

# Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

November 2024



## KID BITS

### Writing with salt

While you cook dinner, your youngster can practice forming letters and numbers. Cover the bottom of a shallow baking pan with a layer of salt, and call out letters or numbers for him to write in the salt with his finger. *Idea:* Try more challenging requests like “Make the first letter in *spaghetti*” or “Write the number of people in our family.”

### History comes alive

Are you visiting older friends or relatives soon? Ask them to show your child some of their treasures from long ago. *Examples:* a photograph, a typewriter, a baseball glove, an old piece of furniture. Then, they can tell her the stories behind those items.

### Sharing toys

Giving your youngster a little control may help him share. Before a play date, let him choose one toy he would prefer not to share, and put it away for safe-keeping. Remind him that he needs to share his other toys. He can take the special item out when his friend leaves.

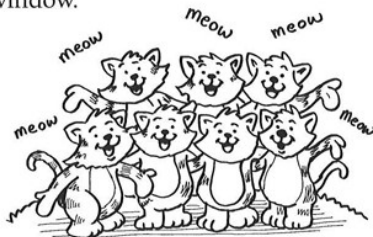
### Worth quoting

“Life is like a trumpet. If you don’t put anything into it, you don’t get anything out of it.” *W. C. Handy*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What’s louder than a cat meowing outside your window?

**A:** Seven cats meowing outside your window.



## Let’s chat

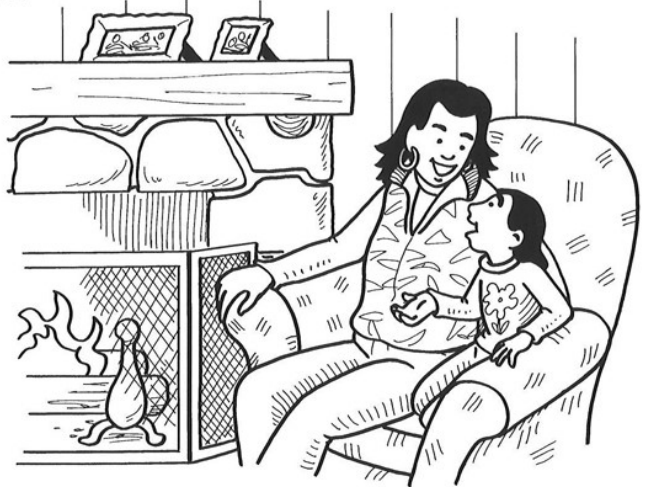
Did you know you can improve your child’s ability to read and write by talking with her? Here are ways to build her language skills during everyday conversations.

### Get her input

Encourage your youngster to share her opinions and put her thoughts into words—skills she’ll use when she writes. During a conversation, you might prompt her by saying, “I like swinging on the front porch at Grandma’s house. What’s your favorite thing to do when we visit Grandma?”

### Talk “up”

The more different words your child hears, the larger her vocabulary will be. Try to sprinkle interesting words into your discussions. You might tell her you’re going to *register* her for tumbling



class rather than *sign up*, or describe her favorite dress as *gorgeous* instead of *pretty*.

### Listen patiently

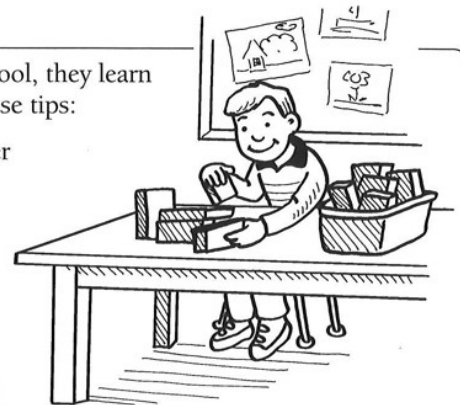
It can be tempting to speed up a conversation by talking for your youngster, especially if it’s taking her a while to respond. It’s better if you let her think about what she wants to say and put it in her own words. Your patience will give her confidence when speaking. Plus, you’ll show her how to be a good listener.♥

## Good classroom behavior

When youngsters behave well in school, they learn more. If your child is acting out, try these tips:

- Exchange information. Ask his teacher for updates so you can give him a high five on good days. Also, let her know about things that could affect your youngster’s behavior, like a new sibling or the loss of a pet.

- Try to visit his classroom. You may spot things to work on at home. Say he throws a tantrum when he’s upset. After school, you might role-play ways he can ask for help instead. (“I spilled my milk. May I please have a paper towel?”)♥



# Raise an independent child

Your youngster can gain a sense of pride and accomplishment by doing things for himself. Use these three strategies to give him a can-do attitude and help him become more independent.

**1. Suggest.** When he struggles with something, offer advice so he can do it on his own. *Example:* "Try putting the bigger blocks on the bottom, and see if your tower will stay standing."



**2. Demonstrate.** Let your child watch you do something, and then have him repeat it. Say you're teaching him to set the table. You could do one place setting, and he can follow your example to do the others. That way, he'll be able to see where everything belongs and make sure that his settings match yours.

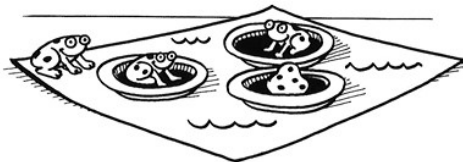
**3. Help.** If he's working on a more difficult task, let him do a single step while you help him with the rest. When he masters that step, he could add another one. For instance, if he's learning to wash his hair, he might rub in the shampoo by himself, and then you can rinse it out.♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER



## What's in a habitat?

Making habitats for toy animals is a fun way for your youngster to learn about the homes of real animals.



Together, talk about what animals need to live (food, water, shelter). Next, she can choose a favorite toy animal and set up a habitat in a corner of her room. For example, she could create a pond habitat for plastic frogs by putting blue poster board (water) on the floor with green paper plates (lily pads). Or she could design a savanna habitat for a stuffed giraffe with construction paper grass and paper towel-tube trees.

If she's not sure where the animal lives, look it up together in a book or online. Or visit your local zoo. She'll get to see habitats, and you can help her read signs that describe the animals' homes in the wild.♥

## PARENT TO PARENT

### Conferences: How to prepare

My first parent-teacher conference is coming up. I'm a little nervous, so I got advice from a friend who has older children.

She said it's helpful to write down questions in advance. When I told her I had no clue what to ask, she suggested I get ideas by looking over schoolwork that my daughter, Ava, brings home. That way, I can inquire about the units the class is doing or find out whether Ava is making progress in certain areas. Finally, my friend encouraged me to see if there's anything I can do at home to help my daughter.

I listed my questions, leaving room to take notes as the teacher talks. Now I feel prepared, and I'm looking forward to finding out how Ava is doing.♥



## Q & A

### Learning with traditions

**Q:** How can I help my son keep learning during the holiday season?

**A:** You can easily fit learning into many of your family traditions. For example, if you usually say what you're thankful for at Thanksgiving, you could have your son write his list ahead of time and read it aloud.

Or if you do craft projects, let him help. Making gingerbread houses is a

fun way for him to practice a variety of skills. For example, ask him to count the candies you're using as decorations. He could even measure his house—you might ask him how many peppermints long a graham cracker wall is, for instance.

Your son might not realize how much he's learning with these activities—he'll just know he's having fun with his family!♥



## 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

# Early Childhood



## Is It Allergies, Cold, Flu, COVID-19 or RSV?

Symptoms 	 Seasonal Allergies	 Cold	 Flu	 COVID-19	 RSV Bronchiolitis
<b>Stuffy or runny nose</b>	Often	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes	Often
<b>Sneezing</b>	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes	Rarely	Rarely
<b>Wheezing</b>	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Rarely	Often
<b>Itchy eyes</b>	Often	Rarely, never	Rarely, never	Rarely	
<b>Fever</b>	Never	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes
<b>Aches and pains</b>	Never	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes	
<b>Headache</b>	Rarely	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes	
<b>Cough</b>	Sometimes	Often	Often	Often	Often
<b>Vomiting</b>	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
<b>Warning time</b>	Symptoms occur after exposure to allergen	Gets worse over several days	Sudden onset	Variable	Gets worse over several days
<b>How long it lasts</b>	Weeks to months	Usually 3-14 days	Usually 10-14 days	Usually 10-14 days	Usually 2-3 weeks
<b>Diarrhea</b>	Never	Rarely	Rarely	Sometimes	Sometimes
<b>Loss of taste or smell</b>	Never*	Never*	Never*	Sometimes	
<b>Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing</b>	Never	Rarely	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
<b>Fatigue</b>	Never	Rarely	Often	Sometimes	
<b>Sore throat</b>		Often	Often	Sometimes	

\* Stuffy nose can temporarily alter smell and taste but these senses are not lost completely.

\*\* Occurs most commonly in children younger than 2 years old.

**This information is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment for a specific medical condition.**



**November is Diabetes Awareness Month**

**National Diabetes Awareness Month** is observed in November to increase awareness of its risk factors, prevention, and support services available for those living with diabetes. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, diabetes is a chronic (long-lasting) health condition that affects how your body turns food into energy. The National Diabetes Statistics report from 2021 estimated 38.4 million people in the United States, or 11.6% of the population, have diabetes. About 1 in 5 adults with diabetes don't know they have the disease. An estimated 97.6 million American adults have prediabetes, which means their blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. For more education on diabetes visit: [healthinfo@niddk.nih.gov](mailto:healthinfo@niddk.nih.gov) and <https://www.slhn.org/diabetes-endocrinology/diabetes-education>.

**NATIONAL  
DIABETES  
PREVENTION  
PROGRAM**

# Prediabetes Risk Test

**1. How old are you?**  
 Younger than 40 years (0 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
 40–49 years (1 point) \_\_\_\_\_  
 50–59 years (2 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
 60 years or older (3 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Are you a man or a woman?**  
 Man (1 point)    Woman (0 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. If you are a woman, have you ever been diagnosed with gestational diabetes?**  
 Yes (1 point)    No (0 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Do you have a mother, father, sister, or brother with diabetes?**  
 Yes (1 point)    No (0 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Have you ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure?**  
 Yes (1 point)    No (0 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Are you physically active?**  
 Yes (0 points)    No (1 point) \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What is your weight category?**  
 (See chart at right) \_\_\_\_\_

Write your score in the boxes below

Height	Weight (lbs.)		
4'10"	119-142	143-190	191+
4'11"	124-147	148-197	198+
5'0"	128-152	153-203	204+
5'1"	132-157	158-210	211+
5'2"	136-163	164-217	218+
5'3"	141-168	169-224	225+
5'4"	145-173	174-231	232+
5'5"	150-179	180-239	240+
5'6"	155-185	186-246	247+
5'7"	159-190	191-254	255+
5'8"	164-196	197-261	262+
5'9"	169-202	203-269	270+
5'10"	174-208	209-277	278+
5'11"	179-214	215-285	286+
6'0"	184-220	221-293	294+
6'1"	189-226	227-301	302+
6'2"	194-232	233-310	311+
6'3"	200-239	240-318	319+
6'4"	205-245	246-327	328+
	<b>1 Point</b>	<b>2 Points</b>	<b>3 Points</b>
	You weigh less than the 1 Point column (0 points)		

**Total score:**

Adapted from Bang et al., Ann Intern Med 151:775-783, 2009. Original algorithm was validated without gestational diabetes as part of the model.

Continued on next page



# Prediabetes Risk Test (Continued)

## If you scored 5 or higher

was validated without gestational diabetes as part of the model.

You are at increased risk for having prediabetes and are at high risk for type 2 diabetes. However, only your doctor can tell for sure if you have type 2 diabetes or prediabetes, a condition in which blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. **Talk to your doctor to see if additional testing is needed.**

*If you are African American, Hispanic/Latino American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian American, or Pacific Islander, you are at higher risk for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes. Also, if you are Asian American, you are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes at a lower weight (about 15 pounds lower than weights in the 1 Point column). Talk to your doctor to see if you should have your blood sugar tested.*

## You can reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes

Find out how you can reverse prediabetes and prevent or delay type 2 diabetes through a **CDC-recognized lifestyle change program** at <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/lifestyle-program>.

Risk Test provided by the American Diabetes Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Even if you do well on the Prediabetes Risk Test, you can still benefit from St. Luke's on-line **EXERCISE CLASSES** and **COOKING CLASSES!**

Check out these classes by using your cell phone's camera and scanning the QR Codes on the right.


For information on community resources or Geisinger St. Luke's services, contact **Angela Morgan, Community Health, Geisinger St. Luke's 1-484-658-4022** or email at [angela.morgan@sluhn.org](mailto:angela.morgan@sluhn.org)

**St. Luke's**  
Community Health


**Diabetes CARES Program**  
Clinical Assessment, Resources,  
Education & Support

Scan the QR codes below to access full libraries of healthy resources!

**Exercise Classes**



**Cooking Classes**





**Child Development, Inc. IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS**



**Talk to your child's teacher!**



**SCAN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT VOLUNTEERING**

Mary Ann Devlin, Executive Director of Child Development, Inc. accepted **"At-Home School Kits"** from Tanya Carl, Girl Scout Leader.

Since 2016 the Girl Scouts of Schuylkill County have made **"At-Home School Kits"** for the children of Child Development as their **MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY PROJECT**. This year they donated 120 of them, each includes: crayons, markers, scissors and glue. These kits will be used by our children to reinforce classroom lessons to support and help them to achieve their school readiness goals.



**"THANK YOU GIRL SCOUTS"**



# Positive Solutions for Families

**Positive Solutions for Families** is four, two-hour weekly sessions that will provide information to families on how to promote their children's social and emotional skills, understand their problem behavior, and use positive approaches to help their child learn appropriate behavior. Here is a brief summary of the sessions:

**WEEK 1: SESSION 1 – Making the Connection!**

Identify the importance of building positive relationships with children. Discuss the “power” of using positive comments and encouragement with children.

**SESSION 2 – Keeping it Positive**

Learn to use playful interactions to strengthen the relationship with your child by understanding the meaning of challenging behavior, and using positively stated directions.

**WEEK 2: SESSION 3 – Behavior Has Meaning**

Learn how to determine the meaning of your children's behavior and then be a behavior detective so you can develop and teach them rules.

**SESSION 4 – The Power of Routines**

It's all about setting up successful routines and transitions and using prevention strategies.

**WEEK 3: SESSION 5 – Teach Me What to Do!**

Learn about emotional vocabulary, anger management, and problem-solving skills.

**WEEK 4: SESSION 6 – Responding With Purpose**

Learn how to respond to challenging behaviors.

**SESSION 7 – Put It All Together With a Plan**

Learn how to develop a behavior plan to use during daily routines.

This program is open to parents of children enrolled in Child Development centers as well as any parent within Schuylkill County.

*Positive Solutions for Families is made possible through a grant from Schuylkill County Drug & Alcohol.*

**TAMAQUA CENTER**  
**Mondays**  
**11/4, 11/11, 11/18, 11/25**  
**4:30 PM-6:30 pm**

*This will be offered again in the Spring of 2025.*



Things you need to know—all in on place!

**CLOSINGS FOR NOVEMBER**

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY**

**Friday, November 1**

Centers will be **CLOSED** for staff training but the Main Office will be open.

**THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**Thursday, Nov. 28 — CLOSED**  
**Friday, Nov. 29 — CLOSED**  
**Monday, Dec. 2 — CLOSED**

All Child Development, Inc. Centers and the Main Office will be **CLOSED**.

**Emergency Closings and Delays**



In case of an emergency closing or delay due to weather, an announcement will be made on the local radio and television stations.

All decisions regarding the emergency closing or delay of either Program-wide or a specific centers will be made with your child's safety and well-being as our primary concern. The cancellation or delay will be aired on the stations below:

WMGH	Tamaqua	FM 105.5
WPPA	Pottsville	AM 1360
T102	Pottsville	FM 101.9
WPAM	Pottsville	AM 1450
WNEP TV	Scranton	Channel 16

Cancellations and delays will be made as early as possible. We will be specific as to whether it is the Head Start and PreK Counts Programs only or the Child Care Program (which includes the Administrative Office) that will be closed or delayed.

**MEETINGS**

**Policy Council**

**MONTHLY MEETING**

**Mon., Nov. 18th at 9:30 AM**  
**In-Person Meeting**

*(a ZOOM link for the meeting will also be emailed to members)*

**Finance Committee**

**Thurs., Nov. 7th**

**5 PM Retirement Plan Review**  
**6 PM Regular Committee Meeting**  
**In-Person Meeting**

*(a ZOOM link for the meeting will also be emailed to members)*

**Health and Mental Health Advisory Committee**

**Thurs., Nov. 14th at 11:30 AM**  
**In-Person Meeting at**  
**Administrative Office of Child Dev.**

*(a ZOOM link will also be emailed to members)*



Old Man Winter will be here before we know it. With that in mind we wanted to remind you that Child Development, Inc. uses an automated message system to alert parents and staff when the our centers or the Program are closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies.

We also use this message system to inform and remind families of other important Program and center events.

As long as we have a current cell phone number, which is the same one that is listed on your emergency card, and/or an e-mail address, you will receive automated messages. **Therefore, it is very important to keep your emergency contact information accurate and up-to-date.**



# The 2024-2025 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program **OPENS 11/1/2024**

The **L**ow **I**ncome **H**ome **E**nergy **A**ssistance Program (**LIHEAP**) in Pennsylvania for the 2024–2025 season will open on **November 4, 2024** and close on **April 4, 2025**. LIHEAP is a federally funded program that helps low-income households pay for home heating. The program offers cash grants, crisis payments, and energy conservation and weatherization measures

**How to Apply:** There are two ways you can apply for **LIHEAP**, online **OR** on paper.

1. **Online:** Apply for benefits online using COMPASS, the online tool for Pennsylvanians to apply for health and human service programs and manage benefit information.
2. **On paper:** You can download a paper application, print it, fill it out, and return it to your local county assistance office.

Click on the links for either an English or Spanish Energy Assistance Application and return it to your local county assistance program located at: **(THE APPLICATION LINKS WILL BE AVAILABLE WHEN THE PROGRAM OPENS.)**

Go to this web site to learn more about either of the above options:

**<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHEAP.aspx>**

The physical address for the Schuylkill County Assistance Office is:

**Schuylkill County Assistance Office**  
**OFFICE HOURS: 8:30 AM to 5 PM**  
 2640 Woodglen Road • P.O. Box 1100 • Pottsville, PA 17901-1341  
**LIHEAP 570-621-3072 • Toll Free: 1-877-306-5439 • Phone: 570-621-3000**  
**FAX: 570-624-3334**

***Individuals with hearing impairments may call the TDD number at 1-800-451-5886***

**Crisis Grants:** In addition to the **LIHEAP** cash program, households experiencing a heating crisis may be eligible for additional benefits through the **LIHEAP Crisis Program**.

Additional money may be available if you have an emergency situation and are in jeopardy of losing your heat.

Emergency situations include: Broken heating equipment or Leaking lines that must be fixed or replaced

**Lack of fuel:** The main heating source or second heating source (a source that is used to operate the main heating source or used if the main heating source is not working) has been completely shut-off.

Danger of being without fuel (less than a 15 day supply) or of having utility service terminated (received a notice that service will be shut off within the next 60 days)

Assistance with home heating crisis situations will be available 24 hours a day; in most counties, you should contact your local county assistance office.

*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@childdevelopment.org](mailto:kwolfe@childdevelopment.org)**

