

parent

PARTICIPATION
& EDUCATION



California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools **PRESCHOOLER**

Letter from the President

Hello to our Co-op Community,

My name is Michelle Edgumbe and it is my honor and privilege to serve you this year as your President for the California Council for Parent Participation Nursery Schools!

I am a local girl. I grew up in Los Altos when much of it was apricot orchards! I have so many sweet memories of climbing apricot trees in my backyard and eating them off the branches. I'll even admit to having a few apricot wars with my siblings with the mushy ones! I received my Degree and my Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential from California State University Fresno. My husband, Eric and I just celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary this past summer. We have 3 children, Katherine (27), Sean (25) and Will (20). I have taught children of all ages from Kindergarten all the way up to 6th grade, but my absolute favorite age is right where I am at right now...those wonderful 3s!

I have been at Cupertino Co-op Nursery School for almost 20 years as their Director/3s teacher. I am blessed each and every day to wake up and say, "I get to go to CCNS today!" I have the best job EVER!

After all these years of teaching, I'm still awestruck by watching our Co-op community of Directors, Teachers and families that give endlessly from their hearts for the betterment of our community. The community that we create together is magical. Please know that our CCPNS Board is here to support you in any way you need. Please don't hesitate to reach out to anyone on our board. We are all just an email away!

I'm so thankful for you and your presence in our Co-op Community! Shoulder to shoulder we can create magic together!

See you all at conference in March!

(Details and registration available online at ccppns.org/convention/#!/meet-play-love.)

Love,

Michelle, Director/3s Teacher
Cupertino Co-op Nursery School
www.cupertinocoop.org

President - California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools

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FALL 2018

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Honoring Susie Stone
May 12, 1944 - Sept. 22, 2018

Memorial Resolution in Honor of Susie Stone

Whereas, Susie Stone, served in many capacities as a member of California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools Board of Directors, for a number of years; and

Whereas, Susie Stone, was an inspiration to countless educators and parents throughout the state of California and internationally; and

Whereas, Susie Stone, was a passionate advocate for children and families; and

Whereas, Susie Stone, supported, guided and held close a number fledgling Teachers and Directors as they gained confidence in their field; and

Whereas, Susie Stone, was a valued and cherished member of CCPNS and loyal to the core concept of camaraderie and community; and

Whereas, Susie Stone, embodied great strength and kindness to all that had the honor to meet her, her positive nature, encouragement and support was invaluable; and

Whereas, Susie Stone, served with distinction as an educator to support children and families; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools, on behalf of its members: honors and will be forever grateful to Susie Stone for her unending wisdom of experience, her passion, loyalty and dedication to the parent cooperative pre-school model, and expresses its sincere sympathy to the family of Susie Stone, that we place a copy of this resolution in the permanent records of California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools, and that we submit a copy of this resolution to the family of Susie Stone.

Respectfully submitted,
California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools Board of Directors

MEET
Play
LOVE
Engage, Enrich, Enlighten

70TH ANNUAL
CCPPNS Conference
for Parents & Teachers
MARCH 9, 2019

Register now at ccppns.org/convention/#/meet-play-love.

<p>70TH ANNUAL CCPPNS CONVENTION March 9, 2019</p> <p>MEET experts in different areas of human development.</p> <p>PLAY with those who know how to open minds and hearts. Learn, laugh, bond, and enjoy!</p> <p>LOVE affirms systems to support a meaningful life.</p> <p>Registration fee includes continental breakfast. Register by January 9th for \$70 Early Bird rate.</p>	<p>venue</p> <p>The Great Wolf Lodge provides state of the art conference facilities combined with the opportunity for a vacation getaway. Adult Education, and family fun! Rooms with conference registration include 4 passes to the extensive indoor waterpark.</p> <p>12681 Harbor Blvd. Garden Grove, CA 92840</p> <p>Reservations: 888-960-9653 (Room rates available for \$189-214/night.)</p>	<p>awards</p> <p>You KNOW who deserves recognition! Nominate a teacher, director, board member or admin assistant who goes above & beyond. Nominations will be accepted through Jan. 20, 2019 but preferred early. Letters of endorsement must be postmarked no later than Feb. 9, 2019.</p> <p>See additional information and the submission form at ccppns.org/convention.</p> <p>Awards luncheon tickets may be booked when you register for \$35/person.</p>	<p>dinner tour</p> <p>After a day of stimulating your mind, feed your body and delight your imagination. A popular option to playing at the water park is the CCPPNS Progressive Dinner Tour of local schools. The line up this year includes schools never seen before! Every co-op is magical, and every co-op is different. Participating Schools go out of their way to highlight curriculum and campus environment to take home to your co-op. It's also just plain fun! \$25 includes dinner and transportation. 5:00-9:00pm.</p>
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Engage! Enrich! Enlighten!

The 3 N's: A new model for education

CCPPNS conferences excite minds, inspire meaningful connection, and update key components of best practices for the education of children. Education for the next generation must reach horizons beyond the traditional Three "R's" (reading, writing, 'rithmetic). The Three "N's": Engage, Enrich, Enlighten, grow minds and offer opportunities to take charge of learning. Learn how to integrate techniques that encourage ability and effort, and build the skills and confidence to negotiate an ever more complex society. A premier One Day Education Conference, within a family friendly resort, CCPPNS Convention 2019 offers teachers and parents an unparalleled opportunity to learn and play.



Schedule of Events

- 8:00-9:00am Registration & Breakfast Buffet**
- 9:00-10:15am Session 1**
 The Art of Roughhousing
 Growing a Carrot Seed: Speech & Language Development
 Young Engineers: STEM in the Classroom
 Proprioceptive Input
- 10:30am-12noon Keynote Speaker**
 Dr. Lawrence Cohen : The Power of Play
- 12:15-1:15pm Awards Luncheon**
- 1:30- 2:45pm Session 2**
 From the Heart Parenting
 Birds & Bees: Sexuality & Kids
 Building Inclusive Communities
 TBA
- 3:00-4:15pm Session 3**
 The Opposite of Worry
 Enhancing Brain Development through Play
 The Science of Music
 TBA
- 5:00-9:00pm PROGRESSIVE DINNER**
 Dinner and a Show! Sign up for this favorite Convention Event. Luxury buses take visitors to tour three Orange County Council schools. Appetizers, main dish, salad and new classroom ideas. Dessert and drinks as we travel. Laughter and great company. A good time is guaranteed!



Northern Area Board (NAB) News!

What an amazing group we have in the leadership north for CCPNS. All the councils were represented at our Joint Area Board (JAB) and our follow up meeting in November sparked a lot of conversation about the health of the schools in all the councils. We also had three directors who visited to learn more about our board. I highly recommend inviting teachers to board meetings to encourage participation.

Supporting teachers and directors was paramount as we discussed salaries, wellness benefits and support in this expensive state. Unfortunately health care is legally complicated and difficult to provide but some schools support teachers with 'wellness stipends' monthly. We thought a survey of current salaries and benefits might help.

We discussed how to encourage new schools to join CCPNS, shared resources on the google drive and celebrated that we will get an insurance credit next year if you are insured by Bob Hadzor. We supported the councils having networking nights for teachers and had a discussion of the BEST PRACTICE for making Sangria! Taste testing might happen at next year's JAB meeting!?



We reviewed the grievance procedures, how to help schools if they need help with hiring, problem solving and finding resources for children with special needs.

We voted to get banners to have at SAB and NAB meetings and convention to highlight this wonderful organization. We VOTED on more than the minutes!!!

We briefly touched on how the JAB meeting in Selma was fun and very productive in the effort to move our coop movement in the right direction. It is getting complicated in this time of increased pressure on academics and the growth of TK programs which are not always developmentally appropriate.

We applauded the new Communications director Maria Chew for all the support for schools with questions and concerns with the google group for teachers and reps. There is also the new Director Only Google group for more sensitive issues. We welcomed Jennie Ivazian as our new Finance North board member and celebrated that more loan and grant information will follow.

We discussed the upcoming CCPNS board nominations will be open after the first of the year. That sparked a discussion about school boards and how they encourage, support and retain board members, the critical organizational body of co-ops.

I will see the NAB group in February for follow up. See the rest of you all at Convention in Orange County!

Konne

Konne Ainsworth
Director, Explorer Preschool
VP North, CCPNS

Volunteer Handbooks

Volunteer handbooks help introduce and reinforce what to do, what not to do, who to report to, and how to handle a crisis or grievance. Knowing how to do things and what is expected helps to strengthen appropriate and safe actions. Your volunteer handbook is your opportunity to give your volunteers all of the information they will need to be effective on the job.

A volunteer handbook can serve as an important part of orientation and as a convenient reference tool. Your volunteer handbook should contain useful and practical information for volunteers. There is no "one size fits all" or pre-determined framework. A small volunteer program may have a two-sided sheet of paper, while a larger organization could have a small binder.

Volunteer handbooks should include most, if not all, of the following info:

- Welcome message from the program director and purpose of the handbook
- Introduction that includes the mission, vision and brief history of your organization (include local and national history, if applicable)
- Listing of staff and/or board members (be sure to include contact information for those who will be working with volunteers)
- General information
- Office locations, including directions

(if volunteer assignment is off-site, include location where service will be performed and parking information) - Current pro-grams - Calendar of important events within your organization

- Definition of terms or acronyms
- Record keeping/reporting procedures (what paperwork and reporting needs to be completed; how and where to find it)

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Volunteer Handbooks

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Sample forms you might include:

- Work contracts or assignments
- Timesheets (importance of reporting hours of service)
- Travel log or expense voucher
- Volunteer application/registration
- Incident/accident report form
- Explanation of organizational structure (chart or diagram)
- Account of financial structure or funding sources
- Application/enrollment policies and procedures
- Volunteer rights & responsibilities
- Position description
- Volunteer training
- Pre-service orientation
- Confidentiality
- On the job orientation
- In-service training
- Rewards & benefits to volunteers; include information on
 - Stipend (if applicable)
 - Transportation / Meals
 - Medical and other leaves
 - Holidays
 - Insurance (accident & liability)
 - Recognition (events, newsletter, other)
 - Volunteer Separation/Resignation
 - Disciplinary action
 - Loss of funding
 - Termination of benefits
 - Information for volunteers with disabilities: inclusion & accessibility

Note: We have many sample forms and checklists available at our secure website. They are located in the Tools section of our Member Resources area.

Provided by the Nonprofits Insurance Alliance Group
www.insurancefornonprofits.org
(Rev 10/2014)



Opinion: Providing Healthier Relationships Can Prevent Child Abuse

By Steve Baron | The Mercury News

Published: April 6, 2018

Surrounding children with healthy relationships throughout their childhood not only prevents child abuse and neglect while enhancing healthy childhood development and resiliency, but also provides long-term prevention of domestic, family, school, and criminal violence.

But what constitutes healthy relationships? The child doing the voiceover in a Santa Clara Child Abuse Prevention Council public service announcement at www.cacsc.org defines them very simply as being "...emotionally and physically safe, respectful, caring, and never, ever, violent or abusive," because, the child adds, "violence always hurts us."

How does it hurt children and their long term healthy development? A video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1mnVfnBTQM>) produced for the state Attorney General's office, "First Impressions: Exposure to Violence and a Child's Developing Brain," speaks to the risks: It cautions, "The younger you are, the more spongelike your brain is. The very same bio-logical sponginess that allows us to rapidly acquire language also makes children more vulnerable to trauma."

The Santa Clara County child featured in the public service announcement knows that "healthy relationships help us grow to be happy, healthy, strong, kind, and productive.

"Listening and understanding" creates a win for the child and the community.

Hundreds of studies, including those by the likes of Harvard University, Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control Neuroscience, demonstrate that providing children with healthy, caring, supportive, violence-and-abuse-free relationships at home, school, and elsewhere dramatically raises the odds

of their experiencing emotional, behavioral, cognitive, social, and physical health throughout their childhood and adulthood. Resilient children are more capable of surviving the inevitable knock downs and losses of life, getting back up, recovering, and going on to lead full, constructive and meaningful lives.

Do you want to prevent violence? Surround children with healthy relationships. Work to reduce poverty. Provide early identification and effective intervention for victim/survivors of abuse, neglect, mental illness, and serious trauma. And keep guns out of the hands of those whose behavior signals serious instability or threat. Those steps will take care of the bulk of it.

Some fear that raising kids to be too nice, caring and empathetic will result in raising a generation of naïve and vulnerable individuals just waiting to be taken ad-vantage of and victimized by those who think empathy is to be used solely for the purpose of manipulation, exploitation and domination. It's a valid concern. But treating people with respect, understanding, and empathy is, in fact, compatible with possessing a healthy degree of vigilance, learn-ing the warning signs of predators, abusers, and con people, and setting and enforcing healthy boundaries. We can teach are children to be trusting, respectful individuals while also teaching them to be appropriately assertive, re-fusing to tolerate abusive behavior, defending oneself and others when necessary, and pursuing healthy self-interest without exploiting others. We have to model and teach the whole package.

Some of our political leaders could benefit by taking to heart this approach. The benefits might trickle down to more of us in the form of healthier role modeling, community, and governmental functioning.

It's good to remember the fundamentals: listening and understanding.

Steve Baron is vice chair of programs for the Child Abuse Prevention Council of Santa Clara County.

The Dangers of Distracted Parenting

When it comes to children's development, parents should worry less about kids' screen time—and more about their own.

BY ERIKA CHRISTAKIS

July/August 2018 Issue **The Atlantic**

Smartphones have by now been implicated in so many crummy outcomes—car fatalities, sleep disturbances, empathy loss, relationship problems, failure to notice a clown on a unicycle—that it almost seems easier to list the things they don't mess up than the things they do. Our society may be reaching peak criticism of digital devices. Even so, emerging research suggests that a key problem remains under-appreciated. It involves kids' development, but it's probably not what you think. More than screen-obsessed young children, we should be concerned about tuned-out parents.

Yes, parents now have more face time with their children than did almost any parents in history. Despite a dramatic increase in the percentage of women in the workforce, mothers today astoundingly spend more time caring for their children than mothers did in the 1960s. But the engagement between parent and child is increasingly low-quality, even ersatz. Parents are constantly pre-sent in their children's lives physically, but they are less emotion-ally attuned. To be clear, I'm not unsympathetic to parents in this predicament. My own adult children like to joke that they wouldn't have survived infancy if I'd had a smartphone in my clutches 25 years ago.

To argue that parents' use of screens is an under-appreciated problem isn't to discount the direct risks screens pose to children: Substantial evidence suggests that many types of screen time (especially those involving fast-paced or violent imagery) are damaging to young brains. Today's preschoolers spend more than four hours a day facing a screen. And, since 1970, the average age of onset of "regular" screen use has gone from 4 years to just four months.

Some of the newer interactive games kids play on phones or tablets may be more

benign than watching TV (or YouTube), in that they better mimic children's natural play behaviors. And, of course, many well-functioning adults survived a mind-numbing childhood spent watching a lot of cognitive garbage. (My mother—unusually for her time—prohibited Speed Racer and Gilligan's Island on the grounds of insipidness. That I somehow managed to watch every single episode of each show scores of times has never been explained.) Still, no one really disputes the tremendous opportunity costs to young children who are plugged in to a screen: Time spent on devices is time not spent actively exploring the world and relating to other human beings.

Yet for all the talk about children's screen time, surprisingly little attention is paid to screen use by parents them-selves, who now suffer from what the technology expert Linda Stone more than 20 years ago called "continuous partial attention." This condition is harming not just us, as Stone has argued; it is harming our children. The new pa-renal-interaction style can interrupt an ancient emotional cueing system, whose hallmark is responsive communication, the basis of most human learning. We're in uncharted territory.

Child-development experts have different names for the dyadic signaling system between adult and child, which builds the basic architecture of the brain. Jack P. Shonkoff, a pediatrician and the director of Harvard's Center on the Developing Child, calls it the "serve and return" style of communication; the psychologists Kathy Hirsh-Pasek and Roberta Michnick Golinkoff describe a "conversational duet." The vocal patterns parents everywhere tend to adopt during exchanges with infants and toddlers are marked by a higher-pitched tone, simplified grammar, and engaged, exaggerated enthusiasm. Though this talk is cloying to adult observers, babies can't get enough of it. Not only that: One study showed that infants exposed to this interactive, emotionally responsive speech style at 11 months and 14 months knew twice as many words at age 2 as ones who weren't exposed to it.

Child development is relational, which is why, in one experiment, nine-month-old babies who received a few hours of Mandarin instruction from a live human could isolate specific phonetic elements in the language while another group of babies who received the exact same instruction via video could not. According to Hirsh-Pasek, a professor at Temple University and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, more and more studies are confirming the importance of conversation. "Language is the single best predictor of school achievement," she told me, "and the key to strong language skills are those back-and-forth fluent conversations between young children and adults."

A problem therefore arises when the emotionally resonant adult-child cueing system so essential to early learn-ing is interrupted—by a text, for example, or a quick check-in on Instagram. Anyone who's been mowed down by a smartphone-impaired stroller operator can attest to the ubiquity of the phenomenon. One consequence of such scenarios has been noted by an economist who tracked a rise in children's injuries as smartphones became prevalent. (AT&T rolled out smartphone service at different times in different places, thereby creating an intriguing natural experiment. Area by area, as smartphone adoption rose, childhood ER visits increased.) These findings attracted a decent bit of media attention to the physical dangers posed by distracted parenting, but we have been slower to reckon with its impact on children's cognitive development. "Toddlers cannot learn when we break the flow of conversations by picking up our cellphones or looking at the text that whizzes by our screens," Hirsh-Pasek said.

In the early 2010s, researchers in Boston surreptitiously observed 55 caregivers eating with one or more children in fast-food restaurants. Forty of the adults were absorbed with their phones to varying degrees, some almost entirely ignoring the children (the researchers found that typing and swiping were bigger culprits in this regard than taking a call).

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The Dangers of Distracted Parenting BY ERIKA CHRISTAKIS (*continued*)

Unsurprisingly, many of the children began to make bids for attention, which were frequently ignored. A follow-up study brought 225 mothers and their approximately 6-year-old children into a familiar setting and videotaped their interactions as each parent and child were given foods to try. During the observation period, a quarter of the mothers spontaneously used their phone, and those who did initiated substantially fewer verbal and nonverbal interactions with their child.

Yet another rigorously designed experiment, this one conducted in the Philadelphia area by Hirsh-Pasek, Go-linkoff, and Temple's Jessa Reed, tested the impact of parental cellphone use on children's language learning. Thirty-eight mothers and their 2-year-olds were brought into a room. The mothers were then told that they would need to teach their children two new words (blicking, which was to mean "bouncing," and frepping, which was to mean "shaking") and were given a phone so that investigators could contact them from another room. When the mothers were interrupted by a call, the children did not learn the word, but otherwise they did. In an ironic coda to this study, the researchers had to exclude seven mothers from the analysis, because they didn't answer the phone, "failing to follow protocol." Good for them!

It has never been easy to balance adults' and children's needs, much less their desires, and it's naive to imagine that children could ever be the unwavering center of parental attention. Parents have always left kids to entertain themselves at times—"messaging about in boats," in a memorable phrase from *The Wind in the Willows*, or just lounging aimlessly in playpens. In some respects, 21st-century children's screen time is not very different from the mother's helpers every generation of adults has relied on to keep children occupied. When parents lack playpens, real or proverbial, mayhem is rarely far behind. Caroline Fraser's recent biography of Laura Ingalls Wilder, the author of *Little House on the Prairie*, describes the exceptionally ad hoc parenting style of 19th-century frontier parents, who stashed babies on the open doors of ovens for warmth and otherwise left them vulnerable to "all manner of

accidents as their mothers tried to cope with competing responsibilities." Wilder herself recounted a variety of near-calamities with her young daughter, Rose; at one point she looked up from her chores to see a pair of riding ponies leaping over the toddler's head.

This is the worst possible model of parenting—we are always present physically, thereby blocking kids' autonomy, yet only fitfully present emotionally.

Occasional parental inattention is not catastrophic (and may even build resilience), but chronic distraction is another story. Smartphone use has been associated with a familiar sign of addiction: Distracted adults grow irritable when their phone use is interrupted; they not only miss emotional cues but actually misread them. A tuned-out parent may be quicker to anger than an engaged one, assuming that a child is trying to be manipulative when, in reality, she just wants attention. Short, deliberate separations can of course be harmless, even healthy, for parent and child alike (especially as children get older and require more independence). But that sort of separation is different from the inattention that occurs when a parent is with a child but communicating through his or her non-engagement that the child is less valuable than an email. A mother telling kids to go out and play, a father saying he needs to concentrate on a chore for the next half hour—these are entirely reasonable responses to the competing demands of adult life. What's going on today, however, is the rise of unpredictable care, governed by the beeps and enticements of smartphones. We seem to have stumbled into the worst model of parenting imaginable—always present physically, thereby blocking children's autonomy, yet only fitfully present emotionally.

Fixing the problem won't be easy, especially given that it is compounded by dramatic changes in education. More young children than ever (about two-thirds of 4-year-olds) are in some form of institutional care, and recent trends in early-childhood education have filled many of their classrooms with highly scripted lessons and dull, one-sided "teacher talk." In such environments, children have few opportunities for spontaneous conversation.

One piece of good news is that young children are prewired to get what they need from adults, as most of us discover the first time our diverted gaze is jerked back by a pair of pudgy, reproaching hands. Young children will do a lot

to get a distracted adult's attention, and if we don't change our behavior, they will attempt to do it for us; we can expect to see a lot more tantrums as today's toddlers age into school. But eventually, children may give up. It takes two to tango, and studies from Romanian orphanages showed the world that there are limits to what a baby brain can do without a willing dance partner. The truth is, we don't really know how much our kids will suffer when we fail to engage.

Of course, adults are also suffering from the current arrangement. Many have built their daily life around the miserable premise that they can always be on—always working, always parenting, always available to their spouse and their own parents and anyone else who might need them, while also staying on top of the news, while also remembering, on the walk to the car, to order more toilet paper from Amazon. They are stuck in the digital equivalent of the spin cycle.

Under the circumstances, it's easier to focus our anxieties on our children's screen time than to pack up our own devices. I understand this tendency all too well. In addition to my roles as a mother and a foster parent, I am the maternal guardian of a middle-aged, overweight dachshund. Being middle-aged and overweight myself, I'd much rather obsess over my dog's caloric intake, restricting him to a grim diet of fibrous kibble, than address my own food regimen and relinquish (heaven forbid) my morning cinnamon bun. Psychologically speaking, this is a classic case of projection—the defensive displacement of one's failings onto relatively blameless others. Where screen time is concerned, most of us need to do a lot less projecting.

If we can get a grip on our "technoference," as some psychologists have called it, we are likely to find that we can do much more for our children simply by doing less—regardless of the quality of their schooling and quite apart from the number of hours we devote to them. Parents should give themselves permission to back off from the suffocating pressure to be all things to all people. Put your kid in a playpen, already! Ditch that soccer-game appearance if you feel like it. Your kid will be fine. But when you are with your child, put down your damned phone.



Happy Birthday CCNS

Cupertino Co-op Nursery School had the most incredible turnout for their 65th Anniversary Celebration.

They had a family drive all the way from Livermore for the event! ♥ There was a group of moms that came by that were parents in the program back in the early 90's, they had a past President/VP and Treasurer from when they moved to their current site in 1986, and they had past Board members, graduates, and current families in attendance. They had almost 450 attendees!

They had pumpkin play dough, leaf bathing, tree painting, scare crow alley, a photo staging area and wagon rides. They had pancake breakfast made by their current Board of Directors and Teachers in honor of the celebration. There was even a cake made by a chef in their program. All of the children were able to decorate their own little cake.

The most exciting part of the morning was singing Happy Birthday to CCNS and having everyone blow out the candles on our cake.

It is obvious from the photo what a loving community they have created. What a blessing for the families of CCNS! ♥

Happy Birthday to CCNS!



The Goose Story

by Dr. Harry Clarke Noyes
ARCS NEWS, Vol. 7, No. 1
January 1992

Next fall, when you see Geese heading South for the Winter, flying along in V formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way: as each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way we are.

When the Head Goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point.

It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs with people or with geese flying South.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

What do we say when we honk from behind?

Finally, and this is important, when a goose gets sick, or is wounded by gunshots and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly, or until it dies.

Only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group.

IF WE HAVE THE SENSE OF A GOOSE, WE WILL STAND BY EACH OTHER LIKE THAT.





RECIPE: SNOWMEN CAKE POPS

Makes around 60 cake pops (30 snowmen)

Vanilla Cake (Makes 1 9"x13" cake)

- 2 cups sugar
- 3 1/4 cups flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, soft
- 1 1/4 cups milk, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 eggs

Preheat the oven to 350°F and lightly grease a 9" x 13" pan.

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, flour, baking powder, and salt.

Add butter to the dry ingredients and mix at low speed until the mixture looks sandy.

In a small bowl or measuring cup, combine milk and vanilla. Add to sand-like mixture and mix for a couple of minutes at low speed.

Turn mixer to low speed and add 1 egg while it's running. Increase speed to medium and beat for 30 seconds. Repeat method 3 more times with each egg.

If needed, scrape the sides of the bowl and mix for at medium-high speed for 30 more seconds.

Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for around 27 minutes. Cake will be golden brown and just beginning to pull away from edges of pan when done. You can also test it by inserting a toothpick, which should come out clean.

Vanilla Frosting

- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 1-2 tablespoons of milk

In a large bowl, cream butter and vanilla until combined.

Adding 1 cup of sugar at a time, mix into butter until thoroughly combined.

Mix in milk until you reach the desired consistency.

Assembling the cake pops:

- White chocolate (approximately 20 ounces)
- Canola oil (optional)
- 6" lollipop sticks
- Pretzel rods, broken into thirds
- Black edible ink pen
- Chocolate covered sunflower seeds

Once cake is completely cooled, cut into 6 pieces. Using your hands, crumble each piece into a large bowl (or you could use a food processor instead).

Add frosting to bowl and mix with the back of a spoon or your clean, dry hands until thoroughly combined.

Roll into 1 1/2-inch balls.

Place cake balls on a baking sheet covered in wax paper and chill for several hours in the refrigerator or for 15 minutes in the freezer. (If you put them in the fridge, I recommend freezing them for 10 minutes while you melt the chocolate.)

In a double boiler or in a microwave, melt the chocolate, stirring until all lumps are gone. Stir in a 1-2 tablespoons of oil to thin the chocolate if desired (the more you add, the thinner the coating will be).

Once chocolate is melted, remove from heat and pour into a cup. Let cool for a few minutes.

Remove cake balls from freezer. Working with 2 balls at a time, stack them. Dip one end of a lollipop into the melted chocolate, then stick it straight down into the stacked balls.

Holding the lollipop stick, dip both cake balls into the melted chocolate until they're completely covered and quickly remove.

Hold pop over cup while excess chocolate drips off (if needed, tap your wrist with the opposite hand to help the process).

Place onto wax paper. Push 2 pretzel pieces onto opposite sides of bottom ball and 1 orange chocolate covered sunflower seed onto the middle of the top ball.

Once chocolate has hardened on all pops, use edible ink pen to draw eyes, mouth and buttons.

Store covered in fridge until ready to serve.

The Last Time

(author unknown)

From the moment you hold your baby in your arms you will never be the same

You might long for the person you were before

When you had freedom and time And nothing in particular to worry about

You will know tiredness like you never knew it before Days will run into days that are exactly the same

Full of feedings and burping Nappy changes and crying

Whining and fighting

Naps or a lack of naps

It might seem like a never-ending cycle

But don't forget...

There is a last time for everything There will come a time when you will feed your baby for the very last time They will fall asleep on you after a long day And it will be the last time you ever hold your sleeping child

One day you will carry them on your hip then set them down And never pick them up that way again You will scrub their hair in the bath for one last time And from that day on they will want to bathe alone

They will hold your hand to cross the road Then will never reach for it again They will creep into your room at midnight for cuddles And it will be the last night you ever wake to this

One afternoon you will sing "the wheels on the bus" and do all the actions Then never sing them that song again

They will kiss you goodbye at the school gate The next day they will ask to walk to the gate alone

You will read a final bedtime story and wipe your last dirty face They will run to you with arms raised for the very last time.

The thing is, you won't even know it's the last time Until there are no more times. And even then, it will take you a while to realize.

So while you are living in these times, remember there are only so many of them and when they are gone, you will yearn for just one more day of them. For one last time.