

Early Years



WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

September 2023



KID BITS

Stay in touch

Reach out to your child's teacher whenever you have a question or concern—no need to wait for parent-teacher conferences. You could email to let her know about any changes in your youngster's life, such as a new sibling. She'll be happy to hear from you, and the information can help her help your child.

My library card

Using a library card teaches your youngster to take responsibility for books. Visit the library to get her a card and check out books. Then, consider celebrating with a reading picnic in the park. At home, help her write the books' due date on the calendar so she remembers to return them with you.

DID YOU KNOW?

The visual skills your child needs for school success are still developing. You can help by offering activities that let him follow moving objects with his eyes, sharpen his eye-hand coordination, and improve his depth perception. *Examples:* Play catch, read hidden-picture books, build with blocks, color.

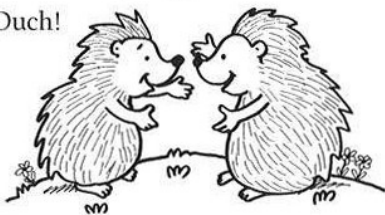
Worth quoting

"It is books that are the key to the wide world." *Jane Hamilton*

Just for fun

Q: What did one hedgehog say to the other after they hugged?

A: Ouch!



Supporting your little student

Whether your child is starting school for the first time or beginning a new year, your involvement will help her do her best. Try these ideas.

My school

Encourage your youngster to draw a map of her school so she can show you where she spends her days. Together, label her favorite spots (music corner, science lab, playground). Then, let her tell you about what she does in each place. You might ask, "Which musical instrument is your favorite?" or "What do you like to play at recess?"

My learning

Have your child share with you what she's learning in school, and do related activities at home. For example, if she's studying community helpers, you could visit a fire station or set up a pretend post office where family members "mail" cards to each other. Or if the class is



learning about apples, perhaps you'll go apple picking or bake an apple pie.

My work

Find special ways to save your youngster's schoolwork. You might let her decorate a binder or box and write "2019–2020" on it. She can put her favorite papers and projects inside. Every so often, look through it with her. You'll both have a reminder of her accomplishments.♥

Routines to count on

Life with little ones goes more smoothly when everyone knows what to expect. Consider these tips for setting up predictable daily routines.

● **Mornings.** Create a goodbye ritual that your child can count on. For instance, you might sing a favorite song together on the walk or car ride to school.

● **Evenings.** As part of dinner cleanup, help your youngster pack tomorrow's snack and set out breakfast supplies (cereal box, spoon, bowl). Also, look through his backpack with him to make sure he has everything he'll need for school the next day.♥



www.childdevelop.org
570-544-8959



How to make friends

Your youngster's earliest friendships build social skills he'll use throughout life. Here's advice to help him get along with classmates and make new friends.

Friendly introductions. Encourage your child to introduce himself to new classmates. He might say his name, ask a question, and share something about himself. ("Hi, I'm Adam. What's your favorite color? Mine's blue.")



Role-play at home so he's more comfortable starting conversations.

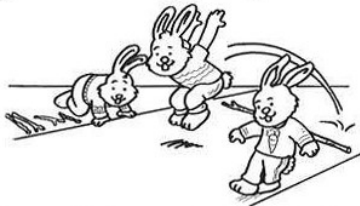
Shared activities. Suggest ways your youngster can ask to play with others. For example, he could take a toy dump truck to a group of kids playing with construction vehicles and say, "Can this truck help out?" And if he is playing with a group of kids,

he might warmly invite a classmate to participate by asking, "Would you like to play with us?"

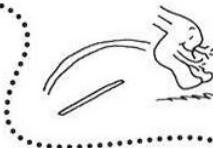
Playdates. Have your child tell you the names of classmates he'd like to get together with. Then, call their parents to set up a playdate at your home or the park. Help your youngster think of ways to make the visit more pleasant—perhaps by setting out or taking along toys his friend might enjoy.♥

PARENT TO PARENT Jump and measure

A family jumping contest is an active way for your child to practice measuring. Follow these three steps.



- 1. Jump.** Mark a starting line. Each player stands behind the line, jumps forward as far as possible, and marks her landing point.
- 2. Measure.** After each turn, have your youngster measure how far the person jumped. She can use her own feet as a unit of measurement by walking heel-to-toe in a straight line between sticks. Let her write the correct number of "feet" next to each player's name on a sheet of paper.
- 3. Compare.** Ask her questions about the results. "How many 'feet' was the longest jump?" (9) "The shortest?" (4) Help her find the difference between the longest and shortest jumps (9 - 4 = 5 "feet"). *Tip:* Play a few more times to give family members a chance to beat their distances.♥



ACTIVITY CORNER

Alphabet rocks

This rockin' activity builds your youngster's alphabet skills as she writes letters on rocks and matches them with objects.



Write

Ask your child to gather five rocks outside and use chalk to write a different letter on each one. Together, say the sound of each letter as she writes it.

Play

Can your youngster match each rock with an item that starts with its letter? For instance, she could place a *t* rock under a tree, a *b* rock on a picnic blanket, and a *p* rock on a plate. Now have your child wipe the chalk off the rocks. She can write five new letters and play again!♥

Q & A Learning self-control

Q: My son sometimes acts without thinking about the consequences of his behavior. How can I help him develop more self-control?

A: It's common for children this age to be impulsive. As your son gets older, he will gain more control over his behavior. In the meantime, there are strategies that can make a difference.

First, ask your child questions rather than telling him what to do. For instance, if he puts a candy bar in the shopping cart without permission, ask, "What should you have done instead?" Coming up

with the answer on his own ("I should have asked you") will teach him to stop and think.

You could also create a special signal to use when he's acting impulsively (say, throwing a ball in the house). Maybe you'll put your index finger to your temple. That's his cue to think about his behavior.

As your son's self-control improves, you're likely to find yourself asking fewer questions and using the signal less often.♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote school readiness, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.



2880 Pottsville Minersville Highway, Suite 210
Minersville, PA 17954



Child Development, Inc. **BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS**

Re-establish the bedtime and mealtime routines . . . About 1 week before school starts plan to re-establish bedtime and mealtime routines. Talk with your child about the benefits of school routines in terms of not becoming over tired or overwhelmed by school activities. Include pre-bedtime reading and household chores if these were suspended during the summer

Turn off the TV . . . By encouraging your child to do early morning activities, such as playing quiet games, doing puzzles, flash cards, and coloring, instead of watching television, you can help ease your child into the learning process and school routine. If you try to maintain this practice throughout the school year, your child will arrive at school better prepared to learn each morning when he/she engages in less passive activities.

Visit school with your child . . . Plan to attend your center's orientation so you and your child can meet their teacher and see their classroom. This will help ease pre-school anxieties and also allows you and your child to ask questions.

Plan to volunteer in the classroom . . . Volunteering, at least periodically throughout the year, helps your child understand that school and family life are linked and that you care about their learning experience. Being in the classroom is also a good way to develop a relationship with your child's teachers and classmates, and to get firsthand exposure to the classroom environment and routine. Our teachers welcome occasional parental help even if you cannot volunteer regularly.

Play, Learn and Grow... Together!

Why Should You Go to Your Child's Back-to-School Night?

Because going to Back-to-School Night allows parents and their child the opportunity to check out their classroom, meet the teacher, and find out what is in store for the upcoming school year.

It is also chance to . . .

- ask questions
- learn how to help your child at home
- gain a sense of the classroom environment
- help build relationships
- give and get important contact info
- create more confidence for your child
- show that you value you child's education



Please make sure to check your center's "Weekly Happenings" and mark your calendar so you can plan to join us for "Back to School Night"!

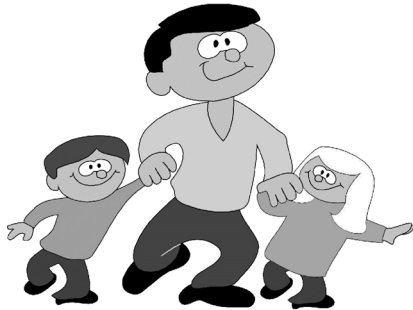
TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

If you are walking your child to school we ask that you follow these Pedestrian Safety Rules.

We will review these rules with your child each day.

We will practice these safety rules when we walk to the playground or when we take short walks around the community.

- ◆ Hold your child’s hand and do not allow him/her to cross the street alone
- ◆ Stop at the curb before crossing the street



- ◆ Walk; don’t run, across the street
- ◆ Cross at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks
- ◆ Look left, right, and left again before crossing the street
- ◆ Walk facing traffic
- ◆ Make sure drivers see you before crossing in front of them
- ◆ Do not allow your child to play in driveways, streets, parking lots or unfenced yards by the street
- ◆ When walking at night, dress your child in white clothing or reflectors
- ◆ When crossing the street in front of a school bus make sure you are at least 10 feet away from the school bus
- ◆ Always stop at the curb, any driveway, or alley that crosses a sidewalk.
- ◆ Look **LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT** to make sure the road is clear before you cross the street.
- ◆ Always cross at the corner.
- ◆ Cross only on a “green” or “walk” light. This is a good opportunity to introduce and/or reinforce the meaning of STOP signs and traffic signals.

If you are transporting your child to the center in your car, we ask that you follow Pennsylvania’s Child Passenger Safety Laws.

Children under 4 years of age are required to use a child restraint device. Non-use is a primary offense. Children 4 to 8 years of age are required to use a booster seat. Non-use is a secondary offense. The fine is a sliding fee up to \$100.00.

It is recommended that any child under the age of 12 sit in one of the rear seats of the vehicle and not in the front.

Please know that when our staff observes any non-compliance with the above laws, they will first talk with you to make sure you know and follow these state laws. We can provide assistance with obtaining appropriate restraints and boosters.

Should non-compliance continue to be observed by our staff, they are required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

We ask that you follow these additional safety precautions when you transport your child to center:

- ◆ Please turn off your vehicle before exiting your car and taking your child into the building.
- ◆ Do not leave children unattended in your vehicle.
- ◆ Do not exit your child on the side of your vehicle facing the street.
- ◆ Please hold your child’s hand until he/she is inside the front doors of the building.



Together, with our team, you can minimize your child’s risk of harm by practicing and teaching transportation and pedestrian safety.

Have a safe and happy year.

TEXT AND E-MAIL SCHOOL CLOSURE NOTIFICATIONS



To keep parents and staff informed, Child Development will be using an automatic message system to alert parents and staff when we are closed — due to weather, holiday or other emergencies. This messaging system may also be used for reminders of other important program-wide and center events, meetings, etc.

You will receive a text message on your cell phone, an e-mail or possibly both. It is important that you keep this information accurate and up-to-date. Whenever your number changes, it is important to provide this information to your Family Advocate and child's teacher.

A sample message may be:

"The Pottsville 2 Child Development Center is closed today due to (reason for closing)."

For Parents: Please notify your Family Advocate of any changes to your child's emergency contact information. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your Family Advocate.

For Team Members: Emergency contact information changes must always be given to your Team Leader/Supervisor. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your supervisor.



YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE AND SAFETY

We would like to remind you what our attendance regulations are to ensure every child's safety.

Please call your child's center (not the administrative office) if your child will not be coming to school. You can leave a voice message on your child's classroom telephone extension number.



We ask that you call as early as possible and before 8am. Leaving a message the night before is fine. We do not want the staff distracted by answering the phone once the children are in the classroom.

If you do not call us, we are required to call you within one hour if your child is not at school by his/her start time and we have not heard from you. To avoid this call, please call us and let us know that your child will be absent.

In advance, thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this requirement regarding attendance and your child's safety.

BE SAFE . . . REMINDER



We would like to inform all parents and family members that it is very important that we keep all children and staff safe in our facilities.

We have special circumstances with children and families such as Protection from Abuse (PFA) orders and cannot allow everyone into our buildings.

One reason for our security system is to reduce the risk of someone entering the facility that is unknown to us or who is not permitted access into the building.

- **Each parent/family member** must use the system to be permitted into the building.
- **DO NOT** hold the door or let anyone else in... *this is the only time when we will encourage bad manners.*
- **Please share this information with the other adults who help with bringing and picking up your child at the center.**

In advance, thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this important safety matter.



Early Childhood HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT

LEAD POISING . . . Know the Facts

Lead poisoning is caused by swallowing or breathing lead. Children under 6 years old are most at risk. If you are pregnant, lead can harm your baby.

FACT . . . Lead can cause learning and behavior problems.

Lead poisoning hurts the brain and nervous system. Some of the effects of lead poisoning may never go away.

Lead in a child's body can:

- Slow down growth and development
- Damage hearing and speech
- Make it hard to pay attention and learn

FACT . . . Most children get lead poisoning from paint in homes built before 1978.

When old paint cracks and peels, it makes dangerous dust. The dust is so small you cannot see it. Most children get lead poisoning when they breathe or swallow the dust on their hands and toys.

Don't be misled about lead.

Did you know?

 **It's more than lead paint**
30% of children with elevated blood lead levels have no immediate lead paint source.¹

Other sources of lead exposure:²

	contaminated soil, drinking water, pottery and crystal, traditional remedies,
	ammunition and fishing sinkers, imported toys, costume jewelry,
	and second-hand smoke.
	
	

A blood test is the ONLY way to know if a child has been exposed.

FACT . . . A lead test is the only way to know if your child has lead poisoning.

Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick. Ask your doctor to test your child for lead.

LEAD POISING . . . Protect Your Family

1. Test your home for lead

- If you live in a home built before 1978, have your home inspected by a licensed lead inspector
- Contact your local health department for more information.

Sometimes lead comes from things other than paint in your home, such as:

- Candy, toys, glazed pottery, and folk medicine made in other countries
- Work like auto refinishing, construction, and plumbing
- Soil and tap water

2. Keep children away from lead paint and dust

- Use wet paper towels to clean up lead dust. Be sure to clean around windows, play areas, and floors.
- Wash hands and toys often, especially before eating and sleeping. Use soap and water
- Use contact paper or duct tape to cover chipping or peeling paint

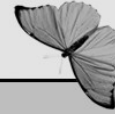
3. Renovate safely

Home repairs like sanding or scraping paint can make dangerous dust

- Keep children and pregnant women away from the work area
- Make sure you and/or any workers are trained in lead-safe work practices
- Home repairs like sanding or scraping paint can make dangerous dust

Mental Wellness Corner

September Thoughts



Isn't it funny how certain months of the year make us think and feel certain ways. (October—fall fun and escape into make believe; November— a time for family gathering and Thanksgiving; December—warm memories, family tradition and giving; February—the month of love; March the magic of leprechauns. So, I was thinking, what about September? It's always been one of my favorite months for obvious reasons. Admittedly after 911 it has become a month to appreciate. The special people who bring challenge, as well as happiness along life's journey.

Recently, I was reminded of this once more when I was asked to meet with a family suffering great loss and staff who wanted to know how to help. After leaving that day, Mary Louise and I got to talking and she reminded me of the old Chinese proverb that states: ***"An invisible thread connects those who are destined to meet regardless of time, place, and circumstances. The tread may stretch, constrict or tangle, but or will never break."***

I have long been acquainted and awed by the synchronicity of life events. How a book shows up just when you are in need of inspiration. How a person or event will happen just when you are in need of guidance or some healing. As we arrived that day in Fountain Springs, we were greeted by Kim who was excited about her new shipment of children's books. She drew my attention to the children's book. ***"The Invisible String"*** by Patrice Karst (do you see a theme here—the energy of the universe working for us). As I read this delightful book, it got me thinking about the thread that may tangle but never breaks.

I remembered a story from my childhood of the red

string with mystical powers of protection wound around the tomb of Rachael. A universal symbol through the years of protection from misfortune, the red string is tied to the left wrist. It is worn on the left hand because this is the direct line to the heart, the receiving side of the spiritual body. According to the tradition, by tying the string with seven knots around your wrist the wearer is protected from the destructive power of the EVIL EYE, thus preventing disease, poverty, accidents or other misfortune. It also is a reminder to the wearer to bid well wishes to others and to avoid the temptations for gossip or negative thinking. The red string is often given or received from a friend or family member and remains in place until it falls away.

So in this month of September your Mental Health Team sends you well wishes. For those who are struggling with life's challenges, we wish for you the synchronicity of the universal invisible string that ties us all together. We encourage you to celebrate with us by wearing or giving the invisible red string to someone you love. May good fortune follow you and may you hold positive thoughts for all of those you meet along your life's path.

Sincerely,
Bev Weikel
Mary Louise Fanelli
Stacy Meredith
 Your Mental Health Team





Recovery Month is Set for September...

Marking its 34th year, **National Recovery Month** is observed in September. This awareness month celebrates the successes made by our family, friends, and neighbors who are living in recovery. It's also aimed at increasing awareness and education on treatment and recovery for substance use disorder. This year's theme is titled **"Hope is Real. Recovery is Real."**

What can YOU do to help support others in recovery from Substance Use Disorder?

Join a Recovery Walk/Event:

Schuylkill County will be holding its 3rd Annual Walk for Recovery event on Thursday, September 7, 2023 with registration beginning at 5:00 and the walk kicking off at 6:30 PM. Walk to show your support for family, friends, and neighbors who are in recovery! Community service providers, human service agencies and local support groups will be on hand to provide information and resources (see the attached flyer).

Learn more about Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery:

A Substance Use/Opioid Use Disorder Rural Resource Guide is available listing prevention, treatment, and recovery services in Schuylkill and Carbon counties. You can view this guide on the Child Development's website. At the left in menu options, click Resources (<https://childdevelop.org/resources/>). The guide is located towards the bottom of the resource list. Knowing what is available can be lifesaving for friends and family members struggling with a substance use disorder.

Be a part of the solution and help discard unwanted, unused, or expired prescription drugs in your medicine cabinet:

Permanent medication disposal collection boxes are now located at the following St. Luke's University Health Network Campuses: Geisinger St. Luke's (100 Paramount Blvd., Orwigsburg) and St. Luke's Miners Campus (360 W. Ruddle St., Coaldale). A Fall and Spring National Drug Take Back Day is also organized in our communities. To learn more, call the number below.

Schuylkill County Walk for Recovery

WHEN
Thursday, September 7, 2023
 Registration begins at 5:00 PM
 Walk Kicks Off at 6:30 PM

WHERE
Island Park
 1 Broadway, Schuylkill Haven, PA

- Resource Tables
- All Ages Welcome
- "Cash Only" Concession stand available
- FREE Registration
- Easy walk for All
- Giveaways
- Rain or Shine

BONUS: SIGN UP by August 14th to receive a FREE event T-shirt!

REGISTER ONLINE or SCAN QR CODE:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-schuylkill-county-walk-for-recovery-tickets-665664128327>

St. Luke's is working together with national, state, and local partners to improve connections to prevention, treatment, and recovery through trainings, initiatives, and services. For more information on resources or family support for those affected by addiction, contact Angela Morgan, Community Health, Geisinger St. Luke's (570) 645-0183.

MISSION STATEMENT

We work with families and the community to provide high quality, comprehensive early childhood education with an emphasis on family involvement and supportive services that prepares each child for success in school and a lifetime of learning.

Child Development, Inc.
 Families * Head Start * PreK Counts
 Child Care * Early Intervention * Community

Early Years. Child Development, Inc.'s newsletter is distributed monthly. If you are a non-profit Schuylkill County agency that is offering a free service that you feel our families might be interested in or benefit from and would like an announcement placed in our newsletter please let us know by the 10th of the previous month. You can send your event to:

kwolfe@childdevelop.org