

Parent Times

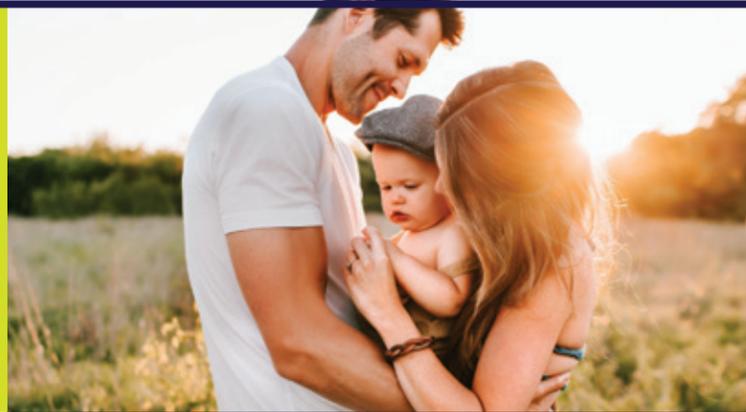
December 2020



ncpg
north central parenting group

learn · connect · inspire

Their future
is in your
hands...



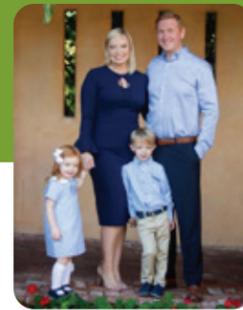
plan accordingly.

Estate Planning | Wills | Trusts

I make the estate planning process easy and convenient to serve busy parents like you. I can guide you through the process in person or via Zoom. Evening and weekend appointments available. *NCPG members automatically get a 10% discount.* To schedule a free consultation, call me at 602.684.1398 or email Paula@PaulaHannahLaw.com.

ncpg

north central parenting group



President's
Corner



Happy Holidays!

What a year this has been?! I hope you all are continuing to stay safe (and sane) during these trying times! I believe it's to SLOW DOWN. I'm striving to truly focus on what matters most (our family and friends), to practice gratitude (for our many blessings despite hardships) and to generously extend grace, (to both ourselves and those around us) — while so much remains outside of our control. I wish you all a peaceful and joy-filled holiday season and thank you for your ongoing commitment and trust as our NCPG Board of Directors navigates this extraordinary year.

A (final) friendly reminder that your class rep received a check for virtual or socially-distanced **Small Class Gatherings** of your class members' choice, and your class should have voted on how to use those funds by now. It is our hope that you're able to connect as a class (in whatever way you're most comfortable with) as a supplement to our regular virtual classes.

Many thanks to everyone that joined us last Thursday evening for our final 2020 Virtual All-Class Guest Speaker: Tiffany Isaacson, a Senior Injury Prevention Specialist with Phoenix Children's Center for Family Health and Safety, who presented a **Water Safety Seminar**. Special thanks to our wonderful Special Events Directors for planning this supplemental learning opportunity for us all!

Lastly, thank you to everyone contributing to our **Christmas Angels Drive** benefiting the Salvation Army again this holiday season. We sincerely appreciate your incredibly generous donations for a fourth consecutive year. We are also pleased to be offering a convenient (and contactless) donation collection this year so that you may drive-thru and drop-off your angel gifts (plus grab breakfast "to-go") the morning of our 12/9 class from 9-11am in the Southwest Parking lot of Christ Church School (at 40th Street and Lincoln Avenue).

While we still hope to resume in-person learning in the Spring once Saint Barnabas on the Desert has reopened to groups in 2021, there are still many ways to get involved with NCPG! It's never too early to start thinking about a Board position for the 2021-2022 year, and we invite you to join us for a **Virtual Board Information Session on Monday, January 11 at 6:30pm** (to learn more about the Board and available opportunities for the 2021-2022 NCPG year). More details and the zoom link are forthcoming!

We sincerely appreciate your support and understanding (and welcome your feedback) during this extraordinary year. As always, please reach out with any questions or concerns, I would love to serve as a resource and hear from you anytime.

Wishing you and yours a happy holiday season and a bright new year!

xo,

Megan Garvey
NCPG Board President 2019-2021
president@ncpgaz.org



2020-2021 Board of Directors

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NCPG is a non-profit, non-denominational organization providing classes to parents of infant to middle school aged children.

ncpgaz.org Like us on Facebook: ncpgaz

Parent Times

It's finally starting to feel like Fall! Members, this monthly newsletter is for your benefit, so we want to ensure our team is publishing content that is valuable, useful, informative, and fun! Please let us know if you have suggestions, comments, concerns, or any input that would help us to improve this publication. Shoot us an email at communications@ncpgaz.org. Thanks for your help! Also, please send us photos of you and your family- we are always looking for photos of our community to include in the newsletter and on the NCPG website. Please keep in mind that when you submit photos, you are agreeing that we can use them in our newsletter as well as the NCPG website.

Editors – Ashley McFate & Amanda Shaw
Designer – Neill Fox, foxnoggin.com, neill@foxnoggin.com

Front Cover – Cynthia Carsten family
Photographer: Marie Grieling, Southern Charlotte Photography

The information provided by NCPG instructors should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

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Member to Meet Katie French

Class: Kindergarten with the amazing Jemeille Ackourey!

Children & Ages: Peter (5), William (3), Stella (21 months)

Spouse: Will French

How did you meet your spouse/partner: Our moms set us up on a blind date. Our moms often go to the restaurant where we had our first date, probably to revel in their handiwork.

Years married/together: Married 7 years, together almost 8. We had a fast courtship, met and married within 11 months

Spouse/partners favorite date night spot: We love outdoor dining- Rita's, Chelsea's Kitchen, Ingos.

Career or previous career: I was a first grade teacher for 12 years — fun fact: I was Monique Nelson's (pre infant and infant teacher) daughter's teacher.

5 words to describe you: Patient, loving, laid back, funny, supportive.

Favorite family vacation spot? We have a cabin in Pinetop and love getting to escape the heat and enjoy the outdoors. We love to take walks, catch crawdads, and play in the rocks.

Favorite children's book to read? *The Pokey Little Puppy* — it was my favorite as a kid, and I still love it

Favorite adult book to read? Anything in the mystery/suspense genre.

Where were you born and raised? Native Phoenician — love Arizona and will never leave.

What do you miss most about being a kid? Being carefree with no responsibilities.

When you have 30 minutes of free time what do you do? Watch Dateline or sleep.

What story does your family always tell about you? When I was 3 years old I was having a tantrum about going to preschool. My mom asked where do you want to go and I pointed to some random day care, she pulled in and dropped me off. She knew nothing about it but was so fed up with me she didn't care. Clearly I never did that again.

What's your favorite thing to do with your child/children? We love to build legos together. I love seeing what they come up with and their imagination at work.

Most meaningful moment as a parent? When you see your child succeed and see the joy in their face. Whether it's scoring a goal on the soccer field or writing their name for the first time that excitement is so precious.

What is your favorite family tradition? We pray together each morning before my husband leaves for work. We pray about school, our day and bless our time together. Helps us to start the day on a positive note.

Best parenting advice given to you? There is no one right way to parent, do your best and give yourself grace.

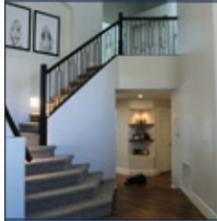
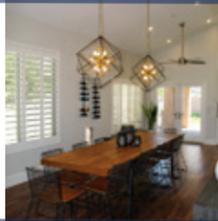
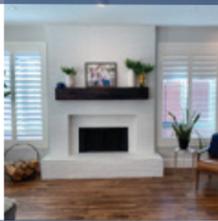
How do you balance meeting your children's needs as well as your own? Oh gosh, that's a work in progress but I try to take nap/quiet time and use some of it for me. I could be doing laundry or dishes but sometimes actually sitting down to each lunch or giving myself a few minutes to relax and check out is more helpful in the long run.

If you could give your pre-baby self advice, what would it be? Don't be hard on yourself — parenthood is a constant learning experience.

Who introduced you to NCPG and for how many years have you been a part of the group? Molly Livak introduced me to NCPG and I'm so thankful. I started when I was pregnant in the pre infant class with Monique.

Best thing learned in NCPG? You need community and support — the friendships I've gained and the encouragement has been priceless!



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CHRISTMAS TIP

**WRAP EMPTY BOXES AND PUT
THEM UNDER THE TREE.**

**EVERYTIME YOUR CHILD ACTS UP,
THROW ONE IN THE FIREPLACE.**

2020-2021 Calendar

NOTE: Classes will be offered virtually until in-person classes are able to resume.

Class Schedule

8:45 am Nursery opens
9:00-9:40 am Refreshments served
9:45*-11:30 am Classes are held
***Teachers will start promptly at 9:45!**
11:45 am Nursery closes
11:30 am-1:15 pm Pre-Infant & Pre-Teen Class

Class Dates

January 6th March 3rd **
 January 20th April 7th **
 February 3rd ** April 21st
 February 17th May 5th **

** Parent Times magazine distributed.

Board Meeting Schedule

January 11th April 12th
 February 1st May 3rd
 March 1st



Saint Barnabas on the Desert Episcopal Church
 6715 N. Mockingbird Lane
 Paradise Valley, AZ 85253

Board

Announcements

Membership

Spots remain available in a handful of classes for the 2020-2021 year! Space is limited so please contact membership@ncpgaz.org for additional information about open classes and registration.

Communications

WE WANT YOUR HOLIDAY PICTURES!

The New Year is around the corner and we are on the hunt for a festive cover image!



Send us your high-res photos of the kids all ready for the holidays for our photo spread and your kid may end up on the cover!

Please also send birth announcement pics, snapshots of NCPG kids and parents, and any professional photos to communications@ncpgaz.org.

Public Relations



Please follow along on our private **NCPG Instagram** @ncpgaz for helpful information and updates!



Please continue to use the members-only **NCPG Facebook Group** to ask questions, share advice, local events, deals and to buy & sell. We ask that we keep everything positive and respectful on the page. Please request to join the group, if you haven't already and join the fun!



Childcare

Our number one priority at NCPG NCPG Childcare is the safety of your children. Childcare will remain closed until we have consistently met the benchmarks set forth by the CDC and Arizona Department of Health for childcare settings, our facility lifts their restrictions on groups, and when we confidently feel that we can safely offer childcare.

In the meantime, if you need childcare during the virtual meetings, **Busy Bees Babysitting**, our trusted provider, is currently offering in-home sitters and has implemented procedures and guidelines to ensure the safety of your children and their Bees. If you don't already have an account, please feel free to reach out to us at childcare@ncpgaz.com and we can help get you registered.

We look forward to serving you and your children again soon. Thank you for your patience during this time.

Check Out Our New Website!



If you haven't seen the new website yet, please take a moment to check it out at ncpgaz.org

And thanks to everyone who helped with this exciting project!

Education

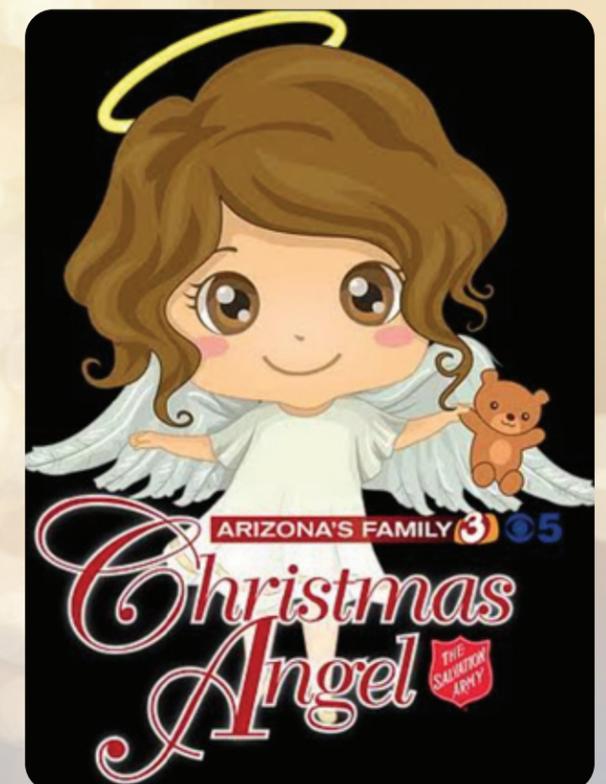
In the coming weeks, please be on the lookout for our **Mid-year Evaluation Survey**.

Your feedback is greatly valued as we continue to strive to provide the best experience possible.



Community Outreach

A special shout out and big **THANK YOU** to everyone for adopting angels this year. You helped to make Christmas feel so special for these children.



I Think I'm Done Having Kids...

Deciding on which permanent birth control method is the right choice for you and your family is an important decision. Women will often use some form of hormone based birth control like the pill or IUD (intrauterine device) during their reproductive years to prevent pregnancy, or have their partner use a condom. These methods are not as effective as a permanent solution, and carry risk from prolonged hormone exposure. It is not uncommon for women to want to “get off hormones” when they are done having children. It also gets very old and bothersome to have to interrupt intimacy to think about and deal with managing birth control while “in the moment.”

No-Scapel Vasectomy: 99% Effective Permanent Birth Control

Dr. Brito performs the no-scapel vasectomy. A vasectomy is a surgical procedure that makes a man sterile (unable to father a child). It is safe, simple, and effective. The no-scapel procedure is done under local anesthesia, without incisions or stitches. Healing is often faster than with the traditional method. Before having a vasectomy, talk to your partner. Any vasectomy should be considered permanent. You must be positive that you won't want children in the future.

The Procedure

When you have a vasectomy, the two vas deferens are cut. This keeps sperm from traveling from the testes to the penis. This is the only change. The testes still make sperm. But because the sperm have nowhere to go, they die and are absorbed by your body. Your prostate and seminal vesicles still produce fluids, so your semen doesn't look or feel any different. Your male hormone level is not affected. Your sex drive, orgasms, and intimacy does not change.

After The Procedure

After a vasectomy, you must ejaculate 15-20 times OR wait 2-3 months before obtaining a post vasectomy semen analysis to confirm sterility and no sperm are present in your ejaculate. During this time, an alternative form of birth control must be used, and you must assume that you are still fertile until the urologist reviews the results of the semen analysis. Stay off your feet as much as you can for the first day. This helps lessen swelling. An ice pack can also help reduce swelling. Avoid heavy lifting or exercise for at least 5 days. No swimming, jacuzzi, baths or sex for 5 days.

Use An Alternative Form Of Birth Control Until Sterility Is Confirmed

It is important to use an alternative form of birth control--this is a MUST--until sterility is confirmed with the post vasectomy semen analysis.

What Are The Risks Of A Vasectomy?

The risks of vasectomy are very few and rare, and include bleeding, infection, chronic pain and failure of the vasectomy. Men often ask if sexual performance will be effected in any way by vasectomy, and the answer is absolutely not. Vasectomy has no effect on the testicle, does not effect sperm production, just prevents the delivery of sperm out into the ejaculate, and has no effect on testosterone production, the hormone responsible for libido. The sensation of ejaculation or orgasm will be unchanged and is not affected by the presence or absence of sperm. Most patients require no pain medication, and simply resting and using ice help significantly with any discomfort.

Vasectomy is an excellent option for permanent sterilization, is extremely well tolerated, and is trusted and proven to be 99.85% effective. Contact Dr. Gil Brito at 480-661-2662 or arizonaurologyspecialists.com/dr-gilberto-brito to discuss having a vasectomy and arrange a consultation.



You have the perfect size family.

Here's how to keep it that way.

A vasectomy is the most effective, most trusted, and most convenient form of birth control there is. If you think your family portrait has just the right number of members, give us a call. We'll show you why a vasectomy is the safe, time-tested choice for preventing pregnancies. It's covered by most insurance plans, too.

Contact Dr. Gil Brito at Arizona Urology Specialists at 480-661-2662 or visit arizonaurologyspecialists.com for more information.

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TFrom the day our children are born, we dream of sending them to a school that will provide the education and social experiences that will guide them to a successful life.

For some, those schools provide a religious education. For others, it is arts, sports, or academics that are important. For some still, there are special needs to consider. Often, those schools we dream of are private schools involving significant tuition expenses. Arizona Tuition Connection guides parents through the process of using private school tax credits to pay tuition expenses for students attending K-12 private schools.

- Scholarships are available to families of all income levels. (your family qualifies!)
- Arizona Tuition Connection works with every private school in the state.
- The best time to start this process is while your child is in pre-K, but we welcome conversations with parents of kids of all ages.
- It is possible to have a large portion or even 100% of your tuition expenses covered.

Tax Credit Scholarships don't have to be difficult or confusing. STEPS to using tax credits for your child's tuition expenses.

1. APPLY

All parents of students enrolled in private school, or parents who are considering private school, are encouraged to go to our website and complete an application. (If your child is currently enrolled in preschool there is a registration form we ask you to complete.)

2. EDUCATE YOURSELF

Getting your tuition paid for is not a difficult process, but you do have to understand how the program works. Fortunately, there is an easy way to do this by attending a scholarship coaching session. A listing of our coaching sessions can be found in the Events section on the home page of our website. After attending this short session, you will have everything you need to get started.

3. GET YOUR TOOLS READY

In addition to the standard tools we have

available, Arizona Tuition Connection will create custom brochures and donation pages for your family. These custom materials help simplify the donation process.

4. START A CONVERSATION

Most donations to this program come in between February 1st and April 15th, so now is the time to get started.

If you own a corporation, your corporation can donate for your school and receive a full tax credit for that donation. If you own an S-Corp, LLC that files as a S-Corp or a C-corp. we would love to visit with you about your corporation participating in this program.

Tax credits scholarships are a wonderful way to fund your child's K-12 education. Let Arizona Tuition Connection help you learn how:

www.arizonatuitionconnection.com
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SEND YOUR CHILD TO THE SCHOOL YOU ALWAYS DREAMED OF.

Tax credit funding available to families of all income levels! High, medium, low.

Arizona Tuition Connection
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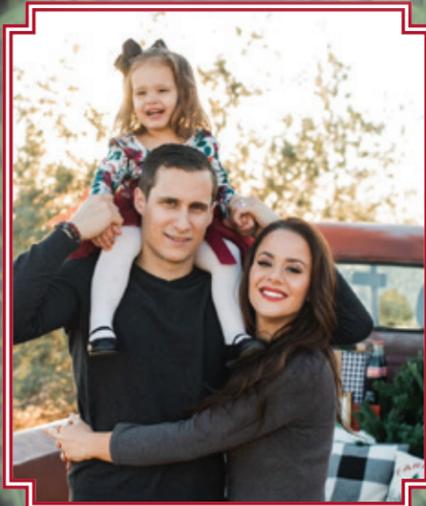
We work with all K-12 private schools in the state.



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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!





Kindness Really Counts!

Article courtesy of Christ Church School

People can show kindness in so many ways and it is one of the greatest gifts you can give to someone. Take the time to lend a helping hand, share a kind word, or show a kind act. True kindness lies within the act of giving without expectation of anything in return. As embracing kindness may not resolve everything, living compassionately will benefit us all.

It is the easiest way to spread joy from one person to another. Even the smallest act of kindness has the power to turn someone's day around. In fact, every time you show others kindness, you are telling them that they are important and they matter. Being kind is 10% thoughts and 90% actions. It is not enough to just be a kind person, but you also need to practice kindness if you want the world to be a better place.

As kindness is so important, it should be something that begins in the home and continues with our children along their path through life. You may be thinking how to go about teaching your children about this important virtue. One of the most important steps in teaching kindness is defining it. Next, demonstrate what kindness may look like. Showing kindness may mean that you are concerned about other people and you find ways to care for them and help them. It is important to treat others kindly because it may make their lives better. Educating children about the im-

portance of kindness is vital so that they make a positive impact in their homes, communities, and the world. Kindness makes the world a better place because it makes people happier.

At Christ Church School, we are a KIND campus! Kindness has always been a part of our fabric, but now it is a primary focus daily. We have partnered with Ben's Bells and joined their Kind Campus movement. This movement is an innovative school-based program that is educating CCS students, faculty, and staff about the benefits of kindness. This program then empowers us to create a culture of kindness in our school and carry it beyond the school gates! This program is based on the belief that everyone has the capacity to be kind and that being kind is a skill that can be taught and can be practiced. Regularly, CCS classes discuss the power of kindness, read stories and do activities which foster kindness, and share kindness with those around them – at school and in their communities. Kindness is what we do at Christ Church School. So, let us focus on what really counts and start spreading kindness!

If you would like to learn more about what we do at Christ Church School, we kindly invite you to give us a call at 602-381-9906 or visit our website at ccsaz.org to schedule a tour. We look forward to hearing from you!

SchmittJewelers.com'."/>



Developing Language and Literacy Skills Through Engaging Relationships

By Dr. Emma Whitman, Head of School, All Saint's Episcopal Day School

As parents and educators, we understand that each child has his/her own unique identity. This sense of identity begins to show up in many different ways throughout childhood, from lists of favorites to a sense of humor, and even the way they greet and engage in conversation with adults and others.

In early childhood, a mix of independence and scaffolded support is ideal for helping children grow into their sense of identity. Children can express themselves through their preferences and individual choices with support. This lays the foundation for a multitude of developmental skills, and leads to meaningful relationships that can serve as building blocks in developing language and literacy skills.

When children enter the All Saints' campus, we greet them by name and with a smile—even if it's from behind a mask. This connection and relationship helps them instantly transition from home to school and prepare for the day ahead. The school space is their space. It is

designed for a child, and they should feel this confidence walking into their place of learning.

Language and literacy skills are built through a process of engagement, and relationships are the foundational piece in this development. Relationships lay the groundwork to tap into a child's interests and get them excited about learning. Letters, sounds, and games become far more engaging and exciting when introduced in ways that appeal to the child's unique personality. Learning becomes a dynamic, engaging process that allows children to acquire foundational skills experientially.

You can tap into the power of relationships at home and help develop language and literacy skills too. Here are a few suggestions:

Ask open-ended questions and tell open-ended stories. Tell "growing stories" that help children strengthen their language skills and imagination. You can start with a phrase or an idea, your child can add to it, and you continue back and forth. It often gets very silly and creative!

Avoiding using screens at home during the pandemic can be difficult—if not impossible—so be a bit easy on yourself! However, you can make the best of it by making this time interactive. Pause and engage—ask your child to share what happened, what they see on the screen, and what questions they have. This approach helps children to think as they are playing games or watching.

Give your 5- or 6-year-old a notepad to write and draw what they see at the grocery store. You can even put the lists up on the fridge, and they can add to it throughout the week. This encourages the connection of objects and experiences to print. Kids love engaging in the same type of writing tasks that their parents do, so find ways for them to do what you do!



At this age, it's crucial to teach the transition from concrete to representational to abstract. If your child is just learning letters, they should start by naming concrete objects and the letter and/or sound they start from, then they can draw pictures to represent what they see or hear, and finally, they can sound out whole words. Let children write what they hear and engage in inventive spelling. It is important for them to make the connection between print and sounds in their own way.

Relationships are essential for all of us. In early childhood, not only do they nurture children's unique sense of identity, but they also provide context and help to make learning language and literacy skills an immersive and experiential process.

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Accepting applications beginning on **Nov.2nd** for the **2021 -2022** school year.

Happy Holidays to all the NCPG Mommies.

And cheers to an amazing 2021!

Birth Announcements

Help us welcome these new additions to our NCPG family!



Elle Hayden Powers
Born 9/16/20



Layla Rose Lyon
Born 9/26/2020 @ 7:32 pm
6 lb 15 oz, 20.5"



Declan Dembow
Born 10/12/2020 @ 5:46 pm
7 lb 6 oz, 20"



Lourdes Lane Fonseca
Born on 10-15-20 @ 9:24 pm
7 lbs. 3 oz. 20"



Saide Jane Hamer
Born 11/7/2020



Michelle



Lesley

What is Your Favorite Family Tradition?

Michelle Cox: Elementary & Middle School

Talk and Lay By. When our kids were little, we would end each day laying next to them for a few minutes. We would ask the question, "Is there anything you wanted to tell me but didn't get to share?" To this day, each of my kids will come in at the end of the night for a visit and several will still lay along the foot of my bed.

Lesley Isaak: 4B

On birthdays, we hide the birthday child's age around the house - like, when my son turned 7, we hid seven 7's around the house. Two dice that add up to 7 on the table, a "7" on the bathroom floor in toilet paper, 7 cents on the dining room table, 7 corn flakes on the kitchen counter. Its a scavenger hunt each new year and the kids look forward to waking up that morning to find them all!

Recipe: Snowball Cookies



Ingredients

- 1 cup (8oz/225g) butter, room temperature
- 1/3 cup (2 1/2oz/71g) sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups (10oz/284g) all-purpose flour
- 2 cups (8oz/225g) toasted pecans* (finely ground)
- 1.5 cups (6oz/172g) powdered sugar

Instructions

1. Using a large whisk or electric mixer cream together butter, sugar, vanilla, and salt.
2. Using a spatula, gradually add flour in 2 batches. Lastly, stir in the nuts and mix until fully incorporated.
3. Cover and refrigerate the dough for approximately 45 minutes. (You can store the dough in the fridge for up to 5 days or freeze it for up to 6 weeks)
4. Preheat to 350°F (180°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper, set aside.
5. Place powdered sugar in a small bowl, set aside.
6. After chilling, use a 1 tablespoon measure to scoop your cookies. Roll between the palms of your hands to achieve a rounded ball. Place dough balls 2 inches apart on prepared baking sheets and DO NOT flatten, leave as little balls.
7. Bake in preheated oven for 14-15 minutes. Do not overbake. The underside of the cookies should be only lightly browned but the top will still be pale in color which is correct.
8. Cool cookies on the baking sheet for approximately 5 minutes. While the cookies are still warm, gently roll them in the powdered sugar.
9. Place the sugar-coated cookies on wire racks to cool completely. Once cooled roll cookies in the powdered sugar for a second time.
10. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

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"We've watched more families than we can list grow at St. Theresa...we want an environment for our son that nurtures and fosters growth, morals and integrity. Our friend's children embody that as we have gotten to know them and it is in no small part, due to the school."

-Kate, current preschool parent

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CRAFT: POPSICLE STICK SNOWMEN



MATERIALS

- Thick Popsicle/craft sticks
- White Paint (Acrylic)
- Beads or buttons for embellishments
- Scissors to cut material
- Scrap materials for scarf
- Wiggly eyes (optional)
- Markers (fine point)
- Orange construction paper
- Ribbon
- Glue gun

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To get started, have your children paint their Popsicle sticks white (one side only/unless you just prefer both sides to be painted).
2. Allow the sticks to dry.
3. Cut out mini scarfs and get other embellishments; buttons, nose, etc. ready. Leave plenty of room for the snowman's face.
4. Attach the scarf with a little hot glue.
5. Next, attach the buttons and construction paper nose.
6. Then, let your child add his/her own facial expression to the snowman (mouth and eyes).
7. Write your child's name and date on the back (or have them do it).
8. Attach the ribbon with a little hot glue on the back of the stick.

Now, your child will have another homemade simple craft to add to their personal Christmas tree.

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