

2017 Annual KFRC Newsletter



KEWEENAW FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

850 W SHARON AVE - STE 6, HOUGHTON, MI 49931 ~ (906) 482-9363 ~ WWW.KFRCCKIDS.ORG

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of KFRC,

A short time ago I was the mother of two young children—shortly after that a parent of middle schoolers, then high schoolers, college students and even a graduate student. And if you asked me, I'd say a short time ago was yesterday. But in reality I haven't had a toddler in 24 years; I haven't had to run to the school with forgotten gym shoes in 15 years; I haven't had to take off work for a sick child in over 10 years; and I have never had to parent an adolescent as part of the Facebook generation.

But one of the things I have been able to do over the last 20 something years is watch and connect with the families and children that have been part of the KFRC. I feel fortunate to have had children in my life way beyond my own children's youth. Holding a baby on

my lap, working a puzzle with a determined toddler, carrying on a conversation about play with an active boy, and interviewing a pirate, a superhero



and train conductor have been rich experiences that made the last 23 years fly by. It is these interactions paired with what I have learned about children over the years that has led me

to recognize that... "What's good for them (children), is good for everyone." It's an easy viewpoint to live by....a nap, a place to play, a good book, time in the day to daydream, less screen time, breakfast, hugs, a clean environment, good schools, good health care, a warm house and a community that cares.

So this year, my retirement year, I am writing my last newsletter article and dedicating it to every child that has been part of KFRC programs. It is you who have given me inspiration and hope for our future, and it is you who have helped make these last 23 years seem like a very short time.

From the bottom of my heart,

THANK YOU!

Catherine Benda
Executive Director

"When you take the time to actually listen, with humility, to what people have to say, it's amazing what you can learn. Especially if the people who are doing the talking also happen to be children."

~ Greg Mortenson, *Stones Into Schools: Promoting Peace With Books, Not Bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan*

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT KFRC?

Last Fiscal Year (10/01/15 through 09/30/16):

- KFRC distributed “Welcome Baby” bags containing information on community resources to 336 families who gave birth at Aspirus & U.P. Health. Parents were also provided a free pass to the Tree House and the opportunity to sign up for the *Parenting the 1st Year* newsletter. This program is made possible in part through a collaboration with the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative (CCGSC) and funding from Copper Country Kiwanis, Michigan’s Children Trust Fund (CTF) and Superior Child Abuse Prevention Council (SCAPC). *Parenting the 2nd & 3rd Year* newsletter is also available to families that subscribed to the *1st Year* thanks to funding provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. A total of 3940 *Parenting the 1st Year* and *Parenting the 2nd & 3rd Year* newsletters were distributed to area families last fiscal year.



- KFRC’s Home-Based Educator provided 298 home visits to 27 pre-school age children and their parents as well as to expectant mothers. This program is made possible through a partnership with BHK Child Development (BHK) and through funding from CTF and SCAPC.



- KFRC’s Occupational Therapist served 14 children and their parents/caregivers through the TRAINS program with 158 child visits made both on an individual and a group basis. TRAINS is funded through CTF and CCGSC.

- KFRC provided a total of 152 playgroups at 3 locations serving a total of 152 families with 242 children. The total number of child visits was 1496 to these socializations. Playgroups are made possible in part through a partnership with BHK, CCGSC and through private funding.

• 32 of the socializations were *Tummy Time* playgroups which are specific to babies up to age one and their families. Last fiscal year, *Tummy Time* served 29 families with 39 children with the number of child visits totaling 150. *Tummy Time* is made possible through a grant from CTF and funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



- KFRC provided 13 “Playtime in the Park” outings at various local parks between June and August. A total of 84 families with 161 children were served with the number of child visits totaling 463 (that’s an average of 35+ kids per session!). Playtime is funded in part by BHK and CCGSC.



- KFRC provided up to 6 Tree House open sessions per week throughout the year. 414 families with 594 children attended open hours with the number of child visits totaling 2131.

- KFRC provided 23 area families with needed clothing and other items from the Baby & Maternity Closet.

A LOOK BACK AT SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- **2017 Ring in the New Year!** A great time was had by all 100+ children and adults of all ages in attendance at this year's snowshoe and sledding event. There were free snowshoes available to use, a scavenger hunt, story walk, face painting and lots of hot cocoa, mac-n-cheese, chili, fruit and other goodies to enjoy. We are so grateful to everyone who helped make this event so successful! A complete list of our wonderful sponsors and volunteers is on page 6 of this newsletter.



- **Literacy Events!** Promoting literacy within our programs has become an important focus for KFRC. In a collaboration with the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative, the Portage Lake District Library, and the Great Start to Quality U.P. Resource Center, two successful Story Walks were held last year. The first one, held in August, featured "Going on a Book Hunt." The walk began at Bridgeview Park in Houghton and led to the Portage Lake District Library. Once inside the library, children were able to make their own books. A total of 14 families with 23 children took part in this event. The October Story Walk, also beginning at Bridgeview Park and ending at the Library, featured the book "Dappled Apples" with children creating art using apple prints! 24 families with 40 children were in attendance.



"The Hungry Caterpillar" was the theme of our June literacy playgroup sponsored by CCGSC. Children painted their own caterpillars out of egg cartons and the story was read. A felt board with food from the story was available as well as puppets. The event concluded with all of the children enjoying a healthy snack. 15 parents with 25 children attended.

Literacy was also the focus of both the first and last Playtime in the Park in 2016. At the first Playtime in June, children from Kathy Wetton's 4th grade class from CLK Elementary School wrote notes in books that were then given to the children at Playtime. A story was also read after snack. 15 children attended and received books. The last Playtime in the Park featured a book swap. Families could bring up to 5 books and swap them with other families. 15 families with 24 children participated.

- **KFRC 5 Year Olds Graduate!** On a child's 5th birthday, he or she officially graduates from KFRC programs. In 2016, we had over 200 children graduate with several choosing to celebrate their very own "I'm Five!" Day at the Tree House where they receive a graduation cap and certificate.



- **KFRC Celebrates 25 Years!** In April 2016, KFRC reached a major milestone of having served families with young children in the community for 25 years! We celebrated with a Dinner/Dance fundraiser at the Brownstone Hall in Atlantic Mine in June. Over 120 people attended including KFRC's co-founder, Margaret Sottile! We are thankful to the businesses and individuals who helped to support this fun filled event. A complete list of the very generous 25th Anniversary sponsors can be found on page 6 of this newsletter.



- **Dr. Seuss's Birthday!** In March 2016, we celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday at the Tree House. Children were able to decorate their own Cat in the Hat mask and then settle in to listen to a Dr. Seuss favorite read by KFRC staff. Oobleck (the Dr. Seuss science experiment) was also available for sensory play. 12 adults with 18 children attended.



HEALTHY KIDS IN A DIGITAL WORLD - REMEMBER TO **unplug**

unplug to **CONNECT**

Children need nurturing relationships!

Kids who spend less time with screens spend more time with their families.

Caring adults help children:

- Feel comfortable with themselves
- Have successful friendships
- Love learning



Children benefit from connecting with nature, too!

Watch clouds • Splash through puddles • Collect leaves

HEALTHY KID TIPS

Screen-free connections don't have to take a lot of time; they can easily happen every day:

- Chat on the way home from child care
- Cook meals together. Kids love stirring and measuring
- Share songs and stories during bath time

NO APP OR PROGRAM IS AS INTERACTIVE AS A TEACHER, PARENT, OR PLAYMATE.

unplug to **LEARN**

How do preschoolers learn best?

- Exploring with all their senses
- Through hands-on, free play
- Having lots of conversations
- When grown-ups read to them

Children who spend less time with screens:

- Do better in school
- Have more time for creative play and interacting with caring adults, two activities essential to learning

HEALTHY KID TIPS

Choose books without added noises and moving pictures—let kids imagine their own

DIGITAL FEATURES CAN INTERFERE WITH STORY UNDERSTANDING WHICH IS AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD LITERACY.

unplug for **HEALTH**

Children who spend less time with screens:

- Fall asleep faster
- Sleep longer
- Eat healthier
- Get more exercise



Be a positive role model

Kids learn screen-time habits from parents and caregivers

HEALTHY KID TIPS

- Encourage outdoor, free play as often as possible—it helps develop strong, healthy bodies
- Make bedtime routines screen-free—kids who use screens at night have more sleep problems
- Keep screens out of bedrooms
- Enjoy screen-free, family meals—they encourage healthy eating

GIVEN THE CHANCE, YOUNG CHILDREN LOVE TO RUN, SKIP, JUMP, DANCE AND CLIMB

unplug and **PLAY**

Children naturally create their own fun. But if they ever need help getting started, here are a few suggestions:

Alone or with a friend

- Draw with sidewalk chalk
- Dig in the mud
- Make sheet tents for indoor camping
- Play dress-up
- Build with cardboard boxes



During chores

- Play "I Spy" at the grocery store
- Make sorting laundry a game
- Sing songs while cleaning up

Traveling and eating out

- Find cars in different colors
- Count stops until your station
- Draw on paper napkins and placemats



FOR MORE IDEAS

screenfree.org/screen-free-activities



Did You **KNOW**?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends avoiding screen time for children under 2 and suggests limiting screen time for children 2 and older to no more than 1-2 hours per day.

Citations available at www.commercialfreechildhood.org/unplug

7 PARENT-TESTED TIPS TO UNPLUG AND PLAY

Tip #1: Rearrange the furniture

Turn your living room into a place for family interaction and play by arranging the furniture so the TV is not the focus of the room.

Did you know? Young children who watch more television show increased aggression, but kids who spend less time with screens spend more time with their families, fall asleep faster, sleep longer, and have more time for creative play.

Tip #2: Start the day screen-free

Create a morning routine that does not involve screens.

Did you know? Screen time has been linked to attention problems in children, but kids who spend less time with screens do better in school and have more time for interacting with caring adults.

Tip #3: Enjoy screen-free meals

Make meals a time for your family to talk about the day without distraction from TV, smartphones, and other screens.

Did you know? Screen-free family meals encourage healthy eating, and children who spend less time with screens eat healthier.

Tip #4: Encourage sensory play

Provide easy play options, like sensory play—which gives children the chance to explore using their sight, touch, and other senses—to engage kids while you get things done around the house.

Did you know? Young children learn through exploring with their whole bodies, including all of their senses.

Tip #5: Explore the outdoors

Make memories by planning outdoor activities that the whole family can enjoy together.

Did you know? Spending time in nature is important for healthy child development. Research even finds that green outdoor settings seem to reduce ADHD symptoms in children.



Tip #6: Create Activity Kits

Make activity kits using supplies you already have to keep children busy during transitions (the time between one activity and the next) and other tricky times of the day.

Did you know? Toys like puzzles, blocks, and shape games—great items for an activity kit—help children develop spatial skills, which are linked to success in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

Tip #7: Limit your own screen time

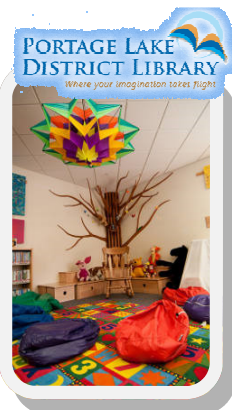
Take a break from your smartphone, tablet and other screens during periods of the day to give your child your uninterrupted attention.

Did you know? Research shows that mothers have higher quality communication with their children when doing non-screen activities together, like reading and playing with toys. Research also finds that kids learn screen-time habits from their parents and caregivers.

<http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/resource/real-life-strategies-reducing-children's-screen-time>

screen-free week May 1 - 7, 2017

On May 1—7, children, families, schools and communities will rediscover the joys of life beyond the screen. Plan to unplug from digital entertainment and spend all that free time playing, daydreaming, creating, exploring and connecting with family and friends!



One great way to unplug is reading books! **Screen Free Week is also Children's Book Week!** If you haven't already, this week would be a great time to take your child to the Portage Lake District Library in Houghton! They have a Storytime every Wednesday and Thursday in May at 10:15AM. Children, along with their parent or caregiver, can listen to a story read by a library staff member and then make a craft. Also, for kids in grades K-3, AmeriCorps will have its monthly Kids Book Club on May 13th from 1:00-3:00PM. Everyone is always welcome to attend these fun events!

The Keweenaw Family Resource Center staff came up with a list of their favorite children's books as suggested reads (see column to the right). Be sure to check them out!

KFRC STAFF FAVORITE CHILDREN'S BOOKS



Cathy:

Little Bear by Maurice Sendak
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams

Andra:

The Pout Pout Fish by Deborah Diesen
Edward the Emu by Sheena Knowles
The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn



Kathy:

The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter
Big Red Barn by Margaret Wise Brown
Charlotte's Web by E.B. White

Tessa:

Love You Forever by Robert Munsch
Oh the Places You'll Go by Dr. Seuss
The Book With No Pictures by B.J. Novak



Pam:

Is Your Mama a Llama by Deborah Guarino
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff
Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

Lori:

In My Heart by Jo Witek
The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton
Blueberries For Sal by Robert McCloskey



Gail:

The Mitten by Jan Brett
Click Clack Moo by Doren Cronin
Just Go To Bed by Mercer Mayer



2016 FRIENDS OF KFRC'S TREE HOUSE INDOOR PLAYGROUND

Russ & Monica Alger
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 Jean Baillod
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 Jason & Kathy Carter
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 Christopher Coxon
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 Paul & Karen Lewis
 Alex Mayer & Suzanne Van Dam
 Suzanne McLean
 Willie & Gloria Melton
 Peter & Cynthia Method
 Michele Miller
 Walter & Sheila Milligan
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In Honor of.....Given By:

Catherine & John Joyce...Brian & Kathleen Joyce
 Milo, Brooks & Emmett...Larry & Rachel Lankton
 R.P. Shlaes.....Linda Lohmann
 Ava & Greta Wolff.....Pete & Cindy Method
 Vera Riley.....Margaret Sottile

In Memory of.....Given By:

Ted A. Ricchi.....Bruce & Jackie Barna
 Tacy Richardson.....Robert & Karen Keen
 Norman McLean.....Suzanne McLean
 June Hawthorne.....Dennis & Pauline Moore

Faith Morrison
 Jon & Gail Neufeld
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 Ruth Wisti

SPECIAL EVENT SPONSORS & VOLUNTEERS

KFRC's 25TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

In April 2016, KFRC celebrated a quarter century of serving families with young children in the Keweenaw with a 25th Anniversary Party. This event was made successful thanks to the following sponsors:

**ASPIRUS KEWEENAW ~ PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATES ~ RE/MAX DOUGLASS REAL ESTATE
 RIVER VALLEY BANK ~ U.P. HEALTH SYSTEM ~ CHARLES & SUSANNA WALLACE**

2017 RING IN THE NEW YEAR FAMILY SNOWSHOE & SLEDDING EVENT

Last January, KFRC held its 6th annual Ring in the New Year and it was, by far, the most well attended yet! We appreciated the use of the Nara Chalet and the surrounding trails, courtesy of the Nara Family and the City of Houghton. We are also thankful for the support of our event sponsors and volunteers:

**COPPER COUNTRY GREAT START COLLABORATIVE ~ EDWARD JONES-STEVE ZUTTER ~ ASPIRUS KEWEENAW
 RIVER VALLEY BANK ~ SHOPKO FOUNDATION ~ U.P. HEALTH SYSTEM ~ MAGNUSON HOTEL FRANKLIN SQUARE
 BHK CHILD DEVELOPMENT ~ LITTLE HUSKIES CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER ~ FITZGERALD'S HOTEL & RESTAURANT
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 MAGGIE'S MASSAGE SPA RESORT ~ SAYEN'S AUTO SALES ~ FIFTH & ELM COFFEE HOUSE ~ JIM'S FOODMART
 KEWEENAW CO-OP ~ BONFIRE GRILL & LIBRARY RESTAURANT ~ ROY'S BAKERY ~ HOUGHTON KEY CLUB**

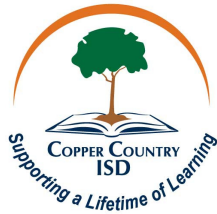
2016 BENEFACTORS, PATRONS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS



GRETCHEN'S HOUSE AT



LITTLE HUSKIES
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER



Steve Zutter
Financial Advisor
Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



Leonard Bohmann & Janeen Stephenson ~ Richard & Stacia Gray
Erik & Molly Hayenga ~ Superior Child Abuse Prevention Council ~ Margaret Sottile

If you or your business would like to join the KFRC team in providing programs for local families as a Community Partner, Patron or Sponsor, please contact us at (906) 482-9363 or info@kfrckids.org.

KFRC's Endowment Fund Donors

Donating to the Keweenaw Family Resource Center's Endowment Fund helps to maintain programs during times of economic uncertainty. Contributions to the KFRC Endowment Fund are locally controlled and professionally managed through the Keweenaw Community Foundation. KFRC would like to thank the following individuals for donating to its endowment fund in 2015:

Jim & Rhonda Bogan ~ Sarah Green ~ Linda Ott

For information on donating to KFRC's Endowment Fund please contact the Keweenaw Community Foundation by calling 482-9673.



KFRC - A Proud Partner Agency of Copper Country United Way

Once again, KFRC received funding from the Copper Country United Way in 2016. A portion of the funding came from the following individuals who kindly directed their United Way campaign donations to KFRC:

Joseph Kirkish ~ Andrea Longhini ~ Helen Ryan

KFRC uses CCUW funding as a cash match for existing grants and contracts, a major necessity when it comes to maintaining funding. This year's CCUW funds are being used as cash match for a grant from the State of Michigan Children's Trust Fund. KFRC is very grateful to the Copper Country United Way for its continued support.



KFRC Receives "Miles of Pennies" Grant

The Church Periodical Club awarded funding to KFRC through its *Miles of Pennies* grant to purchase a variety of books and educational materials. Many of the books purchased will be included in KFRC's Welcome Baby Bags which are distributed to families of newborns in the Copper Country.

SCAPC Awards Funding

Superior Child Abuse Prevention Council, a local chapter of the Michigan Children's Trust Fund, continued its support of KFRC in 2016 by funding some of its early childhood prevention programs including Safe Sleep For Infants, T.R.A.I.N.S., the Home Visiting Program and the *Parenting the First Year* newsletters available through the "Welcome Baby" Hospital Visitation program.

Baraga County Community Foundation 2nd Year Supporting Baraga County Spring Fling!

For the past two years, the Baraga County Community Foundation has awarded funding for the Baraga Spring Fling. This annual event is a collaborative effort by Keweenaw Family Resource Center, the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative and the Baraga County Task Force. The funding from the Baraga County Community Foundation was used to purchase age appropriate books for each child in attendance. This annual event provides valuable information about early learning, literacy and parent support to Baraga County families that will help increase positive childhood outcomes. The 2017 Spring Fling is scheduled for April 29th.



Keweenaw Family Resource Center

850 West Sharon Avenue, Suite #6 ~ Houghton, MI 49931

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The mission of the Keweenaw Family Resource Center is to support, enrich and strengthen family life in the Keweenaw Peninsula by providing a variety of programs which focus on families with children from birth through 4 years. KFRC is a 501©3 non-profit organization.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

04/29/17 - Copper Country Great Start Collaborative's Baraga Spring Fling at the KBIC Niiwin Akeaa Center in Baraga

06/07/17 to 08/23/17 - PLAYTIME IN THE PARK (for kids ages 0-4 and their families) every Wednesday from 10AM to Noon at different area parks. See KFRC's website for more information.

10/06/17 - KFRC's Dinner Fundraiser at the Brownstone Hall in Atlantic Mine. Good food, live music and lots of fun!

For more information on any of the events listed above, please visit www.kfrckids.org or call 906-482-9363

KFRC is supported by the Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Children's Trust Fund, BHK Child Development Board, Copper Country Great Start Collaborative, Copper Country Intermediate School District, Superior Child Abuse Prevention Council, Copper Country United Way, Keweenaw Community Foundation, Copper Country Kiwanis, local businesses, service organizations and individual donations.

KFRC is located in the Red Ridge Plaza, 850 W. Sharon Ave. #6, Houghton



Phone: 906-482-9363

Fax: 906-482-9353

Email: info@kfrckids.org

Website: www.kfrckids.org



For Tree House open hours, playgroups or special events schedule, please check our website or call the KFRC office.

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Children's Trust Fund
Protecting Michigan's Children

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