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- October 5th – 26th
- November 2nd – 23rd

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Sound Off!

The Connections staff wants to hear from you. What do you like about this monthly newsletter? What would you like to see more of? Are the articles helpful?

Please email ideas to: press@northwestmedia.com

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Child Neglect and Food Hoarding

By Charley Joyce, LICSW and Rick Delaney, Ph.D.



Food hoarding is a common issue displayed by foster-adoptive children. Food hoarding can be central in a child’s world and resistant to change. Additionally, hoarding food behavior can bedevil and bewilder parents. So why does a child hoard food?

Often food hoarding is directly connected to significant neglect that the child has experienced in consistently having their basic needs for life sustaining food denied or inadequately met. As a result, the child is forced to become prematurely self-reliant in meeting their own basic needs. For example, in a situation where the parent is chemically dependent, resulting in inconsistency in providing and having food available, it would be reasonable that when food is available that a child would view this as an opportunity. It would be logical that a survival mentality would develop, causing the child to respond to the availability of food by overeating or hoarding food. In neglectful situations, food hoarding is a wise alternative to ongoing food deprivation.

What can be confusing and frustrating to foster-adoptive parents is why food hoarding continues when the child is being properly cared for and has no

apparent reason to continue to hoard food. Unfortunately, child neglect often leaves a child insecure, seeing himself as unworthy of care and lacking in a sense of partnership with foster-adoptive parents. They may not feel that their foster-adoptive parents are available and sensitive, drawing this false conclusion from their previous “blueprint” of being victimized by negligent parenting.

When trying to positively impact food hoarding, we hope to move the child from solitary and secret self-parenting behavior to getting needs met within a healthy parent-child relationship. We want to avoid drawing battle lines around food. If we lock the pantry, the refrigerator, the kitchen, we create a “mine and yours” mentality, one the child is very familiar with from the past. Designing family interventions should be preceded by a close look at the child’s motivation for hoarding food, which is to at all costs avoid food deprivation caused by neglect.

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A Special Word to our Canadian Friends:

Happy Thanksgiving! October 12 is Canadian Thanksgiving. This is a celebration of the harvest and is marked with feasting, football and fellowship.

We also wish to say “*Thank you!*” to Canadian foster families. We hope you enjoy Foster Family Week, October 18-24.



Care-Free Cooking – Banana Pancakes

- Ingredients:**
- ▶ 1 banana
 - ▶ ½ cup whole wheat flour
 - ▶ 1 cup white flour
 - ▶ ½ teaspoon salt
 - ▶ 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - ▶ 1 egg
 - ▶ 1 cup milk
 - ▶ Vegetable oil for frying
 - ▶ Pancake toppings such as maple syrup, jam, honey, or cinnamon sugar



- Directions:**
1. Cut banana into small (bean-sized) pieces. Put into a small bowl and set aside.
 2. Mix flours, salt, and baking powder together in a large mixing bowl
 3. Beat the milk and egg together with a fork.
 4. Combine the flour mixture and the egg mixture. Mix well, until no small lumps are left.
 5. Brush the pan with vegetable oil and heat on medium until a few drops of oil dropped on the pan sizzle.
 6. Drop large spoonfuls of batter onto the hot pan. Sprinkle with the little pieces of banana. Cook for a few minutes, until the edges start to become solid, then flip. Cook another minute or so. Serve.

Recipe from “*Chew with your Mouth Full: The Art of Feeding Your Face*” available on www.SocialLearning.com. The cookbook was written for young adults who may be short on cooking experience and cash.

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Several examples of interventions that are designed to focus on the function of neglect-based food hoarding include:

Food Baskets: Provide food baskets in the home—created with the child’s input—consisting of snacks that are healthy and appealing to the child. The child should be told the food baskets will be refilled and are a better alternative than hoarding. If the child hoards the food basket, set limits, but do not discontinue the basket idea. Some schools will also cooperate with keeping food baskets in the classroom, especially if the child is prone to taking other students’ snacks.

Backpacks: When packing lunches for school or events, pack a special container of food that can be removed and kept with the child. This provides a traveling sense of food security and food availability for the child.

Coupling Nurturing with Eating: Always positively reinforce any progress the child makes in curbing hoarding behavior. If the child utilizes a food basket, nurture the child when he seeks items from the food basket. Positively comment on how all family members are always fed. Weave this message into mealtimes and have this message commented on by various family members.

Teach Food Regulation: If child has a tendency to gorge, set a “food time out” after a complete meal is consumed. Make certain this applies to all family members. The goal is to assist the child in learning to experience a sense of fullness. The food time out should not be presented as denying food but rather delaying additional eating for a prescribed period of time. Describe the physical sensation of fullness. Fifteen minutes is about how long it takes to feel full.

Opportunities

Advanced Parenting Workshops allow parents to collaborate to solve a problem. The unique blend of lessons and interactive online exercises bring parents from all over the world together to learn about a serious behavioral challenge, then work together to create an action plan for coping with the behavior. Enroll now for October workshops on Anger and Lying, which begin October 5.

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As with all behavioral and emotional challenges, a child’s special needs and individual circumstances should be considered when designing interventions. Additionally, professional therapeutic assistance can offer help in the assessment and treatment of food issues. In an effort to understand the function of food hoarding, the following questions can assist in a parent’s understanding of their child’s food hoarding.

- ▶ Could there be psychiatric or biological issues contributing to the hoarding?
- ▶ Does the child’s history reveal reasons for fixation on eating?
- ▶ Does the child substitute a food fixation for a loving relationship with parents?
- ▶ Are there things that trigger eating problems in the child?
- ▶ Is the child displaying an emotional neediness in the way he eats?

It is important to understand how the child’s food issues impact you as a parent. Become aware of your own food issues and explore if they influence your ability or willingness to look at the child’s problem with an open mind and creative flexibility. Also, study yourself to determine if the child’s food hoarding personally threatens your role as a provider and nurturer.

Delaney and Joyce are coauthors of “Behavior With a Purpose,” which is available through www.SocialLearning.com.



Submit your nominations for Champions for Children. This regular column profiles foster parents, advocates, social workers, foster care alumni, etc. Please email a sentence or two about your nominees, along with their contact information, to Lisa at press@northwestmedia.com. Thanks.

October Word Find Fun – Hang this page on your fridge for your children’s enjoyment.

These are all words that remind of us of autumn. Have fun!

Word Key:

- ▶ Migrate
- ▶ Geese
- ▶ Pumpkins
- ▶ Corn
- ▶ Apples
- ▶ Leaves
- ▶ Scarves
- ▶ Wind
- ▶ Frost
- ▶ Cider

K	C	J	A	N	J	L	E	A	V	E	S	U	F	V	Y
Q	B	M	L	L	R	D	U	Z	W	I	N	D	R	D	E
A	T	M	B	H	V	O	Z	T	G	G	I	S	O	Z	I
W	P	K	C	X	G	U	C	R	A	D	K	C	S	K	H
E	X	P	E	G	J	G	K	K	O	Z	P	A	T	H	P
C	O	R	L	L	R	O	E	M	X	V	M	R	F	B	O
I	T	M	O	E	X	P	V	E	K	H	U	V	T	H	V
D	T	Y	N	L	S	U	J	I	S	I	P	E	G	O	W
E	F	H	Y	W	R	A	U	P	P	E	O	S	D	T	O
R	S	D	E	T	A	R	G	I	M	N	A	X	G	V	T

Kids Krafts – Dried Apple Heads

This is a fun project that you do now and enjoy later, because it takes about two weeks for the apple head to dry. It’s worth the wait, though, because apple heads are fun to watch dry and when they are completely dry you can use them as toys or decorations. Pioneer children used to make dolls by building bodies out of wire and cloth and attaching the dried apple heads.

What You Will Need:

- ▶ An apple
- ▶ 2 teaspoons salt
- ▶ ½ cup lemon juice
- ▶ A plastic knife
- ▶ An apple peeler



How To Make It:

1. Combine the lemon juice and salt.
2. Peel the apple. You might need a grownup to help with this part.
3. Rub the apple with the lemon juice and salt. This will help keep the apple from turning brown.
4. Using the plastic knife, carve eyes.
5. Then carve around the middle, where a nose should go, leaving the nose part sticking out.
6. Carve a slit for the mouth.
7. Rub with more lemon juice and salt.
8. Let sit in a warm spot with good air circulation for about two weeks. It helps to put it on a wire rack.