



Back to School with Recreation Services

by Suellen Dabney, Longmont Recreation Services

Whether you are seeking an outlet, exploring activities, or wanting to learn a new skill, Longmont Recreation Services has back to school programs for all ages.

Preschool

There are plenty of options for preschoolers with Longmont Recreation Services. Preschool Sports Clinics are a popular introduction to soccer, t-ball, or basketball. Dancing and tumbling classes provide both boys and girls time to explore their coordination and interests in small class, structured settings. If free-form is more your child's style, check out Itty Bitty City on Fridays, 9-11am, beginning September 10.

School Age Youth

Opportunities abound for school age youth – ranging from swimming programs, to sports programs, to leisure programs. The youngest, kindergarten through second grade, have the opportunity to play basketball in a supportive, non-competitive environment, where the real thrill is the FUN of it all. Third through eighth graders can join a variety of team participation programs: Fall Coed Volleyball, CARA Fall In-Line Hockey, and CARA Cross Country. Tennis lessons, Tae Kwon Do, Rapid Ropers Jump Roping, horse riding, climbing trees, and skateboarding classes are all waiting for you. Check out pottery painting, acrylic painting, and drawing workshops. Interested in learning to play piano and making music? Looking for science enrichment? Recreation Services hosts a variety of workshops and camps. You can even learn how to sew: sewing machines provided!

Teens

Teens have the best of both worlds with Longmont Recreation Services. Not only are many of the programs that exist for school age youth also available for teens, teens are eligible to join in many adult programs as well. The American Red Cross Babysitter's Class is perfect for young teens.

Adults

Adult programming in Longmont Recreation

Services includes sports leagues for all interest and ability levels. Try soccer, flag football, kickball, and basketball leagues – no team required. Don't miss our archery, tennis, and running programs. On the leisure side, sign up for \$5 lectures on topics to enrich your life. Break out of that rut and take ballroom dancing lessons, painting classes, or learn how to play the piano, guitar, or maybe drums. Not sure how to make that digital camera work? There are classes taught by patient people who show you how to make the most of the camera settings. Work with pottery, make your will, and venture outdoors the fly fish or hike. Aikido and Tae Kwon Do offer ways to handle conflict and confrontations with drop-in and monthly classes available. Vast selections of yoga and fitness classes offer ways to center, re-energize, and invigorate your life.

If you haven't seen lately what Longmont Recreation Services has to offer you, take another look. The Fall Recreation Brochure is available for viewing online or for pick up at any Longmont Recreation facility. We look forward to seeing you!

St. Vrain Memorial Building, 700 Longs Peak Ave,
(303) 651-8404

Longmont Recreation Center, 310 Quail Rd,
(303) 774-4800

Centennial Pool, 1201 Alpine St,
(303) 651-8406

www.ci.longmont.co.us/rec



August 2010 Issue No. 5

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Upcoming Learning Opportunities

Doing Business with Contractors

Longmont Senior Center
Tuesday, September 14
303-651-8411

Discovery Days

Longmont Museum
September 2010
303-651-8374

www.ci.longmont.co.us/museum/education/discovery_days.htm

Saturday Morning Eco Art for Kids

Longmont Recreation Services
September 11—October 9
303-651-8404
www.ci.longmont.co.us/rec

We're Interested in Hearing From You

Let us know how you're able to spread positive lifelong learning information in your community. As a way to inspire your fellow Learning Ambassadors, we'll include results and your good ideas in upcoming issues! Send your experience and results to Karen Roney at karen.roney@ci.longmont.co.us, or call 303-651-8633.

Great Math Websites for Kids

By Brad Jolly

Students, would you like to spend less time doing math homework, while getting better grades?

Parents, would you like to help your children learn math, even if you were not great at math yourself?

Teachers, would you like to reduce the time you spend on planning and grading, while providing each of your students with individually-tailored practice and lessons?

All of these things are now possible, thanks to two great math Web sites and three small documents that help guide students' math learning through these Web sites.

The first Web site is A Maths Dictionary for Kids, at www.amathsdictionaryforkids.com. This colorful, animated site was created by Australian teacher Jenny Eather, and it

includes definitions and activities for more than 600 math terms. The dictionary covers most of the math vocabulary words used from kindergarten through high school, and even relatively sophisticated math students will find something new – can you name all of the Platonic solids, for example?

The second Web site is ThatQuiz, at www.thatquiz.org. This site, which includes English, Spanish, French, Polish, Slovenian and Chinese versions, is primarily devoted to math, though it also has sections devoted to vocabulary, geography and science. The site covers math concepts from basic addition and subtraction through calculus, and each quiz is customizable for length, difficulty and problem type.

These sites are both excellent, but they lack structure to help track student progress through the material. That is the purpose of the three documents found at www.topmath.info/mtn. These three documents, which are in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format, allow students (and their parents and teachers) to quickly find areas where students can improve their math performance. The first document is a list of the approximately 300 most important math vocabulary words used from basic arithmetic through algebra and geometry. The words are carefully grouped by subject, so that related terms are listed together, and students can quickly go through the list to determine what they know and what they need to learn. Definitions and activities for nearly all of these terms can be found on A Maths Dictionary for Kids.

The other two documents are designed to work with ThatQuiz. One of the documents lists settings and options to use with specific ThatQuiz topics, and the other document is a two-page file that students can use to track their progress on the ThatQuiz site.



In summary, by using the two Web sites and three documents listed above, students can quickly get help on the math topics that they need to work on. In addition, they can track their progress over time and get a quick visual summary of what they know and where they can learn even more. Please give these tools a try, and send your feedback to mathtools@topmath.info.



The Love of Reading Starts Now!

By Linda Kopecky, Mayor's Book Club

Do I read to my child enough? Do we have enough books or the right kind of books in our house? Won't my child just start reading when he is interested? Is it the school's job to teach reading, or should I be doing something too? These are typical, yet difficult, questions for parents. We all know that reading is important – even crucial – for success in school and later life. Fostering a love of reading early is one key to developing great reading skills. The Mayor's Book Club is a program of the City of Longmont that works on just that – providing fun and age appropriate books to any 3 and 4 year old in Longmont. Children receive these bilingual books through the mail each month, they can watch the Mayor and a Spanish speaking community leader reading these books on Channel 8 each weekday morning, and they receive a Mayor's Book Club backpack and T-shirt with their membership. But what can you do as a parent? The Every Child Ready to Read program suggests 6 pre-

reading skills you can work on – from birth!

1. Narrative Skills – the ability to describe things and events and tell stories. Spend some time discussing the images on a page while you are reading.
2. Phonological Awareness – being able to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. Practice sounds like with your child.
3. Print Motivation – being interested and enjoying books. Board books are durable and kids love to handle them – take some in the car or have several in your child's play area for their own exploration.
4. Vocabulary – knowing the names of things. Learning new names is a great idea for walks or car rides. Try labeling items around the house!
5. Print Awareness – noticing print, knowing how to handle a book and knowing how to follow words on a page. When you read with your child, take a moment to notice the cover and the title page – even have your child turn the pages for you.
6. Letter Knowledge – knowing letters are

different from each other, their names and sounds, and recognizing letters everywhere. Signs are great for this – STOP, EXIT, PUSH, ZOO. Be aware of the letters in the world around you.

Have fun reading – everything! – with your child! New worlds await all of you. For more information about the Mayor's Book Club or to enroll your 3 or 4 year old, go to: www.ci.longmont.co.us/youth_services/early_care/index.htm#mbc or call the Youth Center at 303-651-8580.



Longmont SeniorNet

By Michele Waite, Longmont Senior Center

Ten years ago the City of Longmont Senior Services Division, Front Range Community College, and the national organization, SeniorNet, Inc. formed a partnership to provide older adults (50+) education for and access to computer technologies to enhance their lives and enable them to share their knowledge and wisdom. The Longmont Learning Center was established to provide high quality and affordable computer education to Longmont's older adults utilizing an all volunteer committee to lead, teach, and develop programs.

For the last seven years, Sarah Jane Snyder has been the chairperson of the Coordinating Committee for the Longmont Learning Center and a committed leader to the program. The

entire committee is comprised of exceptional volunteers. These instructors, coaches, and committee members teach, develop new class ideas and curriculum, write manuals, respond to ongoing changes in technology and software, in addition to providing approximately 125 classes and workshops throughout the year. These volunteers have also gone way beyond classroom learning. Longmont Learning Center volunteers assist members with minor home pc troubleshooting, they serve as greeters at FRCC on the first day of classes each semester, they volunteer their time and skill at local senior residences to assist older adults in getting and receiving email and foster other internet use, they have assisted older persons in long term care settings in writing their memoirs, and they have enhanced computer learning for a group of developmentally disabled adults.

Computer classes and workshops are held at Front Range Community College's Longmont campus in a state of the art computer classroom. Class topics include Introduction to Computers I, II, and III, Digital Cameras, Word 2007, Windows 7, PhotoShop, Genealogy, and Graphics. Friday morning special topic workshops scheduled for this fall include: file management, housekeeping your pc, address labels, and buying a pc.

A \$20 yearly membership allows students to register for classes and attend the weekly Friday afternoon open lab. For more information, to register, or to obtain a complete class and workshop schedule contact the Senior Center, 910 Longs Peak Avenue or call 303 651 8411. You can also view a short YouTube video about the program at www.ci.longmont.co.us/sen_ctr/classes/seniornet_computer.htm



What is School Readiness?

An excerpt from "Promoting School Readiness for Latino Children in Boulder County" published by the Early Childhood Council of Boulder County

Many people think that "school readiness" means being able to count or recite the ABC's. But researchers say that we need to look at several qualities and skills that describe the overall development of children to know if they are entering school ready to learn. This widely-accepted definition of school readiness was developed by the National Education Goals Panel, based upon its review of research in child development and early education. According to this panel's work, the elements of school readiness are:

Health: A child who is not healthy finds it difficult to learn. Good health covers all aspects of physical well-being, motor development and physical abilities.

Social and Emotional Development: Being socially and emotionally healthy helps a child form relationships and develop behaviors that are needed for a positive school experience. Young children must have stable and secure relationships with adults, and have experiences that build self-confidence and help them learn to be a part of a group, understand the emotions of others, and express or interpret their own feelings.

Language Development: Language enables a child to become a part of the social and learning experiences in school. In addition to listening and speaking, a child who is ready for school should show the earliest signs of an interest in reading and writing and some related skills.

Cognitive skills: Children who are ready for school have general knowledge about things and events around them and how they are similar, different, and otherwise related to

each other. These skills show some understanding of logic, problem-solving, broad mathematical concepts, and imagination.

A fifth quality of school readiness, "approaches to learning," looks at a child's inclination to use his or her skills and knowledge to become involved in learning. Little has been written about this aspect of school readiness in the research literature. Also, relevant to this study, "approaches to learning" describes a set of behaviors that is likely to vary based upon cultural practices. For these reasons, this aspect of school readiness was not considered in this study.

Since children are wonderfully complex beings, none of the elements of school readiness stands alone from the others. Children who are sick are not able to observe and gain knowledge from the world around them. Children who are emotionally upset won't be able to concentrate on learning to speak and understand language. Children who don't develop language skills may get frustrated in trying to make their feelings known. Because these factors are closely related, the best way to encourage school readiness in young children is to use approaches that touch on all of the qualities described above. Recognizing that children are not able to develop these qualities by themselves, the National Education Goals Panel set objectives that involve parents, child care and preschool providers, and the whole community in preparing children to enter school:

- Parent must be empowered to be children's first teachers.

- Child care and preschool providers must have the knowledge and skills needed to care for and teach all children.

- The community must have a strong system of services that support the basic needs of families as they raise their children.

The National Education Goals Panel also urged close examination of the readiness and capacity of schools to receive young children. The Panel identified characteristics that indicate schools are ready to support the learning and development of young children, including providing a smooth transition between home and school, striving for continuity between early care and education programs and elementary schools, being committed to the success of every child and to the success of every teacher and every adult who interacts with children during the school day, serving children in communities, and taking responsibility for results.



About LifeLongmontLearning

LifeLongmontLearning is a community-based, City-sponsored movement to increase access to learning opportunities available in our area. It is the vision of this effort's leadership—which represents government, education, community and business—to ensure that all children enter school ready to learn; for all students to acquire the education and skills to be successful in the 21st century; for all working adults to improve their employability in a changing world; and for retired adults to continually enrich their lives. For more information, visit www.LifeLongmontLearning.com.