

DECEMBER 2007

NEWSLETTER

Keweenaw Family Resource Center

203 East Montezuma Ave, Houghton, MI 49931 ~ (906)482-9363 ~ www.kfrckids.org

A Note from the Director

Dear Friends of KFRC,

It is that time of year again when sometimes we feel as if there is not enough time in the day, not enough money in our wallet, and not enough ideas, shopping centers and food in the pantry to make the holiday season bright and memorable for the ones we love.

Each year I feel the holiday stress approaching earlier and earlier. The sudden urge to Holiday shop came in July this year for me, and now I find myself rummaging through bags of items trying to remember what I bought and for whom. I never thought I would board this train so early, never thought I would fret months before the season was here, and certainly never thought I would

stop looking forward to spreading the holiday cheer.

Somehow, somewhere gift shopping started becoming a task to be completed, names ticked off a list in school teacher fashion. Andrew ...

In an effort to "just get through it," it is easy to lose site of what is important and miss the season completely.

done ... check, Uncle Dave ... done ... check, and so on. In an effort to "just get through it", it is easy to lose site of what is important and miss the season completely. I've decided that this month I am going to make a concentrated effort to

follow some simple holiday rules to keep me sane:

- T Less really is more for both adults and kids of all ages.
 - T Hot chocolate and *The Polar Express* is a great wind down;
 - T Zero percent down ... just gets me into trouble!
 - T Get outside! Skate, ski, sled or make a snow angel! Take advantage of this beautiful area we call home.
 - T Breathe more ... fret less.
 - T HAVE FUN!
 - T Cherish the time spent with family and friends.
- Happy Holidays!

Catherine Benda

BOOKFAIR FUNDRAISER!

KFRC recognizes the importance of reading to your child. This Holiday Season give the gift of imagination AND support KFRC at the same time.



Throughout the week of
December 2nd - 8th, 2007

B. Dalton/Barnes and Noble will donate a percentage of your book purchase to KFRC. A KFRC Bookfair Voucher MUST be presented at time of purchase in order for KFRC to receive a percentage of the sale. Vouchers can be picked up at the KFRC office or at B. Dalton Bookstore in the Copper Country Mall in Houghton.



For bookfair vouchers or more information, call KFRC at 482-9363.

Need Some Holiday Gift Ideas?

Stop in to the KFRC office or call to order a *Keweenaw Gift Basket* for the holidays. We have many baskets and gift bags available in a variety of themes. Prices start at \$12.

Some gift basket/bag ideas include:

- The Yooper (all products made in the UP)
- Spa & Sauna
- Holiday Glow
- Coffee Craver
- Chocolate Lovers



We also offer "made to order" baskets and bags. Come check it out or call KFRC at 482-9363.

All profits from gift basket/bag sales benefit the programs of KFRC.



2007 - 2008 Playgroup Schedule

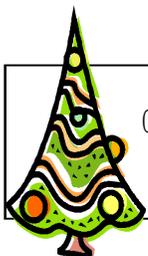
- MONDAY:** Trinity Episcopal Church
Houghton ~ 482-2010
9:30am-12:00noon
- TUESDAY:** Portage Lake United Church
Tummy Time for Infants
Houghton ~ 482-5224
9:30am-11:30am
- THURSDAY:** Lake Linden High School
Laurium ~ 337-3333
10:00am-12:00noon
- FRIDAY:** Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Hancock ~ 482-2381
9:30am-12:00noon

Special Hours for Playgroup
during the Holidays
Playgroups will be closed
December 20, 2007 - January 2, 2008
for the Holidays. Office hours
and playgroups will resume on
Tuesday, January 3, 2008.

Call KFRC at 482-9363 if you would like more information on playgroups.

KFRC Receives Capacity Compassion Fund Grant

Keweenaw Family Resource Center was recently awarded a one-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Capacity Compassion Fund. The Capacity Compassion Fund was developed to help small community organizations purchase and install infrastructure and proficiency that will help their agency grow. The moneys awarded to KFRC will be directed toward enhancing and expanding its information technology, public relations, staff professional development and financial capability.



"Never worry about the size of your
Christmas tree. In the eyes of children,
they are all 30 feet tall."
~ Larry Wilde

2007 "10 Worst Toys" List

The World Against Toys Causing Harm, Inc. (W.A.T.C.H.) recently announced its 2007 "10 Worst Toys" List at its 35th Annual Conference. This list exposes toy hazards seen year after year and includes nationally known brand names being sold by major manufacturers and retailers. W.A.T.C.H. founder, Edward M. Swartz, stresses that these particular toys are illustrative of some hazards in toys being sold to consumers, and should not be considered as the only hazardous toys on the market. These toys have the potential to cause childhood injuries, or even death.

Nominees for the year 2007 are:

1. Go Diego Go Animal Rescue Boat, Fisher Price (contains lead paint)
2. Sticky Stones, GeoCentral. (magnetized stones that, if swallowed, could "stick together across the intestines, causing serious infections and death.")
3. Jack Sparrow's Spinning Dagger, Zizzle (viewed as eye hazard)
4. Dora the Explorer Lamp, Funhouse. (potential for electric shocks and burns)
5. Lil "Giddy Up" Horse-Sassy Pet Saks, Douglas (contains fibers and small parts that could be a choking hazard)
6. Spider Man 3 New Goblin Sword, Hasbro (rigid plastic could cause injuries)
7. Hip Hoppa, Spin Master Ltd. and Vivid Imaginations, Ltd. (combination of footboard and bouncing ball that children jump on has the potential for head and other injuries)
8. B'Loonies Party Pack, Ja-Ru, Inc. (children blow balloon-like toy out of substance squeezed from tube—has potential for chemical ingestion)

9. My Little Baby Born, Entertainment, Inc. and Zapf Creations AG (baby doll comes attached to tiny pacifier that could be swallowed)
10. Rubber Band Shooter, Simple Toys LLC (shoots rubber bands and presents eye hazard)

Unfortunately, this list is just the tip of the iceberg. The toy industry has been hit by a series of recalls, including earlier this year when America's Mattel Inc. recalled more than 21 million Chinese-made toys worldwide because of concerns about lead paint and tiny detachable magnets.

More recently, millions of the "Aqua Dots" toy beads were recalled and the Chinese government confirmed they contained a substance that can turn into a "date-rape" drug after ingestion.

W.A.T.C.H., whose directors and founder are civil attorneys, doesn't conduct tests on the toys, but rather shops with an eye toward features such as small, detachable parts or hard, pointed edges it says aren't safe.

"A lot of families feel that if a toy has made it to the shelf, it must be safe," said Swartz. "The sad truth is, the frightening truth is, that is not the case."

W.A.T.C.H.'s annual "Toy Conference" has generated extensive national press and media coverage. Because of these efforts, and the positive response from both the media and the public, there have been many toy and product design changes. Swartz and W.A.T.C.H. have fearlessly exposed potentially dangerous toys to the general public. As a result, children's lives have been saved.

For more information on toy recalls and alerts, go to the W.A.T.C.H. website at www.toysafety.org, email watch@toyssafety.org, or call 1-877-55-WATCH.

From the World Against Toys Causing Harm, Inc. website and The Associated Press, 11/14/07

This list exposes toy hazards
seen year after year and
includes nationally known
names being sold by major
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Collect "Our Family" Product Labels for KFRC

Keweenaw Family Resource Center is collecting "Our Family" UPC labels to raise funds for its programs. KFRC will earn 5 cents for every label submitted. We encourage you

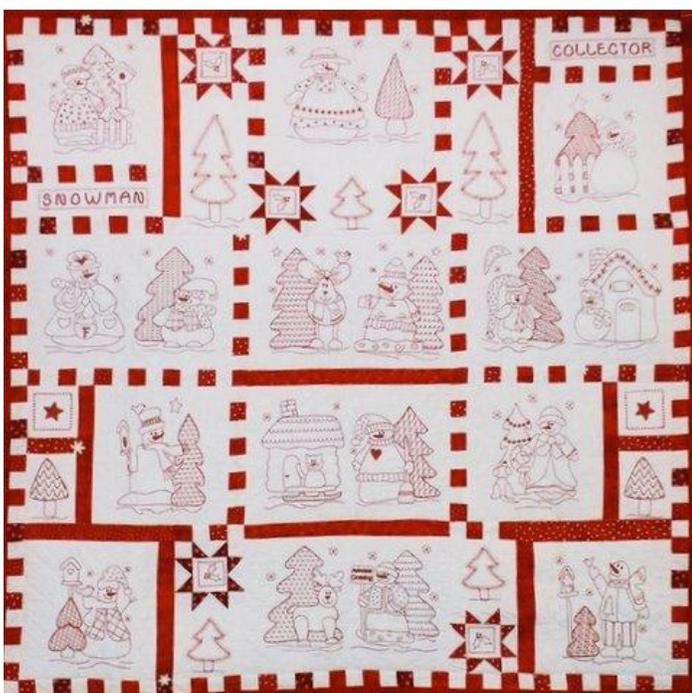
to save "Our Family" labels so that our level of programming can be maintained and hopefully expanded. Please drop your labels off at the KFRC office or at any of its playgroups. If you don't have the time to cut out every label, please drop them off anyway because KFRC has a wonderful volunteer by the name of Virginia Monroe who is willing to take on that job.

"The Snowman Collector" Quilt Raffle

You just have to smile when you see "The Snowman Collector" quilt done in traditional red work designs. Its guaranteed to chase the winter blues away!

Lynda Howell from The Stitch Connection, a Michigan based firm, is the designer of this fun and fanciful creation. All of the embroidery, piecing and quilting were done on a home sewing machine by the Sewing Servants and will mark their sixth quilt that they have generously created and donated to support the vital programs of KFRC.

Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. The drawing will be held on April 23, 2008. Please stop by KFRC or call 482-9363 for your tickets!



HATS OFF to KFRC's 2007 Community Partners...

Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Hayenga Ag Development
Kirsten & Joseph Holles
Psychology Associates of the Keweenaw, PC
Rice Memorial Foundation
Julie Williams



KFRC Serving the Community

From October 1, 2006—September 30, 2007, the Keweenaw Family Resource Center:

- Visited 352 new mothers who delivered at both area hospitals providing "Welcome Baby" bags containing information on community resources.
- Mailed an average of 382 "Parenting the First Year" newsletters each month to families with newborns in the tri-county area.
- Provided 5 playgroups and 1 story hour at 5 locations each week. The number of child visits from playgroups and story hour totaled 1182!
- Provided 312 home visits to 27 children 3 years of age and under.
- Hosted 19 "Playtime in the Park" outings throughout the summer months at a variety of local parks with the number of child visits totaling 425.
- Provided 33 area families with needed items from our Baby & Maternity Closet.



203 East Montezuma Avenue ~ Houghton, MI 49931

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Organization
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KFRC is located on the second floor of the Trinity Episcopal Church Annex on 203 East Montezuma Avenue, Houghton, MI.
Office Hours: Mon—Thurs, 9am-4pm;
Fridays by appointment
Phone: (906) 482-9363 Fax: (906) 482-9353
Email: kfrc@chartermi.net Website: www.kfrckids.org

KFRC is supported by the Michigan Department of Education, BHK Child Development Board, Copper Country Intermediate School District, Michigan Children's Trust Fund, Canterbury House/Episcopal Association for College Work, Copper Country United Way, Trinity Episcopal Church, Superior Child Abuse Prevention Council, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, local businesses, service organizations, and individual donations.

KFRC Staff
Cathy Benda, *Director*
Lori Bradley, *Administrator*
Geri Merkey, *Nurse Educator/*
EarlyOn Service Coordinator
Laura Nakkula, *Family Services*
Pam Sheridan, *Family Resource Coordinator*
Kathy Williams, *Center-Based Coordinator*
Nickie Barna, *Program Assistant*

KFRC Board of Directors
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Keweenaw

community foundation

For good. For ever.

**Copper Country
United Way**



Children's Trust Fund

Protecting Michigan's Children