

# Early Years

Child  
Development, Inc.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

Ready for school and a lifetime of learning

September 2024

## KID BITS



### Stay in touch

Show your child that you think school is important by working with his teacher. Find out the best way to keep in touch (notes, emails, phone calls). Then, let your youngster know when you communicate with her. ("Mrs. Jones said you're a good helper.") He'll see that you're both interested in helping him succeed.

### Understanding feelings

Encourage your child to imagine how others feel. You could ask how she thinks the new kid in her class felt on the first day of school (nervous, scared) or how the dog feels when your family gets home in the evening (excited, hungry). Being able to put herself in another's shoes can help her develop empathy.

### Which direction?

Instead of driving to a nearby store or playground, try walking there with your youngster instead. It's good exercise—and it can build his sense of direction. Let him lead the way and tell you where to turn. Talk about whether you're going left or right, or if you're heading north, south, east, or west.

### Worth quoting

"Parents hold their children's hands for a while, their hearts forever."  
*Anonymous*

### Just for fun

**Q:** How do you fit four hippos in a car?

**A:** Two in the front and two in the back.

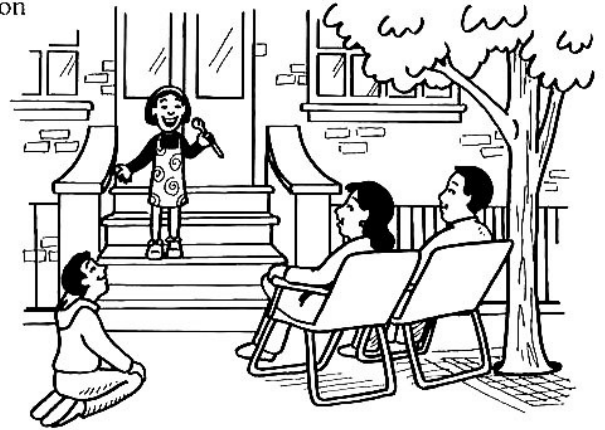


## Excited about learning

What does your youngster like to do? What is she good at? Build on her excitement with these ideas for supporting her interests and celebrating her accomplishments this year.

### Read—then read some more!

Look for books on topics that capture her attention. For example, if she notices ducks during a picnic or points out geese flying south, you could read a nonfiction book on birds. *Idea:* Try using her current interests to lead her to new ones. A child who loves animals might enjoy reading about people who work with them, like vets or zookeepers.



### Put on a performance

Let your youngster feel like a star while she practices what she's learning. She could hold a pretend microphone and stand on a "stage" (porch, steps) while you watch her recite the Pledge of Allegiance or name the months of the year.

### Take "field trips"

You don't need to go far to find learning opportunities! If you're heading to the bank and the post office, tell your child it's a "math field trip." Help her count coins or read numbers on post office boxes. And if you're going to a park, call it a "science field trip." You can each name trees and flowers that you recognize and share facts about them. ("That must be an oak tree because there are acorns under it.")♥

## Healthy habits

Being sick is no fun, and missing school means missing out on learning. Use these tips to help your child stay healthy so he can attend school every day:

- Remind him to wash his hands with soap and water before eating and after using the restroom. *Tip:* You might get soap in fun shapes and colors that he'll look forward to using.
- Make sure your youngster eats a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables. Also, stick to a regular bedtime that allows 10–12 hours of sleep.
- If your child does get sick, replace his toothbrush and change his sheets after he's better. Germs left behind could make him sick again. *Note:* Ask his doctor when it's safe for him to go back to school—he doesn't want to make his classmates sick, too.♥



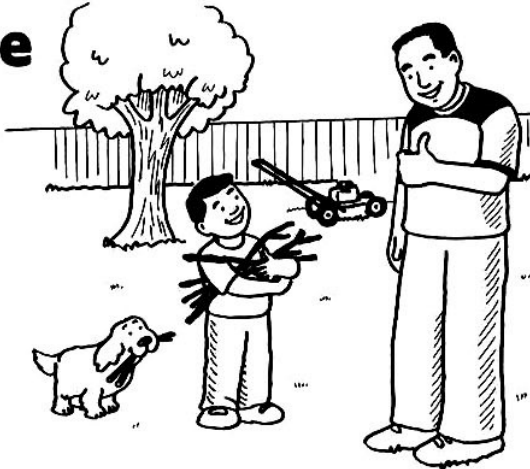
[www.childdevelop.org](http://www.childdevelop.org)  
570-544-8959



# Words that inspire cooperation

The words you choose can encourage your youngster to be a “team player.” Consider these suggestions.

**Include your child.** He’s more likely to cooperate if he feels like he’s part of things. He might not be able to mow the lawn, for example, but you could say, “You’re old enough to help me with yard work—you get to pick up the big sticks so I can mow.”



**Recognize initiative.** If your youngster pitches in without being asked, tell him that you noticed. (“Singing to the baby was a good idea. You kept her entertained while I put away the groceries.”) This will motivate him to think of more ways to help.

**Point out benefits.** It’s one thing to tell your child that working together makes a job easier. It’s another for him to see the results for himself.

(“When we all pitch in to clear the table after dinner, we have more time to play before bed.”) He’ll learn that cooperation pays off!♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER Write a book

Creating a book about school is a great way for your youngster to practice writing skills—and it can help her feel confident about school.

**Materials:** paper, crayons, stapler



Start by asking your child what she likes about school (her teacher, the library, math time). Let her draw a picture of each one on a separate sheet of paper.

Then, she can write a sentence about each drawing. You could make suggestions to help her decide what to write. She might mention the title of a book her teacher read or the name of a friend she played with at recess. If she isn’t writing yet, she can dictate her sentences to you.

Have her illustrate a cover, and then staple her book together. Now, listen while your youngster reads her book aloud.♥



## PARENT TO PARENT

### Flashlight talks

We went camping with my parents this summer, and my daughter Bella loved our evening conversations around the campfire. When we got home, she asked if we could continue the nightly tradition. And that’s how our “flashlight talks” began.



At bedtime, we turn out the lights and sit on the floor with a flashlight. We start with a “thinking” question like “If you were a vehicle, what kind would you be?” or “If you could invent a new milkshake, what ingredients would you use?” Then, we each answer the question.

At first, I asked all the questions, but now we take turns. Bella is getting better at waiting for her turn to talk and participating in conversations. Plus, we’re making some nice memories.♥

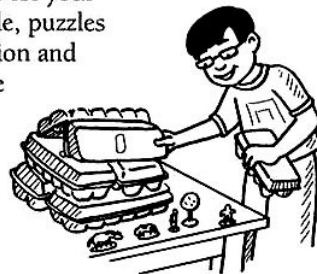
## Q & A Play and learn

**Q:** My son’s teacher said that kids learn by playing. How can I help my child make the most of playtime at home?

**A:** All play offers opportunities for your youngster to learn. For example, puzzles and blocks improve coordination and problem solving. And when he plays with puppets and action figures, he uses his imagination and develops his speech and language.

It’s okay to offer a little guidance during playtime,

but he’ll learn more if you follow his lead. For instance, instead of saying, “Let’s build a house out of egg cartons,” you could ask, “What can we make with these egg cartons?”



**Tip:** Encourage your child to keep his toys organized so he can see what’s available. You might provide plastic baskets or shoeboxes and help him label them.♥


## 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






# 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

Don't forget to mark your calendar so you can plan to join us for "Back to School Night"!



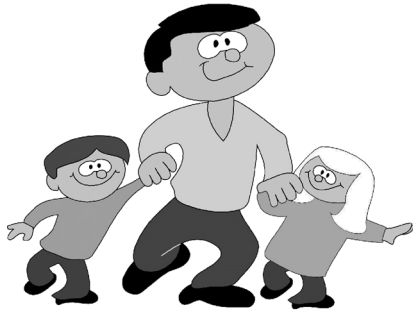
# TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

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 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.

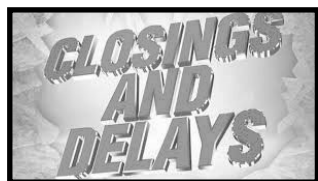
You will receive a text message on your cell phone, an e-mail or possibly both. **It is important that you keep this information accurate and up-to-date. Whenever your number changes, it is important to provide this information to your Family Advocate and child's teacher.**

A sample message may be:

*“The Shenandoah 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.<sup>1</sup>

**Other sources of lead exposure:<sup>2</sup>**

	contaminated <b>soil, drinking water, pottery</b> and crystal, <b>traditional remedies,</b>
	<b>ammunition</b> and fishing sinkers, <b>imported toys, costume jewelry,</b>
	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



# Winning Ways to Mental Well-Being

Be Safe | Be Respectful | Be a Team Player | Be Kind



## September Thoughts

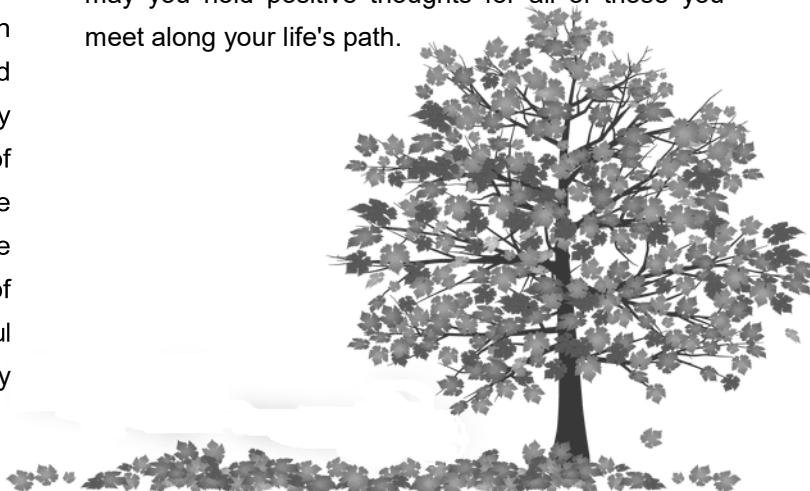
Isn't it funny how certain months of the year make us think and feel certain ways. (October—fall fun and escape into make believe; November— a time for family gathering and Thanksgiving; December—warm memories, family tradition and giving; February—the month of love; March the magic of leprechauns. So, 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 thread may stretch, constrict or tangle, but it 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.



Marking its 35th 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. Their theme is "Recovery, Healing and Hope."

**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 4th Annual Walk for Recovery event on Thursday, September 5, 2024 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 located at the following St. Luke's University Health Network Campus- es: Geisinger St. Luke's (100 Paramount Blvd., Orwigsburg) and St. Luke's Miners Campus (360 W. Ruddle St., Coal- dale). 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**







**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2024**  
Registration begins at 5 PM  
Walk Kicks Off at 6:30 PM


**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


**Take our health survey**



As a nonprofit hospital, St. Luke's is conducting a survey as part of their Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to identify the health needs of our community. We are asking for your participation and feedback.



Please scan the QR code with your smartphone camera and click the link to start the survey. Thank you for your feedback!



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 1-484-658-4022.

**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