



FEBRUARY 2023

EXTENSION

STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES Family and Consumer Science News

Friendship, Love, and Kindness for Children



It's all about love in the month of February. Valentine's Day, Make a Friend Day and Random Acts of Kindness Day are all celebrated this month. These special days on the calendar are positive and upbeat celebrations of loving and caring for our families, friends and communities.

In spite of so much love and light found in these celebrations, February is also a cold and dreary month. On Feb. 1, Oklahomans will get only 10.5 hours of sunlight compared to just over 14.5 hours on June 21. What can parents do to keep themselves and their children from dealing with the "winter blues?"

"In addition to making sure children continue to eat nutritious meals and get lots of physical activity during the winter, parents need to make sure children have opportunities to spend quality time playing with their friends, said Laura Hubbs-Tait, [Oklahoma State University Extension](#) parenting specialist.

"Recent research on adolescents emphasizes the importance of close friendships for teens' mental health and earlier research demonstrated the importance of friends for children."

Hubbs-Tait and Eileen Kerrigan, a recent graduate of the marriage and family therapy master's program in OSU's Department of Human Development and Family Science, have recently completed several fact sheets to help parents guide their children in making friends and helping teens with anxiety.

"Children with supportive friends enjoy school more, are more altruistic and suffer fewer negative consequences if they do experience bullying. They also adjust more positively to transitions – for example, when moving from elementary to middle school," said Hubbs-Tait.

Kerrigan said there are specific things parents can do starting when children are toddlers to help them be more likely to have friends and to develop friendships they can rely on during times of stress, such as staying inside for longer periods of time during the winter.

Continued .

Beaver County Extension Office

Liz Gardner-McBee
Extension Educator, FCS/4H & CED
Beaver Co. Courthouse
Lower Level

Address

111 W 2nd Street
Beaver, OK 73932

Phone

580-625-3464

Email

elizabeth.mcbee@okstate.edu

Website

<https://extension.okstate.edu/county/beaver/beaver.html>

Social Media

Facebook: Beaver County
OSU Extension





FRIENDSHIP

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“The first way parents can help children develop good friendship skills is to practice emotion coaching,” Kerrigan said. “This includes listening and accepting children’s feelings and labeling and confirming them.”

Acknowledging feelings is vital. Hubbs-Tait said showing children that you’ve listened to them and accepted their feelings is important.

“When a child’s voice sounds sad, ask them if they’re feeling sad. This gives the child a label they can apply to their feelings,” she said. “As a parent, you can then ask them if a hug would make them feel better. Being able to say, ‘I’m mad’ or ‘I’m sad’ is essential to a child’s ability to be a good friend.” Help your child develop calming techniques such as taking deep breaths or counting slowly. Kerrigan said this helps children learn to control their feelings and is a good emotion coaching routine.

“This can help them relax and talk about why they’re mad, sad or overexcited,” she said. Older children may still need to be reminded to take deep breaths, but parents also need to encourage positive self-talk.

“When your teen comes home from school saying they’re upset because they’re being rejected from joining groups at school, using positive self-talk can make a big difference,” Hubbs-Tait said. “Tell them they are a good friend and encourage them to tell themselves ‘I am a good friend and I need to ask them why they’re mad and what I can do to help.’”

Social skills developed and used at home may not work with neighborhood children or classmates. Kerrigan said children should use the “pause and take a breath” routine before asking to join the group.

“Children may need to observe quietly and understand what the others are doing before asking to join the activity. Then, do something related to that activity,” she said. “For example, if the group is playing softball and no one is gathering up foul balls, go get the balls and bring them to the catcher or toss them to the pitcher.”

Something else Kerrigan said to keep in mind is avoid the don’ts – don’t criticize, don’t interrupt, don’t try to change the rules and don’t force yourself into the group. Instead – be patient. Do something fun on your own and when other children come to see what you’re doing, invite them to join you.

If a child or teen may harm themselves or a parent is unsure about whether a child is suicidal and what they should do, or needs immediate support, the American Academy of Pediatrics says call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline or text TALK to 741741. Trained lifeline staff will help parents or caregivers figure out immediate steps to protect the child. More information about [what parents can do to support friendships](#) or [helping children make friends at school](#) is available online.



BEEF BARLEY SOUP

Intensely savory, with plump pearls of barley and perfectly cooked vegetables.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds (1kg) boneless beef chuck roast, cut into 1 1/2-inch steaks, or 3 pounds (1.3kg) bone-in beef short ribs, ribs removed and reserved (see notes)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon (15ml) canola oil
- 3 large carrots (10 ounces; 280g), diced
- 1 large yellow onion (12 ounces; 340g), diced
- 2 ribs celery (6 ounces; 170g), diced
- 4 medium cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 3 quarts (3L) homemade or store-bought chicken stock (*see notes)
- Sachet of 2 sprigs fresh thyme, 1 bay leaf, and about 5 whole black peppercorns
- 1 cup pearly barley (7 ounces; 200g)
- 1/2 teaspoon (3ml) Asian fish sauce (optional)
- Minced fresh parsley, for garnish

1. Season beef with salt and pepper. In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat oil over high heat until lightly smoking. Working in batches if necessary, add beef and cook, turning occasionally, until well browned on all sides, about 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a large platter.
2. Add carrot, onion, celery, and garlic to pot and cook, stirring and scraping up any browned bits from the bottom, until lightly browned, about 6 minutes. Scrape vegetables into a heatproof bowl and set aside. Add stock to pot, return to heat, and scrape up any browned bits from bottom of pot.
3. Meanwhile, cut beef into chunks and add to pot, along with reserved bones, if using, and herb sachet. Bring to a simmer, then reduce heat to maintain a low simmer and cook until beef is tender, 1 to 2 hours; skim any foam that rises to the top.
4. Discard bones and herb sachet. Add barley, reserved vegetables, and fish sauce, if using, and simmer until barley and vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. If soup is too dry, top up with water to achieve desired consistency. Serve, garnishing with parsley.

Make-Ahead and Storage: Beef barley soup freezes very well and will keep, frozen, for 3-6 months

*Most store-bought beef stock has poor flavor, which is why we recommend chicken stock instead; if you have good-quality homemade beef stock available, feel free to use it.

NUTRITION FACTS (PER SERVING) Makes 12 servings
320 CALORIES, 16g FAT, 19g CARBS, 26g PROTEIN

Many more tips are in the article with the recipe at <https://www.seriousseats.com/beef-barley-soup-recipe>.



4 Wednesday Classes
MARCH 1, 8, 22, & 29
6:30pm – 8:00pm
Free to people with Diabetes
and Caregivers

Extension's
LEAD Program
Live well, Eat well, be Active with Diabetes.

The L.E.A.D. program provides tools, resources, and hope to individuals who are managing type 2 diabetes and their caregivers,. Each of L.E.A.D.'s four researched-based modules focus on aspects of living well, eating well and being active with diabetes. Join the program to learn more about type 2 diabetes management, including:

- * Meal Planning
- * The Plate Method
- * Carb counting
- * Strategies for modifying recipes
- * Resources and tips for increasing physical Activity
- * Potential diabetes complications
- * Making healthful food choices
- * Weight loss
- * Benefits of being active

Free Diabetes Series especially geared for managing Type 2 Diabetes. Classes will be Wednesdays in March from 6:30-8:00 PM. MARCH 1, 8, 22, *, 29 None Spring Break.

Classes will be held at the Beaver Co Extension Office. Please Register by calling the Beaver Co Extension at 625-3464.

LEAD Program Results

- 76% of L.E.A.D. participants have reported maintaining or losing weight.
- 68% of L.E.A.D. participants reported their glucose was better managed.

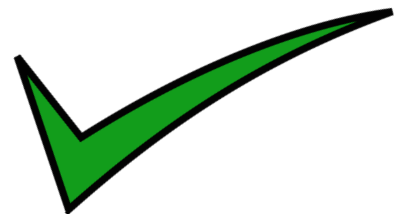
REALITY CHECK

(Lifelike Financial Scenarios for High School students)

March 30—Fair Building

Volunteers Needed

Please Contact the Extension Office if you can help.





Beaver County Extension Office
 PO Box 339
 Beaver, OK 73932

OHCE NEWS

Upcoming EVENTS

- ◇ MARCH 3—**OHCE SPRING COUNCIL** 10AM in the Extension Office. \$12 Registration for provided lunch. **RSVP by 2/28.**
 - ◇ MARCH 25—**NWD OHCE MEETING** —ENID
 - ◇ MARCH 27—**Refurbished Doilies and Hankies** in the Extension Office **at 1:00pm**. Bring your recycled heirlooms items for show and tell. *Note time change* Dignity Bib Sewing at 2pm—Come and Go
 - ◇ MARCH 28—**DIGNITY BIB SEWING WORKSHOP** 10AM-4PM Come and Go
 - ◇ MARCH 30—**REALITY CHECK** for HS students, 9-noon Volunteers needed, script provided.
 - ◇ 3/30 (Sewing cancelled)
 - ◇ APRIL 26—**SEMI-HOMEMADE COOKING @** Fair Ground's Kitchen —NOON
 - ◇ Every T/TH Adult Exercise Classes @10AM Library
- Dignity Bibs Come & Go Sewing.** Come to one or both workdays at the Ext. Office: March 27@2pm-4pm; March 28@ 10am-4pm. If able to donate Men's Shirts, prints or plaids suggested. *Even if you don't sew—we need cutting and pressing help too.*

OHCE MOTTO

“Overlook the little faults of those around you and strive to see the good in everyone.”

SPRING COUNCIL — MARCH 3

Please plan to attend Beaver County OHCE Spring Council on March 3rd at the Extension Office. We will start at 10am. Topic to be discussed will be the Beaver County duties during the District OHCE Meeting on 3/25. We will help with a fundraiser for our 2024 District Meeting Expenses. Please bring your club's items for donations for baskets or the country store. Lunch will cost \$12.00 payable to Beaver Co OHCE. La Donna Oswald Meier is scheduled to be our special guest speaker following lunch. Her inspirational story and unique talents are sure to make for a memorable afternoon .

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Family & Consumer Sciences helps communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth, and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.

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