

Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

January 2003



KID BITS

Sticky fun

Here's a way for your child to practice writing numbers. Dip one end of a Popsicle stick in glue. With repeated dipping, she can use the stick to write numbers on a piece of paper. Let her shake glitter onto the paper while the glue is still wet.

Weather activity

Use an outdoor thermometer or listen to weather broadcasts to check the daily temperature. Help your youngster write down the temperatures on a calendar. Then, talk about the weather each day. Was it windy and chilly? Warm and pleasant?

DID YOU KNOW?

Each year, there are more than 1 million accidental poisonings in children under the age of five. Stick to these guidelines: Avoid taking medicine in front of children. Never refer to medicine as "candy." Store medications, including vitamins and aspirin, out of sight and reach of kids.

Source: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Worth quoting

"I'm not afraid of storms, for I'm learning how to sail my ship."

Louisa May Alcott

Just for fun



Q: What's black and white and has eight wheels?

A: A penguin on roller skates!

Collections for learning

Collect: To gather items of a similar kind for pleasure, learning, or comparison.

Collecting is a fantastic activity to share one-on-one with your child. Your youngster can practice math skills like grouping and matching, as well as observation and organization skills. Try these ideas to help your child create his own collection.

Getting started

Observe your little one. What does he enjoy exploring? *Examples:* leaves, rocks, stickers, state quarters, toy cars. Encourage his interests. For example, you might say, "Look at all the shells you've found! Let's put the white ones in one pile and the pink ones in another."

Sharing together

As you admire your child's collection, ask questions to prompt him to talk about his treasures. *Examples:*



"Which marble do you like the most?"
"Where did this stamp come from?" "What shape is this rock?"

Changing interests

Don't be surprised if your youngster's fascination with a collection comes and goes. Kids often change their minds if something more interesting comes along. *Remember:* Your child's knowledge will grow as his collections grow!

Tip: Need ideas for storing collections? Egg cartons, fishing tackle boxes, cardboard shoeboxes, and small plastic tubs with lids are wonderful organizers for small items. ♥

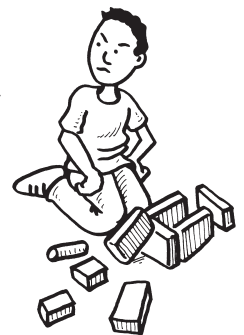
Q & A

Aggressive play?

Q: My child sometimes deliberately pushes or shoves other kids while playing. How much of this behavior is normal?

A: It's common for youngsters to play aggressively on occasion. Like adults, children experience a range of emotions. Often, they use play as an outlet for their feelings—sometimes in unacceptable ways. Keep in mind that most kids will learn more appropriate ways of dealing with their emotions as they mature.

Try to figure out what's causing your youngster's behavior. *Examples:* She's tired; she's not feeling well; she's reacting to someone else's behavior. If your child's actions seem out of line, discuss your concerns with her pediatrician or teacher. ♥



Making decisions

“What game should I play next?” Fortunately for young children, their decisions are usually easy ones. But as your child grows older, she’ll face more difficult choices.

You can help your youngster prepare for the future by showing her how to practice decision-making skills now—and increase her self-confidence. Consider the simple tips below.

Experience is a great teacher. Let your child choose for herself. She’ll learn that her decisions have results. For example, let her decide how she can best help with family chores (set the table or fold towels). Encourage her to make personal decisions (what to do with the money she received for her birthday).



Examples are powerful. Model smart decision making with your youngster by sharing some of your decisions. Explain your choices and the reasons behind them. For instance, say, “It’s cold and wet outside. I’m going to wear my mittens and boots so I’ll stay warm and dry.”♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Let’s paint

Most kids love to create with paint. Why not help your children make their own? Here’s how. *Note:* Parent supervision is required.

Materials: 2 tablespoons cornstarch, 6 tablespoons cold water, ½ cup boiling water, 2 tablespoons powdered tempera paint (available in toy or art supply stores) or several drops of food coloring



Mix the cornstarch and cold water in a bowl. Carefully pour the boiling water into another bowl. Then, stir in the starch and cold water. When the mixture thickens, add the tempera paint or food coloring. Let the mixture cool, and store it in a closed container in the refrigerator.

Ideas: Suggest that your kids try finger painting with their toes! Or ask them to paint a picture of a winter day. They can create snow by putting pieces of torn white paper on the paint before it dries.♥

Poetry and rhymes

“One, two, buckle my shoe. Three, four, shut the door.” Poetry is all around your child—in songs, books, and lullabies.

Poetry is important for children to experience. Among other things, it can teach them what rhyming sounds like. Learning that words can be grouped by sounds (such as “bat,” “cat,” and “hat”) increases your youngster’s ability to read and write words later. You can practice rhyming with your child in many ways:

- Choose a book of poetry and point out the rhyming words as you read with your youngster.
- Create a poem or song together. Begin with simple rhyming sentences, such as, “My little boy is ready for bed. His pillow is snuggled under his head.” See if your child can create rhyming lines of his own.♥



PARENT TO PARENT

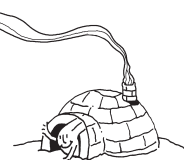
Labels to the rescue!

My son Allen used to be so impatient when I took him to the grocery store. He would whine constantly and complain, “When are we going home?” I had to do something. I couldn’t afford

to hire a baby-sitter whenever we ran out of milk!

The next time we went to the store, I gave him a bag containing labels from products we needed to buy. (I had cut them off the cans and boxes when they were empty.) As we shopped, I asked Allen to look for the products on the labels. He was so excited when he found a match.

Near the end of our shopping trip, I let him select something for himself. He chose his favorite popcorn snack. Allen has become a more patient shopper. And popcorn is cheaper than a baby-sitter any day.♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote school readiness, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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