

Kids Korner

Find Winter Fun

Winter Wonders

Are you tired of winter and anxiously awaiting the first warm sunny days of spring?

Well, you're not alone. But instead of wishing away what can seem like the long dreary days of winter, why not celebrate them!

It is true that every season has its own beauty. Winter's may be a little more difficult to find, but it is there.

Take some time to find for yourself what can make the winter season so beautiful and special (try to go beyond the obvious new fall snow). If you think you might need a little help, check out these books from your local library or bookstore, make yourself a cup of your favorite hot drink, curl up cozy, and enjoy!

- **Snow Crystals** — Describes the history and how to collect snow crystals and dewdrops; 2,453 illustrations. W.A. Bentley and W.J. Humphreys. New York: Dover Publications.

- **A Guide to Nature in Winter** A guide to the natural history of nature in the northeast and north central parts of North America. Donald W. Stokes. Boston: Little, Brown, 1976.

- **Winter Botany** — An identification guide to native trees and shrubs. William Trelease. New York: Dover Publications, (1931) 1967.

- **Wintersigns in the Snow** — Illustrates selected natural tracks and features of snowy woods, lakes, meadows, and mountains in the northern United States and southern Canada. Gerald Cox. New York 10028: Michael Kesend Publishing, Ltd., 1025 Fifth Avenue, (1975) 1984.

- **Winter Tree Finder** — A manual for identifying deciduous trees in winter. May Theilgaard and Tom Watts. Nature Study Guild Publishers, P.O. Box 10489, Rochester, NY 14610-0489.

- **Winter Weed Finder** — A guide to dry plants in winter. Dorcas S. Miller. Nature Study Guild Publishers, P.O. Box



Ready to climb walls during a dreary winter season? You can. Indoor wall climbing is offered at Park City Mall, Lancaster, and at other locations in many states.

10489, Rochester, NY 14610-0489.

- **Do Not Disturb** — Describes the mysteries of animal hibernation and sleep; pencil drawings. Margery Facklam. Boston: Little, Brown, 1989.

- **The Secret Language of Snow** — Examines over a dozen different types of snow and snowy conditions through the vocabulary of the Inuit people of Alaska. Discusses the physical properties and formation of snow and how it affects the plants, animals, and people of the Arctic. Terry Tempest Williams and Ted Major. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.

- **Snow** — A "Bungalo Book." Describes the characteristics of snow and how it is used in various environments; color and black and white illustrations. John Bianchi and Frank B. Edwards. Buffalo, NY 14205: P.O. Box 1338, Ellicott Station, 1992.

- **Robert Frost Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening** — An illustrated version of Robert Frost's poem. Susan Jeffers. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978.

- **A Guide to Wildflowers in Winter** — Describes the herbaceous plants of northeastern North America as seen in winter. Carol Levine. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

- **Winter** — An ecological handbook covering the science of winter ecology, people's reactions to it, and winter field experiences. James C. Halfpenny & Roy Douglas Ozanne. Illustrated by Elizabeth Biesiot. Boulder, CO: Johnson Books, 1989.

- **Season of Promise** — Northeastern wild plants in winter. June Carver Roberts. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1993.

- **In the Snow: Who's Been There?** — Two children on their way to go sledding see evidence of a variety of animal life; large color illustrations; explanations on back page. Lindsay Barrett George. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1995.

Scooters Are Back

The return of these retro-runners has taken many by surprise. Lots of accidents occur with the use of scooters. Here are some safety tips from the National SAFE KIDS Campaign:

- Always wear a helmet, wrist guards, and elbow and knee pads when riding a scooter.

- Be sure protective gear fits properly and does not interfere with the rider's movement, vision, or hearing.

- Children ages eight and under should not use scooters without close adult supervision.

- Before using a scooter, the rider or parent should check it thoroughly for hazards such as: loose, broken, or cracked parts; sharp edges on

metal boards; slippery top surface; and wheels with nicks and cracks. Defects should be corrected by a qualified repairperson.

- Ride scooters on smooth, paved surfaces free from traffic. Avoid riding on streets or surfaces with water, sand, gravel, or dirt.

- Do not ride the scooter at night.

- Never hitch a ride from a car, bus, truck, bicycle, etc., and limit usage of the scooter to one person at a time.

- Use caution when riding the scooter downhill. If a steep hill is encountered, step off the scooter and walk to the bottom of the hill.

(Pennsylvania Safe Kids News)

Keep Kids Active In Winter

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Children need to be active every day. It keeps them healthy and helps them grow. A good child care program will have large indoor and outdoor play areas. If children are dressed in warm clothing and waterproof boots, they can play outside in winter, unless the weather is really bad. There are also many types of indoor active play activities.

Parents, does your caregiver plan different ways for your child to be active each day? Check the daily schedule. Take time to visit when you can.

Here are some ways to keep kids active and busy.

Outside:

- Take walks. This is fun for children of all ages.

- Make snow people, snow structures, and snow angels.

- Play games such as Follow the Leader and Tag.

- Go sledding or sliding on a small slope. Flat pieces of cardboard work well for this activity.

- Throw snowballs at a target such as a tree, laundry basket, or box. This is a safe way to organize snowball throwing.

Inside:

- Play games such as Duck, Duck, Goose and other circle games.

- Dance to music.

- Have a parade with pretend instruments.

- Act out a story.

- Do jumping and hopping activities.

- Sing action songs.

- Play beanbag toss games.

- Do simple exercises.

Caregivers can get new ideas from free educational materials available at Penn State Cooperative Extension's Better Kid Care office. Call 1-800-452-9108 for information and to order.

Explaining Death To Children

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — What would you say to your child who asks, "When will Grandpa wake up?" not long after Grandpa has just died?

On any ordinary lazy Sunday afternoon, the child might have asked this question at least a dozen times. He was anxious for his Grandpa to awake from his customary nap in his big, overstuffed chair. But this isn't any ordinary Sunday afternoon. And Grandpa isn't taking his customary nap.

You and your family have just arrived at the funeral parlor to receive the hundreds of relatives and friends who will come to the viewing. The child could be two or four or even older. After shuffling as slowly as possible into the room where Grandpa's body is, the child rushes up beside the casket and turns to you with the question, "When will Grandpa wake up?"

For some parents this is not a difficult question. They answer honestly and use language and ideas that the child will understand.

"Grandpa is dead — he won't wake up."

"What is dead, Mommy?"

"Dead means that Grandpa stopped breathing and his heart stopped beating (working). Grandpa won't ever move again. He won't wake up."

"Why, Mommy?"

"Because everything that lives will die someday."

"I want Grandpa to wake up, Mommy."

"I know you do, and so do I, but Grandpa won't wake up."

"I'll miss Grandpa."

"So will I — we will all miss him very much. We are all very sad. That's why Mommy and Daddy are crying. Are you sad?"

"Yes, Mommy."

"It's okay to be sad, and it's okay to cry because you loved Grandpa and you miss him. Come climb up on Mommy's lap and let's be sad together."

In this example, the mother is honest and tries to explain to the child what death is, being careful to keep the explanation straightforward, but simple. The mother also recognizes that the child needs some comfort and security — they are sad together, holding one another.

Other parents try to deny

death. They may keep the subject of death from the children, thinking they are too young to deal with it. These parents evade children's questions or give half answers or tell the child something false such as "Grandpa went to sleep." The child either becomes afraid to go to sleep at night or lives each day waiting for Grandpa to wake up.

Sometimes parents keep a child ignorant of death by not being honest with the child when news of a loved one's death arrives. The telephone call brings sad news that Aunt Jane just died.

Mother or Dad begins to cry.

The child asks, "What's wrong, Daddy?"

"Nothing!" is shot back.

The child may think that she had done something wrong, may feel guilty, and tries to understand what she has done to get the adults all upset.

It is strange that some parents will not talk about death with children. Sometimes these same parents allow their children to see death in living color! If the children watch television it is difficult to escape seeing a dead

person, if only on the evening news.

It is also strange that some children are kept in the dark about death, since not many years ago death was an accepted part of everyone's life. In years gone by, people died at home and were waked in the home. But with the introduction of modern medical treatment, hospitals came into existence. Many people die away from home. Thus death has become separated from the family.

Regardless of where people die, death is a part of life and children do come in contact with death at an early age. We can help children understand death by talking about it and by honestly answering their questions. We can help prepare children to deal with death by acknowledging that they have a need and a right to mourn the same as an adult does.

There are many opportunities to talk about death. If you have pets — dog, cat or even goldfish the occasion may be present. You may use the sight of a dead animal along the road to spark discussion about death.

Children can be given the opportunity to mourn. Some parents are against taking the children to the funeral parlor, or to the church for funeral services, or to the cemetery. However, these experiences are a part of life that children can understand, if we but take the time to explain and have the appropriate attitude about death (and life).

The inevitable question that almost every child will ask, surfaced at the funeral parlor late that night after all the relatives and friends had left: "Daddy, will I die?" With a bit of a lump in his throat, the father said:

"Yes, but not for a long, long time."

"Will you die, Daddy?"

"Yes, but not for a long, long time."

With that the family went home. There was a note of peace about them. Everybody knew about all there was to know about Grandpa's death — they had been honest with one another.

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