As I write this, we are all trying to find our way through the coronavirus pandemic and our new normal. The global spread of the infection and the aftershocks it creates reminds me, that it is true, we do live in “a small world after all”. As citizens of the world, we are each other’s keepers. Let’s be the best neighbors we can, especially during this stressful time.

Stay Well and Here’s to Spring and New Beginnings,  
Holly

March:

National Nutrition Month: Use conversation starters to get everyone talking; try a new recipe; invite another family for a meal; or serve a new fruit or vegetable.

National Poison Prevention Week March 20-26: Do you store medications, vitamins, cleaning supplies and other like items away from food and beverages? Are medications, cleaning supplies and other toxins out of the reach of children and pets and in their original labeled containers? Many poisonous items are easy to confuse with candy, beverages and other safe items. The National Poison Hotline number is: 1.800.222.1222.

April:

Child Abuse Prevention Month: “There can be no keener revelation of society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children” (Nelson Mandela). Enough said!

National Volunteer Appreciation Month: This is a great time to be intentional in thanking the volunteers in your life. They are the unsung heroes who keep our communities ticking.

Month of the Military Child: Reach out to the military families you know and thank them for their service. When a family member is in the military, the entire family serves.

Earth Day-April 22: Respect, appreciate, and help Mother Nature. Plant a tree, plan a garden, take a walk, and reduce, reuse, recycle when you can.

Parenting Education is not:
- About Perfection
- About Weaknesses

Parenting Education is:
- About Strengths
- Fun, Free, For Everyone

Newsletter and programming funded by ND Department of Human Services Children & Family Services Division – Child Protection, presented by NDSU Extension & the ND Parent Education Network.

“NDSU is an equal opportunity educator, employer and provider. Visit ndsu.edu/equity or call 701.231.7708.” Requests for accommodations related to disability should be made two weeks in advance to Holly or Laura at 701.857.6450.
211 Free, Safe and Confidential. Trained staff are there to listen.

* indicates programs/materials funded by DHS

On-line Parenting Education: The ND Parent Education Network has a list of research based, evidence-informed, on-line parent education classes. If this type of education might benefit you, contact the PFRC office: 701.857.6450.

March is National Nutrition Month-Tips for Eating Well

National Nutrition Month is the perfect time to pull out your digital devices and look up www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. You even can tryout the new MyPlate app, which allows you to “choose daily food goals, see real-time progress, and earn fun badges.”

Connect with your family by planning meals and snacks for the week together. If you struggle to come up with healthful choices, try a little help from the website. With your family, begin by reviewing the five food groups on the bottom of the homepage. Think about your next family meal and look up what really constitutes a serving. You may be surprised by how much or little you are eating in a particular food group.

Serving sizes depend on some variables. Preschoolers, kids, adolescents and adults have different needs. Check out all that apply for your family.

The website has games, challenges, tips and information for ages preschool through adult. Spend some time playing the games with your younger children, doing healthy challenges with older youth, and teaching and learning about the food you serve and eat with your children.

Habits are formed early. Parents are responsible for offering their children nutritious foods to fuel healthy bodies and minds. If you have vegetarians, picky eaters or a limited food budget, NDSU Extension’s The Family Table website (www.ag.ndsu.edu/familytable) has great information in all of these areas.

Source: Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., Food and Nutrition Specialist; Kim Bushaw, M.S., Family Science Specialist (NDSU Extension)

Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush. — Doug Larson

Spring is Nature’s way of saying “Let’s Party!” — Robin Williams
**Regional Programming Update Related to Covid 19**

As of the afternoon of Friday March 13th, all face-to-face programming has been discontinued to at least April 5th. This is a mandate for all NDSU Extension personnel throughout ND. There will be updates as more is learned. Conscious Discipline is cancelled and the last 4 sessions of Signing are postponed. The new dates will be decided later. The Active Parenting of Teens class has a 1 week later start date (April 7th). If face-to-face programming is not allowed by that date, I may offer the class via Zoom or some other on-line option. I will keep you posted on new developments.

And, in light of school and other related closings, there are a lot of kids who suddenly have a very different routine. If you plan to have them at home without an adult remember the ND for kids home alone: children should be at least 9 years old to stay alone with proper training and practice; short amounts of time and daylight hours only; children should be at least 12 years old with proper training and practice to take care of younger children without an adult present.

Now, once you have your work plans made, consider some ideas to help keep kids engaged and occupied.

- Complete homework and school projects!
- Read. Play board games. Invest in some arts and crafts supplies.
- As a family, deep clean a space that needs attention. It may be the garage, the play room, or a towel closet. Make a list of what needs to be done and divide the tasks. Set a time to be done and share a relaxing break together. Say thank you to all who help.
- Bake something together or divide into teams and have a baking challenge.
- Exercise daily. Take walks. Take turns picking music for some dance moves. Pull out blankets or yoga mats and do some breathing and stretching.
- Plan your gardens together.
- Make cards and write letters to people stuck at home or in nursing homes.
- Wipe out kitchen shelves and drawers. Have children check the use by dates on food and determine if they are a keep or toss item.
- Go through your closets and drawers to decide which clothes your children have outgrown. Do the same with toys.

Check out the PBS website for things to do and games to play: [https://pbskids.org/games/](https://pbskids.org/games/)


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**Region 2 PFRC Class Descriptions & Schedule for 2020**

These classes are in Minot, unless otherwise noted. *These opportunities are free. Pre-registration is required.*

Call 701.857.6450 to register and learn specific class site.

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**Parents Forever™ (Give Your Children the Childhood You Want Them to Remember.)**

This research-based educational program puts parents on the path to minimizing stress for themselves and their children. Participants learn how to make informed, child-supportive decisions so children will come through separation or divorce having a positive relationship with both parents vs. feeling caught in the middle of their parent's conflict. **There is a fee for this class. No class at this time.**

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**Active Parenting of Teens & Pre-teens - (Guiding My Child through the Teen Years)**

Enjoy the teen years by learning to be an active vs. reactive parent by using skills presented in this video and discussion based series. The program addresses teen brain development, parenting styles, communication, problem solving, responsibility, self-esteem, teen behavior goals, high-risk behaviors, alcohol, drugs, sexuality and violence. Meet other parents in this relaxed environment.

**Tuesday evenings – 6-8 pm, Minot**  
April 7, 14, 21, 28, May 5

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**4th Annual PFRC Workshop, Helping Young People Be and Become Their Best Selves- Everyone is an Asset Builder: Developmental Relationships & Assets (The Search Institute)**

This workshop targets service providers/professionals-approved for 6 Social Work CEUs. $85 registration includes workshop material, continental breakfast, lunch, snack. **You will be refunded if the workshop is postponed or cancelled or you are unable to attend due to Covid19.**

Call the PFRC office (701-857-6450) to register. 9 am - 4 pm, Thursday, April 30, 2020 The Grand Hotel, Minot

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**Strengthening Family Relationships: Free Session**

This is specific to parents and other caregivers. 6-7:30 pm, Thursday, April 30, 2020 The Grand Hotel, Minot
MORE THAN A REMINDER—
ITS A MOVEMENT

In 2008, Prevent Child Abuse America® launched the Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign as a grassroots effort for individuals and organizations across the U.S. to take action. The campaign promotes healthy child development while raising awareness to prevent child abuse and neglect—before it ever happens.

WHY PINWHEELS?

Prevent Child Abuse America introduced the blue pinwheel as the nationally recognized symbol for prevention because it represents the great childhoods all children deserve and the prevention efforts that help make them happen. Today, it inspires all of us to play a role in providing the best possible environment for every child to flourish and thrive.