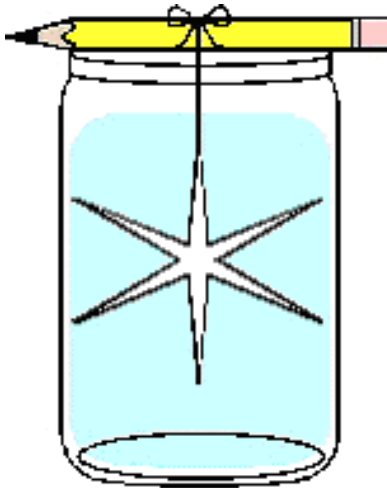
What you need:

- Wide mouth jar
- White pipe cleaner
- Borax (available at grocery stores)
- Pencil
- Boiling water
- String, about 6 inches long
- Food coloring

What to do:

- Fill the jar with boiling water.
- Add borax to water one tablespoon at a time to dissolve. Slowly stir in three tablespoons per one cup of water. Don't worry if some remains at the bottom of jar.

- Add a small drop of blue food coloring, if desired, to give it a wintry look.



- Cut a pipe cleaner into three equal sections.

- Twist pipe cleaner together in the center. Fan out the ends to form a six-sided snowflake shape.

- Tie the string to the tip of the snowflake. Tie the other end to a pencil.

- Rest the pencil on the rim of jar and lower snowflake inside. It should be completely immersed in liquid but not touching the bottom of jar.

- Allow the jar to sit in an undisturbed location overnight.

- You will begin to see crystals grow on your snowflake. Hang in a sunny window and continue to enjoy winter in a bottle!



Fine Literature Digitally Re-Published

Project Gutenberg

Making Castles in the Snow

By D.S. Foxx

You know how to make a snow man: big ball, smaller ball, smallest ball. Stack and dress. But why stop there? You can build all kinds of things out of snow!

If you've ever been to the beach and built a sandcastle, you know how to build a snowcastle, too. Get out your buckets and shovels (and gloves and boots) and get to work. Pick a place that's out of the way, and not too sunny—you don't want your castle to melt! It's just like using sand: you'll want a flat place to build on, with a lot of snow nearby.

Snow is heavy! You won't want to carry it too far.

Pack your bucket with snow, then tip it over where you want the first corner to be. Four bucket-shapes per side make the outside of a small castle. Use more if you want a bigger one. More buckets of snow stacked on top of the first row



will give your walls more height. If you want to, you can use different sizes of buckets, and bowls and boxes and other things. Just make sure they're hollow, won't be hurt by the cold, and aren't metal—you don't want your skin to freeze to them! Make towers at the corners of your castle by adding another bucket-worth of snow, then a snowball or icicle on top. To make windows, you can poke holes in your wall (carefully) or put a small object where you want the bottom of the window to be and then pack snow all around it. When you're finished building that part of the castle, push the object out (also carefully), and there will be an empty space left.

If you have parents helping you, you can get them to do things like smoothing your walls when you're finished—by very gently pouring water over your snow creation—or lifting you out if you forgot and built the walls around you. (Better not do that, just in case.) If you build a snow globe lantern slightly away from your castle, you can even put a candle inside—but you'll need a parent or other adult to light it for you.

For a snow globe lantern: put five snowballs in a ring, with some space in the center. Put a short candle in the middle. Stack three more snowballs in a ring over the first. Light the candle. One more snowball should cover the top in a shape like half a globe, with the candle burning inside (you can add more snowballs if you need them).

If you have rectangular boxes you can pack with snow, you can build an igloo, too; just put your snow "bricks" in a circle instead of a square, and make each row a little bit smaller, until you have half a dome. Oh, and don't forget to leave yourself a door! Doors are always good.

How else are you supposed to get in?

Bear Pawsibilities

Are you a bear lover?
Then look no further!

Bear Pawsibilities has links to many sites selling collectible bears and supplies as well as an extensive list of lots of free bear patterns. Meet Ileana, my only collector bear, too!



Stay at Home Parents Mailing List

A free mailing list for parents who stay at home with their kids. Chat about life and the trials of being at home, get sanity checks, and make new friends. Come join the fun!



How Two Quarelling Kids Invented the Wheel of Dreaded Consequences

By Julie Butler

When David was nine and Laura was twelve, the battles started.

They would start over nothing. One minute the house would be quiet, and the next they'd be shouting at one another. Our once happy home was being turned into a war zone, and it felt like there were landmines scattered beneath our feet.

One night, in desperation, we sent them to their rooms with instructions to each come up with some consequences that we could impose the next time they had a fight.

The following day we arranged them around the perimeter of a board with a spinner in the middle. Then we hung the board up in the kitchen, in plain sight. We crossed our fingers, and waited.

And waited.

It was amazing. Just the presence of the board, hanging on our kitchen wall, had an instant calming effect on the atmosphere in our home. The fighting had stopped.

Well not forever. It took about ten days before they forgot about the board and peace was shattered by another battle.

We were ready.

We called them both into the kitchen and placed the board on the table. They knew what they had to do. It landed on the most dreaded consequence of all: Hug and make up!

The tension was broken as they awkwardly gave each other a hug, mumbling apologies. We all had a good laugh, and life resumed.

Wow, we thought days later when there'd been no further skirmishes... if this thing works so well for arguing, what about some of the other issues that we seemed to be always struggling with? We ended up making consequences to cover seven different issues, including one of rewards for when they were especially good.

We called it The Wheel of Dreaded Consequences.

It has worked beyond our wildest expectations. In the past we'd often let behavior slide.

"David...it's 8:30. Get the dishes done."

"I know," from downstairs where he's watching TV.

"David. It's 9:00. Get these dishes done right now!"

"I know."

Until we'd get angry. And then the consequences would end up being out of proportion to the infraction. Blood pressure would rise, and anger would reign.

"DAVID... GET YOUR BUTT UP HERE RIGHT THIS MINUTE AND GET THOSE DISHES DONE, AND YOU CAN FORGET ABOUT GOING CAMPING THIS WEEKEND!!!"

But with the wheel...

"David... it's 8:15... you haven't started the dishes yet. I'm afraid we'll have to spin the wheel."

"But, Mom..."

"I'm sorry, Dear. It's really not up to me. Those are the rules we all agreed on."

The amazing thing is... we're no longer the bad guys. It's no longer an us against them issue. It's the wheel that they have to answer to.

But the biggest bonus - they seldom have to spin. It hangs on the kitchen wall, acting as a watchdog and reminder. It's mere presence has worked miracles.

We want one too

After sharing our experience with our friends we have received widespread encouragement to make them for others. Ultimately we thought, why not? It's a great product. If it can help others the way it has helped us, it would be a shame not to make them.

David and Laura get along great these days. They've both turned into wonderful teens, and we'd like to think that the Wheel shares a huge portion of the credit for that.

Play Nice: Getting Toddlers to Share

By Carren W. Joye

All parents want their children to share and cooperate with others. Unfortunately, toddlers and preschoolers are just learning how to socialize and how to share, and sharing is a skill that takes time and practice. As a parent, you need to help them learn.

We often tell our young children to "play nice," but this is like telling them to multiply or to divide. They do not know how to share, so it does not do any good to tell them to do it. Rather than let the little tots work things out among themselves, you sometimes need to intervene to show them how to share and show them why they need to share.

Here are some ways parents can promote sharing and cooperation and prevent conflicts with sharing.

Show them how to share

Instead of telling them to take turns, show them how to take turns. If a little boy and little girl are fighting over a toy, for example, suggest that the little boy play with it for a short while and then it will be the girl's turn. Help her find another toy to play with until it's her turn. After a short while, remind the little boy that it is the little girl's turn with the toy. Then, if necessary, help him find something else to play with. Praise him for remembering to give her a turn, and

praise her for waiting patiently.

Alternatively, show them how to play with the same toy together, such as rolling a ball or pushing a truck back and forth to each other. Games such as these foster cooperation in children.

Sometimes, if the youngsters are old enough, you may be able to prompt them to come up with ways to cooperate and share on their own. Say something like, "Looks like both of you want to play with that toy. What are you going to do? How can you two work this out?" Children are sometimes more cooperative if they feel like it's their own idea.

Prevent conflicts with sharing

Sometimes you can prevent conflicts by preparing in advance. If you are hosting a playdate in your home, have two or three of the same toy so youngsters do not have to share. If this proves impossible, have several of the same type of toy, such as several dolls or several cars.

Also, because toddlers find it difficult to share materials from a common pile, you may try dividing the toys into separate piles for each child. If you make it clear that one pile belongs to this child, and another pile belongs to that child, you will avoid a lot of arguments among the children.

Another way to alleviate problems is by helping your children put away favorite toys before any playmates arrive. This will not only prevent conflicts with sharing, but also prevent toys from accidentally getting broken.

Remind your toddler that his toys remain his. Reassure him that his friends will not take his toys home with them.

If you are visiting someone else and your child wants to bring a special toy, remind him that he will have to share it with the other children. Encourage him to leave it at home or in the car, or suggest that he choose something else.

Finally, before your guests arrive or before you get to the play date, tell your child what you expect. Don't just say, "Play nice." Be specific. Tell him, "Do not snatch toys away from anyone. You have to take turns and share toys even with



the babies."

Teach them why they need to share

Adults share because we care about the other person's feelings and because it makes us feel good to make others happy. Give your children opportunities to help other children, so they will learn that it feels good to help others. For example, let them pass out the snacks or show another child how to build a puzzle. Then praise them for their helpfulness and emphasize how good it must have made them feel.

Help children learn to recognize other people's feelings by specifically pointing out the consequences of their actions. Tell them, "Brendon is crying because you took his toy away. How do you think he feels? How do you feel when some-

one takes your doll away from you?"

Praise good behavior by being specific too. Don't just say, "How nice of you." Instead, say something like, "You shared because you like to help others. You're a good friend to Brendon. Look how happy he is that you shared your toy."

Read stories about sharing and talk about them. You can use books about sharing, such as "Mine!: A Sesame Street Book about Sharing" by Linda Hayward, "I Am Sharing" by Mercer Mayer, and "It's Mine" by Leo Lionni. Or you can bring up the topic of sharing as it comes up in other stories, such as the seven dwarves sharing their home with Snow White.

Finally, teach by example. Let your children see you sharing, cooperating and being considerate of others, and they will try to imitate you.

Winnie-the-Pooh Word Search

By Suzanne Miles

Can you find the words in the puzzle below that have to do with this popular story?

POOH
EYORE

ROO
TIGGER

CHRISTOPHERROBIN
OWL RABBIT

PIGLET
KANGA

C	S	G	T	B	R	A	T	P	I	G	O	C	E	O	A	P
E	C	H	R	I	S	T	O	H	E	R	R	O	B	I	N	O
R	B	N	O	R	I	K	R	T	W	L	N	W	I	T	R	B
A	K	R	A	O	H	I	G	P	G	R	I	P	T	P	H	A
B	N	A	B	O	G	T	I	G	G	E	R	T	I	I	G	P
B	O	C	N	A	E	E	R	A	O	W	L	P	R	G	B	T
I	E	K	A	G	E	Y	C	T	P	A	T	R	O	L	E	T
T	A	T	G	E	A	I	O	I	O	C	E	C	A	E	H	B
E	E	Y	O	R	E	P	C	R	O	H	R	I	H	T	S	P
C	H	R	I	K	A	H	N	S	H	W	E	O	W	E	P	O
R	A	B	P	I	O	G	C	R	E	E	Y	N	O	B	K	N
H	L	E	T	G	G	E	B	Y	K	L	O	C	S	H	N	P

See answer on page 20

How to Handle a Mid-School Year Move

By Susan Dunn

Q: What's worse than moving?

A: Moving in the middle of the school year.

My family did it more than once when I was growing up. I still remember some of the incidents-being introduced in the front of the class, having to share a locker until they could find one for me, breaking into the already-formed social groups, having the wrong "accent".

Whatever the reason for the move, moving is stressful.

While you're anticipating the new location and the new job, doing all the paperwork, showing the house, packing, and handling those logistics, remember that your children are going through the same stress only with less cognitive understanding and no sense of control. If they don't know what it's like to "be the new kid on the block," they're about to find out.

The NCC says it takes as long as 16 months for both adults and children to adjust to a move.

Here are some tips for helping make the move easier for your family.

1. Keep structure amidst the confusion and disorder.

Tighten up on meal times, bedtime routines, and other traditions that give structure and stability to your family life. Stay home and skip the babysitters for a while. Let some important things remain stable while the earth moves beneath their feet.

2. Expect regression.

When we're stressed, we retreat to former times to regain stability. And our kids do too! You can expect a newly potty-trained child to relapse, little ones creeping into your bed at night; more tears, maybe picky eating. Loosen up on these things. They'll go away once things settle down.

3. Acknowledge both negative and positive feelings.

You, too, will be having them. There's this you'll miss, and this to look forward to. The old town had an amusement park, but this one has a great children's museum. You'll miss the snow, but now the beach is an hour away. Ambivalent feelings are typical of any transition. Help your child look forward to good, new things while they say goodbye, sadly, to things and people they'll miss. Share your joy in your beautiful

new home, and your frustration in not knowing where the light switches are, or the ice cream store.

4. Orient to the way your child thinks.

When we moved when my older son was 6, we left him with my aunt and uncle while we went to look for the new house. A naturally outgoing child, he was upset until he learned we'd be leaving the family dog there too. Children look at things differently. In his mind, he knew we'd come back for the dog. He was calmed. This is akin to the nursery school teacher who told me to bring a handkerchief and leave it with my crying younger son. Not, she said, as a wubby, but "because he knows you'll come back for a personal item."

5. Be concrete and talk about details.

Help the child see what it will mean to them, depending upon developmental age and temperament. With a preschooler, let him help you pack up a treasured item in a box, seal it up, move it around in a wagon, then return it, open it up and take the treasured thing out and put it back where it came from. This is an experiential lesson that what we pack up doesn't disappear forever. Children are concerned about their possessions, just like we are. Also they displace their general anxiety onto something concrete



like that because they have no other way to express it.

With a toddler, use the doll house and dolls and toy cars to show what will happen.

Read books about moving. "Mallory's Moving and her Monkey is Missing" is a good one.

6. Instead of focusing on logistics, focus on people and feelings.

The move will get accomplished. Take time to deal with the emotional aspects and it will pay off in the long run. It's a lot more important. This is just one of many transitions your family will go through, and how you handle it will have repercussions in the future. All transitions bring ambivalent emotions and fears and fantasies about the future, which is unknown. You'll grow through this as a family.

7. Make a trial run if you possibly can.

Go visit the new place with your children. Show them where their new room will be (let them decorate it if possible). Visit their school. Meet the neighbors. Point out the "same things" like the DQ and McDonalds. Look up sports and scouts programs. Show them where the new movie theater is.

8. Expect an adjustment period at school.

Children learn best in a comfortable emotional environment, and a move is stressful. It will take them a while to get acclimated. Observe when you pick them up, or talk with them to find out if they're making a satisfactory social adjustment. According to research one of the highest emotional intelligence competencies is being able to break into an already formed group. Be compassionate. Help them learn the skills. (You may be going through the same thing yourself!)

9. If not you, then who?

We've lost track of who brings the homemade cake over - the old neighbor, or the new one. Don't ask for whom the bell tolls - let your children choose a cake, bake it together, and carry it over to meet the new folks. Or have an open house and invite the other families over.

10. Saying good-bye precedes saying hello.

Let your child have a going away party with their friends, and then a new party in the new place. We moved a lot when my oldest son was growing up, though usually in the summer, and fortunately he had a mid-October birthday. By that time we knew the names and faces of the other kids in the class and then could have everyone over for a birthday party and get him well into the loop. Worked great.

Simple Science: Snowflakes Everlasting

By Jaki Ryan

Create a permanent snowflake display to enjoy all year long.

You will need:

- Piece of glass
- Hairspray (Aerosol, not pump)
- Snowfall

Instructions:

1. Freeze a piece of glass and a can of hairspray. (You can find glass in a picture frame. Handle with care.)

2. When you're ready to collect samples, spray the chilled hairspray onto the glass.

3. At the first sign of snowfall, allow the snowflakes to gather on the glass. Once you are satisfied that you have collected enough, bring the glass inside the house.

4. Bring to room temperature. Once the snowflakes melt, you will see an exact representation of the snowflakes.



Tips for Planning Your Baby's Nursery

By Audrey Cowan

Planning a nursery takes a little time and effort (and a lot of paint). So, before you start painting that room, you may want to consider the following tips:

1. Selecting the room:

To those expectant parents who live in a two-bedroom house or apartment, this is an easy decision. But, for those who have a choice between a few bedrooms, you may want to consider the following:

a. Proximity of baby's room to yours. Do you really want to walk to the other side of the house many times each night for feedings? I would suggest a room that is close to your room. For those mothers, like myself, who have to hear their baby's every move, the room next to yours is ideal. To some, that may be a nightmare.

b. Which direction does the room face? Is the room on the North, East, West, or South of the house? Babies nap a few times a day, so the amount of sunlight in the baby's room may affect his/her sleeping habits. If the room faces east, then you may have an early riser due to the morning sun streaming in the windows. The North side of your house will get the least amount of sunlight, while the South side of your house will get the most (in North America).

c. Is the room next to a busy road? Two words will sum this up: noisy cars.

d. The size of the room. Select the size of the room based on how you plan to use the nursery. Will it be used just for sleeping or a combination sleeping/playroom? Some parents choose to keep the baby's toys separate from his/her nursery, while others decide to include the toys and double the nursery as a playroom.

2. Decide the tone of the room.

Do you want it to be bright and colorful or subdued and neutral? soft blues, greens, and creams are relaxing colors while reds, oranges, and bright yellows are stimulating colors. Also, consider the patterns of the decorations that you use. Ex: Soft swirls versus bold stripes. The softer pattern may be more soothing while the bold stripes are more interesting for the baby's developing eye. Bright colors versus subdued colors, soft patterns versus bold patterns: it is all a personal preference. One won't make your baby sleep better than the other.

3. Your Budget.

Make a list of the items that you would like to buy and compare that to what you can afford. You really only need one thing: a crib. Everything else is a preference. Changing tables are nice to have, but you could use the floor. A rocking chair is nice to have, but you could stand and rock the baby in your arms. If you have an endless amount to spend on the nursery, then by all means, buy all of the pieces to a grouping. But, if you have a small budget, don't feel bad about limiting the pieces of furniture and decorations. You can still plan a beautiful nursery and plus - your baby won't notice.

If you have a limited budget and would still like all of the nursery items that you see in magazines and on websites, then consider these options:

a. Buy at second-hand stores or garage sales. Some of the items are in "like-new" condition, so it's worth checking them out. Before placing your baby in a used crib, stroller, car seat, or any



other second-hand baby item, please check with the Consumer Product Safety Commission to make sure that the items weren't recalled. You would be surprised at how many baby items are recalled each year. Their website is: www.cpsc.gov

b. Register at a baby store and have a baby shower.

4. Themes

Decide on a theme for baby's room. You will find a lot of help out there by just looking at the bedding available. "The Cow Jumped Over the Moon", "Little Lambs", Stars and Moons", are a few of the many choices that you'll find in the stores. If you aren't looking for a "theme", then consider working with a few select colors. If you are expecting a girl, then colors such as cream, pink, lavender can be used; for boys, blue, yellow and white are always safe. If you aren't sure of the baby's gender, then stick to neutrals such as cream, yellow, beige, and pale green.

5. Furniture Arrangement

Consider the following when arranging your furniture:

a. Proximity of crib to potentially dangerous situations. Ex: Never place crib next to a window treatment with dangling cords, keep crib far away from anything that the baby can pull on top of him/her (lamps, decorations, etc.), and never place a portable space heater near the crib.

b. Keep baby's crib on an inside wall. This will

help keep your baby warm in those cold winter months and also away from windows.

c. Traffic flow. You probably won't place the dresser in the middle of the room. Why? Because you will need some walking space. Take a look at the room and decide where pieces of furniture should be in relation to each other. If the crib is on one wall, then maybe place the changing table on the opposite wall to balance out the room.

6. Window Treatments

The shades, blinds, or drapes that you purchase can be used for both color and function. Light blocking shades are nice if the baby will have a lot of mid-day sunlight. You can also coordinate the shades with the theme of the room, or keep them very neutral.

7. Convert to a Toddler Room?

Many furniture pieces for nurseries are now able to convert to accommodate a toddler. Buying a convertible crib may save some money when it is time for your baby to sleep in a big kid bed. Also, consider the décor of the room. Painting in a cream color, for example, is easier to convert to a big kid room than if you use "baby pink". But, then again, you may decide to have a second baby and move the first child to another room. Worst-case scenario: you re-paint.

Overall, take a little time to plan out your baby's room before entering the stores. All of the products and décor for babies can be overwhelming. But, if you have a game plan before shopping, then it can be a little less stressful. Happy decorating!

Solution to puzzle on page 17

C S G T B R A T P I G O C E O A P
E **C H R I S T O H E R R O B I N O**
R B N O **R** I K R T W L N W I T R B
A K R A O H I G P G R I P T **P** H A
B N **A** B O **G** T I G G E R T I I G P
B O C **N** A E E R A O W L P R G B T
I E K A G E Y C T P A T R O L E T
T A T G E **A** I O I O C E C A E H B
E **E** Y O R E P C R O H R I H T S P
C H R I K A H N S H W E O W E P O
R A B P I O G C R E E Y N O B K N
H L E T G G E B Y K L O C S H N P

Do you have a recipe to share? Craft idea? A sanity check? New curriculum ideas? Then sign up on the Forums and let's get chatting!



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Sarah Eshelman writes and teaches in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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