

# Family Connections

Volume 8, Issue 1 ~ Winter 2009

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and much more...

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## Have a Wonderful Family Bonding Winter (by Scholastic.com)



The calmer winter months are an opportunity to slow down and bond with your family. Inspire creativity and learning with these simple, but engrossing activities.

### 1. Rolled Candles

**What you need:** Sheets of solid or honeycombed beeswax; braided wicking; ruler; utility knife; butter knife; scissors

To start, help your child cut your sheets of wax to the height and size she wants — the wider the sheet, the fatter the candle will turn out. Then, cut lengths of wicking 1/2" longer than each candle's height. Next, warm the wax and make it pliable. Your child can do this with a hair dryer. Once the sheet is warm, have your child press the wick firmly along one edge, with the extra sticking from what will be the top of the candle. Fold the wax edge over the wick and press it down until it's sealed in.

Help your child in rolling her candle, making sure it's tight enough and that the top and bottom edge stay even. To finish, warm your butter knife with the hair dryer (or by running it under a hot tap), and have your candlemaker gently press the seam until it blends in. Finally, prime the wick by pressing a tiny bit of wax on it. Now it's ready to light!

### 2. Sock, Mitten and Glove Puppets

**What you need:** Unpaired socks, mittens, and gloves; heavy yarn, buttons; colored felt, permanent markers; a large sewing needle; scissors; chalk; glue

To make, have your child put on the sock, mitten, or glove and imagine what kind of animal, real or fanciful, he thinks is waiting to emerge. While he's wearing it, ask him to point where things like the eyes or hair should go and mark them with chalk. When he's satisfied, take it off and place it in a workspace.

Decorating the puppet depends on how old (or how ambitious) your child is. For younger children, drawing faces and clothes on with permanent markers is great. Slightly older children can cut pieces of colored felt for eyes, scales, and noses and glue them in place. If your child is old enough to use a needle and thread, he can sew on button eyes or tuft up some yarn hair.

### 3. Feed the Birds

**What you need:** Pinecone; birdseed; creamy peanut butter; yarn or ribbon; scissors; a butter knife or plastic knife; wax paper or newspaper

Tie a ribbon or yarn near the top of the pinecone so it can be hung. Then put the pinecone on the wax paper or newspaper and let your child spread the peanut butter inside each nook of the pinecone. Next, have her pour some birdseed over the pinecone, and then spread more peanut butter over it. Afterward, she should roll her pinecone in birdseed until it is well covered. Now she's ready to hang her birdfeeder and hear the sweet song of birds saying "Thank you!" (cont. on page 10)

## Foster Care & Adoption Advisory Board

### Board Representatives

#### **Northwest Region**

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**Rep 2: VACANT**

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**Lori Ross:** 816.686.0463

rross600@aol.com

**Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition**

**Denise Kelley:** 800.FOSTER.3

denisekelley@foster-adopt.org

### News to Use: State & Local Advisory Board Meetings

#### **Approved for Training Hours!**

Local and state board meetings may be approved for up to 2-hours of in-service training credit when foster parent education is included.

#### **Caregiver Court Report**

##### **Have you completed yours?**

Foster, relative, and kinship providers have the right to receive notice of court hearings held with respect to children in their care. In addition, the caregiver has a right to be heard in any such proceeding. There has been a new form introduced, "Caregiver Court Information Form". The completion of the form is optional but important to elicit factual first hand information on the child from the caregiver. The form however should not be a substitute for your presence at court.

Additional information, along with the form, can be downloaded off of the Children's Division Forms section of their website at:

[http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/forms/reference/caregiver\\_court\\_information\\_form.dot](http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/forms/reference/caregiver_court_information_form.dot).

You may also request the form from your child's case manager or your licensing worker.

#### **Foster Parent Union**

You may have received information recently from the Missouri State Workers Union Local 6355 about forming a foster parent union. The State Foster Care & Adoption Advisory Board continues to research this option and hopes to offer a position statement in the future. You may contact your area representative or foster parent association if you would like to further discuss this issue.

The Board takes its commitment to serving Missouri's foster and adoptive families very seriously. If you have an issue, policy, or procedure you would like to see addressed by the Advisory Board please let us know.

#### **2009 MEETINGS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**Date:** 01/13/09, 03/10/09, 06/9/09, & 09/8/09

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Location:** Howerton Building  
615 Howerton Ct., Room 7  
Jefferson City, MO 65103

If you would like to receive a copy of the minutes from the State Advisory Board's September meeting or would like more information about the State meeting, please contact Cheryl Williams at [williams.cd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:williams.cd@sbcglobal.net).

## Foster Care & Adoption Advisory Board

### Regional Boards in Action: Cole County

The Cole County Chapter of the Midwest Foster Care & Adoption Association has done an amazing job of bringing together caregivers, Children's Division staff, and businesses to fill unmet needs of foster and adoptive families in their community. In just over a year, this impressive group of parents has worked to create many partnerships and opportunities, including:

- o Assistance to children, when funds are available, for special events/needs. Examples include: "Begin Again Backpack" that provides backpacks for children entering foster care; and "Dream Nights" a program to help with prom and graduation.
- o Discounts through their area businesses to foster and adoptive families for extra-curricular activities.
- o Help their local Children's Division and The Children's Alliance with coloring books, and special items to keep in their office for visiting children.

The group has monthly meetings on the second Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. For more information or to get involved contact their President, DeAnna Alonso, at 573.353.0574, or [deanna\\_alonso@yahoo.com](mailto:deanna_alonso@yahoo.com). Information is also available on-line at [www.ccfosteradopt.com](http://www.ccfosteradopt.com).

### **Want to Learn More about Becoming a Board Representatives?**

Members of the State Board are chosen by their local foster/adopt parent advisory board to represent them at the State level. State Board members must commit to attending quarterly meetings in Jefferson City for a minimum of two years.

Even if you are not able to make this commitment, there are other ways you can become involved. To find out how, contact Cheryl Williams (Board Secretary) or one of the associations listed above.



## Children's Division News

### **Safe Crib - Safe Sleep: Make Your Infants Crib a Safer Place**

Did you know that unintentional suffocation is a leading cause of injury and death in infants and toddlers. Most infant deaths due to suffocation are directly related to unsafe sleep practices.

#### **Unsafe practices include:**

- The child becoming wedged against bumper pads, pillows, & comforters.
- Adults sleeping with infants or toddlers and rolling over on them.
- Unaccustomed tummy sleeping

The Children's Division is adopting the **Safe Sleep** recommendations as identified by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

#### **Step 1**

*Place your baby on her back on a firm tight-fitting mattress in a crib that meets current safety standards.*

- The crib mattress should be firm and fit tightly so that not more than two fingers can fit between the crib and mattress.
- Make sure everyone caring for your baby has a safe crib and is aware of these steps. Take a portacrib when visiting family and friends.
- Hand-me-down cribs and cradles as well as cribs from thrift stores are often unsafe. Make certain that the spaces between the crib slats are no wider than a soda can. Be sure there are no splinters or cracked or chipped paint on the crib. End panels should not have any decorative holes or cutouts, and corner posts should be flat on top.
- Keep the sides of the crib up at all times. Drop sides should have a locking latch that will not accidentally release.

*Always place your healthy baby on his back to sleep unless your baby's doctor tells you otherwise.*

#### **Step 2**

*Remove blankets, pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys and other soft products from the crib.*

- Use a tightly fitted sheet.
- Do not use pillow-like bumper pads.

- Do not use "wedges" or rolled up blankets to prop baby on her side.
- Hanging toys and hammocks should not be in or on the crib.

#### **Step 3**

*Consider using a sleeper or other sleep clothing as an alternative to blankets, with no other covering.*

- Do not let your baby get too hot. Dress him in as much or as little as you would wear. Do not wrap your baby up in lots of blankets or clothes. If your baby is sweating, has damp hair or a heat rash, she may be too hot.
- Do not place the crib near a heat source, such as a furnace vent, radiator or space heater.

#### **Step 4**

*Make sure your baby's face and head remain uncovered during sleep.*

- Always keep the baby's face and head clear of blankets, sheets and other bedding. Remember, it is not necessary to cover the baby's head indoors.

#### **Step 5**

*If using a blanket, put your baby with his feet at the foot of the crib. Tuck a thin blanket around the mattress, reaching only so far as the baby's chest.*

#### **Step 6**

*Do not place your baby on a waterbed, sofa, soft mattress, pillow or other soft surface to sleep. The safest place for a baby to sleep is in a standard crib on a firm mattress.*

- Babies sleeping in adult beds, otherwise known as bedsharing, are at increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), suffocation, strangulation and other injury.
- Do not allow your baby to sleep with siblings.
- If you want to feel close to your baby, consider placing her crib next to your bed.

*Additional information can be found on the Children's Trust Fund website at <http://www.ctf4kids.org>.*

## Children's Division News

### **Policies that Impact Your Practice**

**Children's Division Revised Transportation Policy (CD08-106)** Resource providers may receive mileage reimbursement for transportation costs as outlined in policy. Allowable child specific transportation costs for Children's Division vendors with AC, PP, behavioral or medical contracts continue to include:

- o Medical care
- o Counseling
- o Visits with parent(s)
- o Court
- o FST and PPR meetings

Children's Division providers may be reimbursed the current state mileage rate for all the above listed miles traveled using a Children's Services Integrated Payment System Invoice, CS-65.

Additional allowable child specific transportation are trips that are intended to support the case plan as approved by the Family Support Team and/or case manager and supervisor. The reimbursement for these trips may be made at the current state mileage rate for each mile over a 15 mile round trip using a CS-65. The first 15 miles of these trips will not be reimbursed.

### **Fingerprint Requirement for Respite Providers and Transitional Living Advocates (CD08-99)**

It is now required that all individuals who provide respite services, and all contracted Transitional Living Advocates are required to be fingerprinted every 2 years, just as all licensed resource parents.

The Respite provider authorization letter is now obsolete. Authorization letter, CD-26A is updated to reflect all of the resource providers who do not have to pay for their fingerprinting.

The process to obtain fingerprints is the same as the resource parents. This process is explained on the CD-26a and in policy (Section 6 Chapter 3 Attachment A).

### **Keep Current...**

The policies listed above are summaries. The entire policy memos are found at: [www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos](http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos). Also available online is the Children's Division Policy Manual. Visit: [www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/cwmanual/index.htm](http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/cwmanual/index.htm)

### **Congratulations to the 31st Circuit for Achieving National Accreditation**

Gov. Matt Blunt recently announced that the 31st Circuit of Social Services' Children's Division has met national standards of accreditation. The 31st Circuit joins 29 other circuits and the state's Central Administration and Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline in receiving recognition from the National Council on Accreditation.

"I am grateful to Governor Blunt and the General Assembly for their leadership and strong support of the Children's Division in pursuing national accreditation," **Department of Social Services Director Deborah E. Scott** said. "The staff is to be highly commended for the incredible efforts they put forth daily to help protect vulnerable children. Their exceptional efforts to achieve national accreditation and their dedication to ongoing improvement are all aimed at providing excellent service to the people of our great state."

The 31st Circuit Children's Division met all standards for accreditation by the Council on Accreditation (COA), an international, independent, not-for-profit accrediting body that accredits behavioral health care and social service programs. Its rigorous accrediting process reviews all aspects of an organization and evaluates them based on national standards of best practices. Missouri's consistently outstanding performance on accreditation standards has prompted COA to offer Missouri as a model for other states.

Missouri has 45 circuits and 30 of those circuits are now deemed in compliance with accreditation standards. The Department of Social Services anticipates that Missouri will achieve full accreditation by next year. Only five states- Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana and West Virginia - have achieved full accreditation and Missouri is one of only five states currently involved in the accreditation process.



## State & Federal Tax Tips

**Tax Time:** The Adoption Tax Credit is a valuable benefit for adopting families. However, with the details of how it works, acceptable expenses, who qualifies, and other "small print" items make it difficult for most families to understand. With the help of NACAC, we have included in this issue helpful information to help sort out those frequently asked questions, or where you can get them answered. Please know that NACAC is not a tax expert, and these opinions should not be considered legal or financial advice. You should consult your own tax advisor before filing.

### Missouri Tax Credit

As part of Missouri's enacted legislation, HB 1453, \$2-million in adoption tax credits are set aside for adoption of children who are wards of the state. You may even be able to claim the credit for adoptions that occurred in previous years.

Before proceeding, let's review what a tax credit is. According to IRS Publication 968, "The adoption credit is the amount that you subtract from your tax liability." The following summarizes the information on the Missouri Department of Revenue website, <http://dor.mo.gov/tax/taxcredit/atc.htm>.

**Purpose:** Provides a credit to assist in the nonrecurring adoption expenses for a special needs child.

**Eligible Applicants:** Any person residing in this state that legally adopts a special needs child is eligible to receive a tax credit up to \$10,000 for nonrecurring adoption expenses for each child.

**Eligible Activities:** The child must be a special needs child as determined by the Children's Division, a child-placing agency licensed by the state, or by a court of competent jurisdiction.

**How the Program Works:** To claim the Adoption Tax Credit, the parent, or their employer if the employer is claiming the full credit, must complete Form MO-ATC. The claimant must attach a copy of the completed Form MO-ATC along with the tax return the first year the credit is being claimed. Effective January 1, 2000, up to 50 percent of any tax credits earned for adoptions finalized after January 1, 2000, may be claimed upon placement of the child and the remaining 50 percent claimed after the special needs adoption is final.

**Eligible Use of Tax Credit:** The credit may be carried forward four subsequent years. During the year of adoption, or any year in which the credit is carried forward, the credit will be reduced by the state's cost of providing care, treatment, maintenance, and services when the child is placed, with no intent to return to the adoptive home, in foster care or residential treatment licensed or operated by the Department of Social Services, Children's Division, the Division of Youth Services, or the Department of Mental Health, or when a juvenile court temporarily or finally relieves the adoptive parents of custody of the child.

*For more information or questions, visit the following website <http://dor.mo.gov/tax/taxcredit/atc.htm>, or contact Missouri Department of Revenue, Division of Taxation and Collection at 573.522.2089, or e-mail [taxcredit@dor.mo.gov](mailto:taxcredit@dor.mo.gov).*

### Scholarship Opportunities

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

[www.NASFAB.org](http://www.NASFAB.org)

[www.savingforcollege.com](http://www.savingforcollege.com)

[www.UNCF.org](http://www.UNCF.org)

[www.orphan.org](http://www.orphan.org)

[www.jimcaseyyouth.org](http://www.jimcaseyyouth.org)

[www.getcollegefunds.org](http://www.getcollegefunds.org)

[www.fyi3.com/education/oregon.pdf](http://www.fyi3.com/education/oregon.pdf)

[www.aasa.org/discover.htm](http://www.aasa.org/discover.htm)

[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)

[www.waedfoundation.org/gs](http://www.waedfoundation.org/gs)

[www.fyi3.com/fyi3/Independent/IL/index.cfm](http://www.fyi3.com/fyi3/Independent/IL/index.cfm)

[www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html)

[www.collegescholarships.com/](http://www.collegescholarships.com/)

[www.dss.mo.gov/cd/chafee/education.htm](http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/chafee/education.htm)

[www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/state\\_home.htm](http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/state_home.htm)

[www.blavinscholarship.org](http://www.blavinscholarship.org)

[www.questbridge.org](http://www.questbridge.org)

[www.onwardandupwards.org](http://www.onwardandupwards.org)

[www.nfpaonline.org](http://www.nfpaonline.org)

[www.discoverfinancial.com](http://www.discoverfinancial.com)

[www.sociallearning.com](http://www.sociallearning.com)

<http://firstchancescholarship.com/>

## State & Federal Tax Tips

### Federal Tax Credit

Beginning in 2003, families adopting a child with special needs from foster care were able to access a federal adoption tax credit without needing to document expenses. For tax year 2008, the tax credit is approximately \$11,650 per child and parents have this year and up to the next five years in which to claim the credit.

### How do I know if my child is considered to have special needs according to the IRS?

The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) interprets the instructions for Form 8839 (the Adoption Tax Credit form) this way: If you receive adoption subsidy (assistance) for your child, the state that provides the subsidy has determined that your child has special needs. Your adoption subsidy agreement (or application and agreement) is the evidence that the state has determined your child to have special needs. These instructions can be found at:

[www.irs.gov/instructions/i8839/ch02.html#d0e284](http://www.irs.gov/instructions/i8839/ch02.html#d0e284)

### A child is a child with special needs if all three of the following statements are true:

The child was a citizen or resident of the United States or its possessions at the time the adoption process began.

A state (including the District of Columbia) has determined that the child cannot or should not be returned to his or her parents' home.

The state has determined that the child will not be adopted unless assistance is provided to the adoptive parents. Factors used by states to make this determination include:

- A. The child's ethnic background and age,
- B. Whether the child is a member of a minority or sibling group, and
- C. Whether the child has a medical condition or a physical, mental, or emotional handicap.

*If you check the box in column (d), indicating the child has special needs, be sure to keep evidence of the state's determination in your records.*

### More Tax Questions?

Visit [www.nacac.org/postadopt/taxcredit](http://www.nacac.org/postadopt/taxcredit), contact a representative at NACAC at 651.644.3036 or e-mail concerns to: [adoption.assistance@nacac.org](mailto:adoption.assistance@nacac.org).

### Don't forget . . .

Tax Time is also the time to complete the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA) and other applications for students who are continuing their education.

Students should complete the FAFSA as soon after January 1, 2009 as possible, and by midnight June 30, 2009. Some of the applications for scholarships and vouchers require the FAFSA to be completed.

**NOTE:** This includes the application for Chafee Education & Training vouchers. For more information, visit <http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/chafee/education.htm>.

In addition, the FAFSA considers students for grants and work study programs on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) for more information or to fill out the form electronically.

### Tax Issues Related to Adoption

Adoptive parents often ask whether adoption assistance (adoption subsidy) payments are taxable. Many also wonder about claiming their child as a dependent and using the child tax credit. NACAC reviewed related IRS publications, and below offer their interpretation of these issues.

#### Adoption Assistance Payments as Taxable Income

Since 1974, the IRS has ruled that adoptive parents do not normally need to include adoption assistance benefits in their taxable income.

However, the IRS also says that adoption assistance benefits may be taxable if they exceed the amount an adoptive family spends to support the child. This situation might occur if adoption assistance was a family's sole source of income. In cases such as this, some of the adoption assistance funds are used to meet the needs of the parent(s), so not all funds are being spent to support the child.

NACAC is not aware of any states that have a different definition of taxable income, **but parents should consult their tax preparers or a tax advisor about state specific rules.**

## Your Community & State

**Adoption Resource Centers of Missouri:** The Adoption Resource Centers are a partnership between the Missouri Children's Division and community partnership agencies. The Centers allow a wider variety of adoption-related services for you and your families free of charge. To obtain more information on services in your area, contact one of the centers listed below.

### **Eastern MO Adoption Resource Center**

Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition  
111 N. Seventh Street, Suite 402, St. Louis, MO 63101  
800.FOSTER.3 (367.8373)  
[www.foster-adopt.org](http://www.foster-adopt.org)

### **A Message from Your Educational Advocate:**

Some public school and charter school children are eligible for free reading tutoring. It depends on a number of things. It is called **Supplemental Educational Services (SES)**.

Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, schools in second and subsequent years of school improvement status are required to offer to eligible parents and their children the option of using SES, usually provided in the form of after-school tutoring. School districts must notify parents of the available providers and, if asked, assist parents in choosing an appropriate provider for their children from the state's approved list.

Parents are allowed to select the tutoring provider for their eligible child (ren). To determine if your school is eligible for SES click on the link.

<http://dese.mo.gov/news/2008/documents/AYP.pdf>

All the schools are listed. If your child's school is listed as School Improvement, Level 2, 3 or 4, your child may be eligible for free reading tutoring.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education maintains a list of approved providers. This list can be located at:

[http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/fedprog/grantmgmnt/Supplemental\\_Services/SES\\_Providers\\_06.html](http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/fedprog/grantmgmnt/Supplemental_Services/SES_Providers_06.html)

If you have questions or want more information, contact: Leslie Lewis, Educational Advocate, at [leslielewis@foster-adopt.org](mailto:leslielewis@foster-adopt.org), or by calling 800.367.8373.

### **Western MO Adoption Resource Center**

Midwest Foster Care & Adoption Association  
3210 S Lee's Summit Rd. Independence, MO 64055  
816-350-0215  
[www.mfcaa.org](http://www.mfcaa.org)

### **A Message from Your Staff:**

It is through our goal to serve foster, adoptive and kinship families that we hope to positively impact lives in an amazing way. Through our time working with the very special families that are willing to take in, care for, and love those children who may not have been theirs from birth, we have encountered an amazing display of kindness, compassion, and service to others. Although we may not know your personal experience in the care of a child, we can recognize that while incredibly rewarding, this may often be a very difficult journey.

It is in this understanding that we hope to provide you with the tools that can guide you, your children, and your family through the systems that will ideally lead to a permanent, forever-family home for those children you've welcomed into your life.

These young individuals who may have struggled through many of their crucial early years of life can have a spark of hope because of YOU!

We are providing services that are directly related to the care of children who are anticipating adoption, nearing adoption, and who have been adopted. Included is our respite program, support groups, crisis intervention, guidance, and advocacy.

### **Comments...**

If you would like to comment on featured Community Forum pieces, please contact Heather Kemper at: 800.FOSTER.3 x36 / [heatherkemper@foster-adopt.org](mailto:heatherkemper@foster-adopt.org)

## Your Community & State

### **Missouri Virtual Instruction Program**

#### **What is the Missouri Virtual Instruction Program?**

MoVIP offers online courses for K-12 students statewide. Students can take an entire course from any Internet-connected computer; courses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. MoVIP enables all schools to offer Missouri students equal access to a wider range of coursework, more flexibility in scheduling and a learning environment that is dependent on neither time nor place.

#### **What type of students can benefit?**

Students confronted with the following scenarios:

- Courses not offered in student's school
- Scheduling conflict
- Credit recovery, deficient
- Homebound
- Teen parents
- Home Schooled
- Remedial students who require one-on-one support
- Alternative or at-risk students
- Enrichment and/or Advanced Placement Opportunities
- Wanting to improve their skills in a particular subject.

#### **How are the MoVIP classes structured?**

MoVIP students are guided through their courses by Missouri-certified teachers. Courses are delivered over the Internet. Student success in virtual learning is facilitated by a variety of Web-based technology resources such as streaming audio and video, computer animation, e-mail, newsgroups, bulletin boards, and digital portfolios. Teachers communicate with students and parents on a regular basis via telephone, e-mail, online chats, instant messaging and discussion forums. For secondary students, the average course will take 18-20 weeks to complete. For the elementary student the courses are based more on a regular school year with two semesters.

#### **Who can enroll?**

Students must be a resident of the state of Missouri and between the ages of 5 and 21. All of Missouri's public, private and home-schooled students are eligible to apply for enrollment.

#### **Who administers the MoVIP project?**

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the State Board of Education oversee administration and quality-assurance activities as related to the content and delivery of courses.

#### **Registration Process**

MoVIP will take registration for the 2009-2010 school year starting in March 2009 and continue until enrollment is full. Interested students are encouraged to apply quickly during registration to secure a state-funded seat. Selection is first come; first serve until all 15,500 enrollments are taken. If you have questions regarding the registration process, please call the DESE MoVIP office at 573.526.4219, visit the MoVIP website at <http://dese.mo.gov/movip>, or send an e-mail to [webreplyimprmovip@dese.mo.gov](mailto:webreplyimprmovip@dese.mo.gov).

#### **Is there a cost for courses?**

There is no cost to the student or district if state-funded seats are available and the student is not full-time with a public school in the state of Missouri. The student may be part-time with a school district and take courses with MoVIP not to exceed a full load of courses with the district. For example, if the district considers seven hours to be a full load, the student may take any combination of MoVIP and school district courses to equal (but not exceed) seven semester courses.

#### **Will students receive grades?**

Yes. At the completion of a semester course, the student, school district, or private school will receive the percentage of successful course work for each course.

#### **Can a student take Advanced Placement (AP) courses?**

Yes. MoVIP offers nine Advanced Placement courses that are certified by College Board and taught by AP certified teachers. MoVIP will NOT be responsible for administering the AP exam at the end of the course. Local school officials can assist the student with that process.

#### **Is dual credit available for MoVIP classes?**

No. MoVIP does not currently plan to participate in a dual credit program.

*For more information on the MoVIP program, call 573.526.4219, visit <http://dese.mo.gov/movip>, or send an e-mail to [webreplyimprmovip@dese.mo.gov](mailto:webreplyimprmovip@dese.mo.gov).*

## Featured Children

### (Cont. from page 1) - Family Bonding Winter

#### 4. Potato Prints

**What you need:** Potatoes; pencil; utility knife; colored paint; paper; brush



Let your child make personalized stationery, wrapping paper, and cards with the help of a potato. To make a stamp out of a potato, cut it in half and let him draw a design with a pencil in the circle. Using the utility knife, carve around the outline of his design and then cut away the edge, about 1/2" deep. Now his lovely design should protrude out from the potato base.

Now your child can use the brush to apply paint to his potato stamp, then carefully press the potato onto paper. He can repeat with as many designs and colors as he wants.

#### 5. Flashlight Art

**What you need:** Flashlight; pencil or marker; large sheets of white paper; construction paper; scissors; utility knife; tape

This last project is really two quick, simple projects. For the first one, you'll be making silhouettes. Tape a large piece of paper on the wall next to a chair and shine the flashlight so that it falls on the paper. Darken the room and sit in the chair sideways, so that your profile is projected on the paper. Let your child trace the edge of your shadow with the marker or pencil. Then switch places and trace your child.

Next, make shapes with light. Take the flashlight and place it face down on the construction paper. Have your child trace the outline of the flashlight on the paper. Then move the flashlight over and have her trace it again. Help her cut out the shapes. Next, have her draw a few simple designs like stars, hearts, and triangles on the cut papers. Use the utility knife to cut out her shapes. Let your child pick a design and tape it to the end of the flashlight. Shine the light on a wall and watch her eyes light up as her design appears there!

*These winter activities tips are provided by Scholastic.com. These activities, more reading suggestions, and much more can be found at: <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=142>.*



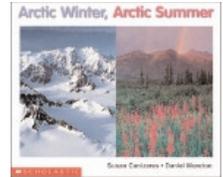
### Winter Tales for Your Family

Celebrate cold weather days with easy-to-read books that showcase the season's coolest scenes.

#### Arctic Winter, Arctic Summer

by Daniel Moreton and Susan Canizares PhD

Explore the seasons of the Far North.



#### The Biggest, Best Snowman

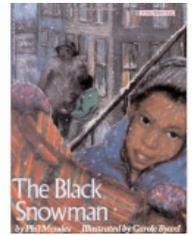
by Margery Cuyler

Inspire your little one with this story of a little girl's big achievement.

#### The Black Snowman

by Phil Mendez

When a boy builds a snowman out of city slush, something magical happens to help him take pride in his African-American heritage.



#### The Great Ice Battle

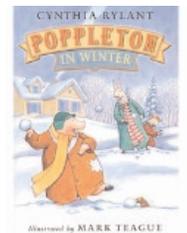
by Tony Abbott

Help three kids save a magical world from eternal winter.

#### Poppleton in Winter

by Cynthia Rylant

Boost your beginning reader's word skills with a story about a pig's snowy antics.



#### The Magic Hockey Stick

by Peter Maloney and Felicia Zekauskas

When Tracy's parents win the Great One's hockey stick in a charity auction, her game will never be the same.

#### Winter: An Alphabet Acrostic

by Leslie Evans

Journey through the season's joys with a book that inspires your child to create his own poetry.



#### Snowflake Bentley

by Jacqueline Briggs

A Caldecott Award-winning look at the life of a snowflake scientist.

## Featured Children

### Meet Jervon

*A Sweet and Active Teen*

**Jervon (15)** is a sweet, loving teen who has been waiting patiently for a forever family. He is currently in the 10th grade, and overall does well in school especially with one on one attention.

Jervon is described as a "laid back" kid, and enjoys being active with activities such as swimming, basketball, dancing, and singing. And, like most teenagers, he loves playing video games. Jervon would do well in any family as long as they provided him with love and consistency.

Jervon is legally free for adoption. For more information, please contact Sheila Suderwalla, Director of Project Teen Plus at 314.367.8373, or sheilasuderwalla@foster-adopt.org.



### Meet Elgin, Marquez, Faizon, and DeShane

*An amazing sibling group of four*



**Elgin (8)** loves being the "big brother." Elgin is an independent thinker and sometimes needs guidance. He is very well spoken and loves to talk. Elgin loves all sports. He especially loves throwing and catching the football. Elgin also loves going to the park to play with his brothers and other kids.

**Marquez (5)** is the next to the oldest in a sibling group of four. Marquez has a very active imagination and loves to "pretend." He just learned to ride his bike without training wheels, therefore, riding his bike is his favorite activity right now.

**Faizon (4)** is a happy go lucky kid who loves to show you "his moves." He is very affectionate and is always willing to give hugs. Faizon loves his older brothers and strives to be just like them.

**DeShane (2)** likes to follow his brothers and model what they do. He sometimes forgets how small he is!

For additional information please contact Travanna Alexander, Adoption Specialist at Missouri Children's Division at 816.929.7864, or Travanna.f.alexander@dss.mo.gov.

### Meet Robby

*An athlete with artistic sensibility*

**Robby (15)** is an active teenager who loves to participate in sports and the arts. His highlights from the last year were participating on the school's wrestling team and in the music programs. Socializing with peers and teachers is an area Robby excels. With encouragement and support, he also has the ability to do well academically.

Due to impaired kidney function, Robby's adoptive family will need to become familiar with his medical needs and treatment. Additionally, maintaining connections with extended family and a sibling is a desire of Robby's after adoption. Although he does not have visitation with his parents, termination of parental rights has not yet occurred and therefore, this is considered a legal risk adoptive placement.

If you would like more information about Robby, contact Tara Holmes, Adoption Specialist Jasper County Children's Division at 417-629-3854 or Tara.Holmes@dss.mo.gov.



Family Connections

c/o FACC

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