



**CHILDREN'S
HOME SOCIETY**
OF MISSOURI

1167 Corporate Lake Drive
St. Louis, MO 63132
(314) 968-2350

LifeLines

Volume 10, Issue 2
Spring 2017



Building, Bonding, Breathing

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Has your clinician recommended trying yoga? Has she encouraged you to try a rhythmic, relational activity with your child? Or talked to you about developing self regulation techniques with your child? If you answered yes to any of these questions, yoga might be right for you!

CHS is offering a six week introductory yoga course designed to promote self regulation for parent and child. The class will be led by Certified Yoga Teacher & Family Support Partner, Jessie Pietroburgo. Over the course of the six weeks, you and your child will explore yoga through breathing exercises, movement, crafts and discussion. Yoga is a great way to join the mind and body to work together to heal from traumatic experiences and to cope with ongoing stress from trauma. Trauma often causes a disconnect between the mind and body making it difficult for individuals to listen to their body's signals and thereby make decisions accordingly. Part of the course will focus on tuning into physical cues to help begin to bridge the gap between mind and body.

Yoga activates the parasympathetic nervous system through deep breathing and rhythmic movements. Kids who have experienced trauma often have their sympathetic nervous system engaged; meaning their fight, flight or freeze mode is turned on. Yoga is a direct way to slow the heart rate, clear the mind, and engage in a more relaxed state. Many studies have shown that consistent yoga practice can improve sleep, reduce anxiety, and improve overall physical wellness, among other benefits. Many of the leading professionals who treat trauma, including Dr. Bruce Perry of

The ChildTrauma Academy, recommend repetitive, rhythmic, relational activities as an intervention. This six week class will be the foundation for understanding yoga as a form of a repetitive, rhythmic, relational activity.

You may be wondering if these classes will be any different from the yoga classes at a gym or yoga studio. Following are some basic similarities and differences:

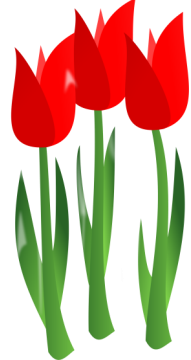
Building, Bonding, Breathing
A Yoga Workshop Series
Who: Caregiver and Child
Ages: Children must be between 9-12 years old.
Where: CHS, Creve Coeur Location
When: Mondays from 6:15-7:15pm for 6 weeks.
April 10, 17, 24, May 1, 8, 15, 2017
Cost: Free



- You will learn physical yoga postures; however, they will be modified to accommodate all ages and abilities.
- In a typical yoga class, you might be instructed on what to do and how to move your body without consideration for how you might feel in each pose. In this class, the instructor will use trauma sensitive language, inviting you to listen to your body and do what feels comfortable for you and your child.
- You will be asked to be mindful and

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Spring is nature's way of saying 'Let's party!'



Robin Williams

We believe:

All children are best able to grow to their fullest potential as members of loving and supportive families.

All children deserve a family that is able to meet their emotional, developmental and physical needs.

Children who have been abused, neglected or otherwise traumatized will bring with them to their new families their feelings of hurt and anger, as well as the negative behaviors they use to express those feelings.

Families formed through the adoption process are equal to families created by birth in their love for and commitment to their children.

Families formed through the adoption process face challenges unique to adoptive families.

The challenges and issues faced by foster and adoptive families require specialized skills on the part of the parents as well as the professionals serving the family.

It is essential that the systems and professionals involved in the process of forming families through foster care and adoption be available at all stages of the family's life – prior to, during and after permanency is achieved.

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still for some moments like in a typical yoga class, but you will also have playful interactions with your children through partner based poses and activities.

If you are interested in participating in the yoga course, please contact our Intake Coordinator, Heather Fjone, at 314-968-2350 ext. 258 to sign up for **Building, Bonding, Breathing**. After registering, Jessie will contact you to discuss any physical conditions that you or your child may have and should be aware of. At that time she will answer any other questions that you may have about the course. She will make every effort to accommodate all levels of physical ability during the six week class. As each class will build on previously learned skills, we ask that the parent and child commit to the full six weeks. Space is limited, so call soon!

Trauma Focused Therapeutic Group for Children

Referencing theory from the Attachment, Self-Regulation, and Competency (ARC) model, this group is intended to support youth in a safe atmosphere as they explore the meaning and impact of trauma. With a maximum number of 10 members and a therapist, the small group setting allows youth to interact within a support network that provides the social benefits of listening and relating to others. Members are allowed the opportunity to explore how trauma has impacted their lives and practice coping skills that can be applied outside of the group room. Group format includes discussion, instruction and various interventions meant to encourage participation and intercommunication. Please contact Heather Fjone, at 314-968-2350 ext. 258 for more information.

Ages: 11-15

Maximum enrollment: 10 members

When: Second and Fourth Thursday of each month
5:00-6:30 PM

Where: CHS, Creve Coeur Location

Cost: Free to families through grant endowment



Mellow Mixer

This teen group is geared toward addressing the unique needs of a growing client population in our CHS community. At the age of 18, available community resources change while families face the pressures of children expected to act as adults when they may not be emotionally equipped. Though our current groups explore aspects of these vulnerabilities and provide a safe place from which to explore strengths and differences, these groups are geared toward younger ages. The sense of inclusion that has been so successfully maintained becomes discouraged as teens get older and face a different set of challenges. This group will therefore offer a space to share ideas and information about pertinent life transitions, separate from their younger peers. The population served will include 18 and 19 year-old youth who have been placed in adoption, foster-care, or guardianship status. Please contact Heather Fjone, at 314-968-2350 ext. 258 for more information.

Ages: 18-20

When: TBD (Fridays-During school breaks)

Cost: Free to families through grant endowment



Educational Opportunities for Adoptive and Foster Parents

2017
Spring

Each session counts as training toward your licensure requirement and are provided at low or no cost to all foster and adoptive parents. Registration is required.

**All trainings will be held at the CHS facility at
1167 Corporate Lake Drive, St. Louis, MO 63132.**

CHS Parenting KIDS (Kids in Difficult Situations): Six week class looks at the reasons behind the behaviors exhibited by children who are in foster care or adopted. Looking through the “trauma lens,” parents learn ways of being proactive in trauma informed discipline techniques and how to be good advocates for their children. Understanding that there is not one “right” technique, the series looks at the work of a number of professionals in the world of developmental trauma.

Dates: Mondays: April 10, 17, 24, May 1, 8, 15, 2017

6:00-9:00 PM



Level A (Elevated Needs) Training: This recently updated six week course is one of the CD approved curriculums mandated for those resource providers who desire parenting children with elevated needs. The curriculum was developed by Children’s Division staff members and reflects a trauma informed approach to parenting children with trauma histories. This competency based program prepares the provider

with the understanding of the criteria for the provider and those characteristics often exhibited by children who have experienced trauma. Completion of this training is not a guarantee that children meeting the qualifications for such service will be placed with the resource family.

Dates: Wednesdays: April 19, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 2017

6:00-9:00 PM

Dates: Tuesdays: June 13, 20, 27, July 11, 18, 25, 2017

9:30 AM-12:30 PM

Parenting Children Who Have Been Sexually Abused: This is a six hour course that will delve into the impact of sexual abuse on a child’s ability to trust, development of sexual identity, future intimacy, respect for one’s body and potential behavioral issues including sexual acting out and perpetration that can occur. The addictive nature of sexual material through media and internet pornography will also be explained and the issue of human trafficking explored.

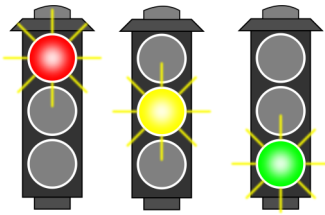
Dates: Monday, June 5 and 12, 2017

6:00-9:00 PM

**To Register:
Contact Heather
(314) 968-2350, ext. 258
or
heatherf@chsmo.org**

Activities to Help With Self Regulation

Self regulation, or the ability to self monitor and regulate behavior independently, is an ability that develops along with maturity. Very young children have no ability to self-regulate, and are completely dependent on their caregiver as an external source of regulation. A history of trauma is linked to delays in social and emotional development, and struggles with self regulation. So what is a parent to do? There are several ways to help children learn and grow in this area, many of which are simple, fun, and easy to make a part of family life. Games are a terrific way to help kids acquire new skills. In addition, they help build the parent child relationship. Some games that help kids learn self regulation include:



Red Light, Green Light- Kids are instructed to line up and either the parent or another child stands in front of the group. When the leader says “Green light” the kids start to move, and when they say “Red light”, they have to stop. If a child is still moving after the leader says “Red light”, he or she is out. The first child to reach the leader wins the round.

Mother May I?- Similar to green light, red light, in that kids line up. A leader (child or adult) stands in front and tells a child to do something such as “hop on one leg” or “run in place.” Before following the command, the child needs to ask “Mother May I?”, and the leader needs to say “Yes you may” or the leader may decide to say “No, you may not.” If a child moves without “mother’s” permission, he or she is out. The first child to reach the leader wins the round.

The Freeze game-Kids dance when the music plays and freeze when it stops. Dance quickly for fast-tempo songs, slowly for slow-tempo songs. And then reverse the cues: Fast music = slow dancing. Slow music = fast dancing.

Color-matching freeze-In this variant of the freeze game, kids don’t just stop dancing when the music stops. First, they find a colored mat and stand on it. Then, before they freeze, they perform a special dance step. There are several, different colored mats on the floor, and each color is linked with a different dance step.

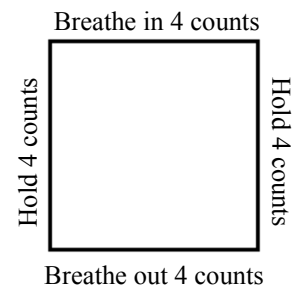
Conducting an orchestra. Kids play musical instruments like maracas, bells or bongos whenever the adult waves a baton, increasing their tempo when the baton moves quickly and reducing their tempo when the baton slows down. Opposite rules can also be applied. (e.g., kids play faster when the baton moves slowly).



Drum beats. A teacher tells kids to respond to different drum cues with specific body movements. For example, kids might hop when they hear a fast drum beat and crawl when they hear a slow drum beat. After a time, kids are asked to reverse the cues.

Another activity that can help a child to regulate is to use a **pressure point** under the nose. The child uses their index finger to firmly push directly below the nose for a count of 10, repeat as necessary. **Chair sit-ups** can be performed by placing hands on either side of the chair seat and lifting the body up off the chair seat, by straightening the arms. Hold for 10 count, rest and repeat. **Wall push-ups;** face a wall about an arm’s length away. With palms flat against the wall slowly bend elbows leaning into the wall, hold for a count of five and the push back. Repeat while breathing slowly.

Square breathing. Slow and deep breathing is also a great regulator. Visualize a square, with each side representing four counts. At the top of square the child breathes in through their nose for four counts fully expanding their lungs, the next side of the square stands for four counts of holding the breath. The bottom of the square represents the slow exhale of the breath through the mouth for four counts. The last side of the square is holding for four counts before starting the next inhalation.



If these regulation activities are practiced with the child during times of calm, then when dysregulation threatens, a simple cue from the parents can help the child access the regulation skills they have learned. The parent is encouraged to engage in the regulation activity with the child until the child can perform the skills on their own.



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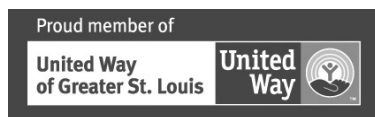
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www.chsmo.org

*Improving the Quality of
Life for Children and
Families in Need Since
1891*



CHAMP Sports Indoor Soccer League

CHS recently became a part of the CHAMP sports league. This is a sports organization that provides opportunities for kids in the St. Louis area to participate in a variety of sports throughout the year while also being supported by agency staff to meet every child's needs. In the spring of 2016 our soccer league was a great success! The next soccer league is beginning soon with a start date of Thursday, **April 6, 2017** This indoor league is co-ed for any clients ages 12-18. The league will be approximately six weeks long.

For more information or if you would like to participate contact Anna Davis at 314-968-2350 ext. 239 or annad@chsmo.org.



April 1st will mark the official merger date for Children's Home Society and Family Resource Center. ***Be watching for our new name!*** The newsletter and its training schedule will continue to arrive at your home as always. Please contact us if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

Coming Soon!