

# Monthly Family Newsletter

December 2021

## Focus on Family

Spending quality time with family is the best investment you can make. The word "family" is a collective term. In other words, it is not simply a couple of people living under the same roof, but a community of people who are connected and share both happy and hard times. Nobody knows you as well as your family, and no one knows your family as well as you! You can be a source of comfort and safety.

Spending time with your child can actually boost their self-esteem. Children who participate in family activities develop a positive sense of self-worth. When a child feels cherished by their parents, they have a more positive self-image. Winter is the perfect time of year for spending time with your child. Whether you go play in the snow, go sledding, or walk around your neighborhood to look at Christmas lights, there are so many opportunities to connect as a family even in the cold. Perhaps your family could experience a new winter activity together like skiing, snowmobiling, or ice skating together. Learning new things together as a family can really help strengthen the bond within a family.

Sometimes it is easy to take our family for granted but they are a gift. If you have ever lost a family member, you are reminded how fleeting time is, and how important it is to cherish our loved ones every day. Family is not always flawless, but it is critical to develop family relationships that will see you through difficult times. It gives you an even sturdier foundation to build your life. This month, devote some time to your family and create time for quality, and engaged family time.

## HEADS UP!

Your Family Engagement Advocate staff will reach out to you in this month to set up a time to complete the 2020-21 Educare Flint Family Interview. This data helps us understand you and your child's needs, figure out if our program is working, and identify what else we can do to keep improving our program. With each child survey you complete, you'll receive a \$25 dollar gift card to Kroger. Don't miss it, your support and participation are greatly appreciated! - American Institutes for Research (AIR)

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## Meet the Educare Family!

KATY NUNN

Welcome Katy Nunn our new Parent Navigator! Her favorite season is Spring, and she loves going to flea markets, gardening, and doing craft projects with her children. Katy's favorite color is teal and enjoys eating anything if it is Italian! Katy's favorite book is *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle. If Katy could have any superpower, it would be the power to teleport! She would love to be able to visit family members who live in other states more often and maybe a tropical island or two!

*"This place is one of the most welcoming and encouraging places I have ever worked. It's a beautiful building and everyone has been kind and supportive."*

## From Our Executive Director

JA'NEL JAMERSON

As a son, husband, and father, I value strong connections and bonding time with my family. Spending quality time together with your child provides an opportunity to discover and learn what your child's strengths and weaknesses are. Quality time spent with family and friends can help your child develop important social skills and enhance their mental health. Participating in happy shared experiences, supporting one another, and communicating effectively are positive steps toward building healthy relationships. The key to positive family time is to give your undivided attention and being physically and mentally present.

*Effort is key, and perhaps, with the holiday breaks, you'll have time to try some of these easy and enjoyable activities for the whole family:*

- Make sock puppets.
- Go on a winter scavenger hunt outside
- Read out loud/Tell favorite winter stories
- Have a snowball fight
- Make snow angels
- Build a cushion/blanket fort

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## Mark Your Calendars: Important Dates



- **December 17th: Virtual Learning Event** hosted by Snap-Ed; Nutrition & Physical Activity; Supplies sent home 12/16. Zoom link will be send out prior to.
  - **December 20: Edushare Market Curbside Pick-up**
  - **December 22 - January 3: NO SCHOOL**
  - **January 4th: Return to School.**
- Dad's Café Tuesdays at 9:30AM OR Thursdays at 6:00PM SEE Mike for more details**

## From Our Family Engagement Coordinator

MIKE KILDEE

Winter Break can be a great time for families to bond and have fun together. With our busy lives, it is important to enjoy time as a family when many of us have a break from work and school.

Family fun in the winter can be enjoyable both indoors and outdoors. Here are some fun ideas for making the most of the time you have together as a family over Winter Break.

- If there is snow outside, go out and build a snowman or even a snow family. Afterwards, you can all come inside and enjoy some nice hot chocolate and a snack. If there isn't snow, make a snowman or snow family out of things you may have around the house.
- Go for a drive and look at Holiday decorations around town. While you're looking at the beautiful decorations, you can sing songs together.
- Have a movie day or night. Pick out movies that the whole family can enjoy together and snuggle up and watch them.
- Go for a walk and look for pinecones and bring them home to decorate or put peanut butter on them and sprinkle birdseed on them to make a bird feeder. Hang them on a tree and watch for all of the different kinds of birds that visit the feeder.
- Plan and prepare a special meal together. Everyone has part in making it a special meal!
- Decorate cookies together!
- Have a game day and play board games together.
- On a snowy day, bundle up and go sledding together. Then come home for hot chocolate!

Whatever it is that you choose to do, have fun being together as a family and make the most of the times you have together?

**Have a Family Fun Winter Break!!**

## From Our School Director

JODI RAMOS

One of our primary goals at Educare Flint is to assist kids in developing their social communications skills. Gratitude promotes social communication by assisting us in understanding the sentiments of others, practicing empathy, and learning the social power of compassion and gratitude. It also aids emotional growth by allowing us to recognize and focus on what makes us happy.

Every night I go through three gratitudes with my son and husband, something I am very grateful for. Hearing about the various things they are grateful for warms my heart. We often challenge each other to not repeat the same things within the same month, which helps us continue to put things in perspective. This month, I am reminded of my gratefulness for family traditions: The turkey and tamales at Thanksgiving, potluck dinners, and family game nights.

As a parent, it's never too late or early to start teaching your child about gratitude. It may be a long time before kids completely understand the notion, but you can create the framework for a daily gratitude habit.

### How to Build Gratitude into Your Child's Day

- **Model It** - Allow them to see you thanking others and expressing gratitude to a family member or friend.
- **Be consistent with "thank you"** - Children learn to comprehend words before they learn to use them.
- **Make receiving special** - Make it a habit to not buy a small item every time you go shopping.
- **Involve Them in giving** - Allow them to assist you in packing up old clothing and toys for donation. Explain how excited other children will be to receive them.
- **Talk about the things you're grateful for** - Do this in the car, at supper, before bed, or whenever you're not distracted.
- **Work it into younger children's play** - Sprinkle gratitude into pretend play.

Scan this QR code to complete the health check survey each morning.



**THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING US TO BE A PART OF YOUR FAMILY!**