

October 2024



KID BITS

Visit the library

Build your youngster's love of reading by signing her up for a library card. Explain that it's a big responsibility! Together, find a safe place to keep books she checks out and write the due date on the calendar. Then, be sure to visit the library regularly so she can use her card.

Safe crossing

Keep your little one safe by teaching him three words to remember before crossing the street. 1. *Stop* at the curb. 2. *Link* hands with a grown-up. 3. *Look* both ways to see if the street is clear. Practice by saying, "Stop, link, look" each time you cross. *Tip:* At stoplights, let him press the button to cross, and show him how to wait for the signal.

Building friendships

Here's a fun way to teach your child to value and nurture friendships. Have her write a thank-you note to a friend. Let her draw a picture of the friend, and help her write something she likes about the person underneath. *Example:* "I love playing dress-up with you. Thanks for being my friend."

Worth quoting

"If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere." *Vincent van Gogh*

Just for fun

Q: What's black, white, and pink all over?

A: An embarrassed zebra.



I know how you feel

Youngsters are still learning to sort out their feelings, so they may not always understand what others are going through. Try these strategies to help your child become aware of his emotions and learn to feel and show empathy.

Looking in the mirror

Stand in front of a mirror together. Make a face that shows emotion, like an open mouth and widened eyes for surprised. Have your youngster identify your emotion. Then, it's his turn to make a face for you to name. He'll learn to "read" faces and link expressions with their emotions, which is a great way to understand how others are feeling.

Reading deeper

When you read a book with your child, take some time to discuss the pictures. Ask him questions about the characters, such as "Look at Anna's face. Do you think she's worried or excited?"



Talk about why the character might feel that way. ("Yes, she is probably excited because she learned to jump rope!")

Modeling empathy

You're one of the people your youngster depends on to empathize with him. Show him that you understand his emotions by validating what he feels. For example, you could say, "I understand you're mad because your favorite shorts are in the laundry. Let's find something else to wear while they get washed."♥

Strengthen little fingers

These hands-on activities can help your youngster develop the muscles she uses for handwriting, tying shoes, and other fine-motor tasks:

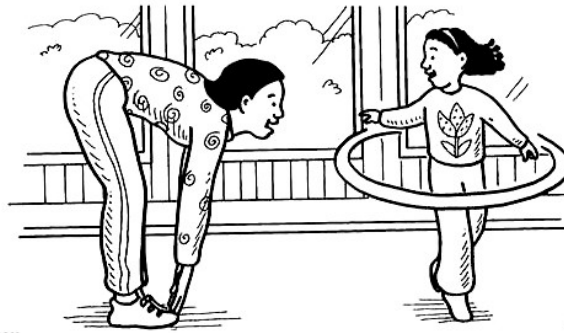
- Let her thread beads onto pipe cleaners to make bracelets and rings.
- Have her count a handful of pennies and put them in piles of 5 or 10.
- String a piece of yarn between two chairs. Your child could use clothespins or binder clips to hang doll clothes on her "clothesline."
- Show her how to roll clay into small balls. Then, she can connect the balls with toothpicks to build a sculpture.♥



S-t-r-e-t-c-h your child's attention

Youngsters often like to zoom from one activity to the next. But as your child gets older, a longer attention span will help her learn in school. You can help increase her ability to focus with these ideas.

Build up gradually. As a rule of thumb, your child should be able to focus for the number of minutes matching her age plus one minute. Start there (have a



4-year-old work on putting away toys for 5 minutes), and increase a minute at a time as she seems ready.

Look and listen. Turn everyday activities into tasks that require concentration.

In the car, you might ask her to look for words on signs that start with the first letter in her name. Or have her listen for a

particular word or phrase in a song on the radio and clap each time she hears it.

Make it a game. Work together to make up a series of movements, adding a new one on each turn. For instance, you could begin by touching your toes. Then, your youngster has to touch her toes and add another motion, like spinning around. She'll need to pay close attention to remember the sequence of movements.♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

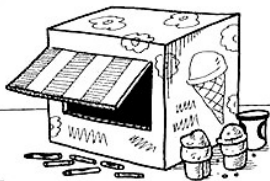
It's a bus! It's a store! It's a box!

With crayons and imagination, a large cardboard box can become anything! Here's how.

1. Decide. Together, think of different things the box could be (ice cream shop, fire station). Let your child pick the idea he likes best.

2. Decorate. Have him use crayons to color the box. For an ice cream shop, help him cut out a window where customers place orders. Then, he could draw cones and sundaes with different flavors and toppings. If he's making a fire station, he might draw a garage door for the fire truck and windows with firefighters looking out.

3. Play. Your youngster can use his creation for pretend play. He could make ice cream treats out of play dough while you pretend to be a customer. Or his toy fire truck might rush from his fire station to put out a big fire.♥



PARENT TO PARENT

How to adapt to change

We moved over the summer, and my children had to change schools. My daughter, Sara, is doing great, but my son, Curtis, tends to struggle with new situations. The school counselor gave me some ideas for helping Curtis to adjust.

First, she said to let Curtis make choices when possible, like what to wear to school or what to eat for breakfast, so he feels in control. To make him feel connected to people around him, she suggested we visit our new neighborhood playground where he can see kids from his new school.

The counselor also told me to help Curtis have a positive attitude about changes. When he says he misses his old school, I let him know I understand. I tell him I miss my old job, but I'm finding things I like about my new one. Then, I encourage him to look for things he likes at his new school, too.♥



Q & A

Organized paperwork

Q: My youngest child just started kindergarten, and now I have three kids in school. How can I keep track of activities, appointments, and homework for all of them?

A: Staying on top of things can be a challenge with just one child. For more than one, organization is even more important.

First, have an after-school check-in. Choose a set time each day, like after dinner, to check backpacks and

sort papers. Label a folder for each youngster, and use it to hold papers you want to keep, such as report cards or special artwork.

A large calendar and a handful of colored pens can make managing activities and projects easier. Assign each

child a different-colored pen. Help them put their important dates on the calendar using their color ink. You'll be able to tell at a glance what is happening when—and so will they!♥



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



Help Your Child Succeed in Preschool: Build the Habit of Good Attendance

Early School Success goes hand in hand with good attendance!

DID YOU KNOW?

Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.

Missing 10 percent of preschool (one or two days every few weeks) can

- Make it harder to develop early reading skills.
- Make it harder to get ready for kindergarten and first grade.
- Develop a poor attendance pattern that's hard to break.

High quality preschool programs have many benefits for your child. The routines your child develops in preschool will continue throughout school. You can make the most of preschool by encouraging your child to attend every day!

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Work with your child and his/her teacher to help your child develop strong attendance. Your enthusiasm is a big boost to success.

Talk about it – sing about it – make it an adventure!

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before
- Share ideas with other parents for getting out the door on time

Before the school year starts:

- Find out what day preschool starts and start the exciting count down!
- Make sure your child has the required shots.
- Attend orientation with your child to meet the teachers and classmates.

Ready – Set GO!

- Develop back-up plans for getting to preschool if something comes up
- Ask family members, neighbors or other parents to lend a hand if you need help dropping off or picking up your child
- Schedule medical appointments and extended trips when preschool is not in session
- If your child seems anxious about going to preschool, talk to the program director, teacher, your doctor or other parents for advice. If the problem persists, make sure the program is a good fit for your child.



Early Childhood HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT

LEAD POISONING . . . 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 POISONING . . . 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 HEALTH

Tips for Families from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

What is mental health?

Mental health means that young children are growing in their ability to:

- understand and share feelings
- have close and positive relationships
- explore and learn

Why Is It Important?

Having Positive Mental Health Makes It Easier for Children to:

- Have close relationships with family and friends
- Do well in school
- Learn new things
- Solve tough problems

- Develop patience (or not give up)
- Focus on a task
- Ask for help

When Young Children Are Worried, Sad, or Angry, It Can Be Hard To:

- Make friends
- Follow directions
- Express feelings or wishes
- Follow simple directions
- Pay attention in class
- Solve problems in positive ways
- Do well in school



Things You Can Do and Say to Help Your Child

- For Your Infant
 - Hold your baby during feedings.
"I love cuddling when I feed you."
 - Look at your baby and smile, smile, smile!
"Hey, when I smile, you smile back."
 - Talk about what you are doing.
"I'm going to change your diaper now."
 - Try to relax and have fun.
"When I am happy, you are less fussy."
 - Read and sing to your baby every day.
"It is bedtime. Time for a story and favorite song."
 - Take care of yourself.
"When I am rested, I take better care of you."
- For Your Toddler/Preschooler
 - Make sure they always feel safe.
"I know loud noises can be scary, but it's OK."
 - Offer choices.
"Do you want the blue shirt or the red shirt?"
 - Practice patience.
"Let's wait until the song is over and then we'll go outside."
 - Show understanding.
"You REALLY want another cookie! It is hard when you can only have one."
 - Leave extra time.
"I see you don't want to leave the playground. One more time on the slide, then we need to leave."
 - Play together at least 15 minutes a day.
"There is so much to do but it is important for us to play together."
 - Follow her interest.
"I see you want to play with the blocks. What are you going to build?"
 - Praise your child when she keeps trying.
"I love the way you keep trying to find the right piece for the puzzle."
 - Practice following directions.
"First pick up the blocks, then take out the cars."



“Making Prevention a Priority”

Get ready to Spread the Red!

The 33rd annual National Red Ribbon Week Campaign is set for October 23-31, 2024. This year's theme is, ***“Life is a Movie, Film Drug Free!”***. Red Ribbon Week is a nationwide event aimed at raising public awareness and mobilizing communities to combat alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among youth. Each October, the Red Ribbon Week Campaign encourages our community to come together to create healthy, safe, and drug-free lives and communities. The campaign, led by the Schuylkill County Drug and Alcohol Program, is requesting your support and participation in this very important drug prevention project in Schuylkill County. All county residents are encouraged to get involved.



What can you do?

1. One simple way is to **wear a red ribbon or tie one on the antenna/mirror of your vehicle** to visibly show your commitment to making drug prevention a priority.
2. Join in Red Ribbon Week activities planned by your community, church, school or organization.
3. Start the conversation early with your children about drug prevention. Provide them with boundaries and teach them to say “no” when they are uncomfortable. It's never too early to begin the conversation of making healthy choices. Teach them how and why to avoid drugs along with coping skills and ways to handle difficult situations.
4. Prescription medication safety is another important factor to prevention. Safely store and properly dispose of unwanted, unused, or expired medication to reduce the supply of easily accessible prescription medication. Storage includes keeping prescription medication out of reach of children and in a secure bottle or lock box.

You can safely dispose unwanted prescription medication at any local police department or at the following St. Luke's University Health Network Campuses: **Geisinger St. Luke's (100 Paramount Blvd., Orwigsburg)** or **St. Luke's Miners Campus (360 W. Ruddle Street, Coaldale)**. Permanent Medication Disposal Collection Boxes are located at these hospital campuses in the emergency departments.

Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use are serious health and social issues that affect Schuylkill County and impacts everyone. Together, we can make a positive difference in the lives of individuals and families and in the communities where we live and work.

**For more information about drug prevention, contact
Schuylkill County Drug & Alcohol Program office at (570) 621-2890.**

Geisinger St. Luke's is working together with national, state, and local partners to improve connections to drug 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 **484-658-4022**.



fyi

Things you need to know—all in on place!

IN PERSON ORIENTATION

FOR NEW POLICY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES AND ALTERNATES
Thursday, October 24, 2024 10:00 AM
at Child Development Main Office

All new Center and Community Representatives will be getting more information—please check your e-mail.

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE MEETINGS



Policies Committee Meeting*
Friday, Oct. 11, 2024
at 10:00 AM

Community Outreach Committee Meeting*
Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024
at 3:00 PM

POLICY COUNCIL MEETING*
Mon., Oct. 28, 2024
at 9:30 AM

** Meetings will be IN-PERSON and on Zoom.*

A ZOOM link for the meeting will be emailed to all members. When you receive the email with the link, please respond and confirm how you will be attending the meeting—IN PERSON or by ZOOM

~ In-Person Meetings are at our Main Office ~



All **Child Centers**
Development, Inc.
will be **CLOSED**
on **MONDAY,**
OCTOBER 14 TH

Centers will re-open on Tuesday, October 15th at their regular time.

The administrative office will be open on Monday.



Oct. 6-12, 2024
FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

*"Smoke alarms:
Make them work for you!"*

Parents and teachers, check out this web site to find activities and on-line games for your child/students:

<http://www.sparky.org/>

Not all learning happens in a classroom!



It happens when a child feels connected and curious.

Language and math skills are important but so are social skills. Well-developed social skills help children to:

- form positive relationships
- have conversations
- develop body language.
- learn patience and cooperation
- and play together

Good social skills are the foundation for learning.

CALL  TODAY

Ready for school and a lifetime of learning

1-800-433-3370, EXT. 212
to talk with one of our ERSEA Advocates

CENTERS LOCATIONS:

Fountain Springs | Mahanoy City | Pottsville | St. Clair
Sch. Haven | Shenandoah | Tamaqua

www.childdevelop.org



PROUD PARTNER AGENCY OF



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.

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