

NETWORK NEWS

Enriching the Community



A Message from the CCR&R Director

Happy New Year!!

We made it through 2020! At the change of each year, I look back at the previous year and think about all the good and bad times. We had many of both this year. Now we can look forward and be hopeful for positive changes to the upcoming year.

If you had asked me back in March when this pandemic would be over, I would have said I anticipated being back to “normal” by January. It’s January now and we are still in the midst of the pandemic and are seeing the numbers of positive tests increase in our community. I know we are all tired and experiencing “COVID fatigue” but we must remain vigilant in following recommended guidelines from OCFS and the Department of Health. Give us a call if you need any help figuring out what you need to do.

The federal stimulus package that was passed the end of December did include funding specifically for child care in each state. We do not yet know what OCFS will do or what projects they will fund, but your input is always helpful. Tell us what you need. Tell your licensor what you need. Then we can share your stories.

We hope you have a good 2021! As always, the CCR&R at Family Enrichment Network is here to support you this year! Give us a call.

Jennifer Perney

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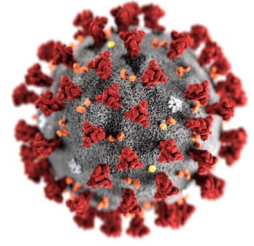
Family Enrichment Network
is a proud member of:



Early Care &
Learning Council
United to Promote Quality

A Cold Versus COVID

It's winter now, which means everyone will get a little runny or stuffy nose and a sore throat. It's just a cold, right? You may have an upset stomach. It's just a little flu or something you ate, right? You have an itchy, red eye. It's just pink eye, right? **WRONG!**



You may think of COVID as severe symptoms, difficulty breathing, coughing, extreme tiredness, or the common loss of taste and smell. You may think that you can easily tell the difference if you had COVID. But unfortunately, you can't always tell the difference. Did you know that many times, people who think they have "just a cold" actually have COVID? Please remember your community responsibilities with any illnesses this winter.

If you are experiencing ANY symptom of COVID, no matter how minor, you must treat it like COVID. Go get a rapid test or call your doctor to set up a test. As much as it is inconvenient and impacts working parents, and your business you need to help control the spread we are seeing in our community. Do not go to work sick or allow employees to come to work sick. Do not let children with symptoms come to your program until it is confirmed to not be COVID.

Wear a mask, wash your hands, clean and sanitize touched surfaces, maintain safe distances as much as possible, allow circulation of fresh air.

For more guidance on COVID and Child Care, visit the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

Child Care Resource and Referral Contact List

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Ann Shear: Training Coordinator	Ext: 1186	ashear@familyenrichment.org

Chenango Office: (607) 373-3555

Julie Henry: Chenango Coordinator	Ext: 1522	jhenry@familyenrichment.org
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General questions: email: jperney@familyenrichment.org
Program updates or referrals for parents: referrals@familyenrichment.org

To Nap or Not To Nap

By Leslie Vermaat



Napping can be a challenging issue in child care. Chances are that somewhere in your career as a provider, you have experienced the frustration of a child who does not fall asleep at naptime and also is not good at playing quietly while the other children nap. NYS regulations state that “children shall not be confined to a sleeping surface but instead must be offered a supervised place for quiet play” if they cannot fall asleep. This is easier said than done! The reality of what this may look like can make you to want to pull your hair out on a daily basis!

Let’s take a look at some of the issues surrounding napping. Do you expect children to snuggle down and take a nap right after eating lunch? It has been suggested that many children need more transition time between eating and napping—after lunch, they have just been re-fueled! Thirty minutes is recommended as a transition time. That’s plenty of time to read some books, go for a walk, or do some scissor practice.

A study by the University of Colorado found that daytime naps for toddlers are beneficial but not for most preschoolers. The Archives of Disease in Childhood (2015) studied napping in children birth to five years also. The study showed that for children over 2 years, napping resulted in later bedtimes and lower sleep quality. The study confirmed that, “toddlers need naps, but some preschoolers do not.” Preschoolers (3-5 yrs.) need 10 to 13 hours of sleep each night according to the Academy of Pediatrics. The recommendation is that children get their sleep all in one shot, at night, rather than trying to make it up with a nap.

Each child is an individual and we need to treat them as such, even when it concerns their sleep. Good communication with parents will help you know what a particular child’s sleep needs and patterns are. According to NYS regulations, parents must agree in writing with the napping arrangements for their child (ren) up to school age. One size does not fit all! Consider the recommendations above as you navigate naptime for the children in your care. Even school-agers may benefit from a nap on a snow day!

*Source: Health and Safety: Competencies in Child Care for Directors; Trainers Manual (May, 2020).
Academy of Pediatrics website: healthychildren.org*

SUPPLIES

Many of you have asked where you can purchase some of the supplies that were ordered through the CARES grant.

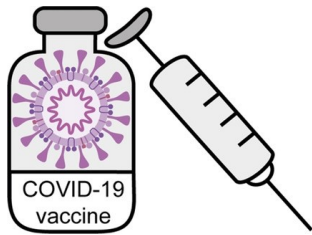
These were purchased in bulk from SANICO. We have been told that you are welcome to call and order on your own if you would like. Make sure to tell them you are a child care provider and that Family Enrichment Network placed a large order with them last summer for you. You will need to set up an account in order to purchase more supplies.

Call Vic Merrill directly@ 607-222-6079 or Bridgette @ 607-677-0899.

If you have a problem call Julie at 607-373-3555 Ext. 1522

This is the most requested item that we purchased.





COVID Vaccine

When are child care providers eligible for the COVID Vaccine?

Currently in the CDC recommended national phases, child care programs and staff are included with public school teachers in Phase 1b: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations.html>

But, New York State has it's own Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force determining phases and implementation.

For New York State specifically, you can find the latest changes in the phase schedule on the Department of Health website, as well as **check your eligibility:**

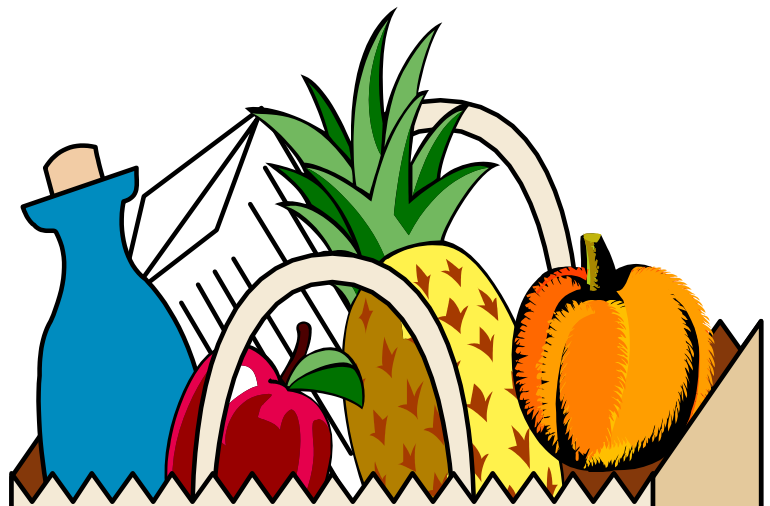
<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>

Congratulations!!

New child care program:

Broome County Child Care Center

Great Beginnings Child Care Center, LLC.



Stress-Fighting Vegetarian Chili

From ECLC CACFP Newsletter

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 onion (large, cut into 1/4 inch pieces)
- 1 green bell pepper (cut into 1/4 inch pieces)
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 jalapeno chilies (fresh, diced, optional)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon cumin (ground)
- 2 cans whole tomatoes, low sodium (28 ounces total - cut into 1/4 inch pieces or 8 medium fresh tomatoes)
- 2 zucchini (cut into 1/4 inch pieces)
- 2 summer squash (cut in to 1/4 inch pieces)
- 1 can kidney beans (16 ounce, rinsed)
- 1 cup cilantro (or coriander) (chopped, fresh)
- salt and pepper (to taste, optional)

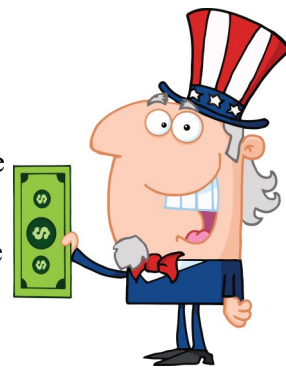
PREPARATION:

1. In a large pot sauté onions, bell pepper, garlic, & jalapeno in oil over med-high heat for about 5 mins - stirring often.
2. Add chili powder, cumin, half of the chopped cilantro, salt and pepper, & continue cooking for another 3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the tomatoes, zucchini, squash, & bring mixture to a simmer.
4. Simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Add beans, & simmer for another 5 mins.
6. Serve the mixture hot. Put remaining cilantro on top.

Note: Consider adding more than one type of bean and choosing seasonal vegetables like acorn or butternut squash. Quinoa or barley could also be added for a whole grain and added texture.

End of Year Tax Saving Tips for Family Child Care

It's been a tough year for everyone, but there have been additional challenges for child care providers. Tom Copeland has some tips to help your child care business weather the financial hardships.



There are ways that you, as a family child care provider, can reduce your taxes before the end of the year.

The general idea is to accelerate your deductions into this year and delay income until next year. Here are some specific tips:

- 1) If you are thinking about buying larger items such as furniture, appliances, computers, fence, etc., you may be better off buying them before the end of the year. A deduction this year is generally worth more than waiting to get the deduction in a future year.
- 2) Stock up on business supplies and toys for next year by purchasing them this year. Such supplies can include: arts and crafts supplies, cleaning supplies, kitchen supplies, curriculum materials, etc. If you pay by credit card for an item purchased this year, it's considered an expense this year, even if you don't pay the bill until next year.
- 3) You can deduct 100% of the costs associated with expenses related to COVID-19. This includes gloves, masks, cleaning supplies and more. If you stock up on these items in 2020, you can deduct them this year.
- 4) Ask parents to pay you next year for any remaining child care payments they owe you for this year. Money you receive next year for child care delivered this year is reported by you as taxable income on your next year's tax return, not this year. If a parent gives you a payment check on December 30th, but you don't deposit it until next year, it's still considered income to you in this year (the date you received the check).
- 5) Make a contribution to an IRA. You can set up a Traditional IRA or SEP IRA before April 15, of next year. Any contributions you make to these IRAs before then will reduce your personal taxable income. If you set up or contribute to a ROTH IRA you won't reduce your taxes this year, but you will save money later when you withdraw the contributions at retirement. If you have set up a SIMPLE IRA before October 1 of this year, you can make a contribution to it before April 15th of next year and reduce your personal taxable income.
- 6) If you make contributions to a charitable organization before the end of the year, you may be able to reduce your personal taxable income if you are able to itemize your taxes.

What COVID-19 Expenses Can You Deduct?

Are you spending money to keep the children in your program safe during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The answer is probably "yes" for most family child care providers.

Here are some examples of COVID-19 spending:

- COVID-19 supplies (Gloves, Masks, Disinfectants, Sanitizers)
- Thermometers
- Delivery service fees (food, supplies, etc.)
- Expenses to keep children apart (screen dividers, etc.)
- Painting, remodeling, etc. (to get ready for reopening)
- Costs associated with distance learning (computers, Internet, Zoom fees, curriculum/activity expenses, etc.)

How much of these, and other expenses, can you deduct?

If you only use an item for your business, you can deduct 100% of the cost. If you also use an item for personal use, deduct the business portion, which is probably your Time-Space Percentage.

Keep receipts for all of these expenses. In fact, it's a good business practice to keep receipts of all expenses, whether you think it's deductible or not.

Being a Daycare Provider during Tough Times

By Lisa Rosa, Tioga CCR&R Coordinator

Being a daycare provider during normal times can be very rewarding because you can hug the children, give them the emotional support they need because you're like their second parent when they're with you. But because of COVID-19, you can't be hands on right now. It's very difficult, especially if they're upset.

Things are different in other ways, too. When the children are being dropped off, their parents can't come into the home or center. If they are new to daycare, they're being dropped off to strange people. They have to have their temperature taken, and then they're walked into a room where they will stay in most of the day. You may have rooms set up so each child has a specific play area that allows for social distancing. They also can only play with one toy at a time so we can disinfect it when they're done. That's hard for them because they want to share and they want to play with each other; they want to hug each other, and they want to run around with each other. And you have to tell them they can't do that. That's a lot of stress and anxiety for them—some of them are having a very difficult time adjusting to this new normal that we have.

You are trying to comfort them in every way you possibly can. You try to do a lot of activities during the day to try to keep them busy and to make it as normal as possible. You go outside for walks. You incorporate large motor activities inside so they can de-stress. Your utmost priority is keeping them healthy so other essential workers can keep going to work and serving the community. It makes you happy that parents can drop off the children to you and know that they're safe, and you're nurturing them, and they don't have to worry about their children. You're doing your part to help everybody that needs your help—grocery store workers, essential workers, doctors, whatever they are. It gives you great pride to do it, and to help them get through this difficult time. Especially with younger children, daycare can lay the groundwork for all the different things that they're going to do in life. In the future, if the children remember during this difficult experience that they came to daycare and you made them smile because of the positive environment that you provided for them, and that's something they will remember and that's all you could ever ask for. It will have made all of your efforts worthwhile.

Having the children with you also helps *you* get through the chaos and uncertainty, too. When they come to your home or center, you don't think about the outside world. You just want to see the children happy and smiling. Don't think of yourself as a hero. Think of yourself as lucky to still be able to do the job that you love, and consider yourself lucky that you are able to contribute in any small way that can help our country survive this pandemic.

ATTENTION CARES Grant Recipients

Guidance from OCFS and the Federal Office of Child Care indicates that CARES funding is taxable income. To stay in compliance, we will be issuing you a 1099. Please call with any questions.

Cold weather, outdoor play - It's not just for the children, but for adults too!

By: Courtney Nornhold, Infant Toddler Specialist

The winter months can be challenging for those who are caring for children. Getting outside as often can be more challenging than when it was warmer outside. It takes more time to get each child ready in their winter gear. Spending time outdoors is still important even when it is cold.

Follow safe practices by checking the temperature including the wind chill and dressing the children appropriately in winter gear. There are health benefits to getting outside. The immune system can be strengthened by going outside because everyone is getting away from the indoor germs, dirt, and bacteria that is getting circulated through the air vents. This is especially important in these times with COVID. By getting outside the children are able to explore and breathe in the fresh, outdoor air. The fresh air is good for everyone!

Toddlers have so much energy! Getting outside gives them a way to engage in physical activity. In fact, the California Childcare Health Program states outdoor winter play “gives children an opportunity for a change of environment, a balance in play and routine, and large muscle activities (gross-motor development).” The changing seasons provide new opportunities for infants and toddlers to explore the outdoors. Having planned activities while outside will help with keeping children engaged.

Some activities that can be done with infants and toddlers include:

- make a snowball and let them roll it around
- provide a shovel and bucket and they can try and scoop snow into the bucket. (sandbox toys work great with playing in snow)
- blow bubbles
- catch snowflakes (can put dark fabric on ground and watch snowflakes land on it)
- stomp their feet in the snow to make a path
- make snow people
- draw shapes in the snow
- sledding
- sing songs about snow or the outdoors
- read books about snow
- snow shoveling
- paint the snow
- make an obstacle course

Need more ideas for your infants and toddlers?

Need help with an issue in your program?



Supporting Infants and Toddlers

Every child and family is deserving of quality, nurturing childcare by providers who have access to the resources that are needed to allow for a physically and emotionally safe environment. We can help!

Call or email the Infant Toddler Mental Health Specialist. Tessa Stacy, tstacy@familyenrichment.org or (607) 201-5678 for free support!

“Early Childhood Mental Health is not the absence of mental illness, but rather the presence of a feeling of safety and emotional security, comfort in connecting with trusted others, confidence in one’s developmental trajectory, an expectation that dependency needs will be met, and an assumption of one’s right to move, explore, and communicate.” WestEd (2019). Program for Infant Toddler Care



Weird and Wonderful

By Cathy Lipski, CACFP Coordinator

Are you tired of bananas, apples and canned peaches? If so, reach out to the world of weird and wonderful fruit from around the world.



Don't let the hairy exterior of this fruit scare you! The outside spikes are soft and the fruit is easy to peel. Look inside and you will find a white fruit that is juicy and sweet. Children might really like this fruit because it looks a bit like a fruit you would find in a Dr. Seuss book. What is it? Rambutan.

Without question, the first obvious trait about Jackfruit is its sheer size. Jackfruit can reach up to 100 pounds! It is hard to believe it grows on trees, but it does. An individual jackfruit contains hundreds of seeds that are high in protein, potassium, calcium, iron, and vitamin B. The meaty texture makes it good meat replacement for some recipes.

Trying new fruits and vegetable is a good way to teach children about flavors, textures, colors and what children in other countries are eating. They don't have to like the flavor, and that is just fine! Weird and wonderful fruits allow for experimentation and learning. For more information on this topic, come to my Small Talk program entitled "Make it Exotic and Weird" on January 19! Call 723-8313 extension 815 to register.

For more information on Child Adult Care Food Program contact the Family Enrichment Network at (607) 723-8313.
Cathy at ext. 824 or Crystal at ext. 825

This CACFP institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Are Playgrounds Safe During the Pandemic?

Compiled by Cathy Lipski from NPR GOATS AND SODA News Letter, December 9, 2020

The benefits of outdoor playgrounds seem obvious enough: Catch some precious outdoor time while turning your child loose on swings and slides. However, with COVID-19 in play (no pun intended) it's not always so simple.

With the specter of an ever-increasing infection count, it's fair to wonder, are playgrounds really a good idea right now? According to Harvard Medical School physician Abraar Karan, if you're prudent, a playground trip is actually a great idea.

The first thing to note is that the risks of picking up the virus from surfaces (think: jungle gyms, rock walls, slides and swings), are lower than initially assumed. Even though there was concern early in the pandemic about this possible mode of transmission, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in May that surfaces are "not the main way" the coronavirus spreads. Successive studies have strengthened that belief.

While the risk of transmission from surfaces is low, it is not absent. Outdoor airflow disrupts the flow of droplets and airborne particles, but it's critical you follow some of the general guidelines: masking, sanitizing hands after visiting and physical distancing while on the scene. If there are a lot of families at the playground when you arrive, try coming back in a few hours.

To be extra safe, carry along a set of disinfectant wipes with you, wiping down surfaces before your children get on them. Even though the risk that your gear was contaminated by contact with playground apparatus low, it's better to be safe and wash your clothing when you get home.

And the biggest word of advice, don't forget to wash hands after a visit with soap and water!



5 Winter Fruits to Keep Everyone Healthy

Compiled by Cathy Lipski

It is possible to eat fresh fruits during the winter and keep children in your care, yourself and your family healthy during the cold dark months ahead. There is no need to spend a lot of money on out-of-season fruit when you can introduce children to less pricey fruits that are at their peak now!



Kiwi

Season: all year, with Kiwi from California available from October to May

Benefits: Kiwi contains a lot of fiber and phytonutrients. A child's body absorbs the antioxidants in Kiwi more easily than those in other fruits, such as grapes or strawberries. Eating Kiwi before bedtime might be beneficial for sleep by improving its quality and duration.

Serve: You can peel the kiwi and put the round slices on ice-pop sticks and serve them with a yogurt dip, or cut the whole unpeeled fruit in half and give your kids a little spoon to scoop out the flesh.

Pomegranate

Season: from September to February

Benefits: It is fun for kids to pick and eat the seed pods inside. They're packed with fiber and rich in other beneficial nutrients, like potassium, vitamin C, vitamin K and folate.

Serve: Toddlers can pick seeds from a pomegranate with their fingers. Other than just giving them the fruit split in half, you can stir the seeds into yogurt.



Bananas

Season: all year

Benefits: Besides being one of the cheapest fruits you can buy, bananas are also easy to digest. They strengthen bones, moderate blood-sugar levels and may support heart health because of the high levels of potassium.

Serve: Bananas are easy to serve. Peel the fruit and cut it in round slices and serve it either alone or in a fruit salad with oranges, kiwi, or any other fruit. Children love to eat it straight out of the peel.

Oranges

Season: from November to April

Benefits: Oranges are filled with vitamin C, which is a great antioxidant and plays an important role in enhancing the immune system. Oranges can also help lower cholesterol, boost heart health, regulate blood pressure and possibly prevent kidney diseases.

Serve: You can peel the fruit and divide it into slices to eat or you can cut the unpeeled fruit into round slices and then cut those in half. Remind your children not to eat the peels!

Pears

Season: from late summer until the end of winter

Benefits: Pears are packed with plenty of beneficial nutrients such as antioxidants, dietary fibers, minerals and vitamins. They may also help your body heal wounds faster, stimulate the immune system and are low in calories.

Serve: You can make a fun snack by making pear "French Fries". Slice firm pears into French Fry shapes and serve them with peanut butter or yogurt.

JANUARY 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 Owego	14	15	16
17	18 MLK Day	19 JC	20	21 JC	22	23
24/31	25	26 JC	27	28 JC	29	30

FEBRUARY 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 JC	3	4	5	6 Chen
7	8	9 JC	10 Owego	11 JC	12	13
14	15 President's Day	16 JC	17	18 JC	19	20
21	22	23 JC	24	25 JC	26	27
28						

MARCH 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 JC	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Owego	11 Chen	12	13
14	15	16 JC	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Upcoming Training Opportunities

Broome County (JC):

- Jan 19: 6:30-8:30pm—Small Talk
- 2Fer: CACFP Make It Weird & Exotic and All About Singles—In person
- Jan 19, 21, 26, 28 & Feb 2: 9am-12pm—Director Health and Safety—Virtual
- Feb 9: 6:30-8:30pm—Attachment 101—Virtual
- Feb 11, 18, & 23: 8am-2pm—Provider Health and Safety—In-person
- Feb 16: Appointment only 4-8pm—CPR/First Aid for Couples
- Feb 25: 5:30-8:30pm—ACES 101—Virtual
- March 2: 6:30-8:30pm—The Role of Child Care in Preventing Child Abuse—Virtual
- March 16: 6:30-8:30pm—Small Talk
- 2Fer: CACFP Make It Weird & Wonderful and All About Singles—In Person

Chenango County (Chen):

- Feb 6: 9am-12pm—ACES 101—Virtual
- March 11: 6-7:30pm—Child Abuse: When To Make a Call—Virtual

Tioga County (Owego):

- Jan 13: 6:30-8:30pm—Gross Motor Activities for Indoors—Virtual
- Feb 10: 6:30-8:30pm—Caring For Your Business—Virtual
- March 10: 6:30-8:30pm—Trauma-Informed Child Care: Fitting the Pieces Together—Virtual

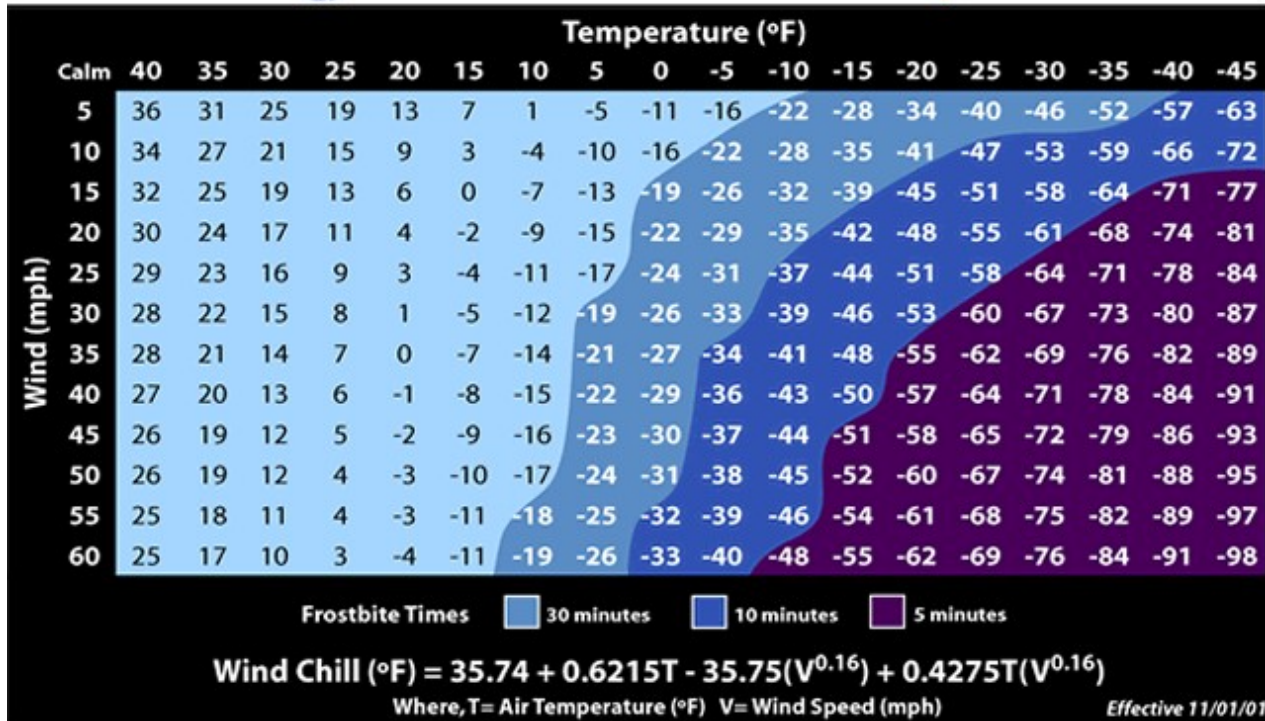
Please see the January through March Professional Development and Training Calendar for full workshop descriptions or visit our website at www.familyenrichment.org.

Understand the Weather and Windchills

Sometimes the temperature might be nice outside, but it's a little windy. What does that mean? Here is a chart from the National Weather Service that shows the real-feel temperature when it is windy and compares to frostbite times.



Wind Chill Chart



Wind-Chill

- 30 is **chilly** and generally uncomfortable
- 15 to 30 is **cold**
- 0 to 15 is **very cold**
- -20 to 0 is **bitter cold** with significant risk of **frostbite**
- -20 to -60 is **extreme cold** and **frostbite** is likely
- -60 is **frigid** and exposed **skin will freeze** in 1 minute



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Through partnerships with families and community agencies, Family Enrichment Network provides supportive services and programs for the optimal development of children, adults and families.

To learn more about our mission, and share in our vision that all children and families have the opportunity to grow and develop to their full potential, please visit our website at www.familyenrichment.org.