



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Social Skills

“His piece is bigger!”

There’s nothing like one piece of cake or one popsicle to start a full-scale battle between siblings over who got the biggest piece.

Since treats don’t really fall under the “need” category, parents can solve the her-piece-is-bigger-than-mine dilemma by this method: one child divides the item and the other child gets first choice.

Both children quickly learn to cut equal pieces.

One mother handles the problem this way: “I just take a bite out of the bigger piece,” she says.

Sometimes an outrageous or humorous response works far better than seriousness.

Another parent offers an alternative treat: two pieces of candy for one popsicle, for instance. □

April, 2017

Vol. 33 No. 4

Parenting

Teaching kids to share—and care

How can parents help their children develop a sharing/caring attitude?

- **Start early.** Various studies demonstrate that even infants have surprisingly generous instincts and like to share.

Most parents have the experience of witnessing the baby, eating in a high chair, spontaneously pick up a piece of food from the tray and offer it to them.

Parents can begin planting the seeds of compassion when their children are infants.

Benjamin Spock cited this example: “If a toy is offered but the baby doesn’t want to let go, don’t try to pull it away from him. That will only bring out his possessiveness.

“Instead, lay your hand on the toy, smile and say thank you. Even if the toy is not actually relinquished, your positive reaction shows him that his impulse is right.”

- **Love and nurture your child.** While this may appear to be obvious, parents are usually surprised to learn the great number of children who grow up feeling unloved by their parents.

In fact, believing they are unloved is the number one reason many teens

give for attempting suicide, using drugs and alcohol, and running away.

On the other hand, such issues are almost non-existent in homes where parents consistently work at showering their children with love and respect.

- **Commend your child for acts of caring and sharing.** This is not as obvious as it appears because children seldom bring attention to their acts of compassion and kindness.

Parents constantly need to be on the lookout for signs of caring and sharing and then praise the child for his or her behavior.

How the future is shaped will depend upon the values children receive in the present.

As parents work at developing caring and sharing attitudes in their children, the world always has a chance at being a brighter, better and safer place. □



Encourage writing

A parent's positive approach to writing as a pleasurable activity can have rewarding results.

Just as you began talking to an infant who could not repeat anything recognizable back to you, you provide the similar exposure to the art of writing.

Build on children's natural curiosity and encourage them to explore the world of writing—encourage writing play anywhere.

- Write in the snow, in the sand, in the mud with sticks.
- Write in the icing on the pan of brownies.
- Write on the sidewalks and driveway.
- Write in the car, the stroller, the grocery cart. Safe, fat crayons keep children occupied.
- Write in restaurants. Markers and tablets are essential diaper bag items,

although placemats make wonderful impromptu paper. Some restaurants provide paper puzzles and crayons.

• When you're writing down a grocery list, a thank you card or a birthday greeting at home, give the kids a piece of paper too and let them write along with you. Children always want to do what their parents are doing. □

Games & Activities

Hide and seek—the new way

When the kids are stuck inside on a rainy or cold day, here's an updated version of hide and seek that works for any number of kids—and adults—in any kind of location.

Instead of hiding people, try hiding objects, such as pencils or spoons.

Seekers stay in one room while the hider secrets ten similar objects in another room.

The person who finds the most gets to hide the objects the next time. □

Science & Nature

How much does it weigh?

To conduct some experiments about how much things weigh, put your kitchen or bathroom scale on a table along with several interesting objects to weigh: a shoe, toy car, doll, apple, cup, a box of toothpicks, a book, a marshmallow and anything else that looks interesting.

1. Have each person guess how much an object weighs. Then put it on the scale and see what its weight really is.
2. Next, compare the weights of different objects. Which is heavier: the doll or the shoe? The toy car or the apple?
3. If you're using a bathroom scale, put it on the floor and weigh each person who participating and line up by weight: lightest to heaviest.

Is the heaviest person the tallest?

4. Which weighs more: big objects or little objects? Try to think up "stumpers" such as a jar of peanut butter vs. a sack of potato chips. Or a package of marshmallows vs. a can of soup.

5. Solve this problem: How can you measure the weight of your pet if it won't stand still on the scale? (It's not higher math, but it is a good problem for older kids to solve.)

If you have more than one pet, which one weighs the most?

6. Liquids have weight, too. Everybody guess how much a gallon of water weighs—then find out. □

Growing Together is published by Growing Child, Inc., P.O. Box 2505 W. Lafayette, IN 47996 ©2017 Growing Child, Inc. Telephone: (765) 464-0920. Customer Service: 1-800-927-7289.

Growing Child also publishes: **Growing Child** (birth-six years), and **Growing Up** (grades K-12).

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Articles in **Growing Together** refer to both boys and girls. For simplicity, the pronouns "he" and "she" are used interchangeably unless otherwise noted.

www.growingchild.com

April 2017

Sunday

Monday

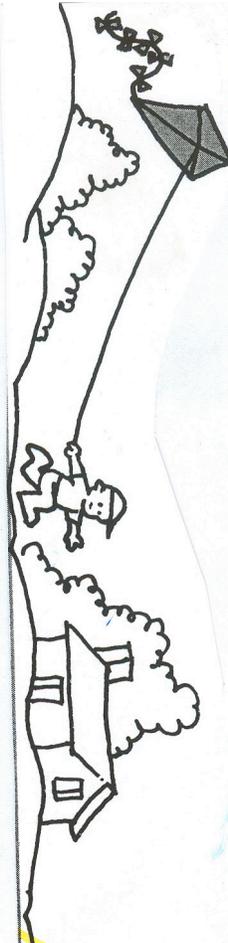
Tuesday

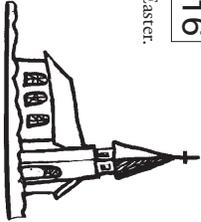
Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday



<p>2</p> <p>Lie on your stomach and go around in a circle.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Have a "conversation" with Baby. Repeat every sound she makes.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Who gets up first at your house? Who gets up last? When do YOU get up?</p> 	<p>5</p> <p>What state do you live in? Can you find it on a map?</p>	<p>6</p> <p>At breakfast, talk about what you plan to do today.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>At supper, talk about what you did today.</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>Visit a pet store and look at the fish. Maybe a snake. Maybe not.</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Palm Sunday</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Passover begins at sundown.</p> 	<p>11</p> <p>Show Baby how a wind chime works and listen for the sound.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Count the number of bites it takes for you to eat lunch.</p> 	<p>13</p> <p>What color is a banana? Find four more things that are the same color. Can you spell banana?</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Good Friday.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>How many times can you bounce and catch a ball without stopping?</p> 
<p>16</p> <p>Easter.</p> 	<p>17</p> <p>Find something blue in the kitchen.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>How can you look at your back?</p> 	<p>19</p> <p>Play rug-of-war (gently) with a scarf or towel.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Count all the toes at your house.</p> 	<p>21</p> <p>Talk about the safest way to cross the street. Remember to always look both ways first.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Earth Day. What can we do to take care of our earth?</p> 
<p>23</p> <p>Walk together, hold some-one's hand</p> <p>30</p> <p>Name some animals that might live on a farm.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>What words would you use to describe the weather today?</p> 	<p>25</p> <p>Play with a toy truck. Where's it going? What will it do when it gets there?</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Don't throw out those cardboard boxes! Think of ways to adapt them as toys.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Draw some happy faces to put on the refrigerator.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Arbor Day Plant a tree.</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Go to the library and look for a book about pets.</p> 