



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Behavior

Signs of stress

In times of stress, a child may behave in ways similar to how she acts when she's not feeling well. She may be whiny, clingy, and demanding. She may be more easily frustrated and upset by little things. She may tire easily and move more slowly than her usual pace. And it may be that nothing suits her!

This is true in simple situations such as when a child is overtired or hungry, as well as in more obviously stressful situations such as getting lost or hurting herself.

It's something parents should keep in mind in a highly stressful life-event such as a family separation or a death in the family.

Whatever the situation, stress drains energy and doesn't leave a child with enough to cope as well as she usually does.

A shared snack, a private lunch just for the two of you, a warm bath and a quiet story before bedtime, or a whispered "I love you" can do wonders for frayed nerves. □

Academics

Let's read a story

Numerous research studies have indicated that children whose parents regularly read to them during the early childhood and school years will generally do better in school.

That's why educators continue to encourage parents to read aloud to their children.

A child's parents are generally her first educators and her most important resource for developing a love of reading.

Here's some of the things your child can learn while you read a story aloud:

Vocabulary: As you read, your child is acquiring new words. Let her see the pictures in the book. Point to an object as you read its name. See if she can point to some objects which you name.

Information: Your child is also acquiring new knowledge and expanding the horizons of her mind. Reading helps to open a whole new world for her.

Comprehension: From books a child acquires new understanding of her world.

She perceives new relationships between words and can relate new knowledge to what she already knows.

Listening and attention skills: Reading helps to sharpen your child's

listening skills and improve her attention span.

Mental awareness: As a result of your reading to her, she will also likely become more aware of and take greater interest in her everyday surroundings.

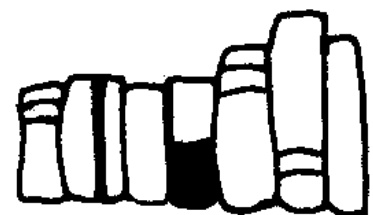
Sequencing: From your reading she can learn about sequencing in time ("Once upon a time...") and in space ("In the first place sat...") which are important skills for school learning.

Emotions: As she identifies with the characters in the story, she can sometimes gain a better understanding of her own emotions.

Love of books: As you read to your child, you are imparting an important value in your life, namely, your own love of books and reading.

Personal love: Above all, by setting aside uninterrupted, quiet time for reading, you are letting your child know how important she is to you.

You are thereby conveying your own personal love for her. □



Dealing with problems

In today's world, parents are confronted with a wide variety of problems and stressful situations. The National Association for Mental Health has suggested 11 positive steps which an individual can take for dealing with problems.

1. Talk it out. When something worries you, don't bottle it up. Confide your worries to some level-headed person you can trust. Talking things out helps relieve your strain, helps you to see your worry in a clearer light and often helps you to see what can be done about it.

2. Escape for a while. Lose yourself in a movie or book or a game or a brief trip for a change of scene. But be prepared to come back and deal with your difficulty when you are more composed.

3. Work off your anger. If you feel like lashing out at someone who has provoked you, try holding off that impulse for a while.

Let it wait until tomorrow. Meanwhile, do something constructive with the pent-up energy. Pitch into some physical activity.

4. Give in occasionally. If you find yourself getting into frequent quarrels with people and feeling obstinate and defiant, remember that that's the way frustrated children behave. Stand your ground on what you know is right, but do so calmly and make allowance for the fact that your children could turn out to be wrong. If you yield, you'll usually find that others will too.

5. Take one thing at a time. For people under tension, an ordinary work load can sometimes seem unbearable. Take a few of the most urgent tasks and pitch into them, one at a time, setting aside all the rest for

the time being. Once you dispose of these, you'll see that what remains is not such a horrible mess after all.

6. Do something for others. If you feel yourself worrying about yourself all the time, try doing something for somebody else.

7. Shun the superman urge. Some people expect too much from themselves and get into a constant state of worry and anxiety because they think they are not achieving as much as they should. Decide which things you do well and then put your major effort into these. Then, perhaps, come the things you can't do so well. Give them the best of your efforts but don't take yourself to task if you can't achieve the impossible.

8. Go easy with criticism. Some people expect too much of others, and then feel frustrated, let down, and disappointed when another person doesn't measure up. Remember, each person has that person's own virtues, short-comings, values, and the right to develop as an individual. Instead of being critical about the other person's behavior, search out the good points and help that person develop them.

9. Give the other fellow a break. When people are under emotional tension, they often feel that they have to get there first—to edge out the other person. Competition is contagious, but so is cooperation. When you give the other fellow a break, you often make things easier for yourself.

10. Make yourself available. Many of us feel that we are being left out, slighted, neglected, rejected. Instead of shrinking away and withdrawing, it is much healthier, as well as more practical, to continue to make yourself available—to make some of the overtures instead of always waiting to be asked.

11. Schedule your recreation. Many people drive themselves so hard that they allow themselves too little time for recreation. For such people a set routine and schedule will help, a program of definite hours when they will engage in some recreation. And, in general, it is desirable for almost everyone to have a hobby that absorbs them in off hours. □

Language

Keep the beat

Rhythm is more than marching to the beat of a favorite song or keeping time with the music by tapping a foot.

Different languages are filled with different kinds of rhythm. As we learn to talk while very young, we are also learning the rhythm that helps us understand and communicate in our language.

To help young children appreciate the many types of rhythm—in addition to the ones they hear in modern music—show them how they can mark time in poetry.

You can do this by reading a poem aloud and asking them to feel the rhythm by walking or waving an arm “in time” with the words.

Each poem has its own unique “meter” and you may want to use several different ones as examples. (Your local library can provide you with books that have all kinds of poetry for children.)

This is also an excellent way to introduce your child to poetry, to enrich his or her storehouse of ideas—and to add an abundance of new words to his or her vocabulary. □

Healthy eating without fuss

Nutritionists tell us that if children are consistently presented with items from the major food groups, they will choose a healthy diet.

This doesn't mean they will eat the same amount of food each day or even that they will eat a balanced diet.

Teething, colds, or a slow growth period can cause a lackluster appetite. It's quite common for a child to temporarily reject eating or go on a banana binge.

It does mean that given the chance (and an absence of prodding and tension), kids can develop reasonable eating habits.

Make it easier for your child to enjoy eating by trying some of the following:

- **Sidestep potential conflicts** by substituting “likes” for “dislikes” whenever possible.

If Becky hates roast beef but loves hamburger, why fight it? They have the same nutritional characteristics.

Lean on fruit during an “I-don't-like-vegetables” phase or offer cheese instead of eggs.

- **Take advantage of your child's “hungry time.”** In one family, the oldest son awakened very hungry each morning and could easily consume almost a day's supply of nutrition at breakfast.

His parents supplied large quantities of oatmeal, fruit, eggs and toast—and ignored his “pickiness” about food choices during the rest of the day.

- Provide a choice of nutritious snacks on those “I-don't-want-anything-to-eat” days. Good snacks are better than nothing.

- **Change the setting.** A “bored-with-food” preschooler may regain her appetite with a bang if allowed to picnic in the park or back porch or eat in a tent (a sheet thrown over a card table) or on a tray while reading or building blocks.

Where is it written that food must always be consumed at a table?

- **Once your child is more agreeable about food, let him or her help you in the kitchen.** You'd be surprised what kids will eat if they make it themselves.

Two-year-olds may “hate” salads but let them tear greens for a taco and they soon change their minds.

Slightly older children can shape dough for cookies, slice bananas, or assemble cheese sandwiches for toasting.

When children help with meal preparation, you can expect some spilled milk and flour-coated floors.

But keep a happy, encouraging attitude and children will soon associate food with good times and maybe even fun! □

FREE!

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

Issues are free of advertisements; email addresses are shared with no one.

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

Encouraging social relationships

Children are more successful in their relationships with others when they feel comfortable than when they are self-conscious.

You can help by being supportive and encouraging rather than critical or discouraging. Here are some do's and don'ts:

DON'T suggest he has trouble getting along with others. (“Nobody really likes you.”)

DO give him positive feedback for getting along well with others. (“I really like it when I see you helping Noah put on his shoes.”)

DON'T force him into uncomfortable situations. Don't insist he “make up” with someone he's still angry at.

DO respect his wishes about how and with whom he wants to spend time.

DON'T compare him with other children.

DO allow him to work out his own relationships with a minimum of interference.

DO stand up for him, especially with adults. Everyone needs someone they can depend on, no matter what. □

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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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September 2021

Sunday

Monday

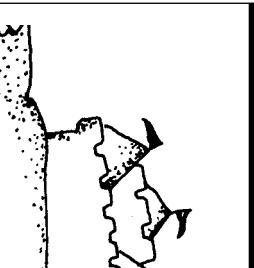
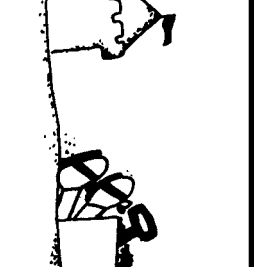
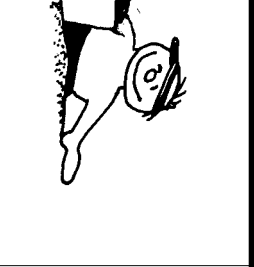
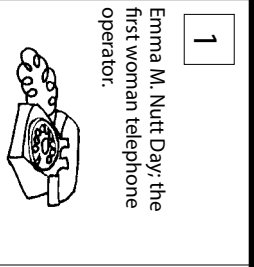
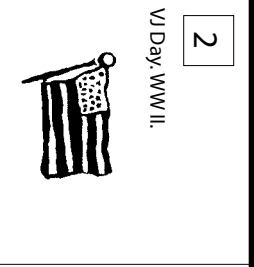
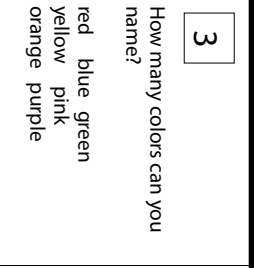
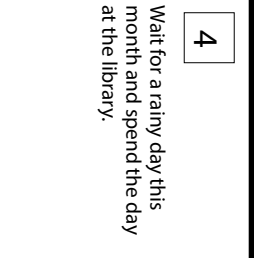
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Wednesday




Thursday



Friday



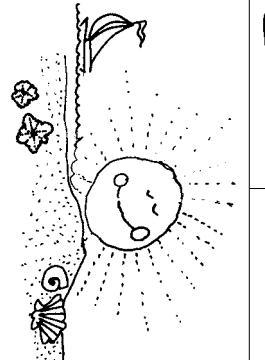
Saturday

						
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<p>5</p> <p>Tell your fellow family members what you like about them.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Labor Day. Who do we honor on Labor Day?</p> 	<p>7</p> <p>First day of Rosh Hashanah</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>International Literacy Day. Look it up.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>How many marshmallows can you stack?</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Write down four sounds you hear.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 	<p>11</p> <p>September 9/11 Remembrance Day</p> 
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<p>12</p> <p>Grandparent's Day</p> 	<p>13</p> <p>Wear something with stripes in it today.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Put on a blindfold and draw a picture of an elephant. Then, take a look. What does your drawing look like?</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Think of words that rhyme with sun.</p> <p>Fun</p>	<p>16</p> <p>First day of Yom Kippur.</p> 	<p>17</p> <p>Learn how to play "Musical Chairs."</p> 	<p>18</p> <p>Cut up pieces of a sponge and use them to paint a picture.</p>
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<p>19</p> <p>Snack: banana bites and celery sticks.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>What chores can you do around the house? Clean your room ... pick up newspapers; dust.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Describe the difference between an apple and a banana.</p> 	<p>22</p> <p>Autumn Equinox Day Autumn begins. Nancy's birthday!</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Can you make a house of cards? Ask for assistance.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Learn how to sing a round. (Takes practice.)</p> 	<p>25</p> <p>Hide paper circles for kids to find.</p>
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<p>26</p> <p>Johnny Appleseed Day Who was he? Look it up.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Make up your own "dance" and give it a name.</p> 	<p>28</p> <p>Find five things in your house that are soft.</p> 	<p>29</p> <p>Draw a picture of someone who lives at your house.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>How many bites does it take to eat your lunch? 84 - 85 - 86 - 87 - 88</p>	
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