

**November 2025**

## KID BITS



### Practice direction words

Would your youngster make a good remote-control robot? Use direction words (*forward, backward, right, left*) to tell her how to move across a room. Then, you can be the robot and let her give you directions. Getting more comfortable with these words will help her in math and in everyday life.

### Drive, sail, or fly

Here's a fun way for your child to practice sorting skills. Have him gather toy cars, boats, and airplanes. Together, divide a large sheet of paper into three sections for land, water, and sky. Ask him to steer each vehicle to where it belongs. For example, a jeep goes on land, a tugboat in the water, and a plane in the sky.

### Routines are important

Children who grow up with routines handle change more easily than those who don't. That's because a predictable schedule gives your youngster a sense of security that boosts her confidence for trying new things. **Tip:** Regularly talk about routines so your child knows what to expect when she wakes up or gets home from school.

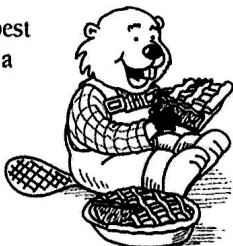
### Worth quoting

"Give your dreams all you've got, and you'll be amazed at the energy that comes out of you." *William James*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What's the best thing to put in a pie?

**A:** Your teeth!



## My ABCs

"Now I know my ABCs, next time won't you sing with me?"

Singing the alphabet song and playing with letters build early reading skills. Use activities like these so your little one will recognize the alphabet from A to Z.

### Molding

Help your youngster make his own alphabet mat. He can print the alphabet in large letters on a sheet of paper and tape wax paper on top. Have him roll clay between his hands to create "snakes" and shape them to cover the letters on the mat. Encourage him to say each letter as he forms it.

### Building

Ask your child to get two blocks or Legos for each letter of the alphabet. Together, use masking tape and a pen to label each pair. He should write an uppercase letter (A) on one and its lowercase match (a) on the other. Then,



mix the blocks all together, and let your youngster find matching letters to build houses with.

### Fishing

During bath time, toss a set of magnetic or foam letters into the tub. Give your child a plastic cup or large spoon, and have him fish the letters out in alphabetical order, saying each one as he goes. If he needs help remembering which letter comes next, sing the alphabet song with him until you reach the letter he needs.♥

## What to expect at parent-teacher conferences

A parent-teacher conference is a quick checkup for your child's progress. Here's what you need to know before you go:

- Conferences allow you to learn about your youngster's strengths and weaknesses and to find out how you can support her at home. If she has trouble counting to 10, for example, her teacher might suggest a counting game to play.

- Be prepared to share information about your child, too. It will be helpful for the teacher to know your youngster's likes and dislikes or about things going on at home that may affect her behavior in school.

- Find out how to contact the teacher if there are problems between conferences. Let her know the best time and way to reach you.♥



## Free play

Inventing games and activities lets your child explore and learn at her own pace. Consider these ideas for helping your youngster benefit from “just playing.”

**Provide materials.** Spark her imagination by combining toys or household items with everyday events. After a doctor appointment, you might put her doctor kit with her dolls, for example. Before recycling cardboard boxes, have her pick some to build a shopping center like the one you just visited.



**Ask questions.** It's okay to steer your youngster toward a type of activity, but let her guide the actual play. So instead of making specific suggestions, prompt her with a few words. For instance, you could help set up her easel and then ask, “What should we paint?” rather than saying, “Let's paint a picture of a pony.”

*Note:* Hectic schedules can make it hard for your child to find time for free play. Consider ways to add downtime, such as keeping a few days free of scheduled after-school or evening activities. ♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER



## Long ago and far away

Knights and castles make for fun stories, and since most fairy tales take place in the past, they also offer your child a first look at history. Next time you read a fairy tale to him, try this.

### Look at the pictures

Ask him to identify activities that are different from how we do them today. For example, he might notice a character getting water from a well rather than turning on a faucet, or people riding in carriages instead of in cars.

### Act it out

Encourage your youngster to use action figures and pretend it is the same time and place as in the story. He could build a castle for them to live in, have them cook their food over a pretend “open fire,” or make them carry candles so they can see in the dark. Let him tell you the story of how his action figures lived “back then.” ♥



## Q & A

### Being considerate

**Q:** Our daughter has a tendency to do things without thinking of other people's feelings. How can we teach her to be more considerate?

**A:** It's perfectly normal for youngsters this age to be a little self-centered. They are still working out how their words and actions affect others.

One way to help her learn is to have her pretend to be the other person. Say she colors on the table at the library. Ask how she would feel if she worked there and had to clean that up.

It's also a good idea to encourage your daughter to make things right. Instead of simply apologizing, suggest that she do something to show she's sorry. If she accidentally rips another child's picture, she could get tape and repair it. ♥



## PARENT TO PARENT

### Settling down for bedtime

Our son Isaiah always seemed to be full of energy and zooming around the house at bedtime. Getting him to bed was such a problem that I worried something was physically wrong with him.

I asked the pediatrician about it. She told me that when kids get too tired, their brains actually release hormones that keep them awake. She suggested that I watch for signs that Isaiah is getting sleepy and adjust his bedtime to match. For instance,

he might slow down in his play or start rubbing his eyes and yawning—signals that his body is ready for sleep. The doctor also said we could help him learn to relax for sleep by providing simple cues, such as reading the same

storybook or listening to the same quiet music every night.

Now, thanks to the doctor's suggestions, bedtime is going a little better. Hopefully, that will continue—for Isaiah's sake and mine! ♥



## 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

## Protecting Little Lungs at Play

Our playgrounds are a place for kids to run, jump, and play in a safe, healthy environment. As a reminder, smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere on our playgrounds or at our facilities. By keeping these areas tobacco-free, we protect our youngest community members from secondhand smoke and set a positive example.

Thank you for helping us create a healthy space for children and families.



## November is Diabetes Awareness Month



*A blood glucose reading over 166 mg/dL in a child is considered high, especially if it's a fasting blood sugar level.*

It's also a critical time for parents and early childhood educators to learn about this condition, which can affect even our youngest children. While **Type 1 diabetes** is more common in preschoolers, cases of **Type 2** are also increasing in children. Understanding the signs is the first step toward ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all children.

### Recognizing the signs of diabetes

Spotting diabetes in young children can be challenging, but certain symptoms should never be ignored. Be on the lookout for a combination of these signs:

- **Increased thirst and urination:** A child may ask for drinks constantly and need more frequent diaper changes. In potty-trained children, this may appear as new-onset bedwetting.
- **Excessive hunger and weight loss:** Despite eating more than usual, a child may lose weight.
- **Fatigue and mood changes:** Unexplained tiredness, weakness, and unusual irritability or grumpiness can be key indicators.

If you observe these symptoms, parents should contact their child's healthcare provider immediately, as early diagnosis is crucial for effective treatment.

### Creating a safe and inclusive environment

- **Care plans:** All caregivers should be informed about a child's specific health care plan, which outlines their needs for managing blood sugar, insulin, and emergencies.
- **Trained staff:** Designated staff members should be trained to monitor blood sugar levels, administer insulin and glucagon, and respond to highs and lows.
- **Normalizing care routines:** With proper training, a child's care routines, such as blood sugar checks and insulin doses, can become a normal part of the day, helping the child feel secure.
- **Empowering children:** Even at a young age, children can be introduced to age-appropriate tasks related to their care. This helps them build confidence in managing their condition over time.

By working together, families and early educators can ensure that all children with diabetes have the care and support they need to learn, grow, and thrive alongside their peers.

## Early Childhood



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

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

## PA Department of Health Lead Information HOTLINE

As a follow-up to our article last month on the facts of **LEAD POISONING**, we wanted to let you know that the Pennsylvania Department of Health's **1-800-440-LEAD** hotline provides information about lead poisoning prevention, testing, and local resources.

It is available for anyone concerned about lead exposure, including parents, physicians, and property owners. The hotline can answer questions and provide guidance on lead-related issues, such as testing for lead poisoning and resources for those affected. They also have great information on-line at:

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/diseases-conditions/lead-poisoning/lead-information-line>

# Geisinger St. Luke's Corner



## The Importance of Lead Testing for Your Child

WITH DR. MELANIE KOEHLER, PEDIATRICIAN AT ST. LUKE'S TAMAQUA PRIMARY CARE



Exposure to lead is quite common in our community. There was lead present in house paint until 1978 and gasoline until 1976. Residual dust and vapors from these are present in older homes and in soil. Younger kids spend more time on lower surfaces and put more things in their mouths, so they are at risk for absorbing lead. Pipes in older homes may also contain significant lead. This lead is leached out of the pipes when the water is run warm or hot. There is also lead present in some cosmetics, pottery, and crayons especially if not made in the USA where there are requirements for lead testing.

Lower lead levels under 3 do not appear to be harmful to children, but levels above this can affect development, the heart, and the kidney. Detectable lead levels are also associated with an increased risk for ADHD, hearing problems and asthma. The safest thing for kids is to minimize their lead exposure, and here some ways to do that:

- ◆ Make sure they get plenty of calcium as this blocks the absorption of lead. Most children should receive 16-24 oz daily of cow's milk.
- ◆ Start a children's multivitamin with iron to further block lead absorption. Kids under 3 can take a liquid vitamin like Poly-Vi-Sol with IRON. Older kids can take a chewable but not a gummy as these typically contain little to no iron.
- ◆ Make sure kids wash hands before eating and after playing in dirt or dust. Run water from the tap for several minutes each morning to flush out standing water which may contain a higher proportion of lead. Only use cold water from the tap and heat it up for cooking as needed. Houses built before 1978 most likely have lead in their paint. Peeling paint should be repaired. Cleaning surfaces with a high phosphate detergent like Mr. Clean can also bind up lead.

If your child has detectable lead in the bloodstream, the test should be repeated per CDC guidelines depending on the level, usually every month or 2 until it becomes undetectable. Reach out to your child's healthcare provider to determine when a repeat level should be drawn.

### RESOURCES

- ◆ <https://www.cdc.gov/lead-prevention/about/index.html>
- ◆ <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/diseases-conditions/lead-poisoning>
- ◆ **Lead Information Line – 1-800-440-LEAD (5323)**  
According to the Lead Information Line's website at **pa.gov**, some of the topics that have been discussed include 1) Preventing exposure to lead 2) What to do if you've already been exposed to lead 3) Getting lead paint hazards out of PA homes 4) Am I or is my loved one at risk for lead poisoning 5) Lowering the risks of exposure to lead and other environmental hazards 6) Where to find resources for inspection and removal of lead-based paint and 7) Current consumer alerts regarding environmental health.
- ◆ <https://paleadfree.org/prt/>

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

**DR. MELANIE KOEHLER, MD - ST. LUKE'S TAMAQUA PRIMARY CARE**  
**143 NORTH RAILROAD STREET, TAMAQUA, PA 18252**  
**570-645-1540**

# Child Development Then vs Now

## What's Changed and Why It Matters

In 1980, child development mostly meant:

-  Are they growing?
  -  Are they eating?
  -  Can they behave in public?
- That was considered enough.

Parenting now looks different



Not because we're fussier.  
Because we finally have better tools to raise emotionally healthy kids, not just compliant ones.

We now understand:

-  How early stress shapes the brain
-  How connection fuels language and learning
-  How trauma gets stored in the body
-  Why secure attachment predicts lifelong wellbeing

We've also learned what doesn't work so well:

- Shaming children into obedience
- Using fear as a behaviour tool
- Treating emotional expression as weakness
- Assuming all kids develop the same way

We've stopped ignoring whole groups of children:

- Neurodivergent kids
- Anxious, sensitive, or shut-down kids
- Children from blended, LGBTQ+, or non-nuclear families

| Modern understanding                                                                                                              | What to try at home                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Behaviour is communication                    | Instead of punishing immediately, ask "What's this behaviour telling me?" Example: aggression might signal hunger, tiredness, or emotional overload. |
|  Kids co-regulate before they self-regulate    | When a child is distressed, stay physically close, breathe slowly, speak softly. They need your calm to find theirs.                                 |
|  Language builds brains                        | Narrate what's happening: "You're stacking the blocks so carefully!" Use rich, descriptive language — especially in play.                            |
|  Secure attachment leads to resilience         | Spend at least 10 minutes daily on child-led play. No instructions, no corrections. Just follow their lead.                                          |
|  Routine helps emotional safety                | Use visual schedules, predictable transitions, and simple cues: "After snack, we brush teeth." This reduces meltdowns.                               |
|  Sensory needs affect behaviour                | Watch for signs like covering ears, hiding under tables, or sudden shutdowns. Offer quiet, dim spaces to regroup.                                    |
|  Children thrive on connection over correction | Replace "Stop that!" with "Let's try this together." It builds trust and teaches through relationship, not fear.                                     |





Things you need to know—all in on place!

## CLOSINGS FOR NOV./DEC.

### Thanksgiving Holiday

**Thursday, Nov. 27 — CLOSED**

**Friday, Nov. 28 — CLOSED**

**Monday, Dec. 1— CLOSED**

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

*(All locations will re-open on Dec. 2nd)*

## 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

### Finance Committee

**Thurs., Nov. 6th**

**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. 13th at 11:30 AM**

**In-Person Meeting at**

**Administrative Office of Child Dev.**

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

### Policy Council

**MONTHLY MEETING**

**Mon., Nov. 24th at 9:30 AM**

**In-Person Meeting**

*(a ZOOM link for the meeting 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.**

# Enroll Your Child TODAY!

*Give your child the best possible start on their educational journey in our preschool program!*

**CHILD DEVELOPMENT, INC.** helps prepare children both academically and socially for a smooth transition to kindergarten. Most families qualify, we are federally and state-funded and we provide a variety of services, including:

- A focus on education to build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.
- Health screenings and support, including dental, mental, and physical health.
- Nutritious meals, such as breakfast and lunch.
- Family partnership to empower parents as their child's most important teacher.



**570-544-8959 | Ext. 210**



## 8 LOCATIONS

- Fountain Springs
- Mahanoy City
- Pottsville (2 centers)
- Saint Clair
- Schuylkill Haven
- Shenandoah
- Tamaqua



## ~ REFER A FRIEND ~



Do you have a friend or relative with a preschool age child (or children) and lives within Schuylkill County? If so, please give them this coupon to complete and return to you so you can turn it in to your child's teacher or family advocate.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Referring Family: \_\_\_\_\_ Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred Family: \_\_\_\_\_ Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call: ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon

Family is interested in the following center: ☐ Fountain Springs ☐ Mahanoy City ☐ Pottsville ☐ Pottsville 2  
☐ Saint Clair ☐ Sch. Haven ☐ Shenandoah ☐ Tamaqua

### 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