

Tender Hearts Child Therapy Center



Monthly Newsletter



Specializing in Child, Adolescent & Family Counseling

Let Them Play!

Summer is fast approaching and while your children are overjoyed at the prospect of unrestricted time, there is probably a part of you that cringes at the idea. What on earth are you going to do for 3 months to keep your children entertained?!? The maternal and paternal instinct in us desires strongly to keep our children safe, but as Donald Simpson writes in this edition, being an overprotected kid just might do our children more harm than good.

Don't get me wrong. I totally get it. I am the mother of a 3 year old tomboy. My daughter wants to get into everything! She loves splashing in mud puddles, climbing the wrong way up slides, creating "magic potions" out of mud and leaves and unidentifiable slime she finds outside. It makes my skin crawl! I was a girly, girl. I stayed inside and played with dolls.

But I work with counselors and I am reminded (sometimes daily) how my daughter's "explorations" are healthy and that she'll grow into a stronger, more self-confident adult than she would otherwise with me hovering over her shoulder.

Don't believe me? Then check out Donald's article and hear it straight from the expert! It just might make you decide to put an end to the hovering parent that's within you.

If you haven't already signed up for our Newsletter, just click [Tender Hearts Monthly Newsletter](#) to sign up!

May

Inside this Issue

- Summertime Parenting:
Allowing Children to Explore
Their World... 5
- Anger in Childhood and
Adolescence... 6

In Every Issue

- Stronger Families Campaign... 2
- Tender Hearts Happenings... 3
- Family Friendly Events... 4

Location

2909 Independence Street
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703
(573) 803-1402



Stronger Families Campaign



April Showers Bring May Flowers! Now that May is here, Springtime is in full bloom and so are all those beautiful, colorful plants and flowers! May would be a great opportunity to spend some family time planting some flowers together. Whether you are planting one flower in a ceramic pot or an entire flower garden, getting outside and enjoying an activity together is key! Go to the market, pick out the flower or plants you all like, grab your soil and supplies, and get to work! Some of the supplies you may need are:

- **Pot or container**
- **Your favorite plant, flower, or seeds**
- **Soil**
- **Tools (such as a small shovel or trowel)**

Send us a picture of your family planting together for a chance to win a gift certificate to a local business!

(Send answers to TenderHearts@TenderHeartsChildTherapyCenter.com. Contest ends May 31st, 2014.)

How does the Stronger Families Campaign Monthly Contest Work?

As you know, we are 100% committed to helping Families in our area build ***Stronger Relationships***. Each month, we will introduce a new, Family Friendly Contest to promote and encourage family involvement and family connectedness. And, even better, the ***Monthly Contest Winner*** will receive a Gift Certificate to a local business that offers fun, family friendly activities or products. Our Counselors will all vote each month for the winner. What a combination! **Supporting Stronger Families and Local Community Businesses at the same time!**



Tender Hearts Happenings



The Tender Hearts Staff wants to send Valerie Bollinger best wishes as she begins her new life journey.

Valerie has been the Administrative Assistant at Tender Hearts for over a year.

At the end of May, Valerie is leaving Tender Hearts to start her own business. Beginning in June, Valerie will open her own Child Learning Center in Jackson.

We wish her well in this new chapter in her life!

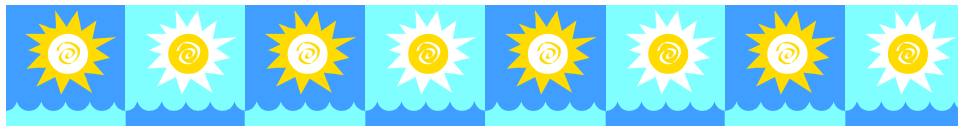


Lydia Anderson

Valerie Bollinger

Donald Simpson

FREE Family Friendly Events



Perryville Mayfest

May 7 - May 10, 2014

Friday: 5 pm - 11:30 pm

Saturday: 9 am - 11:30 pm

Downtown Square, Perryville, MO

Enjoy all the special events at the annual Mayfest. There will be a parade and music on Friday evening. Families can enjoy the Craft Fair on Saturday along with live entertainment, mother/daughter look-a-like contest, plant sale, art show, car and bike show, antique tractor show, and much more! A carnival takes place at the American Legion parking lot from May 7th through the 10th. Don't miss out on the delicious food served by vendors on the square. There's something for everyone at the Perryville Mayfest!

Basic Fishing For Families

Saturday, May 17 at 9:00am

Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center Cape Girardeau, MO

Registration begins May 1 (ages 8+). Families will have the opportunity to learn how to cast, tie knots, bait hooks, identify fish, and locate good fishing spots. The youth will have the opportunity to try their luck in the stocked kids fishing pond. The program is a unique opportunity for families to learn to fish together and discover just how much fun it can be. Youth must be 15 years of age or younger to fish the pond.

Tunes At Twilight

May 16, 23, & 30, 2014

Friday evenings: 7 pm - 9 pm

Common Pleas Courthouse Gazebo, Lorimier and Broadway

Tunes at Twilight is an award winning outdoor concert series organized by the Old Town Cape organization and held on Friday nights. The series provides a free hour long concert for 6 weeks in the spring and 6 weeks in the fall. In case of rain, the indoor location will be at Rose Theater on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University.

Summertime Parenting: Allowing Children to Explore Their World

Summer is nearly here and children are ready for free time. Already, too, parents and caregivers are steadying themselves for lengthened legs traipsing through kitchens, for the open refrigerator door, and for ever-exploring minds set on... *Where?*

Our children's comings and goings, like their need for lots of snacks, become increased concerns in summer. After classrooms, school hallways, and gymnasiums no longer accommodate children's boundless energies, their homes and neighborhoods assume the task. After teachers are done for the year with transforming children's potentials, parents and caregivers step up their functions including, above all, keeping children safe.



Some children are naturally more cautious than others; a treat! Other children become known, it seems, for their rough play and risk-taking, thus, for their boo-boos and more serious injuries. What makes for these differences is not easily explained. Temperament does seem to play a part in whether children are more shy and reserved or more outgoing and rambunctious. Still, a more certain influence is the child's relationships with their caregivers, their parents, and siblings, too. Some caregivers teach by caring example that the body, the self, is to stay intact, its abilities nurtured and disciplined. Others parent as they were parented and unknowingly follow habits promoting less care.

The cover article in the April edition of *The Atlantic* magazine, titled "The Overprotected Kid," has no doubt stirred the memories of many parents and caregivers whose kitchens, and lives, will be busier this summer. The article looks back, at the upbringings of children in the 1970s and the benefits and risks of less adult supervision. It looks at today, mainly at how it has happened that children's outdoors play, everywhere it seems, is on rubber-surfaced playscapes, with parents close at hand. It then looks intensely, with research findings galore, at the problematic boredom of our "overprotected kids." And to push further the buttons of overprotecting parents are several pages of pics. One shows children climbing atop a fort of pallet boards and a blue tarp (*Tetanus boosters, anyone!*). Another one shows a five-year-old boy poking a stick into a fire pit. Yet another is of a child upside down in mid-air, backflipping onto a filthy mattress. All this oddly unplugged and un-sanitized action was at a playground designed to give its users what researchers say all children need: more thrilling experiences; opportunities to build self-confidence and courage. Not to worry... this playground is in Great Britain, and there's no news yet of playgrounds like it being built in the U.S.

This point nevertheless hits home. Children need to explore, and even have accidents. They need practice at separating, at overcoming fears and learning consequences of their decisions. They need to come and go with parents and caregivers providing a secure base. Thus, their adults need not to impart fear, but confidence in the child's sense for *what they can do*, including keep well-enough safe.

Good-enough summertime parenting then includes less worry and hovering, and more an approach of keeping the child in-mind. This means knowing that as surely as the child will come in from play for snacks and for bandaids they will come in for emotional refueling and repair. ***They will come in at times for none other than to have eyes laid on them.*** With this, *wherever* it is that they go, they will find themselves as increasingly equipped, independent and capable explorers in an ever-bigger world.

~ Donald Simpson, MA, PLPC

Anger in Childhood and Adolescence



Anger control is difficult for many people. Emotional outbursts, physical aggression and violence are just some of the results of anger problems. Anger in children and adolescents may also be associated with feelings of dependency, sadness and depression. In childhood, anger and sadness are very close to one another, and it is important to remember that much of what an adult experiences as sadness is expressed by a child as anger. For example, a child who is grieving a loss may express these feelings through irritable outbursts or seemingly defiant behaviors. Handling children's anger can be puzzling, draining, and distressing for adults. Angry feelings and behaviors can be especially challenging for children who have learning and attention problems.

Changes in your child's thoughts and feelings will lead to changes in their body language and their behavior. Anger can sometimes make children act in a way that is harmful to themselves or others. If this happens, try to make the surrounding environment as safe as possible.

Symptoms of anger in children and adolescents may include:

- clenched fists
- tightness or tenseness in their body
- verbal outbursts
- a particular facial expression
- hitting

These are just a few of the ways children may express anger. However, every child is different and will express his or her feelings in their own way.

Learning anger management techniques can be an essential tool for children who need help controlling their anger. With the right help, a child who struggles with anger can learn what lies at the root of their frustration and rage. They can identify what their anger triggers are and learn healthy ways to cope with those situations. Emotional regulation is a key component of effective anger therapy and empowers a child to face uncertain and stressful situations with control and emotional balance. This, in turn, benefits their mental and physical health, and the well-being of those around them.