

Growing Together

Newsletter for parents of preschool children

Language

Reading books, telling stories

Driving is also a great time for looking at books—for kids, that is.

Carry along a supply of books in the car for the youngsters as you're traveling hither, thither and yon. And rotate traveling books often. Your local library has an inexhaustible supply.

Stories don't always come from books. Tell your children stories from your childhood. You and your child can also make up stories to tell each other. (Be sure everyone understands the difference between real stories and those that are made up.)

It can also be fun to make up a story together. You tell one line and your child tells the next, and so on, until you have your own special tale. (You'll probably be asked to repeat it often.)

If you're on the way home, it's your turn to tell a story and you're too tired to think, resort to a classic like *The Three Bears*.

Happy telling, happy listening!

Academics

Learning about time

Time is something that cannot be seen or felt. Its passing is measured artificially by clocks and calendars.

Early mankind measured time only in the natural cycles of day and night and the rhythmic occurrence of the seasons.

A journey was three days walk; an event took place during the last full moon

Time during the day was measured by the passage of the sun. Longer periods were measured from new moon to new moon, from season to season.

Now, when many families live in cities, the cycle of seasons is less apparent.

We use calendars instead of moon phases to measure off the months, and clocks to measure off the days.

Children measure their time by the events of their days that begin at waking-up time and end with bedtime.

Their days do not include twenty-four hours but only the hours between waking and sleeping. To expand a child's concept of time, begin with answers to the question: "How long until _____?"

To answer questions like this, use a large calendar. Circle the date of the holiday, visit or special event that is anticipated. Mark off all days of the month that have already passed. Hang the calendar within easy reach so that each night before she goes to bed, the child can X out the days remaining.

As you do this, you are teaching duration of time over periods longer than one day and the child can begin to learn the concept of how time progresses in steady, measured segments.

A start on telling time

When your child is hungry and impatient with the speed of mealtime preparatons, point to the large hand on the close and say, "We will eat when this big hand is at the bottom (or top) of the clock.

Point to where the hand will be as you say this. Then make every effort to meet this prediction accurately.

If the child is not familiar with the clock, you will have to explain that the hand does move, but too slowly to see.

Don't try to teach hours and minutes at first. This is difficult even for some first-graders to understand.

However, by kindergarten many children will understand the concept of hours.



Making dreams come true for children with special needs

Every parent has dreams for his or her child. If you find out that your child has special needs, your child will need extra help and support to make those dreams come true.

Remember, every child has many strengths. With your help and support, and the appropriate education, your dreams for your child can come true.

Understanding a child's special needs can help you set goals and guide your dreams. Knowing why some goals may be hard to reach can be helpful to parents.

Look for different ways to help your child learn and develop. Information about how your child learns can also help family, friends and teachers care for and teach your child.

Helping others get to know your child will make it easier for everyone to work together to build on your child's strengths and meet her or his needs.

Your dreams for your child might change over time. This is natural. You

and your child will also change. Try to be flexible. Remember that part of making your dreams come true means you may have to work hard to get the right services to meet your child's special needs.

You know your child best. Set goals your child can reach. When a goal is reached, set a new one and keep trying.

Think about what your child can do and build on each success. Remember, even the smallest achievement is something for which your child and family can be proud.

Work to meet your child's special needs. Think about what would help your child do more. Don't let anything stop you along the way.

You will find that others will support you and share your dreams. You can help make your dreams for your child come true. Don't give up. Remember, your child will also have dreams of his or her own that you can share.

Parenting

Explain your expectations

Let your child know what you expect of him in terms of behavior. Try to keep your expectations fair, reasonable, age-appropriate and sensible and spell them out to your child.

If he knows what you expect of him, it will be easier for him to please you and avoid your disapproval. For example, at four or five years old, explain that you expect him to be in bed by a time that is acceptable to you.

Let him know that he can lie in bed quietly for a short time before going to sleep. Offer to read or tell him a story or just talk with him during that time if he wishes. But explain that you will not want to spend the time with him if you have to remind him every night to go to bed.

Let him know what you expect and what he can expect when he doesn't fulfill his part of the bargain.

Think: Don't react

When we were children, we vowed we'd never treat our children in some of the ways our parents treated us when they got mad.

Now that we are parents, we find ourselves reacting in many of those same ways we vowed we'd not repeat.

Try to remember how you felt when you were small—how easily you could be hurt and frightened by those you depended on for guidance and comfort.



Try to think before reacting to your child. When you do react in a way you think was unfair or overly harsh, let your child know that.

It's helpful for him to see that you, too, can make—and acknowledge mistakes. It will build his trust in you. And it may make him more considerate of your feelings in the future.

It's not always easy to behave as we want toward our children.

No one can be kind, considerate, fair, patient, and respectful all the time.

Try to accept yourself as you are, and do the best you can. Just by trying you will succeed, and your child will learn from your example.

How does your child see herself?

Self-concept or self-image is how a child thinks of herself in relation to the people and things in the rest of her world.

What is your child's concept of herself? Is she a very important person in her own eyes? Or does she think she's not too good of a person?

It is very important that a child have a genuine feeling that she matters in the world.

Psychologists have developed several ways to measure self-concept. Research about school-aged children shows that a child's self-concept is directly related to later achievement in school.

Children who have a poor selfconcept do poorly in school learning tasks. Those who feel good about themselves generally do well in school.

Parents can influence their child's self-concept development. Here are three general principles which will help your child develop a good self-concept:

- 1. Let your child know that you love her. A child needs to know that she is important to you, that she has your love—even when she has engaged in some unlovable activities. ("I love you but I don't like what you have just done.")
- 2. Help your child handle her failures. What messages are you giving her when she fails? She needs to know that you're on her side, that you accept her—win or lose—for who she is. Your corrections should deal with what she's done, not what she "is."
- 3. <u>Don't be dishonest</u>. Your child knows when she hasn't done well, when she has failed you. If you acknowledge that you know that, but

that it isn't the end of the world, your child gains confidence in you to reflect an honest value to her.

As a child grows, she tries to find her place in the world. She experiments with different ideas and concepts, looking to you from time to time for guidance and support.

Make sure you give her the room she needs to learn and make mistakes. But also make sure she knows you're on her side—win or lose.

Games & Activities

Where's that clock?

Here's a bit of fun that also helps children learn how to solve problems by listening carefully.

First, set the alarm of an old alarm clock to just a few minutes from now. Then have all the players close their eyes while you hide the clock (a kitchen timer will work also).

Start with some place fairly easy like behind a sofa pillow, under a chair, or in a closet.

Next, everybody waits—and when the alarm goes off, all players try to find it.

When someone finds it, show her or him how to turn it off so she or he can do it the next time. Now it's someone else's turn to hide the clock.

Difficulty can be adjusted by making the hiding places easier or harder, depending on the players' ages.

You might be surprised at how clever kids can be at finding new and ever more difficult hiding places!

How to help children feel good about themselves

Here are some simple ideas parents can use to help children feel good about themselves.

- Have confidence in your child. Trust in him to learn from his mistakes and to outgrow aggravating habits he may pick up at he grows. He won't always slam the door or leave his shoes in the middle of the room.
- Pay more attention to her strengths than to her shortcomings. You'll find you see more of whoever behavior you focus on most. So, thank her when she closes the door quietly.
- Be alert to encourage your child's natural talents. Have patience with him in the areas in which he doesn't excel. If he is good at printing, ask him to print a poster for the refrigerator door. If he has trouble with numbers, tell him you'll help him with his homework.
- Try to give her the benefit of the doubt when you find your confidence in her lacking.

After all, wouldn't you like for her to have the same kind of confidence in you?

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Hot oatmeal tastes yummy with cinammon on top!	17 Go out for pizza.	Remember to put out some bird seed for our friends as the weather gets colder.	Blay hide-and-seek with some adults	مسسسه	Sunday
Draw a picture of grand-mother and send it to her with a little note.	18 Presidents Day	Count the houses (buildings) on your side of the street (road).	Put on some rock-n-roll music and "Do the Twist." Ask mom how.	Momissian Ba	Monday
Think of something you'd like to learn more about.	Visit the library and look for a book about Alaska.	Go out for ice cream. What is your favorite favor?	Lunar New Year. What does this mean? Look it up.	3 COUNTY OF THE PARTY OF THE PA	Tuesday
Do you have the phone number of the local poison control center posted by your telephone?	"Name your Car" Day. Old or new? What color? Can you drive it? Why not?	Go to your dictionary. See what it says about the word "February".	Write a short poem about a snowman: "Snowman, snowman, snowman, What's your plan?"	DE JAMANE 33 VO	Wednesday
Tell someone a story that begins: "Once upon a time there was a"	Blow up some balloons and think of something new to do with them.	Valentine's Day. Make a nice valentine for Mum.	Name some foods that are healthy and good for you to eat.	O'N T	Thursday
	Make a simple vegetable dip for lunch. And dip some vegetables in it.	Look for the country Panama on a map or globe. Is it hot or cold there right now?	Make something from a paper plate: happy mask, sad mask, flying saucer, nature scene, a picture of your face.	See how many different ways you can walk in snow.	Friday
No.	23 Plan a family get-together time for the weekend.	Look at the numbers on an outdoor thermometer. What is the temperature today?	Go to a basketball game.	Groundhog Day Did he see his shadow?	Saturday