



Parenting News



We are a group of parents in Linn County who want to be supports to other parents. We have difficult kids or kids with difficult behaviors, and have felt alone, misunderstood, isolated, confused, frustrated, and everything in between.

Support with other parents has been a lifeline, and reminded us that we do not have to be alone.

OMGIFA: Oh My Gosh...It's Friday Already!

By Josi Winkler

As a single mother of three children with different needs, I've experienced the dreaded weekend more times than I can count. Luckily, I learned early on the importance of routine and structure, however, there was still chaos in my home. It wasn't until after I attended Collaborative Problem Solving that I realized how much had to change. Change is scary but I was willing to try anything because what I was doing wasn't working. I began changing the way I viewed and thought about my children's behaviors. For me, what worked was writing little love notes telling them one specific thing I love

about them, with a reminder of how proud I am they are my children. With attitudes changing, I began changing the way I listened to my children, I learned to ask questions and before long my faking it paid off, I really am interested in the things they have to say. Then as I began to change the way we spent time together, I learned that I needed to meet them at their level regardless of the level they are on at that moment. We began doing activities that kept their interests and as a result I discovered the more interested I keep them, the less time they have to initiate conflict. I have found cards or dice come in handy to resolve quicker. In our house, high number wins, and there's no complaining

that it's unfair. Some of our favorite activities include turning off the power and playing games or taking turns reading aloud to each other in our silly voices by candlelight, or packing snacks and going for a drive to nowhere special, while we play Slug Bug (for points, not slugs), in hopes of discovering a new park or a spot we can stop and look for "treasures" or skip rocks. And, on rainy nights, we like to eat breakfast for dinner in our jammies, before snuggling in for a movie. Although the things that work for our family might not work for yours, I'm hoping that something I've shared will inspire change that will work for your family.

Self Kindness—what a concept!

By Connie Kay

It is the time of year when we traditionally choose resolutions for the next year. We decide to lose weight, eat healthy, save money, etc. Some even manage to make changes but for most of us, resolutions are forgotten in a few weeks. Chocolate and French fries are so good,

and we will begin saving after we pay our holiday debts. All stays the same until next year.

I suggest we get serious about one resolution. Let us all resolve to be kinder to ourselves. Yes, I said *ourselves*. Not our kids, our spouses, our co-workers, but ourselves. Most of us have explosive children and the

challenges parenting them brings. We easily go to blaming and being unkind to ourselves. If only I had done this or that. I suggest we give up on self-blame and practice kindness. Yes, we need to be honest about our behavior and what we want to change. However, we can do it kindly. We can learn about our lagging skills and begin a plan to change. We can treat

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Activities

- Jan 21: Children's Performing Arts "Valentine's Pigs", (real pigs!), LBCC Forum, 10a, Free
- Jan 17 (6-9p) & 24 (1:30-4:30p): Warm Soup in Cold Times free workshop, Albany Senior Center
- Seniors: Billiards M-F, 9a-4p and Game Night Tuesday 6:30-8:30p, Albany Senior Center
- Open Swim: M, 2-3p & 6:30-8p; Sat 1-4p, Albany Comm. Pool
- Open Swim: M-F 7-8:30p, Sat 1-3p, Sun 2-4p, Lebanon Community Pool

ourselves gently while we re-learn new parenting styles.

The thing about kindness is it spreads. When I am kind to me, it is much easier to be kind to others. When I am mad at me, it is easier to be mad at you. Please join me and make 2012 the year of kindness in your home.

Outside Activities

By Joel Wheeler

Sick of being cooped up all winter with your kids? Here are some outdoor activities. Got an inner tube or sled? Head into the hills for some snowy action. Do you like to avoid the coast in the summer because of the crowds? Head there now; The Mark Hatfield Marine Science Center is always free –they do appreciate donations – as are the beaches. There are many hiking opportunities for the whole family in the Cascades, and some are even closer. When was the last time you went to McDowell Creek Falls? Have you ever been to the William L Finley National Wildlife Refuge near Corvallis? Or the E. E. Wilson Game Management Area north of Adair Village? Get out and enjoy!

Organizing Tips

By April Wheeler

Start small: It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the task at hand. Pick one thing--a small area, a type of item--and start there. Remember: 15 minutes or 15 items, every small bit done is more than was done before.

De-clutter: For those cherished items stuck in the garage, take a photo, and let go of the item. For the most part, if you haven't used something in 6 months, consider letting it go.

Labels: Totes, tubs, and drawers are great, but can be confusing when searching. Labels can help!

Paperwork: Some you can get rid of after 3 months, such as pay stubs, bank statements, and utility bills. Remember to shred these documents.

Food & Medicine: Anything expired needs to go!

Brief tips: Put it away when you're done. Make sure everything has a home. One new habit at a time; 21 days to form a new one.

Family Fun!!!

Stuffy Chicken Casserole

By Mellie Meston

Ingredients:

- 1 box StoveTop stuffing
- 1 small can cream of broccoli
- 1 small bag veggie
- 1 small bag 2nd veggie
- 1lb chicken or pork (cut & cubed)
- 1/4c Shake-n-Bake
- 1/3c French Fried onions (opt.)
- 1/2c shredded cheese
- 2-3 tabs margarine
- 1.5 soup cans of hot water

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375°.
- Put StoveTop in the bottom of a baking dish.
- Add veggies evenly.
- Add spoonfuls of soup over the top.
- Pour water into dish evenly.
- Sprinkle meat generously.
- Sprinkle Shake-n-Bake and onions.
- Sprinkle top with cheese.
- Bake 45 minutes.
- Garnish with sour cream and olives.

Indoor Crafty Fun

Shrink Art

- #6 clear plastic
 - Markers
 - Foil
 - Oven (pre-heated to 350)
- 1) Using #6 clear plastic (usually used in deli containers or similar, look for the number six in the recycle triangle) cut a shape about three times the size you want the finished product.

- 2) Trace or draw and color your plastic with permanent markers, punch a hole if you want to hang your design.
- 3) Place on foil in the oven. Shrinking should take less than 3 minutes. Curling is normal, but will flatten in time.

For more info, check out this web site: <http://www.curbly.com/users/chrisjob/posts/2252-diy-shrinky-dinks>

Upcoming Group Schedule

Albany groups at Eastside Christian Church, 1910 Grand Prairie Rd.

CPS Phase 2: Mondays 10:30-12:30.

CPS: Thursdays 5:45-7:45.

Lebanon/Sweet Home group at the Free Methodist Church, 580 F St.

In Lebanon. CPS: Tuesdays 12:30-2:30

Comments, questions? Contact us by phone or through e-mail:

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To submit an article or feedback, write to fsveditors@gmail.com or talk to Crystal Rowell.

