



ACC-CLS Parent News

Stress Free Family Holidays

Adapted from an article by Alliance Work Partners

Volume 11, Issue 4

December 2009

Winter is a time when many of us come together with family and friends to celebrate the joys of the season and the rich traditions in our history. At the same time, we may experience increased pressure from planning events, purchasing gifts and living up to the "expectations" of the season. Without careful planning, flexibility and a positive attitude, the activities and demands of the season can overwhelm us and detract from the enjoyment of the season. Follow this plan to reduce stress this month:



- 1) Develop a family schedule for the month; include holiday activities for each family member, plan time for shopping and down-time. Be realistic about your commitments about your commitments to yourself and your family.
- 2) Maintain your normal family routine as much as possible. Stick to your exercise schedule and make sure everyone gets sufficient sleep.
- 3) Plan special times to come together with family and friends that do not involve added responsibilities. For example, a party with friends can be a

Important Dates:

- **Parent Conferences continue this month**
- **Parent Association Meeting- Wednesday 12/9**
- **12/18 and 12/21 CLOSED for Professional Development**
- **12/22-1/3 CLOSED for winter break and room preparation**
- **Monday 1/4 OPENED for spring semester**

PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING

Wednesday, December 9th, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

A light meal will be served and child care will be provided

Fall parent conferences continue in December!

Planet Earth—December 7-11
Make-up conferences—December 14-18

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Interested in contributing or seeing a particular topic in our newsletter? See Dawn or Teri.

STRESS FREE HOLIDAYS (Continued from Page 1)

pot luck to avoid one person having to do all the preparations.



- 4) Review your traditions and if they are no longer meaningful and enjoyable, create new traditions that reflect what is important to you and your family. For example, one year our family decided to purchase gifts for Blue Santa and deliver them to the fire station together. It became a new and much beloved tradition.
- 5) Develop a realistic budget for both gift giving and other holiday expenses. Once the budget is developed, keep your spending within the budget.
- 6) Consider avoiding holiday shopping crowds by shop-

ping online, visiting holiday fairs, or making gifts together as a family. This is also a good way to give more unique and one-of-a-kind gifts.

- 7) Re-evaluate your holiday greeting list; send greetings to those who really matter to you. Or you may want to send "New Year" greetings in January when you have more time.

- 8) Build relaxation time into your schedule.



Creating a balance of fun social activities and quiet family times will help keep energy levels high and will prevent holiday melt down.

- 9) When family members are feeling overwhelmed, exam-

ine your holiday involvement. Re-evaluate your plans and only participate in those activities that have meaning to you and your family.

- 10) Stay in touch with what this holiday means to your family. Remember that children often get non-verbal or hidden messages that we don't intend to give them. What words best describe holidays in your family—stressful? exhausted? overwhelmed and over-scheduled? commercial? relaxed? fun? traditions? family? spiritual? In short, what do you want your children to remember about this time of year?



THANK YOU'S

Thank you to George Brainard for the wonderful portraits and to Thomas Bacon for setting up the website for our fundraiser.

Thank you to Lois Kim and Phil Reed for their generous donation to the school in honor of Sylvia and Nate.

Parent Association Invites Your Participation

There will be a Parent Association meeting this month on Wednesday, **December 9, from 5:30-6:30.**

Officers:

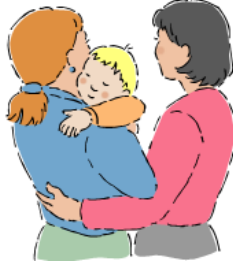
Paloma Hernandez—Chairs
Aoife Longmore—Secretary
Diane Bogard—Treasurer

Parent Room Representatives:

Planet Earth—Laurie Drucker
Stars—Amy and Richard Taylor
Moons—David and Mison Zuniga
Sunbeams—Erin Romero

Parent representatives may sometimes communicate with parents in their child's classroom by e-mail, phone or notes to remind them about upcoming events (fundraisers, social events, workshops, etc.).

The purpose of the Parent Association includes:



1. Choose, organize and implement fundraising projects to benefit the program.
2. Provide opportunities for parent education and support.
3. Act as an avenue for communication between staff and parents.

The December meeting will focus on :

- Special events (end of year party and Week of the Young Child staff recognition)
- Vision Statement
- Meeting topics for the spring

A light meal and child care are provided for meetings. We ask that you sign up at the front desk if you plan to attend so that we can plan for food and staff. Thanks!

Contact Paloma at 223-5218 or phernand@austincc.edu or Dawn for more information.

FAMILY EVENTS AROUND THE COMMUNITY

WHAT: Zilker Tree Holiday Festival

WHERE: Zilker Metropolitan Park, 2100 Barton Springs Road.

WHEN: Opens December 13th and runs nightly through December 21st, 6pm - 10pm.

COST: **No entrance fee, but \$10 to park**

The event has been scaled back from the traditional event scope and will be hosted around the Zilker Tree. The department has worked enthusiastically to produce a beautiful holiday village. There will be a Santa's House, a half mile lighted pedestrian oriented area, nightly entertainment, fun and concessions for the entire family.

WHAT: Live from the Plaza

WHERE: Austin City Hall

WHEN: 12/4, 12/11, and 12/18 from noon to 1pm — **FREE!**

This music series showcases local musicians and reflects the artistic excellence and cultural diversity of Austin

WHAT: Candlelight Christmas Tours

WHERE: 10621 Pioneer Farms Dr. (512) 837-1215

WHEN: December 5-6 & 12-13, 6:00-10:00pm

COST: \$10.00

Experience a Pioneer Christmas with hayrides, music, crafts, games, caroling, and story telling around the fire plus special performances each night!

WHAT: Keep Austin Bizarre

WHERE: Palmer Events Center

WHEN: December 18th -21st, Friday and Saturday from 11am -11pm; Sunday and Monday 11am-10pm— **FREE!**

This event features over 60 local artists and small businesses housed under multiple heated large circus tents, with a further 40 artists outside on "vendor row" selling unique gifts and fine, hand crafted items. In addition, there will be tribal and improvisational dance performances, fire spinners, djs, circus acts and resident musicians who play while patrons shop.



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Austin Community College Children's Lab School is a preschool program for children, six months through five years of age, that serves as a demonstration school for the ACC Child Development Department. The Children's Lab School offers an early childhood program designed to support the growth and development of young children in a warm and creative environment. Through field work experiences in a lab setting, students observe the principles of child development and gain practical experience with young children under the supervision and guidance of qualified classroom teachers. The Children's Lab School is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAECP), a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

2009-10 Calendar at a Glance

Last Day ACC Fall Semester.....	December 11
*Staff Development Days.....	December 18 & 21
*Winter Break.....	Dec. 22-Jan 1
*Martin Luther King Holiday.....	January 18
ACC Spring Semester Begins.....	January 19
*Spring Break.....	March 15-19
Last Day ACC Spring Semester.....	May 14
*Memorial Day Holiday.....	May 31
ACC Summer Semester Begins.....	June 1
Independence Day Holiday.....	July 4 (no closure)
Last Day for Graduating Lab School Children....	August 13
ACC Summer Semester Ends.....	August 13
*Room Preparation/Staff Development Week....	August 16-20
ACC 2009-2010 Academic Year Begins.....	August 23

*Lab School will be closed to children on these dates.
+Dates are tentative or to be announced

Reminder:

The ACC Children's Lab School will be **CLOSED** from **December 18th to January 3rd** for Staff Development Days and Winter Break. The Lab School will open back up on **January 4, 2009.**
Have a safe and relaxing time off with your family!