



WINTER 2012

# MOM'S THE WORD!

A Mothers' Center of Central New Jersey Publication

## General Information

### What is the mothers' center?

The Mothers' Center is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization founded in 1978 by mothers for mothers of children of all ages. Our aim is to enhance parenting by offering daytime discussion groups, evening parenting education workshops, playgroups, social activities and library resources. The Mothers' Center offers the opportunity to share experiences, learn more about parenting and form lasting friendships.

### Meeting policy

RSVPs are key to any successful gathering. All events and meetings, including steering, are open to all members. Please RSVP to the contact person for events at least 24 hours in advance.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

The Mothers' Center  
of Central New Jersey  
PO BOX 294  
Cranford, NJ 07016  
908-561-1751  
(please leave a message)  
[mccnj@westfieldnj.com](mailto:mccnj@westfieldnj.com)  
(Email)  
<http://westfieldnj.com/mccnj>

Phone numbers or other information may have been purposefully omitted in this newsletter to protect our members' privacy. If you are a new member and have not yet received a membership contact list, please leave a message at the above phone number or email address to get one. Thank you for your understanding.

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When thinking about what to write for the newsletter, I first thought about the holiday season... being thankful for friends and family, pleased that my children liked most of their presents, and very happy that the gift giving season is almost at a close (Chanukah/Christmas seems to be extending to New Year's weekend). You would think that all the stress would be gone and calmness would be bestowed upon the Handsman household, but there's something else on my mind... planning our first trip to Disneyworld. It's a big moment in a child's and parent's life. Like many NJ families, we have grandparents in Florida, so we're combining this important vacation with visiting family. We're going to pack a lot into a short amount of time. Quality time, hotels, meal plans, character dining, parks, budgets, etc. Trying to plan the perfect vacation so that we can capture the moment when the girls meet Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty for the first time. Ahh, all these expectations are enough to make my head spin. Any bets on which of my family members is going to crack first?!

We're lucky, though, my in-laws are coming and will be able to share in the joy and help with the girls. This should make things easier, right? Still, so many people to please. I have to remind myself what Disneyworld is supposed to be about. Being a kid – young and old - at the *happiest place on earth*. The truth is I'm excited. I'm excited to see my children experience Magic Kingdom for the first time, and I'm excited to be there myself and maybe steal a little bit of alone time for me and my husband. It's been almost 20 years since I've been to Disneyworld. That's a **long** time! So, for me this vacation will be a whole new experience, which is a good thing. It looks like this trip will have something for everyone.

Something for everyone... just like the Mothers' Center in so many ways. The idea of something for the kids and something for me is a little bit of why I need and enjoy the Mothers' Center so much. There are no rides or major attractions, but it is a place that lets me be myself and my children have fun, too, and I don't have to apologize for it. I can do Zumba or chat with my friends, and my children can play with theirs. The beauty of the Mothers' Center is that it helps with the stress instead of adding to it – crazy, I know!! Another thing that I love about the center is that there are so many different types of women coming together, and in most cases, it feels like the center offers something for everyone.



There's a lot to enjoy, however, like a trip to Disneyworld, the Mothers' Center can't succeed without some planning. Being involved in the center is vital. For example, my participation in the Steering Committee and my work on activities helps the Mothers' Center run and hopefully grow. And like my in-laws coming on our trip, members help each other and work together towards the same goal – hopefully making it a better experience for everyone. So, while you're looking through this newsletter and deciding what groups you'll sign up for, think about how the center could most benefit from your talents and take the time to get involved.

Happy New Year!

-Jessica H.

## Upcoming Events & Activities

### EVENING BOOK GROUP

8:00 PM

January 6th

February 3rd

March 1st



Like a good read? Join the monthly evening book club to talk about books and enjoy the company of some of the Mother's Center members. For more information about book club or if you are interested in joining, please contact Tina H. at [mccnjnews@hotmail.com](mailto:mccnjnews@hotmail.com).

### WINTER OPEN HOUSE

January 11h

9:30-11:00am

Garwood Presbyterian Church



Please come to the Mothers' Center for our Winter Open House. Group registration will be open at this time. You can meet our faculty, catch up with old friends, meet prospective members and register for your groups. This is for members and non-members alike. Please join the fun!

### MC COOKING CLUB

January 19th

8:00pm

Location &amp; Theme TBD



Members prepare a dish according the theme and bring it along with copies of the recipe to the chosen meeting spot. This months theme is still to be determined. You'll be notified via yahoo when details are finalized. If interested in joining the fun, please contact Alysia R. at [mccnjnews@hotmail.com](mailto:mccnjnews@hotmail.com)



*Emma Margaret*

Born December 21st, 6lbs. 15oz.

Congratulations to Trish, John  
and Big Brother Jack!

### AFTERNOON BOWLING

January 20th

February 17th

March 23rd

3:30pm

Jersey Lanes,  
30 Park Ave., Linden



NO GUTTER BALLS ALLOWED! But don't worry...luckily there are gutter guard rails that make this possible. Bring your kids out for a fun and cheap winter activity. We'll meet at about 3:30pm at the Jersey Lanes in Linden. It's \$3 per game bowled and shoe rentals are free for kids sizes 5 and under. Please RSVP to Rosie K. at [mccnjnews@hotmail.com](mailto:mccnjnews@hotmail.com).



### WHITE ELEPHANT

January 24th , 8pm

Cranford Hotel Restaurant &amp; Pub

1 South Union Ave., Cranford

Mark Your Calendars for our annual White Elephant Gift Swap. This is a fun opportunity to swap one of your unwanted gift for someone else's. You will need to bring a wrapped gift from home. It should be something given to you recently. Maybe you will bring a set of glasses that don't match your décor, maybe earmuffs that hurt your ears, or possibly a cookbook that doesn't appeal to you. Whatever it is, it should be worth roughly \$20-\$30. We will draw numbers and in turn each person will choose a wrapped (unknown) gift or an already opened gift from someone else. Opened gifts will be able to be "stolen" three times before the forth owner gets to keep it permanently. Of course, if a gift is "stolen" from you, you will have a chance to steal another, or choose a wrapped gift. It is usually a lot of fun! RSVP by Jan 17th to Jessica H. at [mccnjnews@hotmail.com](mailto:mccnjnews@hotmail.com).

### STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

February 7th 8:00pm

March 13th 9:30 am



Do you have some ideas for the Mothers' Center? **Please Come And Share With Us!** The Steering Committee will meet on the above dates and times. AM meetings will be held at the Garwood Presbyterian Church with babysitting available. Location for the PM meeting will be posted on Yahoo Groups. All members are encouraged to attend. RSVP to Jessica H. or Rosie K. at [mccnjnews@hotmail.com](mailto:mccnjnews@hotmail.com).

### VALENTINE'S PARTY

February Date &amp; Time TBD

Casano Community Center  
314 Chestnut St., Roselle Park



Love is in the air! This Valentine's Day we're going to celebrate by telling stories, making great crafts and lots good treats. More information will follow via Yahoo Group email.

### ETHNIC EATS

February 23rd, 7:30pm

Harrar Cafe

11 Village Plaza

South Orange, NJ

<http://www.harrarcafe.com>

This month is Ethiopian food! Nice selection of vegetarian and meat dishes... BYOB! Join other mom's for a fun night out enjoying the best of international cuisine. Come for dinner, munchies or just a drink. Do you know a fabulous restaurant? If so, we'd love to hear all about it. Please send any Ethnic Eats suggestions and all RSVP's to Gretchen B. at [mccnjnews@hotmail.com](mailto:mccnjnews@hotmail.com)

**\*More events & activities will be offered this winter. You will receive notification via the Mothers' Center Yahoo Group, so keep a lookout in your email for more information.**

\*More information for Events & Activities will be posted on Yahoo Groups. If you have any questions or suggestions for Special Events or Activities, please contact Jessica H. or Claudia C. at [MCCNJnews@hotmail.com](mailto:MCCNJnews@hotmail.com).



## STOVE-TOP MAC & CHEESE

My 6 yr. old son, EJ, didn't like the "crispy noodles" in the baked mac & cheese I use to make so looked I online for a new recipe and tried this one. He liked the texture but the flavor wasn't up his alley. On the second go-round I omitted the Dijon mustard and the outcome was "YUMMY" according to EJ, my toughest critic.

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 1/4 C. finely chopped onion
- 1/3 C. all-purpose flour
- Coarse salt
- 4 C. whole milk
- 1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 3/4 lb. small shell pasta or elbow macaroni
- 4 C. grated sharp yellow cheddar (3/4 lb.)
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce



### DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium; add onion and cook until softened, about 4 minutes. Add flour and 1/2 teaspoon salt; cook, stirring frequently, until mixture is pale golden, has a slightly nutty aroma, and is the texture of cooked oatmeal, about 5 minutes.
2. Whisking constantly, pour in 2 cups milk; add 2 more cups milk and cayenne and whisk until smooth. Cook mixture, stirring constantly along bottom of pan, until boiling, 6 to 7 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Simmer gently, stirring occasionally, until sauce thickens and does not feel grainy when a small amount is rubbed between two fingers, about 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta until al dente; drain thoroughly and return to pot. Remove sauce from heat and let cool 10 minutes. Quickly whisk in cheese, mustard, and Worcestershire. Pour cheese sauce over pasta and stir to coat.

## WINTER GROUPS:

### MONDAY

#### MORNING PLAYGROUP

(7 weeks)

9:30-11:00 am

Dates: 1/23, 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, (No Group 2/20),  
2/27, 3/5 & 3/12



Moms and kids enjoying each other's company in free play in the childcare room filled with age-appropriate toys, puzzles, coloring books and storybooks.

#### ART EXPLORATION

(6 weeks)

8 participants per group

Group A: 9:30-10am

Group B: 10:15-10:45am

Fee: \$15 (\$25 for 2 children)

Dates: 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, (NO Group 2/20), 2/27, 3/5, 3/12



Watch your toddler discover art with beginner projects like coloring, sculpting, and painting. With a focus on process rather than results we will learn techniques for (mostly) clean activities you can do at home. Class recommended for 12 months and up. The fee covers supplies, including some to keep at the end of the session. \*Please let us know of any allergies since play dough and paints contain food ingredients and can be adjusted to accommodate you.\*

#### CPR and FIRST AID

(2 week)

(On-site babysitting available)

9:30-11:00 am

Instructor Fee: \$15 for both (or \$10 one)

Dates: \*3/19 & \*3/26 (\*Preliminary dates could possibly change)

This CPR group prepares participants to recognize and care for breathing and cardiac emergencies (ages 1-12 years old) and the First Aid group is intended to help us moms respond to those common injuries and increase our knowledge of how to first respond to more serious situations. Both of these groups DO NOT include certification and are intended to serve as an introduction to these subjects. They can be taken as a pair or individually.

### TUESDAY

#### KEEP STEPPING

(3 weeks)

(On-site babysitting available)

9:30-11:00 am

Fee: \$30 (or \$15 drop-in)

Dates: 1/17, 2/28 & 3/20



Attention former S.T.E.P. participants... remember how much S.T.E.P. helped us parent more effectively and taught us skills to deal with the challenges we faced? Joann is returning on a monthly basis to guide "STEP alumni" through applying the STEP techniques towards the challenges we face now that our kids are a little older. If you have completed a STEP course outside of the Mothers' Center and are familiar with the training you are welcome to sign up too.

#### WOMENS FORUM

(4 weeks)

(FREE On-site babysitting available)

9:30-11:00 am

Dates: 1/24, 1/30, 2/7 & 2/14

Sometimes it's easy to get lost in the daily routine and get beyond small talk even when you are at a group. This Mothers' Center signature discussion group explores many issues that we face as women and mothers through a series of meaningful conversation. The topics will be selected by group members and may focus on themes such as the transitions and challenges in motherhood, changing friendships and living beyond a routine.

#### MORNING BOOK GROUP

(2 week)

(On-site babysitting available)

9:30-11:00 am

Dates: 2/21 & 3/27



Would you love to join the Mothers' Center Book Group but can't get out at night? If so, this is your opportunity to catch up on the best reads and have a great discussion with other women. The facilitator will contact you about the book selection for the February group.

## WEDNESDAY

### A to Z

(10 weeks)

(On-site babysitting available)

9:30-11:00 am

Dates: 1/18, 1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 2/29, 3/7, 3/14 & 3/21

Do you have little projects or hobbies but no time to complete them without interruption? Well now is your chance! Sign up for A-Z and bring any project such as knitting that gift sweater, organizing baby photos, clipping coupons, scrap-booking or simply balancing the checkbook. Just bring yourself and something to work on for 90 minutes (even reading the gossip mag counts) and enjoy chatting with other moms while you get those projects completed!

### MOM & BABY

(11 weeks)

9:30-11:00 am

Dates: 1/18, 1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 2/29, 3/7, 3/14, 3/21, 3/28



Whether you're a new mom or an "experienced" mom with an infant who would like to get together with other moms and their babies then this is the group for you. For first time moms this group is a great way to make new friends! Topics include how motherhood has changed your life, birth/adoption experience, and questions about feeding, discipline, scheduling, sleeping and more. Moms with 0-9 month olds welcome. We support breast and bottle-feeding.

## THURSDAY

### ZUMBA®

(10 weeks)

(On-site babysitting available)

\*\*9:15-10:15am\*\*

\$45 Group Fee

Dates: 1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15 & 3/22



Zumba® is an aerobic workout that combines Latin rhythms and easy-to-follow moves to create a one-of-a-kind experience that is fun and exciting. Come dance your way to great fitness with a certified instructor and some other Mothers' Center friends.

### MOMMY (& ME) YOGA

(10 weeks)

(On-site babysitting available)

\*\*10:15-11:15am\*\*

\$40 per family

Dates: 1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15 & 3/22



A combination of yoga for Mom, "yoga" for baby/child and bonding between the two. The intensity of the practice will be tailored depending on the participants in the group. No experience is necessary. Plan to bring a yoga mat for yourself and a blanket for your child. We also welcome Moms that would prefer a solo yoga practice or who have multiple children to utilize on-site babysitting.

## SNOW DAY ART PROJECT FOR THE KIDS - HELPFUL WINTER ORGANIZING TOOL FOR YOU!



I'm definitely putting my kids to work on this project! A drying rack and an organizer in one. This vertical clothesline brings instant order to even the smallest entryway.

### MATERIALS:

- Wooden clothespins
- Permanent markers
- Durable cord or plastic twine
- Ceiling hook

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Have your kids decorate a dozen or so wooden clothespins with permanent markers. If they'd like assigned spots for their mittens, hats, and gloves, they can label the pins or dream up a color-coding system.
2. Cut a length of durable cord or plastic twine (pictured is ribbon cord and extends from the ceiling to 2 feet above the floor). Thread the cord through the clothespins' springs, knotting it beneath each pin as you go.
3. Hang the line from a ceiling hook.

# Mothers' Center of Central New Jersey, Inc.

## Membership & Groups Registration Form

**1. Determine which group(s) you would like to take.** All groups are limited to 10 members, first come, first served so sign up early! Some groups may be filled or may not run. Please specify first and second choices.

**2. Determine your babysitting needs and appropriate fees.** Babysitting fees are \$5.50 per group meeting for one child; \$4.00 per group meeting for the second child and \$2.50 per group meeting for each additional child. Please specify any allergies your child may have. Parents must stay on premises during discussion groups. If the cost of babysitting prevents you from taking a group, please contact Sarah S.

Group Length	One Child	Two Children	Three Children
1 week	\$5.50	\$9.50	\$12.00
2 weeks	\$11.00	\$19.00	\$24.00
3 weeks	\$16.50	\$28.50	\$36.00
10 weeks	\$55.00	\$95.00	\$120.00

**3. Make all checks payable to:** The Mothers' Center of Central New Jersey, Inc.

**Mail registration form and check to:** Mothers' Center of CNJ, PO Box 294, Cranford NJ 07016, or bring completed registration form to our open house on January 11th.

**4. Important Note:** You will receive confirmation of your group via telephone from the facilitator prior to the beginning of the group. Groups begin promptly at 9:30 AM and end at 11:00 AM unless otherwise noted. Your promptness is essential to the group to run smoothly. Your attendance is expected each session. If for any reason you cannot attend a session, please call your facilitator as soon as possible.

-----detach and return-----

### Registration Deadline: January 11, 2012

Registration for groups will only be accepted if both babysitting and membership fees have been paid.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Husband/Partner \_\_\_\_\_

Children	Birthday (mo/yr)	Any allergies?	Need Babysitting?
_____	____ / ____	_____	yes / no
_____	____ / ____	_____	yes / no
_____	____ / ____	_____	yes / no

Which committee(s) do you want to join? (Please Circle)

**OPERATIONS**    **ACTIVITIES**    **COMMUNICATIONS**  
**GROUPS**        **OUTREACH**        **STEERING**        **FINANCE**

Which group(s) do you want to attend?

Will you need babysitting?

For how many children?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

yes / no  
 yes / no  
 yes / no

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Dues (1/12-8/12) \$35.00, Alumni Members \$15**

Payment:	Membership Dues	\$ _____	(If you paid dues in the fall 2011, you <u>do not</u> owe any dues)
	Group Fees (if any)	\$ _____	
	Babysitting Fees	\$ _____	
	Adjustments	\$ _____	
	Donation to MCCNJ	\$ _____	
	(optional and tax deductible)		
	<b>Total Enclosed</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>	

### PHOTO RELEASE AGREEMENT (Choose One)         I Agree         I Do Not Agree

The Mothers' Center of Central New Jersey may use photographs of me or my child/ren, without our names for any lawful purpose, including for example such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_