

# Little Bridges News



November 2019

## Calendar of Events

### **Food Drive**

11/1 – 11/30

### **CLOSED – Veteran's Day**

Monday 11/11

### **School Age**

#### **All Day Camp**

Friday 11/1

&

Mon. – Wed. 11/25 – 11/27

### **CLOSED – Thanksgiving**

Thurs 11/28 & Fri 11/29

### **Harbor House Toy Store**

All gifts due by Fri 12/6

### **Preschool**

#### **Christmas Program**

Thurs 12/12 7:00 pm

## Enrichment Classes

### **Soccer Shots (2-5 yrs)**

Mondays

### **Tuff Tumblers (2-4 yrs)**

Thursdays

### **Science (3 -5)**

Varies

### **Private Music (K-5)**

Guitar & Piano Lessons

## **Fighting Hunger, Changing Lives**

Little Bridges and Canyon Creek Church are sponsoring a food drive for the Contra Costa County Food Bank. We will be collecting food for the entire month of November. Our goal is to fill all 6 bins at least twice, which would be a donation of 1,200 pounds of food!

The most needed food items include canned ready-to-eat meals (chili ravioli, etc.), peanut butter, canned meats and stews, whole grain cereal, fruit juices, tuna, pasta, rice and beans.

## **Share the Joy of Christmas**

Little Bridges will again be partnering with Harbor House in Oakland to help share some Christmas joy with families less fortunate than us. Look out for a Sign-Up Genius on-line form via email to participate. Donations of new and unwrapped toys are needed for children aged 0 – 18. **Last day to drop off donations is Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>.**

Harbor House serves under-resourced families through educational, spiritual and economic programs. Again this year, Harbor House has an Amazon Wish List of desired toys and clothes. Amazon will send your gifts directly to Harbor House to be organized and then put out at their Christmas Store. The Christmas store is open on a Saturday and provides parents a place where they can purchase gifts for their children at greatly reduced prices.

Both the food drive and the gift giving opportunities we have here this month offer priceless experiences for you to participate in with your kids. What a great way to teach and instill compassion, sharing, empathy and unselfishness in your kids who are so very blessed with an excess of food and toys.

## **Jacket Weather**

Fall weather means layers of clothes, sweater and jackets. Please label EVERYTHING. We will always return a lost item to the owner when we can. If not labeled, all items left out will be placed in our Lost & Found area located in the Little Bridges office.

## **Follow Us & Like Us**

Did you know Little Bridges has a website, a FaceBook page and an Instagram account? We would love to have you follow us!

Thoughts from Ms. Jacque...

## Big, Big, Big Love

I had my first baby 35 years ago this month and I wish I would have known how having children would make all my feelings **MORE** - more thrill, more love, more anguish, more adoration, more fear, more gratitude, more doubt, more crazy.

The Feels are all big. At times, being a parent is the most frustrating, boring, numbing, exhausting, lonely job. But also the opposite. As I type this, I can literally 35 years ago, recall how Curtis' chubby little cheeks felt against my lips; I kissed them hundreds of times a day. I remember exactly how my heart surged seeing his smiling face and squealing at the sight of me.

And then I had another son...and then years later another son, and then another.

There were days of big exhaustion and big guilt, but also days of big pride. Every night with four kids fed, bathed, read to, rocked, snuggled, and tucked into bed, I felt like some sort of warrior princess. Who can handle this many kids, a fulltime job, marriage and even school?? APPARENTLY I COULD.

You can too, Young Momma. The new mom brain can be a real enemy, saying you are not enough and falling apart and a hot mess. But look at your children. Their shoes are on the correct feet, at least one has combed hair, those round bellies are clearly well-fed, and peek in their little eyes: lots of light there. Those are the eyes of loved, cherished, cared-for babies. You're doing it. You are raising whole humans, healthy and happy and safe.

Can I tell you what happens next?

First, you will get your groove back. Your brain returns and it comes back wiser and way less judgmental. (Except for that older lady in the store as your toddler pitches an epic fit for CoCo Puffs cereal: "*My children never behaved that way.*") But, most of us "old moms" get it now. We love all you young moms behind us. We'll share our child biting stories with you and encourage you at Target as your tot takes off his pants and streaks down the aisle and assure you easier days are ahead.

And they are!

Well, easier in most ways. Kids grow up and pee-pee on the potty! They make their own sandwiches! They wash their own hair! *They go to school for seven hours a day. I'm serious.* The nonstop physical parenting slows down. The daily marathon relents. They stop biting their friends.

But I have some bad news too. These little ones? You fall even more madly in love as every year passes. That part doesn't get any better. The Big Feelings stay big, especially the tender ones. The kids grow up and you cannot stop it. That beautiful 3-year-old you're tucking into bed? Blink and you'll be sending him to Driver's Ed. I swear to the heavens.

Let me tell you about Big Feelings: my youngest son, is now a sophomore in college. I can hardly speak of it. **It went so fast.** People told me it would and I didn't believe them.

I'll tell you something most moms don't: adult children are mostly awesome. Sure, you also want to strangle them at times, but they are funny and smart and interesting. It's not all great (that youngest was caught skateboarding after midnight in the dorm parking lot recently), but *no stage of parenting is all great.* Young Momma, set that future fear aside. You will adore that baby when he is one and eight and thirteen and twenty-two and thirty five.

So what I wish I would have known before bringing that first son home? *The baby years are short, kind of like five minutes...underwater.* It doesn't seem like it, but he will go on to kindergarten then read the Harry Potter series then join the "ninja club" in middle school then play high school football and then move way from home, and you will hit your knees and thank God that you got to parent this kid, that he was yours, that he walked into your arms at one and will walk out of them at eighteen, but my gosh...what a gift. I wouldn't trade one day of Big Feelings, because the good ones far outweigh the hard ones, and the one that endures above all else is **Big, Big, Big Love.**