



Tell us about your favorite holiday tradition and you will be entered into a drawing for a prize!\*

## Here at La Casa...

### Introducing you to other programs available at La Casa de Esperanza.

Home Energy Plus Program may help you if you are having trouble paying your energy bill. Please call (262) 549-9666 or (800)506-5596. Walk-in sites are available at different locations in Waukesha County, including La Casa de Esperanza. Whether you make an appointment or a walk-in, you must provide the following information:

- Your most recent energy bill
- Social security cards for all members of your household
- PHOTO ID
- Written proof of your household's gross income for the three months prior to your application, such as:
  - Payroll stubs
  - Child support printout
  - Unemployment printout
  - Social security benefit verification letter

#### INCOME GUIDELINES FOR THE 2011-2012 WHEAP HEATING SEASON

60 PERCENT OF STATE MEDIAN INCOME GUIDELINES

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ONE MONTH	THREE MONTH	ANNUAL INCOME
1	2,027.00	6,080.00	24,319.00
2	2,650.00	7,950.00	31,802.00
3	3,274.00	9,821.00	39,285.00
4	3,897.00	11,692.00	46,768.00
5	4,521.00	13,563.00	54,250.00
6	5,144.00	15,433.00	61,733.00
7	5,261.00	15,784.00	63,136.00
8	5,378.00	16,135.00	64,539.00

## Mental Health Minute Handling Transitions

Does your child have a hard time transitioning from one activity or place to another? Does your child yell, scream, or cry when it's time for a change? Sometimes children get "stuck" in what they are doing making it difficult for them to move on to the next task, activity, or environment. In the present moment, they feel safe and secure and can predict what is going to happen next. Here are a few suggestions that may help with transitions:

- Before an activity begins, let your child know how long the activity will last – if he doesn't know how to tell time set a microwave or other timer.
- Let the child know how you will signal to her that her activity will be ending soon. You may flick the lights, tell her she has 5 more minutes, play a song that when it ends it is time to transition, etc.
- Talk positively about the transition – build up what is wonderful about the next activity or next place.
- Let the child help you – give her a task – carry the keys to the car or a picture she has made for a teacher or another child. This keeps her mind busy and off the negative feelings she may have about transitioning.
- Validate your child's feelings if he is having a hard time, "I know it is hard for you to leave what you are doing because you are having so much fun, but I believe you will enjoy \_\_\_\_\_ too." Tell him the positives he will experience.
- When it is time to leave the child, such as at day-care, help engage her in an activity before you leave. Remain calm, confident, and reassuring as you prepare to leave. Give her a hug, kiss, and "I love you," and remind her when you will see her as you leave.

If you would like more suggestions, see your classroom teacher for a copy of the *Transitioning Suggestions: Helping a child move from one activity or place to another* hand out.

By Sonya Trueblood, PsyD  
Mental Health Consultant for Early Childhood Program



Room 5B:  
Lana, Jace,  
Alynah, Payton,  
Kieryanna,  
David, Miss  
Graciela and

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Hello Families! The Holiday season is upon us! With the excitement of the holidays, we sometimes lose sight of the important things in life. It is a good time to reflect on what really counts.

Here are some tips to make the holidays more memorable for your children.

### Strengthen family ties.

Plan times to be together as a family. Choose a game night, a pizza and movie night, or a night for reading stories aloud.

Avoid filling your calendar with lots of activities that pull parents and children in different directions.

### Encourage gifts from the heart.

Help children think about the needs of others. Visit an elderly friend or relative who is alone, make cookies for a neighbor, or bring gifts to a women's shelter.

Volunteer at an organization that works with people in your community who have limited resources. (Note: Choose a volunteer activity that is appropriate for young children.)

### Create a peaceful home atmosphere.

Reduce the noise and clatter of the season. Plan a calm family activity such as family

cookies or homemade greeting cards, sing holiday songs or play music, re-read favorite storybooks out loud, or light special candles at dinner or bedtime.

### Resist buying more.

Advertisers hope to convince *you* that a perfect family holiday means buying more and to convince *children* that more gifts will make them happier! Limit children's exposure to commercials, and help them learn to question advertisers' claims. When possible, avoid taking preschoolers shopping.

### Focus on people, not things.

Spend *half* the usual amount of money but *twice* the usual amount of time with your children. Make people, not things, your priority. Focus on activities that bring your family together and that draw children's attention to the needs of others.

These efforts will help reduce the madness and enhance the memories and meanings of the holidays.

**We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season filled with family, friends and lots of old (and new!) traditions!**

<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/holidays.htm>

## In this issue...

- Holiday Food Safety
- Thank you!
- Here at la Casa...  
Energy Assistance
- Upcoming Events:  
Three Kings
- Mental Health Minute

## For your calendar!

- November 22**  
Thanksgiving Feast,  
5:00 PM
- November 24**  
Happy Thanksgiving!  
La Casa is Closed
- November 29-30**  
School Picture Day
- December 9**  
Three Kings  
Applications DUE
- December 23**  
Breakfast with Santa  
8:30 AM
- December 26**  
Merry Christmas!  
La Casa is Closed
- January 2, 2012**  
Happy New Year!  
La Casa is Closed
- January 7, 2011**  
Three Kings Day  
10:00 AM

# Happy Holidays!

Special thanks to all of our holiday sponsors

Feeding America

Mayfair Mall

Brookfield East High School: Spanish Honor Society

Galilee Lutheran Church in Pewaukee

Shorewest Realtors

Wisconsin Hills Middle School

Fox River Christian Church: Mitten Ladies



## Holiday Food Safety

The onset of cold weather is generally associated with the beginning of cold and flu season. But did you know that the symptoms most people call the "stomach flu" are actually the result of food-borne illness (food poisoning)?

Make this holiday season a safe and healthy one by following these food safety tips:

**Wash your hands!** Food safety starts with proper hand washing. Before and after handling food, wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water. Twenty seconds is about the amount of time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.

**Keep food contact surfaces clean.** After preparing each food, be sure to wash countertops, utensils, dishes, cutting boards, and other surfaces food has had contact with in warm, soapy water. This includes in between preparing different food items for the same dish (for example, you should wash the cutting board and knife after preparing raw chicken and before cutting raw vegetables on the same cutting board).

**Wash your produce.** Even fruits and vegetables that have an inedible skin need to be washed, as dirt and bacteria (germs) from the outside can transfer to the inside while peeling or cutting. DO NOT rinse raw meat, fish, or poultry.

**Avoid cross-contamination.** Cross-contamination refers to bacteria transferring from one food item or surface to another. Keep raw meat, fish, poultry, and eggs away from any items that will not be cooked. Following the guidelines for washing contact surfaces and washing hands after touching different foods can drastically reduce the chances of spreading dangerous bacteria.

**Cook foods to proper temperature.** Appearance of food is not always an indicator of doneness.

Use a meat thermometer to test the internal temperature of foods. Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the food.

Be sure meat reaches the recommended temperature:

- 165° for all poultry (including stuffing)
- 160° for ground meats (beef, lamb, pork, and veal)
- a minimum of 145° for all roasts and cuts of beef, lamb, pork, and veal (let sit at least three minutes before carving).

Always reheat leftovers to proper temperatures. Do not eat raw eggs or cookie dough containing raw eggs.

**Thaw food properly.** Never thaw foods on the counter. Let foods thaw in the refrigerator or let cold (NOT warm or hot) water run over food. Foods that are thawed in the microwave must be cooked immediately after thawing.

**Refrigerate leftovers.** Foods should be refrigerated within two hours after preparing. Foods made in large quantities, such as pots of soup, should be divided into smaller containers before refrigerating. Consume refrigerated leftovers within three to four days. Leftovers can be frozen for longer periods of time; a general rule of thumb is to use frozen foods within six months, though some foods may lose quality after 3-4 months (they will be safe to eat but may have altered texture). Thermometers can be purchased to measure the temperature of the air in refrigerators or freezers; be sure the refrigerator is set below 40° and the freezer is below 0°.

**Last but not least, WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!!**

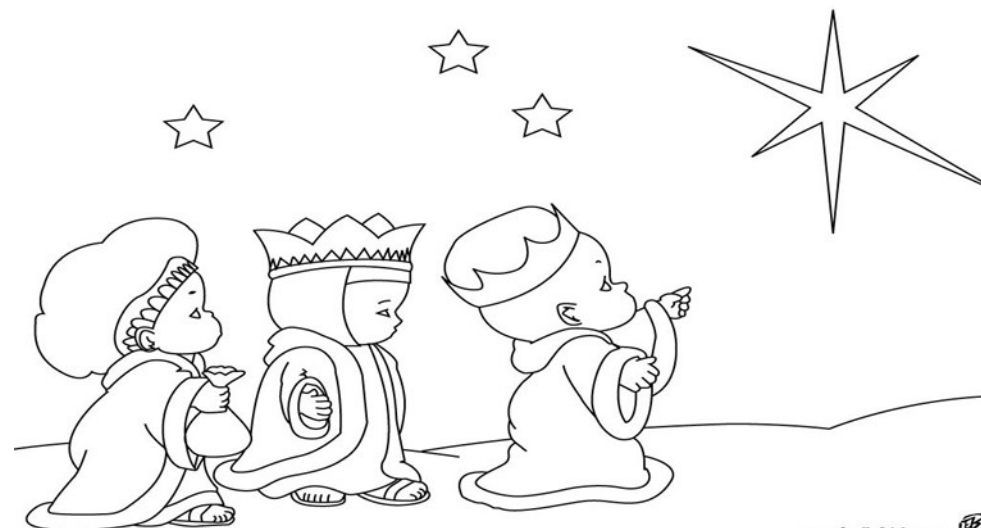
## Coming Soon: Change of Address Form

To ensure the safety and well-being of all children, we need have your most up to date contact information so we can get a hold of you promptly in the case of an emergency.

Whenever any of your information changes, please fill one of these out and turn it in to the Childcare Office to keep us updated.

Look for this form in the entry way, next to the ProCare punch-in machine.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!



Mitten Ladies from Fox River Christian Church donated knitted mittens, hat and scarf sets for the children & families of La Escuelita.

## Three Kings Day

Each year, La Casa celebrates a very traditional and very special Hispanic Holiday Event, "Fiesta de los Reyes Magos" – "Three Kings Celebration", and distribute gifts to Waukesha County Families.

Three Kings Day signifies the day Three Wise Men followed the Star of Bethlehem and arrived with gifts for the newborn king, Jesus. Children from Mexico, Puerto Rico and various other Hispanic countries celebrate this joyous occasion by receiving gifts from the Three Kings.

Come join us on Saturday, January 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM as we celebrate this special day with friends and family at La Casa de Esperanza.

Please turn in all applications by Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>.

*When the three kings of Orient saw a star beaming in the night, they knew that their savior was born. They followed the star to a barn where they presented baby Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*

*Before going to sleep, the children place their old shoes under their bed, where the Wise Men will leave presents.*

*Some also place outside the house, some hay and a bucket with water for the animals, and even some cookies and milk for Melchor, Gaspar and Baltasar.*

*During the night they sleep lightly, waiting for the sounds of the camels or the whispers of the Wise Men as they pass through the children's homes bearing gifts.*

*The next morning, on Three Kings Day, the children awake to find gifts where they had left their shoes!*