

# SCHOOL LIAISON LINK



Grand Forks AFB School Liaison Newsletter Volume 1, Issue 9 December 2011

"A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes."



Everyone Matters



## Meet Ms. Laura Lininger PASS Team Leader

Laura Lininger has been a dedicated military spouse for 17 years. She holds a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction in Elementary Education from George Mason University. She is currently a full-time mother of 3 young children. Laura and her family arrived in Grand Forks in July and have been stationed in Germany, Italy, Idaho and California. She has experienced many facets of education both as a teacher and parent. Laura hopes that with the PASS program parents can work together as a team to help ensure our children's success.

### Preschool Informational Forum (PASS Sponsored)



Please join the PASS team 6 December at the Community Activity Center from 5:30-6:30pm to hear all about the preschool options in and around the Air Force base community. There will be a panel of representatives from 9 different agencies that provide programs for children 3-5 years of age. You will hear the in's and out's of each program and be able to ask questions to the programs. Child Care is provided. Please call ahead for childcare to Ms. Laura Lininger at 701-631-0194.

### North Dakota Community Military Covenant (*Standing Stronger Together*)

275 cities & counties across North Dakota have come together to formally pledge their support to veteran's, service members, and their families by signing the Community Military Covenant. This initiative spearheaded by the North Dakota League of Cities exemplifies the gratitude that North Dakota has for the sacrifices and service that military members have given to this state as well as to the nation.

Some of the commitments outlined in the covenant are:

- building partnerships with military members and their families that enhances their strength and resilience
- teaching our communities how to care for military families and their service members
- educating our communities to make them aware of on going changes within the armed forces

To see the complete covenant go to: [www.ndlc.org](http://www.ndlc.org) (click on link at bottom left of the page)

School Liaison Officer: Kelly Painter \* Phone 701-747-4484\* Email: [kelly.painter@us.af.mil](mailto:kelly.painter@us.af.mil)

# SCHOOL LIAISON LINK con't

## Parents Forever Classes

(Sponsored by NDSU Extension Service  
North Dakota State University)

Parents Forever is a comprehensive educational program that puts parents on the path to minimizing stress for themselves and their children. Participants learn how to make informed, child-supportive decisions so children will come through divorce having a positive relationship with both parents.

Who should attend these classes?

- Parents experiencing a family transition of separation/divorce
- Parents considering separation/divorce who would like to learn more about the impacts on their family
- Parents who are divorced and experiencing challenges with co-parenting
- Parents who have never been married and do not live together, but have challenges co-parenting

Class dates for 2012: Jan 19, March 20, May 17, July 17, Sept 20, Nov 15

All sessions from 5:30-9:30 pm, 3rd floor, 151 South 4th Street

Session Fee: \$55.00 per person

For a downloadable brochure go to [www.ag.ndsu.edu/grandforkscountyextension](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/grandforkscountyextension)

For more information about the classes call NDSU Extension at (701)780-8229

## Keeping Your Kids in School



Is regular attendance in school really that important to a child's education? Studies show that children who regularly miss school had a higher possibility of dropping out than their counterparts. GreatSchools.org reports that a study completed in 2008 by the Rodel Community Scholars at Arizona State University, tracked students from kindergarten through high school and found that drop out patterns were linked to poor school attendance; starting with kindergartners! (excerpted from [militarychild.org](http://militarychild.org))

Parents are the foremost influence on their children. Their attitudes have a huge impact on what their child sees as important. If parents place emphasis on school attendance, completing homework, and talk about what is happening at school, they show their child they value education. Parents need to ensure their children are in school unless they are sick or there is an emergency. When children aren't in school they are missing valuable information which can put them behind in their classroom subject areas. This may cause some children added stress in trying to keep up to the expected school workload. Parents can help their children have a successful school career by engaging in their education. Ask them questions about their school day, set up a "homework" area in your home, maintain a positive relationship with the teacher, volunteer at the school, and ensure regular attendance. Research shows that children perform better academically and in life in general when parents stay involved. What better investment is there!

# SCHOOL LIAISON LINK con't



## Grand Forks Youth Commission

**Mission Statement:** *A Cooperative Coalition of Youth & Adult Mentors Working to Enhance the Lives of Grand Forks Youth*

**History:** The Grand Forks Youth Commission was established in 2006 and was made up of youth representatives from each of the Middle and High Schools in the city and on the Air Force Base. Membership consisted of 4 members from each high school and 3 members from each middle school. The Mayor's Cabinet on Young People serves in a mentorship role for the Youth Commission.

**Currently:** The Youth Commission meets once per month at City Hall. Meetings are conducted by elected youth leaders, with support from City and School District staff. The Youth Commission works in conjunction with the YORS groups in each of the schools that are made up of 6 to 10 youth, which come from a cross section of the various populations within the school. YORS stand for "Youth Gaining Opportunities, Recognition and Skills". A facilitator jointly funded by the Grand Forks School System and City of Grand Forks ensures continuity between the YORS groups and the Youth Commission and serves to enhance communication between all members. These groups serve as a support for the youth commission within the individual schools and a source of communication and feedback to the commission. Each YORS group now elects 2 members from their group to serve as commission representatives on behalf of their school.

The Youth Commission serves an important role as a voice for youth in the community. They provide feedback to agencies and the City on issues affecting youth. To learn more about the Grand Forks Youth Commission or YORS, contact your youth's school.

## College Tutoring During the Holidays



Homework never seems to end, even around the holidays. Military members taking college classes can use Tutor.com for Military Families throughout December! The math and science tutors can help with subjects like algebra, statistics and chemistry. And tutors in the Proof Point Writing Center can help ease the minds of anyone with a term paper looming. The tutors are online 361 days a year (the program is only closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Years Day and Independence Day), and are ready to help before and during holiday breaks.

# SCHOOL LIAISON LINK con't



## *EFMP NEWS*



### *Choosing Toys for Children with Special Needs During This Holiday Season*

It is important to consider the child's age, level of development, and any special needs they may have when deciding which toys to purchase. Toys that may be suitable for one child may not be suitable for another. Consider the child's disability and preferences when selecting toys. Some children may enjoy a toy that appeals to his or her different senses. Other children may be sensitive to toys with certain sounds, blinking lights, or textures. Some children require toys that are highly interactive, while others may need to have less stimulating toys. Where a child plays can make some toys more usable than others.

When deciding on a toy to purchase, consider such questions as:

- Does the toy engage the child without being over-stimulating?
- Is the toy complex enough to challenge the child without being frustrating?
- Where will the toy be used? Can the child use it in the position required?
- Is the toy interactive? Does the toy allow for group play?
- Can the toy be used in a variety of ways by the child? Does it promote other types of play?
- Will the toy allow the child to feel like everyone else? Is it popular?
- Is the toy interesting to the child? Is it adjustable to meet his or her needs?
- What is the durability of the toy?
- Is the toy safe for the child? Does it require supervision?
- Will the toy be fun for the child to play with?



### **Respite Care Expanded to More Air Force Bases!**

The Air Forces Respite Care initiative is in place to support the respite child care needs of Air Force families within the Exceptional Family Member Program. The Air Force is partnering with the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA) to recruit, screen, and train providers to care for children with special needs. The program was launched in July of 2011, with 7 test areas to include the following Air Force Bases: Andrews, Langley, Lackland, Randolph, Peterson, Schriever, Air Force Academy, Hickam, Charleston, and McChord. Recently the program has been expanded to include: Nellis, Creech, Scott, Eglin, Hurlburt Field, Wright Patterson, Elmendorf, Davis Monthan, Travis, Little Rock, Tinker, Shaw, Offutt, Warner Robins, Moody, Minot and Fairchild.

Although the program currently is not available at Grand Forks AFB, the goal is to eventually have respite care available at all Air Force locations within the continental United States. For more information on the Air Force Respite Care Program, contact the Airman & Family Readiness Center at 747-6437.