



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Developmental

Raising a positive child is an art!

Raising children who are fun to be around is an art. Three important parts of that art are speaking positively, encouraging skills, and conveying reasonable expectations.

- **Speaking positively.** Children reflect what they see and hear. If they are surrounded by criticism, pessimistic thoughts and unfriendly talk, they will learn to speak and act accordingly. If they are surrounded by encouragement, praise and positive thinking, they will learn to reflect those qualities.

- **Encouraging skills.** When children are praised for their efforts, rather than their accomplishments, they learn that the process of learning is important and that mistakes are all right.

- **Reasonable expectations.** Children most often live up (or down) to the expectations their parents have for them. Once you set an expectation, you will consciously and unconsciously convey that to your child. With positive encouragement and feedback, chances are those expectations will be met. □

June 2021

Vol. 37. No. 6

Health & Safety

Avoiding medication mistakes

Giving medicine to children should be a simple thing to do. But sometimes mistakes can be dangerous, especially with over-the-counter medications. Here are some precautions to follow when giving medications:

1. Follow directions.

If medicine is supposed to be given three times a day, give it three times a day, not twice today and three tomorrow and once the next day.

If your doctor says to give your child all of the antibiotic, for example, or any medicine that the doctor prescribes, do it.

Don't discontinue the medication when the child appears to be getting better.

2. Don't share medication.

Don't give your three-year-old the medicine that was prescribed for his eight-year-old brother.

Don't give your children medicine left over from your illness. Give the child only the medicine prescribed for that child.

The only way to do this with a liquid medication is with a calibrated spoon available from your drugstore. A household spoon will not give an accurate measurement for medicine.

Don't try to convert from teaspoons to ounces or vice versa unless you are absolutely sure you are correct.

Don't give a very sick child a double dose in hopes she will get well faster.

Don't give over-the-counter drugs longer than the recommended number of days.

4. Don't combine medications.

Never try combining two or more medications, even over-the-counter ones without consulting your doctor or pharmacist. Drug interactions can be deadly.

5. Be safe.

Always use the child-resistant bottle cap and put medication out of the reach of children.

Never let a child take his own medication without supervision!

6. If in doubt, DON'T!

Never give a medication if there is any doubt in your mind about its safety.

Never give medicine that looks old, discolored, or crumbly.

Never mix medicine with food or drink unless your doctor gives such instructions.

Read the labels of all medications and ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions — before you medicate. □

There are individual differences between children, whether or not they are from different families. What works for one child will not necessarily work for another. And you are the best decision-maker about what works best for your family.

The good news is that there is always the possibility that among all the advice showered upon you by well-meaning friends and relatives lies a useful tip. \square



The thirty seconds you take to share a few moments of love and conversation can make the rest of your child's day—and yours—more rewarding. ■

Soothing away a jangled day

Most people like and respond to music—it is one of the most natural things in the world. All cultures sing, dance and play instruments. But no one knows exactly why music makes us smile, or why it calms children. It just does.

To relax both you and your children, soft, gentle music usually works best.

One little suggestion that sometimes works at naptime—or bedtime—is to tell kids they don't have to sleep, but they need to be quiet and listen to the music.

At other times, music can be a source of great fun with simple games you make up yourself. Kids will love it if you participate, too. Here are a few not-so-common ideas to get started:

- **Roll around the clock.** Put on a song with a good, strong beat and get down on the floor and roll! It sounds silly, and it's even sillier to see a bunch of kids and adults rolling around on the floor. Some people have even been known to laugh out loud!

- **March to a beat.** Give everybody a hat and a noisemaker (make your own from simple, safe kitchen items) and march in time to the music. This is an excellent experience for learning about rhythm and matching movement with sound.

- **Line dancing.** Hold hands and teach little ones a few simple steps you can all do together. If you know the words to the song, sing along. Kids LOVE to dance with moms and dads!

- **Remember the Bunny Hop?** If you do, teach it to the kids. This is great fun and a good way to get rid of that extra energy (theirs, not yours). □

Number of the day

Here's a fun way to introduce the idea that numbers stand for a quantity. It can be an introduction to numbers for young children and practice for older learners.

To start, pick a number for the day—let's say it's three.

So, for today, look for the number three in headlines, books, articles, signs, and so forth. Point these out to your child and tell her, "There's a three."

If you're getting ready to eat cookies or grapes, count out three and say, "Here are three grapes: one, two, three" as you touch each one.

During the day, look for natural places where the number will occur: three buttons on a sweater, three birds sitting on a wire, three people waiting at a bus stop. Point out these groups as you spot them.

Don't expect perfection, and don't hold a quiz at the end of the day. Just enjoy this little game of looking, listening, matching and counting wherever you are.

In a few days, pick another number and start all over again.

It's the way kids learn. □

FREE!

"Grandma Says" is a twice-monthly email that includes general parenting tips, words of encouragement, and children's book reviews.

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Written by a very wise grandmother;
From the publishers of **Growing Child**
and **Growing Together**

Listening helps settle arguments

Bicker, bicker, bicker! Sometimes it seems that brothers and sisters are always fighting. You can't stop it all, but you can help your children learn to settle their disputes in constructive ways.

- Try to get the whole story of what caused the problem before jumping in and blaming anyone.

For example, say, "You must have really been mad at your younger sister to hit her," and then let the older child explain. Let her know that angry feelings are acceptable but that you can't let her hurt her sister.

- In arguments between two children who can both talk, give each a chance to tell her or his own point of view.

You can help by describing the situation rather than judging it: "It looks like you two can't agree on a television program. You both seem to be pretty upset. Want to tell me about it? Laurie, you go first. Then Joey, I want to hear your side of the story."

This kind of approach will save a lot of hurt feelings and resentment between the kids, and it will help them learn to settle disputes themselves without fighting. □

Growing Together is published by Growing Child, Inc., P.O. Box 2505 W. Lafayette, IN 47996 ©2021 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.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<div>1</div> <div>International Children's Day</div> 	<div>2</div> <div>Make some flowers out of construction paper</div> 	<div>3</div> <div>Draw a picture on the driveway or sidewalk with colored chalk. (Wash off with the hose.)</div>	<div>4</div> <div>At dinner, everyone name one good thing that happened today. "Found some pennies!" </div>	<div>5</div> <div>What words rhyme with "tree"?</div>	
<div>6</div> <div>Fruit with breakfast</div> 	<div>7</div> <div>Do any of your neighbors have a clothes line? What's it for?</div>	<div>8</div> <div>National Yo-Yo Day Can you yo-yo?</div>	<div>9</div> <div>How many steps are there from the kitchen to your bed? Make a guess and then count them off.</div>	<div>10</div> <div>Does your family have a plan in the event of an emergency, such as a fire?</div>	<div>11</div> <div>What are wheels for? What would happen if your car had no wheels? </div>	<div>12</div> <div>Look for things outside that are green.</div>
<div>13</div> <div>What are peas: Where do they come from? What color are they: Can you eat them?</div>	<div>14</div> <div>Flag Day </div> <div>Fly the Stars and Stripes!</div>	<div>15</div> <div>Draw a map of your bedroom.</div>	<div>16</div> <div>How many different berries can you name? See if a tomato is a berry?</div>	<div>17</div> <div>National "Eat Your Vegetables" Day. </div>	<div>18</div> <div>Make some real lemonade.</div>	<div>19</div> <div>Make a list: 1. Things I like to eat. 2. Things I don't like to eat.</div>
<div>20</div> <div>Father's Day </div> <div>First day of summer.</div>	<div>21</div> <div>Mark off one square foot in your lawn. See what you can find there.</div>	<div>22</div> <div>Try to find six circle shapes in your home.</div>	<div>23</div> <div>Make your bed. </div>	<div>24</div> <div>Take your shoes off and walk in the grass.</div>	<div>25</div> <div>Go to the library and look for a book about worms. </div>	<div>26</div> <div>Forgiveness Day.</div>
<div>27</div> <div>Go outside and count all the dandelions you can see.</div>	<div>28</div> <div>Take a look at a picture book. </div>	<div>29</div> <div>Talk about some things an animal can do that people can't do. </div>	<div>30</div> <div>Hugs in the morning. Hugs before bed.</div>	