

TEXAS

Child Care

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL FOR CAREGIVERS EVERYWHERE

SUMMER 2011



INFANT SAFETY
TEST WHAT
YOU KNOW
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BACK TO BASICS

Social development

Social competence—the increasing ability to work with others—is an essential tool for a person’s success in school, the workplace, and personal relationships. As children start out on the path of social competence they require the supports of nurturing environments and responsive adults to model and guide behaviors. Consider the developmental traits below and adjust to the specific needs of the children in your care.

Infants

- Need to be held and cuddled.
- Have distinct vocal patterns to communicate pain, hunger, boredom, or frustration, and need for you to respond quickly.
- Build brain connections through positive social interactions.
- Babble and coo and need for you to respond.
- Like to imitate actions like clapping, waving, and reaching before they have the skills to communicate with words.
- Respond enthusiastically to people they know and trust.

Toddlers

- Want you to be in sight—always.
- Frequently turn away from and are upset by unfamiliar noises, animals, and people.
- Often repeat behaviors to gain attention, seeking clues about the appropriateness of an activity—throwing food or holding a doll, for example.
- May offer toys or objects to another and quickly take them back again. Social competence doesn’t yet include the skill to share. Instead they use the word *mine* and may tussle to protect what they perceive to be their own—even you.

- Frequently develop an attachment to a toy or blanket—a concrete and temporary replacement for the security and intimacy of an important social relationship.

Preschoolers

- Want to be included in everything. The need for social connection sometimes interferes with attention and focus on an activity.
- Begin to understand concepts like taking turns and sharing but are often unwilling to act on that understanding.
- Test their social competence and language skills by arguing. Though sometimes unpleasant, this gives children important feedback on self-regulation and perseverance, essential social skills.
- Need daily opportunities for dramatic play activities that allow them to explore gender roles and problem-solving skills.
- Respond well to choices rather than demands. Meaningful choices give children a sense of self-control and social responsibility.
- Generally have special friends that change frequently. They might also have imaginary companions against whom they can test social problems, assumptions, and decisions.

School-agers

- Take part in group activities and are generally able to share materials, equipment, and attention.
- Help with chores cheerfully and especially like working with a buddy.
- Continue to need adult support and comfort but are sometimes embarrassed to ask for help.
- Are sometimes too eager or too resistant to expressions of affection.
- Like group games, and understand that competition in a game—the desire to win—doesn’t need to transfer to all interactions with others.
- Tend to be rigid in defining what’s right and wrong; compromise is difficult.
- Often defend gender-role stereotypes and usually prefer to play with children of the same sex.
- Generally have the verbal and physical skills that can hurt others—with teasing, bullying, or fighting—but need your guidance in accepting the consequences of social transgressions and changing behaviors.

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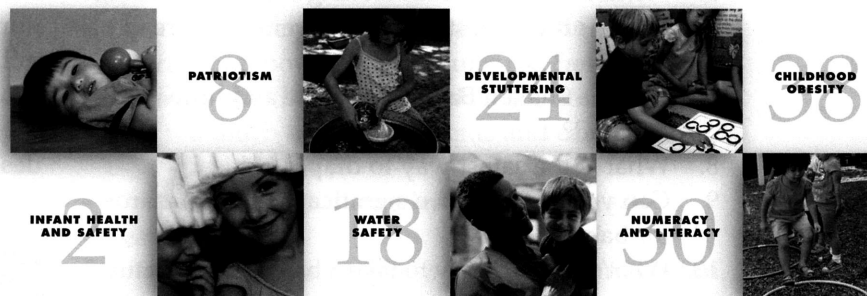


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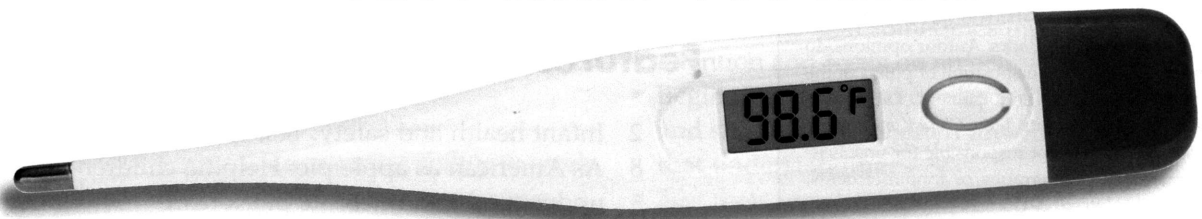
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INFANT HEALTH AND SAFETY

TEST WHAT YOU KNOW



Take this quiz and compare your knowledge to the best practices described below.

1. What's the best sleep position for infants?
2. How do you heat baby bottles safely?
3. How do you prepare formula for baby bottles?
4. How do you prevent infant choking accidents?
5. When should you start feeding babies solid foods?
6. What is the easiest way to prevent the spread of infection?
7. What is Shaken Baby Syndrome and how is it avoided?
8. What is the safest way to diaper babies?
9. Can you identify five significant safety hazards for babies?
10. What's the best way to take a baby's temperature?



Infant health and safety concerns often steer families away from regulated care toward the perceived safety of kin care and privately hired nannies and babysitters. In fact, both licensing rules and teacher preparation endeavors make regulated care the safest option for families and their children—especially babies.

The health and safety of infants focuses on four primary areas: feeding, sanitation, environmental risks, and sleeping. Best practices, formulated by professional educational organizations, child development experts, and medical professionals, give teachers (and families) guidance on the most current ways to support infant growth and development.

Food and feeding

Out-of-home care for infants starts when babies—tiny, vulnerable, and helpless—are as young as a few weeks old. Best practices dictate that you work closely with the baby's parents to establish a feeding routine that suits you, the parents, and most of all, the infant.

Experts agree that for infants, breast is best. If a mother must work outside the home and is unable to nurse on demand, she may choose to express breast milk for you to feed the infant from a bottle. Alternatively, a family might opt for infant formula for bottle feedings. In either case, how you clean bottles, prepare the milk, and use the bottle will make a big difference in the safety of the infants involved.

Safe heating

Never use a microwave to heat bottles. Unfortunately, microwaves heat unevenly. Uneven heating can make the milk too hot and scald the baby. The uneven heating also increases the risk of the bottle exploding. Additionally, there is evidence that this method of heating destroys the nutritional quality of both breast milk and formula.

For safe warming, place the bottle in a bowl of hot (not boiling) water and let it stand for a couple of minutes. Shake the bottle and test the liquid's temperature on the back of your wrist. It should feel neutral on your skin—not hot and not cold.

If you use a Crock-Pot® for heating bottles, be certain that it's placed next to the electrical outlet. Never use extension cords and always make sure electrical cords are inaccessible to children.

Storing and preparing expressed breast milk

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics offer the following guidelines for maintaining the high quality of expressed breast milk.

- Wash your hands.
- Use storage containers with screw caps or heavy-duty bags that fit directly into bottles. Avoid ordinary plastic storage bags that could leak or spill.
- Have all containers clearly labeled with the baby's name and the date.
- Don't save milk from a used bottle for use at another feeding.
- Thaw frozen breast milk in a refrigerator. Alternatively, swirl it in a bowl of warm water.
- Don't re-freeze breast milk once it has been thawed.
- Never use a microwave for heating bottles. (See box on safe heating.)
- Encourage parents to transport milk in insulated cooler bags with ice packs that hold the temperature under 40 degrees. This milk can be stored for no more than 24 hours if it is kept cold.
- Frozen milk can be stored for three to six months at 0 to minus-18 degrees without degradation.

Storing and preparing formula

Families, with the advice of the infant's pediatrician, might choose one of three types of manufactured infant formula:

- a cow's milk formula that has been chemically modified to resemble breast milk with the right balance of nutrients that facilitate digestion
- a soy-based formula for babies who are intolerant to cow's milk, or
- a protein hydrolysate formula for babies that have both milk and soy allergies. These are called hypoallergenic formulas.

Formula is available in powdered, concentrated liquid, and ready-to-use forms. The powdered form is least expensive to buy but demands the most attention to prepare. The FDA ensures that all infant formulas—brand name and generic—meet the same nutritional and safety standards. These standards are only maintained, however, if the formula is used by its expiration date.

To safely prepare formula, follow these guidelines.

- Wash your hands.
- Prepare utensils. Make sure bottles and nipples are clean and dry. The Mayo Clinic recommends rinsing

nipples daily in equal parts of vinegar and water to inhibit fungal growth. Make sure mixing containers are clean too.

- Measure the formula accurately. Shake ready-to-use formula well and pour enough for one feeding into a clean bottle; don't add water. For powdered formula, use the provided scoop, determine the amount of formula you want to prepare, and follow the instructions on the container. Always use level measurements.

EXPERTS AGREE THAT FOR INFANTS, BREAST IS BEST.

- Use clean water—bottled or tap—for liquid concentrate and powdered formulas. Be careful to measure—too little water makes digestion difficult; too much reduces nutrients and calories necessary for growth.
- Warm the formula if needed. (See box on safe heating.)
- Feed the baby immediately. Discard formula left in the bottle after a feeding.
- If families bring prepared formula for their babies, make sure bottles are labeled and dated. Store in

Plastic or glass?

Consumers and researchers are engaged in an ongoing debate about the impact of bisphenol A (BPA), a compound used to make polycarbonate plastic in food and beverage containers including baby bottles. While manufacturers say the levels of BPA are safe, some parents are insisting on BPA-free plastic bottles or are returning to glass bottles.

Be aware of the controversy and work to assure parents that you will be careful with all food preparation and service containers.

the refrigerator and discard any unused formula after 24 to 48 hours.

Solid foods

Pediatric experts recommend a diet of breast milk or formula for babies younger than 4 months. Increasing evidence suggests that the introduction of solid food too early increases the likelihood of digestive problems, food sensitivities (allergies), and subsequent childhood obesity. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that this milk-only diet be maintained until 6 months.

SANITATION AND INFECTION PREVENTION GO HAND-IN-HAND.

When the baby is ready for pureed solid foods, work with parents to choose which foods to introduce and when. The baby will need to work hard to learn how to move the jaw and manipulate the tongue and throat to chew and swallow. What had been a reflex will now be a deliberate activity!

Keep foods soft and mushy until the baby has back teeth that can be used for chewing (18 months to 2 years).

Be alert to choking and stay vigilant about hand washing and careful food preparation and storage.

Sanitation

Sanitation and infection prevention go hand-in-hand. Following recommended hand washing and diapering procedures goes a long way in preventing the numerous opportunistic illnesses that sometimes overwhelm infant care programs.

Hand washing

Frequent and proper hand washing is one of the best ways to avoid getting sick yourself and spreading infection to others. Always wash your hands before

preparing food, eating, treating wounds, giving medicine, and inserting or removing contact lenses.

Always wash your hands after preparing food—especially raw meat or poultry—using the toilet, changing a diaper, helping with toileting, touching an animal, blowing your nose or coughing or sneezing into your hands, treating wounds, touching someone who is sick or injured, or handling garbage. And, of course, whenever your hands look or feel dirty.

The how-to is also important. Washing is not quickly sweeping your hands under the faucet and drying them on the back of your pants. Reduce illness by following this procedure:

- Wet your hands with running water.
- Apply soap—liquid is recommended; antibiotic is not.
- Lather well.
- Rub your hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds. Remember to scrub all surfaces, including the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers, and under your fingernails.
- Rinse well.
- Dry your hands with a clean or disposable towel or air dryer.
- If possible, use your towel to turn off the faucet.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers that don't require water are an acceptable emergency alternative to soap and water. If you choose to use a commercially prepared hand sanitizer, make sure the product contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Then follow these simple steps:

- Apply enough of the product to the palm of your hand to wet your hands completely.
- Rub your hands together, covering all surfaces, for up to 25 seconds or until they're dry.

Diapering

Designate a single space for diaper changing to make cleaning and sanitizing procedures easier. Help babies learn that diaper changing is social and pleasant—an opportunity for some exclusive contact with you.

The procedure for diaper changing is designed to avoid cross-contamination with surfaces, hands, and other people.

Step 1. Get organized. Wash your hands and gather supplies. You'll need a liner for the diaper changing surface, a fresh diaper, wipes, and a plastic bag for soiled items. Some programs also insist that diaper changers wear latex gloves.

Step 2. Carry the child to avoid cross-contamination. Place the child on the changing table and remove outer clothes that are soiled. Place these in the plastic bag.

Step 3. Unfasten the diaper but leave on the child. Lift the baby's legs and use disposable wipes to clean the skin. Wipe from front to back. Put the soiled wipes in the soiled diaper or directly into a plastic-lined, covered, foot-operated garbage can.

Step 4. Fold the soiled diaper inward and place in the garbage can. If you wore gloves, remove and put into the garbage can. Use a disposable wipe to clean your hands and another to clean the baby's hands. Put wipes into the garbage can.

Step 5. Slide a fresh diaper under the child and fasten the diaper. Re-clothe the child.

Step 6. Wash the baby's hands and return the child to the play area.

Step 7. Clean and sanitize the diaper changing table. Leave the sanitizing solution on the surface for at least two minutes.

Step 8. Wash your hands and make notes in the child's daily record. Make special note of, and report, the following: infrequent (fewer than three wet diapers a day) urination or dark-yellow urine that may be a sign of dehydration; painful urination; and raw, blemished, or bleeding skin.

Remember to follow general cleaning and sanitizing recommendations for classroom and play areas, feeding areas, as well as diapering areas.

The standard sanitizing solution formula is ¼ cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water (1 tablespoon bleach to

1 quart water) mixed fresh daily. Leave the solution on surfaces for at least two minutes.

Sleeping

Suffocation hazards have again been in the news with renewed evaluations of cribs, bedding, and plush toys. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is too great to succumb to the temptation of *cute* over *safe*.

SIDS is defined as the sudden death of an infant under a year old that remains unexplained after a complete investigation, which includes an autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the symptoms or illnesses the infant had prior to dying, and any other pertinent medical history—a death that has no explanation.

There's no way to guarantee that a particular child won't die of SIDS, but experts can offer guidelines that significantly minimize the risk.

Most important, put babies to sleep on their backs—not stomach and not side. The Back to Sleep campaign has dramatically decreased the number of SIDS deaths in recent years. Additionally, avoid overheating rooms or using excessive bed clothes and coverings. And last, remove stuffed, lofty, or plush bedding and toys from sleeping areas.

When babies get sick

Tiny bodies get sicker faster than bodies with stronger immune systems. Infant care requires hyper vigilance and careful planning on the part of caregivers. Surely, your program policies cover the basics of



defining exclusion of sick children, identifying the person to contact when a baby gets sick while in your care, and knowing when to call emergency medical services (usually 911).

Medical and policy experts also identify and encourage a daily health check to help you immediately recognize and respond to potential illness. A health check should include observations of the following:

The child's behavior

- What's the child's general mood—happy, cranky, or sad—and is the mood typical for the time of day and circumstance?
- What is the child's activity level—sluggish, sleepy, engaged, or reluctant, for example?

The child's appearance

- Is the skin pale or flushed? Is there a rash? Is the skin warm to the touch?
- Are the eyes, ears, and nose dry or is there a discharge? Is the child rubbing one of these areas?
- Is breathing normal or different? Is there a cough?

Query parents on any unusual behavior, activity, illness, or injury since the last time the child was with you. Ask if the baby is sleeping, eating, drinking, and behaving as usual. When you have established good communication lines with families, there are far fewer questions of trust when you have to report an illness.

When a baby appears to be mildly ill, remove the child from the group, offer restful comfort, and assess the situation. Remember, your job is to identify and report symptoms, not diagnose illness.

Typically assessment of illness includes determining the baby's body temperature and the presence of fever. Because elevated body temperature can have many causes—strenuous exercise, time of day, environment (like a hot room or being bundled up), individual variations, or infection—it's essential to make your assessment broad. When fever is a baby's response to infection, it is usually accompanied by behavior change and related symptoms—a rash, vomiting, diarrhea, mucus discharge, or cough, for example.

Learn how to properly take a child's temperature and make sure your method is safe and appropriate to the child's age.

Traditional oral thermometers (mercury in glass) are no longer appropriate or approved for children.

Oral digital thermometers are less dangerous and offer reliable feedback if used properly. All thermometers demand attention to manufacturer directions for appropriate and safe use.

Birth to 3 months. Use a regular digital thermometer to take a rectal temperature. Turn on the thermometer and lubricate the tip with petroleum jelly. Hold the baby tummy down on your lap. Insert the thermometer about a half inch into the baby's anus and hold in place for about one minute or until the thermometer signals its reading. Remove the thermometer and read and record the number and the time the temperature was taken.

3 months and older. For older infants and toddlers it's easier to use a digital ear thermometer or a digital pacifier thermometer. Carefully follow the manufacturer's directions.

Use a regular digital thermometer to take an axillary or armpit temperature. Turn on the thermometer and place the tip in the child's dry armpit next to skin (not over clothes). Hold in place for about one minute or until the thermometer signals its reading. Remove the thermometer and read and record the number and the time the temperature was taken.

Temperature strips contain liquid crystal that reacts to heat. Apply the strip to the forehead and the strip will register the body temperature by changing color. The strip isn't precise and the child's surroundings can affect the recorded temperature. Use strips for screening but a digital thermometer if you need precision.

Remember to wash your hands before and after taking a child's temperature. Wash the thermometer with cold water and soap; rinse in cold water. Wipe the tip with rubbing alcohol or dip in a sanitizing bleach solution and allow to air dry.

Environmental risks

Infant mobility is a challenge to caregivers who must attend to several babies at once. There is a temptation to restrain the movement in activity chairs, slings, and cribs. Remember: Mobility, curiosity, and sensory explorations are building neural networks—the basis for social, physical, emotional, and cognitive development. Awake babies need interactions with you, other children, and the environment. Allow—and encourage—safe explorations.

It's a magical day when the infant who could be relied on to stay in one place suddenly rolls, creeps, or wiggles to a new one. Because even the most

experienced professionals can't predict this day, it's prudent to prepare well ahead of time. Curiosity and sensory stimulation drive infant learning—a dropped grape or dangling blind cord can suddenly become a major hazard.

Choking. Choking is scary and largely preventable. Keep babies safe by following these guidelines:

- Introduce solid food only after the baby has the motor skills to swallow.
- Avoid high-risk foods like seeds, nuts, nut butters, gum, and hard candy.
- Supervise mealtime—with your eyes and your ears.
- Evaluate playthings for safety risks.
- Keep hazardous materials out of reach.

If choking occurs, hold the baby face down on your forearm and thump the baby on the back with the heel of your hand. The combination of gravity and the back blow will likely dislodge the object. If the baby continues to have trouble breathing, call 911. Always be ready to perform CPR and choking first aid.

Shaken Baby Syndrome. Sometimes adults are instruments of the most unacceptable environmental risk to babies: Shaken Baby Syndrome, a serious brain injury that occurs when an infant or toddler is forcefully shaken. It destroys brain cells and interrupts oxygen flow to the brain. It is a form of child abuse that can result in permanent brain damage or even death. (See *Texas Child Care* Spring 2000). No behavior—endless crying, biting, screaming, or kicking—ever justifies shaking a child.

Consider other environmental risks

Cribs. The Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued new guidelines for cribs to help ensure infant safety. These new requirements include the following:

- Traditional drop-side cribs cannot be made or sold; immobilizers and repair kits are not allowed.
- Wood slats must be made of stronger woods to prevent breakage.
- Crib hardware must have anti-loosening devices to keep the hardware from loosening or falling off.
- Mattress supports must be more durable.
- Safety testing must be more rigorous.

Beginning June 28, all cribs sold in the United States must meet the new federal requirements for overall crib safety.

Stairs. Stairs are irresistible mountains to a mobile baby eager to try out new skills.

Open water. Children—mostly infants—die every year from drowning. Buckets, dishpans, wading pools, and bath seats are potentially lethal when babies are unattended for even a moment.

Stoves, heaters, and scalding liquids. Yes, your hot coffee is important but it's also a danger to a too-wiggly baby with hands that want to grab. Check that the hot water heater—and the faucets children use—don't risk burns. Make kitchen areas off limits for play. Check smoke alarms and fire extinguishers routinely.

Equipment and furniture. If the object is unsteady, move it out of the area or anchor it to a wall.

Recalled items. Many materials in resale shops and garage sales are there because they've been deemed unsafe for children. Bargains on strollers, baby carriers, cribs, and toys are tempting but it's no bargain if it's dangerous. Get in the habit of checking the Consumer Product Safety Commission website for recalls and alerts at www.cpsc.gov/.

Resources

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AS AMERICAN AS APPLE PIE HELPING CHILDREN UNDERSTAND AND CELEBRATE PATRIOTISM



At Rivertown Child Development Center there is a recurring conversation among teachers and administrators about the state and national budget crises. Inevitably, the teachers divide into the predictable camps reflecting today's popular political views—too much government and too little.

A group of 4-year-olds listen to the teachers' conversation and struggle to put together what they are hearing with the snippets of what they also overhear at home and in the media. Boldly, Jamikka approaches the teachers and asks, "Don't you love your country?" Ms. Jackson, a little taken aback, responds, "Of course I do. We all love America, even when we disagree on how it works."

At the end of the day, Ms. Jackson and the other teachers agree: It's time to help children learn about—and celebrate—patriotism.

We live in a time of instant communication about world, national, and local events—automated news feeds, Facebook, Twitter, and cell phones. We recognize that children hear about bombings, riots, terrorist threats, government overthrow, universal health care, school finance, and poverty, and we know that the events and issues are confusing, frightening, and complex.

Rather than ducking the challenge, perhaps it's a good time to help children understand that patriotism isn't partisan. Patriotism is not about political parties or even one person's interpretation of an issue. Simply, patriotism is love and devotion to one's country. We demonstrate patriotism in a variety of ways—debating issues, voting, serving in the military, noticing when the flag is flying at half-staff, and even feeling goose bumps when we sing the national anthem or *America the Beautiful* at a ball game.

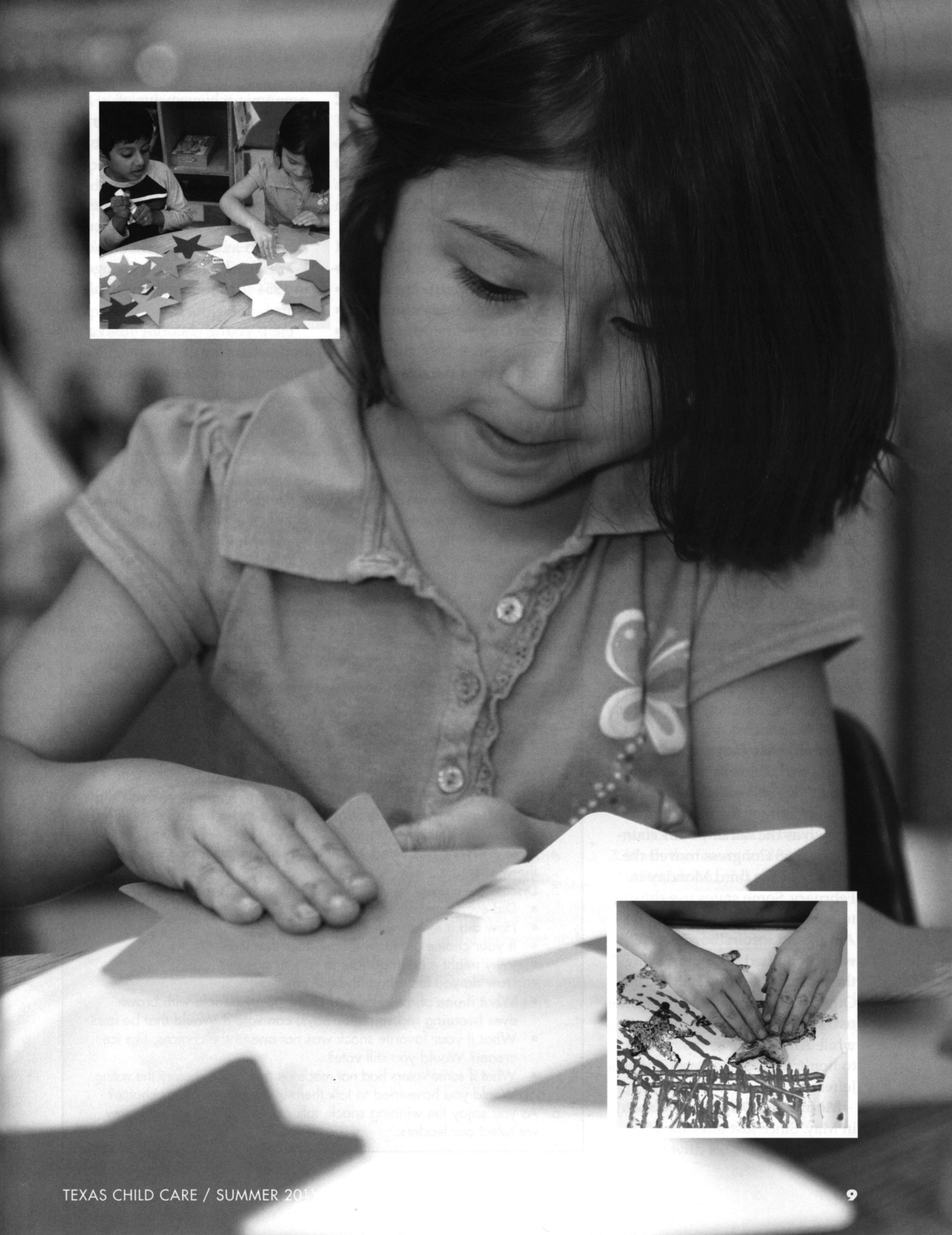
As we talk with children about patriotism, we need to remember that children learn through the

sensory input of concrete, hands-on experiences until they develop the skills to reason abstractly.

Questions for teachers to consider

The answers to the following questions will guide you as you ponder a starting point for an exploration of patriotism.

- What do the children already know—what's the level of background knowledge?
- Which expressions of patriotism matter most?
- What makes the United States different from other places?
- What makes the United States a great place to live?
- Are there ways to make the country better?
- What impact does military service have on the sense of patriotism?
- What are some ways children can express patriotism in a developmentally appropriate manner?
- Can an individual's family history impact the sense of patriotism?
- How can we express our love of country—as adults and as children?



Along the continuum, conversations with respectful adults and investigations driven by curiosity have the most impact on what and how children learn.

Most preschool and early elementary aged children first experience patriotism in celebrations of American history. We recognize the most important people and events in our national history in federal patriotic holidays with parades, flag waving, and picnics: Celebrations. Help children appreciate patriotic holidays as times when all Americans join together in appreciation of America's history and freedoms.

While cities and states can identify significant local events to celebrate, the entirety of the United states celebrates these federal patriotic holidays.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Day—third Monday in January. This is the newest federal holiday. It celebrates the birth of a man dedicated to the establishment of equal rights to housing, education, voting, and accommodations to all Americans.

Presidents Day—third Monday in February. Originally Feb. 22 was observed as the birthday of George Washington, known as the father of our country. In 1968 Congress moved the holiday to the third Monday in February. Some states use the day to honor both Washington and Abraham Lincoln (born Feb. 12), who is credited with preserving the nation after the Civil War. Other states continue to honor the two presidents on separate days, while Alabama uses the holiday to honor Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

Memorial Day—last Monday in May. Since just after the Civil

War, Americans have formally remembered the patriots who died in wartime.

Independence Day—

July 4. On this day in 1776, the Declaration of Independence was read out loud to the people of Philadelphia claiming independence from England and the tyranny of King George III. The day is celebrated as America's birthday.

Labor Day—first Monday in September. Since 1884, this holiday has honored the social and

economic achievements of American workers and the tenacity, strength, and perseverance of their efforts to foster the well-being of the country.

Veterans Day—November 11. Originally known as Armistice Day to celebrate the end of World War I, this holiday was changed in 1954 to honor veterans of all wars.

Help young children build an understanding of American history through connections with

Voting: A patriotic responsibility

Patriotism involves responsibilities as well as celebrations. One of the most important responsibilities is voting. Introduce this concept by giving children an opportunity to vote on an activity that the entire class will do. Here's a sample.

1. Invite children to vote on what to have for snack. Display three boxes, each with a hole in the center. On each box, glue a picture of a snack that you are willing to offer, such as graham crackers, watermelon, and vanilla yogurt.
2. Explain the rules:
 - Every child gets one vote.
 - The snack that gets the most votes wins. What you vote for may not win.
 - You don't have to vote.
 - Every vote is private. You don't have to tell anyone how you voted, but you can if you want to.
 - Once you have voted, you cannot change your vote.
3. Place the boxes in another area of the room, and give each child a token. Have children, one by one, place a token in a box of their choice.
4. After everyone has voted, count the tokens together and announce the winner.
5. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as these:
 - Did everyone vote?
 - How did it feel to vote?
 - If your choice didn't win, how does that feel?
 - Why might it be important to vote in private?
 - How do you feel about the outcome?
 - What if one of the rules had been: "Only people with brown eyes (wearing red shirts, or boys) can vote"? Would that be fair?
 - What if your favorite snack was not one of the choices, like ice cream? Would you still vote?
 - What if some voters had not made up their minds before the voting. Would you have tried to talk them into voting for your choice?
6. As you enjoy the winning snack, talk about how voting is the way we select our leaders.

activities in their own lives. Every day they try to solve problems, build self-confidence, and work cooperatively—all hallmarks of freedom and democracy.

While young children won't grasp the history and fine details of each patriotic holiday, they can appreciate the idea of *commemorations*—just like their birthdays. Help older preschoolers understand that patriotic holidays are *recurring*—we celebrate the same holidays every year at the same time. Children older than 4 can also begin to understand that holidays are celebrated in different ways in different areas and by different ethnic or cultural groups.

Old Glory

The American flag, with its stars and stripes, is the best known symbol of the country. Since 1777—when there were only 13 colonies and a newly established Continental Congress planning independence from England—the form of the flag has been consistent: white stars in a blue field and alternating red and white stripes. By 1818 the independent nation was expanding and Congress determined that each state would be represented by a star; the 13 stripes would be constant. In 1959 the last two stars were added to represent Alaska and Hawaii, the newest states.



Stars and Stripes art

Try to keep this activity open-ended with no directions on how the flag must look. Encourage creativity and let children dictate stories about their flags.

Here's what you need:

- trays with edges
- star-shaped sponge
- cardboard tubes
- string
- glue
- plastic spoons
- red and blue paint
- paper

1. Prepare the activity by gluing lengths of string around the cardboard tubes. Cut the tube to about 6-inches in length. Glue three pieces of string to the tube each about ¼-inch apart and 1 inch from the end of the tube. Each piece will become a stripe. Add three more groups of string to the tube, each about 1 inch apart. Make several stripe forms and cut several five-pointed stars from sponges.
2. Introduce the activity to children with conversations about flags. Ask where children notice flags and what the flags look like.
3. Spoon paint into two trays—clean polystyrene meat trays work well—red paint in one and blue in the other.
4. Invite children to roll a cardboard tube in the red paint and to transfer the print onto paper.
5. Dip the star-shaped sponge into the blue paint and add this print to the paper.

Celebration foods

All people associate food with celebration traditions. Patriotic holidays have special food associations for Americans from cherry pie on Presidents Day, soul food to celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., and picnics with melon, cake, and iced tea for summer holidays.

Give classroom cooking a try with simple, make-ahead snacks that can add to a patriotic celebration.

Iced mint and lemon tea

Preschoolers can make this sun tea with satisfying independence. The frozen lemonade adds the only sugar—the mint and herbal tea add enough zing that a sweetener isn't missed.

Here's what you need:

- large pitcher
 - small can frozen lemonade
 - bowl
 - colander
 - mint leaves
 - caffeine-free herbal tea bags
 - ice and cups for serving
1. Gather a large bunch of mint—from your class garden, a family's garden, or the grocery.
 2. Show the children how to gently pull leaves from the mint stalks and put into a bowl.
 3. Wash the leaves under running water, drain, and put into a pitcher.
 4. Fill the pitcher with water and add a few herbal tea bags.
 5. Place the pitcher in the refrigerator for a few hours or over night.
 6. At serving time, remove the tea bags. The mint leaves will have settled to the bottom of the pitcher.
 7. Gently stir in a half can of lemonade concentrate.
 8. Serve with ice and mint sprigs.



All American PB & J

Be alert to nut allergies and good cooking hygiene.

Here's what you need:

- whole wheat bread
- sugar-free jam
- peanut butter
- cutting board
- dinner knives
- serving plates
- plastic wrap or storage container

1. Prepare for the activity by cutting bread slices in half to minimize tearing for inexperienced spreaders.
2. Show the children how to hold one corner of the bread with one (clean) hand and to spread the jam gently.
3. Let the children spread peanut butter (or other nut butter) onto another half slice of bread.
4. Put the slices together.
5. Cover with plastic wrap or place in a container and refrigerate until serving time.

Easy apple cobbler

Make this cobbler in individual servings using either a toaster oven or full-sized oven. When every child has a hand in the cooking, the activity is much more meaningful.

Here's what you need:

- canned apple pie filling
- premade pie crust
- flour
- butter
- muffin tins
- muffin cup liners
- mixing bowl
- measuring spoons
- rolling pin
- small cookie cutters

1. Make rebus cards picturing the simple steps for making the cobbler. Arrange furniture and direct traffic paths to enable children to move from step to step without collisions.
 2. Gather ingredients for the cobbler. For ease, use canned pie filling and premade refrigerator crust. Pour the filling into a bowl and place a measuring spoon next to it. Roll out the pie crust (adding a bit of flour if necessary to prevent sticking) and place the cookie cutters next to the crust.
 3. Remind children of health and safety rules: tie back hair and roll up sleeves; put on aprons; and wash hands.
 4. Place liners in the muffin tin cups.
 5. Place $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of butter in a muffin cup liner.
 6. Measure four tablespoons of pie filling into the liner.
 7. Choose a cookie cutter to cut a piece of crust to fit on top of the filling. The shape will identify who made each serving.
 8. Bake the cobblers in a 350-degree oven for about 30 minutes. Allow to cool before serving for snack with milk.
- Variations:** Simply substitute cherry pie filling for the apples to make cherry cobbler to celebrate George Washington's birthday. Introduce the activity with pictures of George Washington and a brief conversation about his work as the first U.S. president, and the legend of the cherry tree.



Have a parade

Parades—whether a simple one down a long hall or a more carefully orchestrated march in a neighborhood—are hallmarks of patriotic celebrations. Introduce the event to children according to their developmental levels: toddlers might like standing to the side and moving to recorded or sung music, school-age children will be eager for history stories—folklore, legend, or factual.

If you choose to have a big celebration, be sure to include children's families.

Parade stilts

Here's what you need for one set:

- 2 empty cans of the same size
- heavy cord
- scissors
- can opener
- red, white, and blue paper tape

1. Wash the cans well and dry. Make sure there are no rough edges along the open end.
2. Place the cans open-side down on a sturdy work surface. Use a can opener that makes a triangular hole to make two holes opposite each other just under the can rim.
3. Thread the cord through the holes in each can. Determine the correct length of the cord by having a child stand on a can. Cut and knot the cord to make a comfortable handle. Slide the knot to the inside of the can.
4. Decorate the outsides of the stilts with lengths of colored tape.

Activities: Encourage the children to wear the stilts in a celebration parade and for relay races. They will discover that successfully walking on stilts requires lots of practice with balance, coordination, and stability.

Red balloon rockets

Note: This activity is appropriate for children older than 4. Balloons are a choking hazard for younger children!

Here's what you need:

- long red balloons
- drinking straws
- rubber bands
- scissors
- paper
- ruler
- pencil

1. Cut a straw in half and gently push one half inside the other to make a double wall.
2. Push the straw into the neck of the balloon and hold it firmly in place with a rubber band.
3. Cut a 3-inch square fin for the back of the balloon rocket. Fold the paper in half twice to determine the exact center of the square and make a small hole to fit over the end of the straw.
4. Hold the neck of the balloon (over the rubber band) and blow it up.
5. As the child lets go, the balloon will fly high. Vary the flight length by modifying the paper fin or the shape of the straw.

Activity: If your parade includes singing a patriotic song like "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy," agree on a cue when all the children let go of their rocket balloons at the same time.



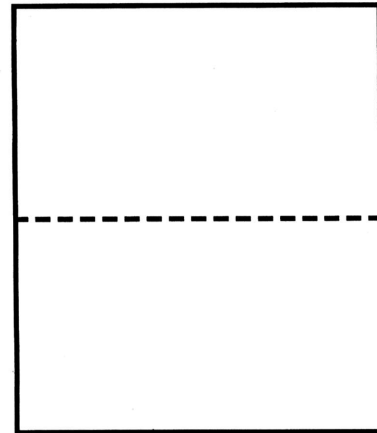
Five-point stars

Decorate your celebration space with classic five-point stars—just like those on Old Glory, the American flag. While young children might not care about precision, older children can follow these directions to build skills in measuring, paper folding, and scissor work. The pattern will work for stars of any size, so encourage children to make enough for lavish decorations.

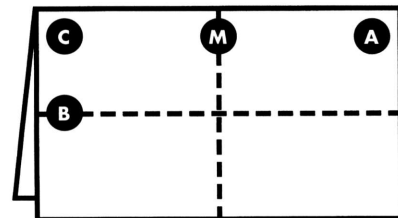
Here's what you need:

- paper
- pencil
- ruler or straight edge
- scissors

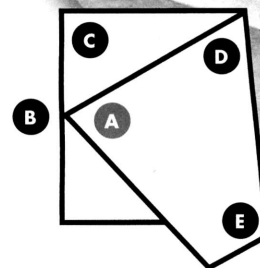
1. Fold a piece of paper in half and label the paper as in the diagrams at the right. A and C are at the edges of the fold; M is in the middle between A and C; B is the vertical mid-point of the folded paper.
2. Fold corner A to point B. Label the new corner D.
3. Fold corner C over the paper edge running from B to D. Label the new lower corner E.
4. Open corner C and make a new fold so that fold D-E meets line B-D.
5. Refold corner C to cover the packet and label the new lower left corner F.
6. With a pencil and straight edge, draw a line from point F to a point about half-way to point D.
7. Cut along the F-D line and then open the paper.



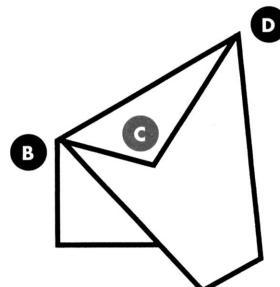
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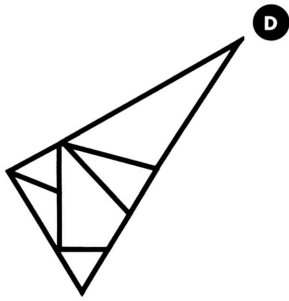


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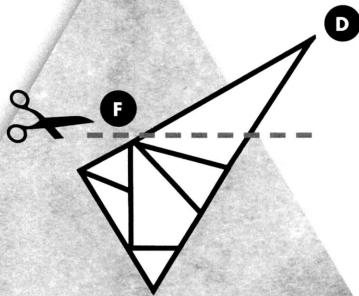


Stringing stars

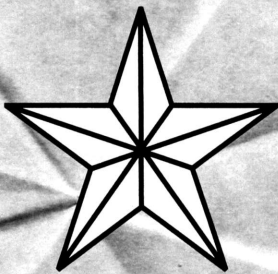
Once children are comfortable with folding and cutting stars, offer a variety of paper styles—colored, printed, foiled—to make celebration decorations. Use a hole punch at the top of one point. Show children how to use yarn threaded on a large plastic needle to thread the stars in a line. Use glue and a paper plate to make a star-studded wreath. Glue two stars back-to-back over a drinking straw to make a star wand to wave during the parade.



4 & 5



6



7

Parade music

Gather classic patriotic tunes for your celebration. John Philip Sousa marches set a festive mood. The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences website offers music and lyrics for these sing-along favorites: *I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *This Land Is Your Land*, and *It's a Grand Old Flag* at

- <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/imayanke.htm>
- <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/thisland.htm>
- <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/grandold.htm>

Patriotic tambourines

The youngest patriots will have fun watching a parade of older children when they contribute to the celebration. Rhythm instruments—drums, bells, and rhythm sticks—are fun to play, but you can easily personalize the celebration with pie pan cymbals.

Here's what you need:

- aluminum or metal pie pans
- awl or sturdy hole punch
- lengths of red, white, and blue ribbon

1. Punch two or three holes along one edge of the pie plate.
2. String the ribbon through a hole and tie securely.
3. Show children how to hold the tambourine on one edge and to use their other hand to tap in rhythm. Alternatively, wooden spoons or short lengths of wooden dowel make great and inexpensive drum sticks.



For people who are trying to understand the world, the world is a very complex place. It is a world of many different people, many different cultures, and many different languages. It is a world of many different things, and it is a world of many different people. It is a world of many different things, and it is a world of many different people. It is a world of many different things, and it is a world of many different people.



Parade floats

Decorate tricycles and other riding toys as parade floats. Use tape to attach flags (see <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov> for a flag template), crepe paper streamers, star wands, and drawings. Provide whistles and kazoos for float drivers and encourage other children to march along with rhythm instruments and cardboard box drums.

Dress the part

Early patriots adapted many of the traditions of European ancestors. Hats and wigs were nearly universal—worn by gentlemen, children, servants, prisoners, tailors, sailors, and soldiers—in early America. Visit Google images to search for portraits of patriots: Betsy Ross, Thomas Jefferson, Paul Revere, Crispus Attucks, and James Otis, for example. Talk with children about the dress styles of early Americans.

Help children make, fit, and wear tall Uncle Sam hats, bonnets, and the tri-corner hats of the Revolution from newspaper, felt, or discarded hats.

Make a wig

Here's what you need:

- white hose or tights
- scissors
- cord
- waxed paper
- light-loft fiberfill quilt batting
- glue
- mirror
- ribbon

1. Cut the legs off of the tights.

From one pair of stockings you can make six wigs. Cut each leg of nylon into three equal pieces.

2. Fit a length of stocking on a child's head as a cap. Tightly tie off the open end at the top with cord.
3. Ask children to label the inside of the cap with a name or other identifying mark.
4. Roll out about 6 inches of batting and cut—two 6-inch lengths will be needed for each wig.
5. Cut the batting into strips, each about 2 inches by 6 inches.
6. Cut additional batting into rough ovals measuring 6 inches by 12 inches.
6. Show children how to roll and glue the batting into fat curls. Allow the glue to dry.
7. Encourage children to work in pairs to complete their wigs. First, show how to hold a square of waxed paper over the head under the cap. This will protect children's hair from glue. With the paper and cap in place, dot the cap with glue and press the batting ovals into place leaving excess batting hanging at the back of the head.
8. Embellish the wig with batting curls.
9. Tie a ribbon around the ponytail at the back—the standard style for men. Women typically wore more curls but were tied back as bonnet fashion dictated.

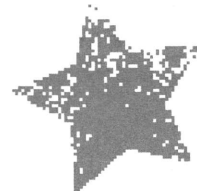
Learning center activities

Modify equipment and materials to reinforce holiday symbols in all areas of the classroom. Use these ideas to help you start planning.

- In the art area practice making five-pointed stars, banners and flags, and newspaper hats with feathers. Make fireworks paintings with red or blue construction paper, straws, and white

paint. Create a sparkler effect by using a drinking straw to move the paint across the paper.

- Set up the dramatic play center for a pretend picnic (tablecloth, picnic basket, and dinnerware), factory (wheels, tools, hard hats, and blueprints), or archeologist dig (backpacks, note pads, magnifying glasses, broken pottery pieces, and brushes).
- Reinforce math skills with red, white, and blue paper pattern sequences, ordering activities, and floor puzzles.
- Sing and march to *Yankee Doodle* or *The Grand Old Duke of York* to transition to lunch or outdoors.
- In the literacy and writing center offer older children a scroll copy of the Declaration of Independence and invite children to add their signatures to the document with a quill pen and ink.
- Include these children's picture books in your classroom library:
 - Chall, Marsha Wilson. 2000. *Happy Birthday, America*. New York: HarperCollins.
 - Dagliesh, Alice. 1995. *The Fourth of July Story*. New York: Aladdin Books.
 - Ernst, Lisa Campbell. 1992. *Zinnia and Dot*. New York: Viking Kestrel.
 - Pingry, Patricia A. 2000. *The Story of America's Birthday*. Nashville: Candy Cane Press.
 - Thomas, Jane Resh 1997. *Celebration*. New York: Hyperion.
 - Wong, Janet S. 2006. *Apple Pie 4th of July*. New York: Sandpiper.
 - Ziefert, Harriet. 2002. *Hats Off for the Fourth of July*. New York: Puffin Press.





**Talking
with children**

**about
water safety**

When we think of fun summer activities, water is one of the first things that comes to mind. We visualize splashing in a wading pool, swimming in a pool, riding in a boat, playing in ocean waves.

But water activities also pose a hazard. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death for children 1 to 14 years old.

To reduce drowning risk in child care programs and schools, states have issued regulations governing wading and swimming pools, staff-to-child ratios, CPR training, and other safety measures.

The limits imposed on water activities can be mystifying for young children. At the same time, however, these limits present an opportunity to educate children about the reasons behind the rules and gain their cooperation. Use the following learning activities to begin talking about water safety.

Which objects float?

Here's what you need:

- sink or small tub
- water
- slender objects such as a metal spoon, coin, kitchen implement (potato masher, bottle opener)
- empty containers such as a cereal bowl, butter tub, plastic box, metal mixing bowl, polystyrene cup
- toy boat

1. Fill the sink or tub with enough water to float objects on it.
2. Invite children to place a spoon on the water. Talk about whether it floats or sinks. Try again with other objects. Encourage children to describe the objects (metal, thin, light). Remove the objects from the water.
3. Place an empty bowl on the water. Observe that it floats. Encourage children to describe it (round, empty). Explain that the bowl has air inside it so the space it occupies is lighter than

the water. The bowl *displaces* the water. Invite children to float other empty containers, one at a time. Remove the objects from the water.

4. Pour water into a bowl and place it on the water. It will sink. Why? Now the bowl is heavier than the water around it. Invite children to fill other containers and try to float them.
5. Ask children about the toy boat: Will it float or sink? Why will it float? What will make it sink? Test their predictions. Objects that float are *buoyant*.
6. Talk with children about ships. They are made of heavy metal, but unlike the metal spoon, they don't sink. Why? What happens if the ship gets a hole in the bottom? Water begins replacing the air inside, the ship fills with water, and it goes under.





Can people float?

Here's what you need:

- sink or tub
- water
- plastic baby doll (hollow inside)
- image of human respiratory system (see www.webmd.com/lung/how-we-breathe)

1. Fill the sink or tub with water. Remind children of what happened in the previous activity.

Ask: Will the baby doll float or sink? Allow them to test their predictions.

Ask: What will make the baby doll sink? Demonstrate by taking off the doll's head, filling the body cavity with water, and trying again.

Ask: Can a person float? Children may be more familiar with seeing people swim or may have begun swimming lessons themselves. Encourage children to describe how a person looks

while swimming (feet kicking, arms moving, head dipping in and out of the water).

Ask: How can a person float on the water or stay on top of the water enough to swim? Compare a swimming person to a floating person (lying on back, calm, not moving).

2. Encourage children to take a deep breath, hold it a moment, and breathe out.

Ask: What are we breathing in? What happens to the air when we breathe it in? When we *inhale*, the air goes up through the nose, down the back of the throat, into the windpipe (*trachea*), and into the *lungs*. When we exhale, the air goes in the reverse direction. What would happen if we could not breathe, or if we stopped breathing?

3. Show an image of the respiratory system. Compare the lungs

to balloons. They fill up with air when we breathe in and flatten when we breathe air out.

Ask: How do people breathe when they are swimming? Is it possible to hold your breath while your head is under water? Demonstrate how a swimmer breathes in when the head is turned to the side out of water, and blows air out into the water.

Ask: What would happen if you got water in your nose or mouth? You would probably cough it out and continue breathing. That often happens when we are learning to swim.

Ask: What if you could not cough out the water? You wouldn't be able to breathe and water could go down your windpipe into the lungs. You might also start swallowing water, and it would go down your digestive tube (*esophagus*) into the stomach. This would

make the body heavier and cause it to start sinking. If not rescued in a few minutes, you would die. This is what happens when someone *drowns*.

Ask: Could a *lifeguard* help? Many times, a lifeguard or friend can pull a drowning person out of the water and start *rescue breathing* or *CPR*. This could save your life.

4. Use the doll to demonstrate the rescue breathing (mouth-to-mouth) and CPR techniques you learned to earn your CPR certificate. These techniques get air into your lungs so you start breathing again and get the heart beating again if it has stopped.

Note: In many drowning cases, it's not the lungs filling with water (usually only a small amount of water is taken in) that causes death, but rather it's the breathing stoppage.

Ask: How much water could cause a person to drown? Can a person drown in a bathtub? What about a baby playing in a wading pool? Emphasize that it takes only an inch or two of water in a tub or bucket to stop us from breathing.

Rules for water safety

Talk with children about the water activities you have planned for them. Strive for a balance between encouraging them to have fun while warning them to stay safe. Discuss rules such as the following:

- Always have an adult within reach when playing with water, even in a wading pool. Why should you never go near water without a grown-up?

Safety tips for caregivers

- Practice touch supervision with all children younger than 5. This means you are within an arm's reach of all children at all times.
- When supervising children, keep your eyes on them. Don't read a book or get involved in conversations with other adults.
- Don't rely on air-filled water wings to keep children safe.



These floaties cannot keep a child's head above water, and they can slip off.

- Remember that knowing how to swim won't necessarily prevent a child from drowning. Supervise all children carefully.

References

- MedicineNet. n.d. Drowning. www.medicinenet.com.
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2011. Unintentional Drowning: Fact Sheet, www.cdc.gov.



CHILD CARE LICENSING

Take action to prevent fires

Children younger than 5 stand the greatest risk from injury and death from fire. You can prevent fires by taking action, short- and long-term, to create a safer environment for children.

What's needed for fire to occur?

A fire results from the combination of three common and ever-present elements:

- **heat**—from a match, an exposed heating element on a stove, or frayed electrical cord, for example
- **fuel**—a sleeve, curtain, or newspaper that comes in contact with the heat
- **air**—the breeze from an air conditioner vent or open window that fans and feeds the burning fuel.

These elements are present in every environment, and they become critical components in spaces designed to care for young children.

Local fire codes and the rules from the Department of Family and Protective Services are designed to help protect people and property. Some fire safety issues like wiring or heating systems in older buildings may be costly to remedy. Other issues like keeping outlets covered and changing air conditioner filters should be easy and routine for all adults who work with children.

Short-term steps

Make sure spaces used by children are free of hot radiators, pipes, furnaces, space heaters,

and fireplaces. Place portable heaters out of the reach of children, and turn them off when you leave a room.

Unplug small appliances when they are not in use. Make sure electrical cords don't dangle over countertops or tables inviting children to tug or pull. Use electrical outlets close to appliances; avoid using extension cords. Outlet extenders and cube taps can overload electrical circuits and create a fire hazard.

Organize cooking activities to teach children how to be safe around ovens, slow cookers, and toasters. Never leave items cooking on the stove or in an oven or Crock-Pot® unattended. Keep items such as potholders and towels away from a stove.

Prohibit smoking by parents as well as staff. Minimum standards do not allow the use of tobacco products inside a facility, on the playground, in a vehicle, or on field trips.

Make sure you have a well-charged fire extinguisher and know how to use it. Keep matches and lighters out of the reach and sight of children who may be tempted to demonstrate their developing motor skills.

Long-term fire safety

Ensure smoke alarms are positioned appropriately. Test the batteries regularly.

Plan and practice fire drills and

evacuations—even at nap time. Ensure escape windows and doors can be opened easily. Practicing calm, orderly fire drills and evacuations with children to help them know what to do in the event of a real emergency.

Discuss fire safety and prevention as part of the curriculum. Learn and practice the "Stop, drop, and roll" maneuver recommended by fire departments.

Remember: No amount of fire prevention planning can take the place of active supervision of both the environment and the children in it.

If a fire does occur despite your best prevention efforts, safety planning should help you be prepared to respond to the situation.

Resources

The following sites contain general information as well as fire prevention and safety checklists to help keep your operation safe.

- American Red Cross, www.RedCross.org
- U.S. Fire Administration, www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/
- FireSafety.gov, www.firesafety.gov/

TEXAS Parenting News

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS EVERYWHERE

SUMMER 2011

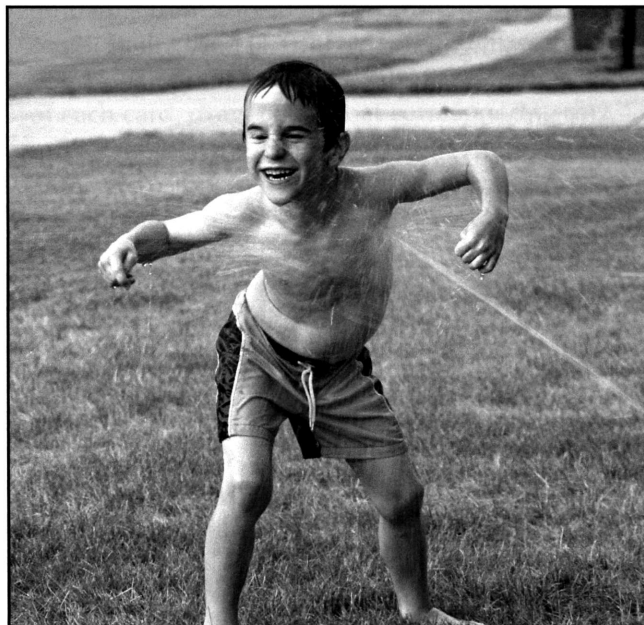
Teach children about summer safety

Summer activities often include playing in water—splashing in a lawn sprinkler, swimming in a pool, riding in a boat, or playing in ocean waves—and building fires—for grilling or camping.

Both kinds of activities pose hazards: drowning and burns. Talk with your children about safety. Strive for a balance between fun and caution.

Water safety guidelines

- Always stay within arm's length of your preschoolers, even in a wading pool.
- Don't rely on air-filled water wings to keep afloat. These floaties cannot keep a child's head above water, and they can slip off. Use only Coast-Guard-approved life vests designed for children.
- Teach children to swim around age 5. But remember that knowing how to swim won't necessarily prevent a child from drowning.
- Ensure that everyone, even adults, always swim with a buddy.



- Instruct children to walk—not run—on the side of a pool.
- Learn CPR and be ready to use it.
- Keep a cell phone handy.

Fire safety guidelines

- Leave fireworks to the professionals. In the United States, more fires are reported on the Fourth of July than on any other day, and half are caused by fireworks.

STRIVE FOR A BALANCE BETWEEN
FUN AND CAUTION.

- Never let children play with fireworks. A sparkler tip burns at 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit—enough to cause a third-degree burn.
- Keep barbecue grills at least 10 feet from the house and bushes.
- Never use a grill in a garage or carport. It can be both a fire and carbon monoxide hazard.
- Use only the starter made for charcoal grills—not gasoline.
- With gas grills, check the connection between the propane tank and fuel line to make sure it's not leaking.
- Never leave the grill unattended.
- Keep children and animals away from the grill until it is completely cool.
- When grilling, wear short or snug-fitting sleeves. Keep potholders, towels, and paper away from the grill.
- Get a fire extinguisher and learn how to use it.
- Prohibit smoking in your home, yard, and camping area.

Use books to build math skills

Ordinarily we associate books with reading skills, but books are also tools for learning math skills.

These skills include counting rationally (not by rote), sorting, categorizing, manipulating shapes and spaces, and performing simple arithmetic functions, all of which build a foundation for later abstract and symbolic thinking, and academic success.

Ask the children's librarian in your public library for help in finding more books that can help your child build this foundation.

The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins

Sharing cookies becomes a math lesson as more and more children join the table.

Math activity: How many shares?

Place 12 graham crackers on a tray in the middle of your dining table. Brainstorm ways to divide the crackers among your family members. Does it work to have everyone take one in turn? What happens if there are five people? If the 12 objects are divided evenly between two family members, what happens when two more people join the group? Listen to your child's solutions and ask questions to expand understanding of *more* and *fewer*, *equal* shares, and one cracker for every one person (what teachers call *one-to-one correspondence*).

Big Chickens by Leslie Helakoski

When a wolf sneaks around the coop, the chickens flee and try to hide from danger. But for the silly chickens, running away is fraught with new dangers when four chickens flurry, hurry, worry, and scurry from one challenge to the next.

Math activity: Explore four

Explore four—four chickens, four children, four adventures. Draw four boxes on a large sheet of paper. Challenge your child to gather four objects in the room and to place one in each of the boxes (one-to-one correspondence). Vary the activity for outdoors by drawing with chalk on a sidewalk or drawing in dirt with a stick. Older children might explore arithmetic functions—addition, subtraction, and multiplication: How many objects do you have if there are two objects in each box ($4 \times 2 = 8$). Point and count aloud to verify the answers.

Oodles of Animals by Lois Ehlert

Colored paper collage illustrates basic shapes—square, rectangle, triangle, circle, diamond, oval, heart, and teardrop. They combine to create oodles of animals.

Math activity: Identify the geometric shape

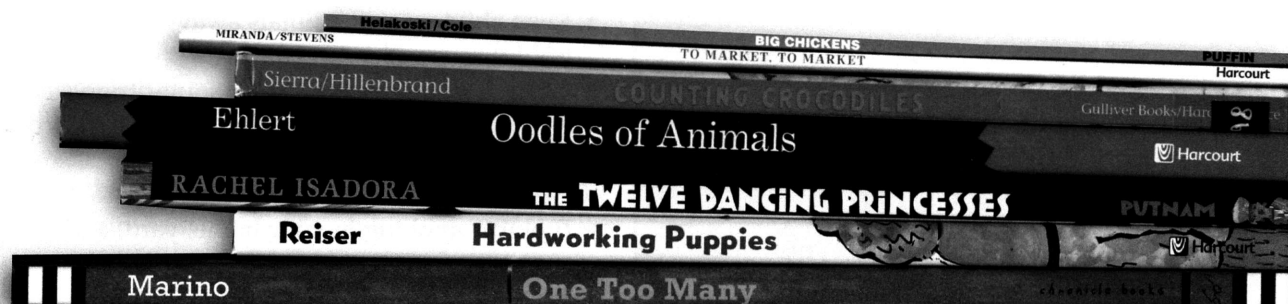
After you show the page's illustration and read the short verse, help your child dissect the pictures according to basic shapes. Encourage descriptive words: "I see a large purple circle on the back of the ape. It has smooth lines." Encourage your child to cut out shapes from paper, build new collages of animals, and describe them.

The Twelve Dancing Princesses retold by Rachel Isadora

This retelling of the traditional fairy tale is illustrated in the blazing colors and angular shapes of African art.

Math activity: Sort by attribute

Gather buttons of different sizes and colors and with either two or four holes. Ask your child to



choose a button and describe its attributes—a big, red button with four holes, for example. Give your child time to sort the buttons by attribute and to discover that some buttons share attributes without being identical. Ask: “Are there any identical buttons? Are there any pairs?”

To Market, To Market by Anne Miranda

A reinterpretation of the nursery rhyme embellished with zany illustrations follows a shopper who settles for a simple meal of hot soup.

Math activity: Animal round up

Take the time to read the book and slowly examine each of the illustrations. Encourage your child to count the different animals on each page, pointing, naming, and counting one by one. Do the same with the soup ingredients at the end of the book. Have a conversation about the different vegetables and the characteristics of each.

Hardworking Puppies by Lyn Reiser

Ten puppies have big dreams—they want to be dogs with jobs like guarding, rescuing, and performing. Each finds a job and a hardworking human to help.

Math activity: One less

Encourage your child to associate numerals with numbers of objects. With a marker, clearly write numerals from 1 to 10 in the center of 10 index cards. In the lower left-hand corner, write out the word, *one* or *five*, for example. On the reverse side of each card, draw boxes that correspond to the numeral—10, ten, and 10 boxes, for example. Let your child copy the number words, make one-to-one correspondences, and practice arithmetic skills like adding one or taking two away.

Counting Crocodiles by Judy Sierra

A monkey is stuck on an island with only a lemon tree. Way across the Sillabobble Sea is a delectable banana tree. But the Sillabobble crocodiles, eager for a tasty lunch, challenge the monkey to count the crocs.

Math activity: Describe what you see

The illustrations in *Counting Crocodiles* are soft and detailed, making pointing and counting a challenge.

But each page offers several math options. For example, one page illustrates “Eight crocs in polka-dot socks.” With your child you can count tails (8), pairs of socks (8), and individual socks (16).

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow

Bedtime means saying “Goodnight” and then having a jumping party—until the doctor comes—and then doing it again!

Math activity: Size order

Using five objects such as pencils or pebbles, encourage your child to arrange them in order from smallest to largest. Vary the activity with weight—ordering from heaviest to lightest. Ask your child to name family members from oldest to youngest.

Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina

Mischievous monkeys take advantage of a peddler’s nap, steal his hats, and mime his hard work.

Math activity: 50 cents

Use this activity only if your child is old enough to keep the coins on the table and not in the mouth. Provide coins: 50 pennies, 10 nickels, 5 dimes, 2 quarters, and 1 50-cent piece. Find out what your child already knows about *equivalences* (10 pennies equal 1 dime, for example) and the sizes, shapes, and images on U.S. coins. Build on your child’s knowledge by attaching price tags to a few objects (toy truck or baby doll, for example) and helping determine how many coins the purchase of each item requires.

One Too Many by Gianna Marino

This simple barnyard counting book is enlivened by the hopping flea that finds itself making mischief as new animals arrive on the scene. Each spread features a numeral but no other text.

Math activity: Can you count them?

One Too Many is a cacophony of animals—and most are illustrated in black and white. With your child, count the animals by type—a real challenge. Help the child identify the animals that walk on two legs, and follow the silver hopping line of the tiny flea.

Is your baby sick?

A normal body temperature for babies is between 97 and 100.4 degrees. A higher temperature can have many causes—strenuous activity, time of day, environment (like a hot room or being bundled up), or infection.

When fever is a baby's response to infection, it is usually accompanied by changes in behavior or appearance—a rash, vomiting, diarrhea, or mucus discharge, for example. In addition to fever, be alert to symptoms such as the following:

- Is the child cranky, irritable, sluggish?
- Is the skin pale or flushed?
- Is the child rubbing the eyes, ears, or nose?
- Is breathing different? Is there a cough?
- Is the baby having trouble sleeping?
- Is there a change in eating, drinking, urination, or stools?



How to take a child's temperature

Use a digital thermometer to take a rectal (in the bottom), oral (mouth), or axillary (armpit) temperature. Note: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends removing glass tube thermometers from the home to avoid accidental exposure to the mercury it contains.

Age	Rectal	Oral	Axillary
Birth to 3 months	x		
3 months to 3 years	x		x
4-5 years	x	x	x
5 years and older	x	x	x

Wash your hands before and after taking a child's temperature.

Rectal: Lubricate the thermometer tip with petroleum jelly. Hold the baby tummy down on your lap. Insert the thermometer about a half inch into the baby's anus and hold in place for about one minute.

Oral: Place the tip under the child's tongue. Hold in place for about one minute.

Axillary. Place the thermometer tip in the child's dry armpit next to skin (not over clothes). Hold in place for about one minute. Note: The axillary method is not as accurate as the rectal or oral methods.

After use, wash the thermometer with cold water and soap; rinse in cold water. Wipe the tip with rubbing alcohol or dip in a sanitizing bleach solution and allow to air dry.



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EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

Inclusion practices for children with developmental delays or disabilities

I'm caring for a baby who was born prematurely. He is about a year old now and is doing fine. His mom said something about not calculating his age from his birth date but from when he would have been born. Why would I do that?

When children are born early, we think of their progress in terms of *adjusted age*. For example, if a baby is eight weeks early, we adjust our expectations by eight weeks. Therefore, a 4-month-old baby born two months prematurely may act like a 2-month-old full-term infant. ECI stops adjusting the baby's age for eligibility at 12 months even though the developmental lag may continue to require ECI services and appropriate accommodation.

I care for a 2-year-old child who has to use a walker. What activities can I do in my classroom that would allow me to work with her while including the other children in the class?

A child using a walker may have balance problems. Depending on physical limitations, the child can be included in all classroom activities and with other children. Consider using a buddy system to help with modeling, transitioning, and actively participating in all activities. Along with the walker, the child may be able to use other mobility aids such as a rolling chair, a cart, or a hand-

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) is a division within the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). ECI programs provide services to families with children birth to 36 months of age with developmental delays or disabilities. For more information about DARS/ECI, call 1-800-628-5115 or visit www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis.

propelled tricycle to move from one activity to another.

On the playground, include activities to support balance and stability skills and independence. For example:

- sitting and balancing on a small rocking boat
- walking on uneven surfaces and inclines
- stepping on and off sidewalks
- following patterns on the ground or sidewalk
- getting on and off playground equipment

I need ideas for adapting my classroom for a child with disabilities. What inexpensive literacy resource can I look for?

The Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL) promotes the adoption and sustained use of evidence-based early literacy learning practices. Their website provides resources for early childhood intervention practitioners, parents, and other caregivers of children, birth to age 5, with identified disabilities, developmental delays, and those at-risk for poor outcomes.

The CELL provides adaptation guides for you to use. These guides will give you information to make it easier for young children with disabilities to participate in early literacy learning activities. They are written for

both parents and practitioners. The practice guides describe everyday home, community, and child care learning opportunities that encourage early literacy learning.

Visit www.earlyliteracylearning.org/index.php for useful and practical information.

Why are families at our child care program served by ECI programs with different names?

DARS/ECI contracts with 56 different organizations to provide ECI services throughout Texas. Some are private, non-profit organizations such as Easter Seals. Others are public school districts, Regional Education Service Centers, and Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) Centers. Some urban areas with large populations have several ECI programs.

Families in the same child care program may be served by different ECI programs depending upon where the families live. Each ECI program provides services to families living in specific areas. In Austin, for example, three ECI programs cover different areas of the city. ECI programs serve every county in Texas.

DEVELOPMENTAL STUTTERING

A TRANSITION BETWEEN EARLY TALKING AND ELOQUENT SPEECH

by Kate Anderson

A teacher walked into my speech therapy room with a concerned look on her face. "Can I ask you a question? Not about a student, but about my son?"

I agreed and she proceeded to tell me that her 3½ year-old son was starting to stutter. She demonstrated what he sounded like and showed me how he was physically struggling to get his words out. "What should I do?" she asked.

As a speech-language pathologist assigned to elementary schools, I have conversations like this at least two to three times during a school year. Often the children of concern are between the ages of 3 and 5. Boys seem to have this issue more than girls. Many of these children are intelligent and often come from stimulating and language-rich households. What the teacher described is called *developmental stuttering*.

What is stuttering?

People generally expect to be able to express their ideas easily and smoothly. *Fluency* refers to the flow with which sounds, syllables, words, and phrases are connected together when someone is speaking (Nicolosi, Harryman, and Kresheck 1989). Fluent speech flows freely without any breaks, hesitations, or repetitions.

A break in the flow of speech is called a *dysfluency*. Stuttering is a pervasive pattern of repeated persistent dysfluencies.

Everyone has breaks in the flow of speech at some time or another. These are called normal dysfluencies. We have all had times when we say "uh, uh"

when we are trying to formulate a thought or remember a word. We may repeat a word or phrase or stop in the middle of a sentence and start over again.

Stuttering, in contrast, involves atypical dysfluencies such as part-word repetitions ("Duh-duh-duh-dog") and prolongations ("Mmmmmommy"). Sometimes the words get stuck in the throat and nothing at all comes out. This is called a *block* or *block of airflow*. These dysfluencies usually happen at the beginning of the sentence. The stutterer often struggles to get a message out and may show secondary characteristics such as averting the eyes or showing excessive tension in the lips, jaw, neck, and shoulders. The stutterer may gasp for air or wave

Adult stuttering: An inherited metabolic disorder

Researchers have long known that adult stuttering tends to run in families. A recent study, led by researchers at the National Institutes of Health, has identified three genes as a source of stuttering, providing further evidence that stuttering is not a behavioral disorder but rather an inherited disorder that arises from abnormal neuronal activity.

For more information about stuttering, see the website of the National Stuttering Association, www.nsastutter.org, the largest self-help support organization in the United States for people who stutter. Its mission is to bring hope and empowerment to children and adults who stutter, their families, and professionals through support, education, advocacy, and research.

the hands around. It's as if there is a glitch or malfunction between the signals the brain sends out and what happens at the level of the speech mechanisms.

It can be frustrating both for the stutterer, who has something wonderful to say, and for the listener, who wants to know what it is. If it gets too frustrating, the stutterer may give up and the message will remain locked up inside. Stutterers go to speech therapy to learn techniques to help their speech become smooth and less effortful.

What is developmental stuttering?

Developmental stuttering is the most common form of dysfluency, with an onset generally between the ages of 2 and 5 years. Preschool children often experience a temporary period of dysfluency. According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 75 percent of preschool children who begin stuttering will eventually stop.

Developmental stuttering is a temporary break in the fluency of speech that occurs when the child has a giant spurt in language development but lacks the motor coordination to keep up with increasingly complex verbal messages. Tommy's mouth can't keep up with all his ideas, and so he stutters.

Children who have developmental stutters are often bright and have a lot of energy and enthusiasm. They have a lot to say and they want to say it as fast as they can. But their neurological motor

planning systems have not matured enough to let them do that fluently. It is much like the initial awkwardness in learning to walk and run (Ainsworth and Fraser 1989).

What can caregivers do?

Unlike persistent stuttering, developmental stuttering often clears up over time. Once the child becomes coordinated enough to speak clearly at a rapid rate, the atypical dysfluencies and struggling behaviors will diminish. In the meantime, the caregiver can use some simple techniques to calm the interaction and assure the child that the adult cares more about the message than how it is delivered. The key is to change the environment, not the child.

Here are some methods that have proven successful in increasing speech fluency in preschool children with developmental stuttering.

Give the child your full attention. Easier said than done. I remember when my own son went through developmental stuttering. I was in such a panic that I consulted my fellow speech pathologists who were doing summer testing for the school district. I called them during their lunch break, and they put me on speakerphone.

As I was working myself up into a frenzy describing how my son was struggling to get his messages out, I could hear my co-workers shouting, "Calm down! He's going to be all right!" When they told me that I needed to stop what I was doing and give



him my full attention, I was incredulous. My son was 3 and my daughter was 5 and I had a very hectic life. How was I supposed to give him my full attention? I was so busy multi-tasking that I wasn't giving anyone my full attention.

But my fellow speech pathologists reminded me that my son needed to know that I was interested in what he had to say, that he had all the time in the world to get his message out, and there was no need to hurry. As I said, easier said than done. But it is do-able.

I learned to keep looking at my son with my eyes while my body was doing other things, like cooking and laundry. I also changed my conversational style so that I commented more and asked fewer questions. Lots of questions or interruptions may seem more confrontational and make the child feel under pressure to speed things up. Comments encourage elaboration and show you are listening.

Model a calm, relaxed state. Parenting, teaching, and caregiving are demanding jobs. When the adult is tense and frantic, the child will feed off

this energy and respond in kind. If the child is overly nervous and excited, speech will be impacted. Adults need to model the behavior they want to see in the child.

IF THE CHILD IS OVERLY NERVOUS AND EXCITED, SPEECH WILL BE IMPACTED.

So take slow, deep breaths. Pause and wait. I silently say a poem or song to myself to help me achieve a calmer state when I am giving pause time to the children in my speech therapy sessions. I also use relaxation techniques I learned in my childbirth and yoga classes. Young children intuitively imitate adults, and it is amazing to see how quickly they will relax when you do.

Model slow, easy speech. Remember Mr. Rogers? Talk like Mr. Rogers. Talk more slowly. Pause more often. If you habitually talk too rapidly, the child may be trying to imitate you. Because Audrey does not have the coordination to talk as fast as you do, she will naturally start to stumble and hesitate. The slower the child speaks, the easier it is for the developing speech system to keep pace with the message. Show what slow speech sounds like so the child can try that as well.

What should the adult listener avoid?

Basically, everything we are naturally inclined to do when a child struggles to speak turns out to be more detrimental than facilitating. At least that was how it seemed to me. We love our children and want to help them. So we tell them to take a breath or calm down. We tell them to slow down and try again. Or we try to finish their sentences for them so they don't have to struggle anymore.

For young children, this means the adult is not listening to what they have to say. The adult is listening only to how they say it. So they may actually

Did you know?

The world has seen some famous stutterers, including the following:

Athletes

Bill Walton
Tiger Woods

Actors

Emily Blunt
James Earl Jones
Harvey Keitel
Marilyn Monroe
Sam Neill
Jane Seymour
Jimmy Stewart
Bruce Willis

TV personalities

Tim Gunn
Mike Rowe

Government officials

Prince Albert of Monaco
King George VI of England
Vice President Joseph Biden
Prime Minister Winston Churchill
Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson, Jr.
Congressman Frank Wolf

Musicians

John Lee Hooker
B.B. King
Carly Simon
Andrew Lloyd Webber
Bill Withers

Writers

Lewis Carroll
Robert A. Heinlein
John Updike

Scientists

Charles Darwin
Sir Isaac Newton

Stuttering severity

Developmental stuttering characteristics may include the following:

- Stuttering begins around the ages of 3 to 3 ½.
- Stuttering disappears for a few weeks and then returns.
- Stuttering consists of effortless repetitions or prolongations of sounds.
- Speech becomes more fluent within 6 to 12 months of onset.

More severe (non-developmental) stuttering characteristics may include:

- Later onset of stuttering.
- Stuttering occurs in more than 10 percent of speech.
- Stuttering persists for more than 6 to 12 months.
- Physical struggling behaviors are present, such as aversion of eye gaze, facial grimace, lip tremor, jaw tension, excessive hand or body movements, audible gasps of air.
- Complete blocks of airflow occur more than repetitions or prolongations.
- Stuttering is present in most speaking situations.
- Avoidance of certain words, sounds, or speaking situations.
- Having a family member who is a stutterer.

Consider a referral to a speech-language pathologist if the child is demonstrating more severe stuttering characteristics. For additional information on stuttering, visit the website of the Stuttering Foundation of America, www.stutteringhelp.org.

stutter more when the adult focuses on the stuttering. As children become more aware that they are not speaking correctly, they may begin to get tense and nervous about making more mistakes. They may become more dysfluent than they were before the adult started correcting them.

It is often more effective to address your behavior as a listener than to focus on a child's stuttering patterns. Pay attention to the child's message, model a relaxed state, and demonstrate smooth, easy speech. I have seen these techniques work time and time again. Even in my own household.

Back to the beginning

A month after I gave the teacher the tools to change her behavior, she returned and said, "Guess what! It worked. My son doesn't stutter anymore!"

I had been correct in thinking it might be a developmental stutter. Had she said that her son's stutter had become worse, I might have talked to her about considering a formal speech evaluation and possibly speech therapy. Some stuttering in preschoolers is the beginning of a lifelong pattern of dysfluency. Try the techniques above first. If the child's speech does not improve, encourage the child's parent to contact a speech pathologist. The Stuttering Severity chart at the left can help you determine if and when the child should be referred to a speech pathologist.

Developmental stuttering can be worrisome, but it is often a brief stepping stone to eloquent speech.

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About the author

Kate Anderson is a speech-language pathologist with the Austin Independent School District, where she has worked for 21 years. She received her master's degree in communication disorders from the University of Texas at Austin in 1989 and has national certification from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

STUFF & NEW STUFF

Life science resources for teachers

Celebrate Nature! Activities for Every Season

Written by Angela Schmidt Fishbaugh. Redleaf Press, 2011. (\$29.95)

Angela Schmidt Fishbaugh starts her book with a plea: Turn off the media and celebrate nature. Few American children grow up low-tech. Most spend as much time in front of a screen as they do asleep—and more than they spend in school. *Celebrate Nature! Activities for Every Season* offers teachers and families the tools for leaving the gadgets behind and re-engaging with the natural world.

Each of the four seasons invites explorations of insect life

cycles, plant growth, the weather, and animal habitats and migrations. The summer nature study, for example, invites a look at insects, the sun, grass, sand, bees, ants, and flower blooms. The seasonal sections are enriched with reading lists, reflective questions for adults (“What does summer mean to you?”), music, and an invitation to families to participate in the hands-on activities.

The quiet, nurturing tone of the text invites and encourages the most skeptical adults to take a second look at the outside world and to be seduced by the rhythms of the seasons.

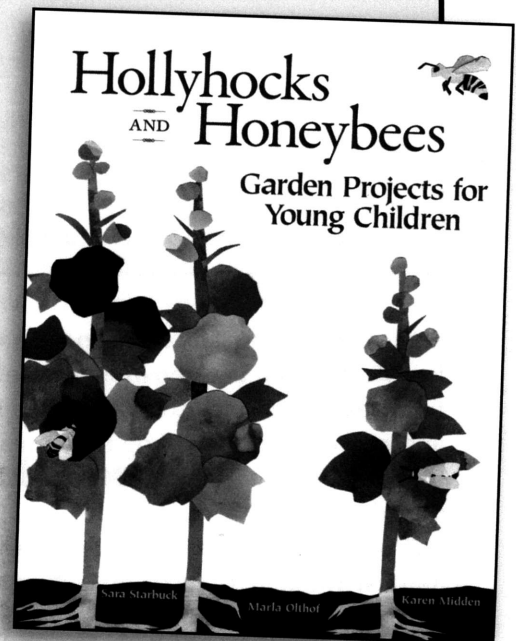
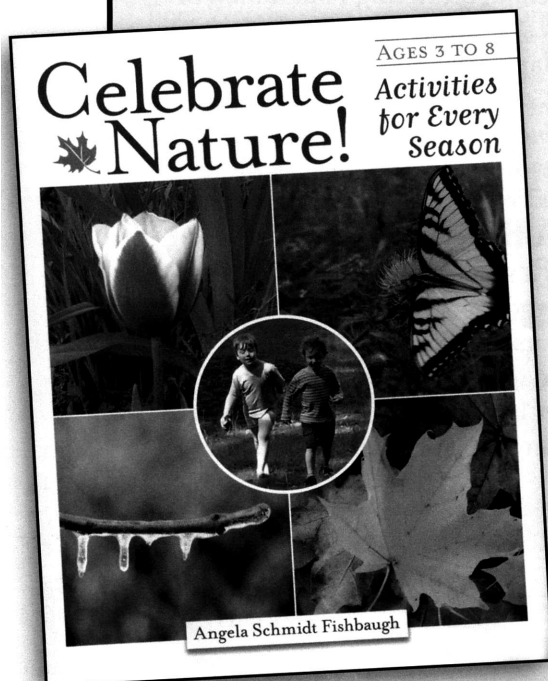
Hollyhocks and Honeybees: Garden Projects for Young Children

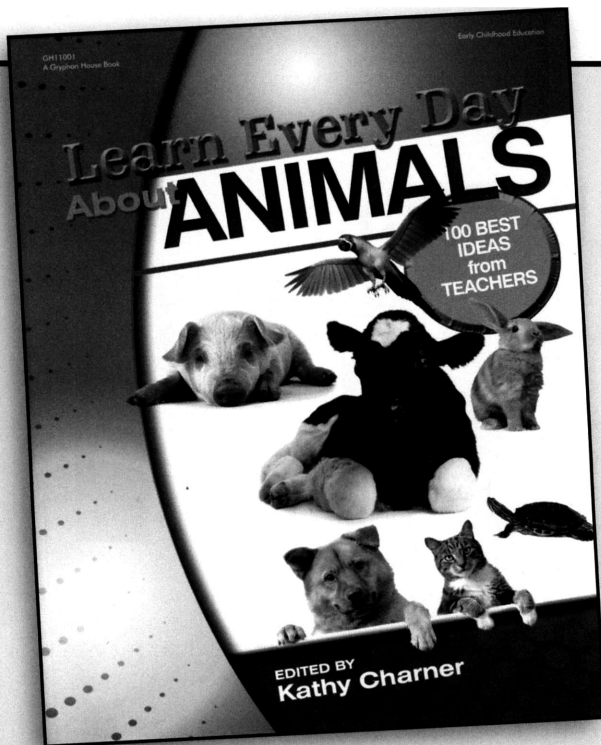
Written by Sara Starbuck, Marla Olthof, and Karen Midden. Redleaf Press, 2002. (\$29.95)

Recently reissued, this classic R continues to guide teachers as they involve children in the satisfactions and wonders of gardening. With this guide, even novice gardeners will find needed support for incorporating language and literacy, science and math, social science, art, and music in simple gardening plans. The book leads teachers through planning, preparation, plant selection, and even child-friendly pest control. Garden designs, recipes, resource lists, and activities for classrooms, families, and larger

communities are intended to make gardening experiences infectious—and filled with joy.

Hollyhocks and Honeybees earned its classic status not only by inspiring new gardeners but also by respecting children’s intellectual curiosity and integrity. The authors, professional educators, reinforce the excitement of discovery in a focused, intellectually challenging activity with a clear message: Science is not magic. The enjoyment of gardening—physical, social, emotional, and cognitive—is a byproduct of purposeful engagement in a rich, worthwhile activity.





Learn Every Day About Animals

Edited by Kathy Charner.
Gryphon House, 2010.
(\$12.95)

Author and teacher Kathy Charner has added another volume to the *Learn Every Day* series. Each book in the series offers 100 engaging activity ideas collected from teachers across the country. The activities are divided by curriculum areas (art, dramatic play, math, motor activities, and music, for example) and are organized by rough developmental levels. Each activity includes objectives, relevant vocabulary words, related children's books, a list of necessary materials, preparation sequences, and presentation ideas.

Learn Every Day About Animals helps satisfy children's curiosity about animals, large and small, with games, puzzles,

art, movement, language play, and observation. The detailed index will make a search for the perfect activity easy and satisfying.

...and a new nature book for children

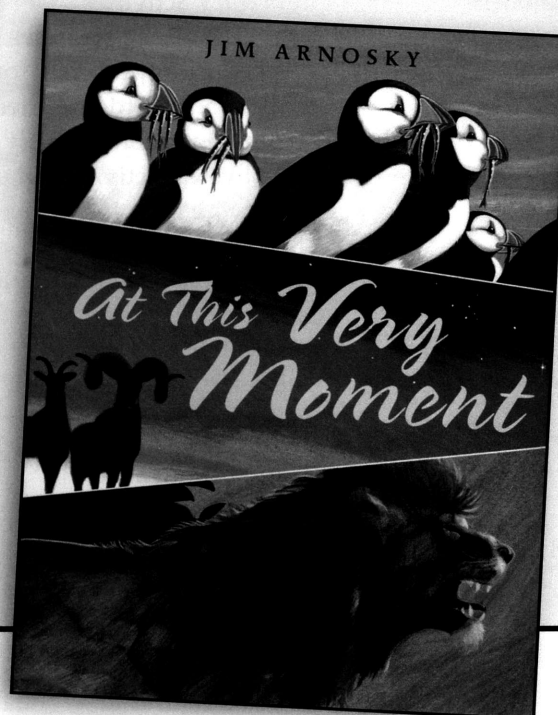
At This Very Moment

Written and illustrated by Jim Arnosky. Dutton Children's Books, 2011. (\$16.95)

*Each and every moment
Of each and every day,
Amazing things are happening....*

So introduces a lushly illustrated book of poetry guaranteed to satisfy both readers and young listeners. A peek at the natural world and the animals that inhabit it offer perspective and an invitation to think about the world's wildlife. The satisfying verse pairs a human's daily routine—brushing hair, drinking from a fountain, or seeking shade from the summer sun—with an animal counterpart.

Arnosky, an ardent naturalist and award-winning author and illustrator, hits just the right notes with a book that is vivid, soothing, informative, and inspiring. This perfect blend of natural science, poetry, and art begs to be prominent in every early childhood classroom.



NUMERACY AND LITERACY

PICTURE BOOKS AND NUMBERS

Literacy—the ability to listen, speak, read, and write—has been in the limelight for early care and education professionals for years. Sometimes, however, this focus has minimized other aspects of development like physical strength and balance, social cooperation and problem solving, and emotional self-awareness.

Numeracy—children’s ability to count rationally (not by rote), sort, categorize, manipulate shapes and spaces, and perform simple arithmetic functions—builds a foundation for later abstract and symbolic thinking, and academic success.

+ + +

Brain research tells us that cognition—with words and with numbers—and movement are closely linked. When we move our bodies—responding to sensory input, gaining awareness of how our bodies move in space, coordinating our movements meaningfully, and applying movements to deliberate and regulated behaviors—we are literally building stronger neural connections in our brains. Simply, movement makes us more able to meet life’s challenges.

Linking movement with literacy and numeracy can be as easy as choosing a great children’s picture book. Choose books wisely and let them direct you—and children—to art, music, dramatic play, movement, literacy, and numeracy activities.

Almost all the activities included here are appropriate for both indoors and outdoors. Heed the recommendation for daily vigorous physical activity and use activity ideas to inspire and encourage participation.

The books listed here—a combination of old favorites and new publications—are just a starting point. Almost any high-quality children’s picture book promises engaging and instructive math and movement possibilities. As you make up your own activities, don’t forget poetry, nursery rhymes, and song lyrics.

The Doorbell Rang

by Pat Hutchins

Sharing cookies becomes a major math lesson as more and more children join the table.

Literacy focus: Story refrain “No one makes cookies like Grandma.”

Math focus: One-to-one correspondence; fewer and more

Literacy activity: Read along

Books with predictable refrains help children recognize word shapes and letter sounds. They also encourage active participation in the reading of the story. Encourage children to read along with you. First, point to each word in the refrain and say each word clearly. Next, have the children read the words with you, pointing to each. Then point to the words and let the children say them alone.

Write each word of the phrase onto individual index cards. Encourage children to copy the

Wishy-Washy

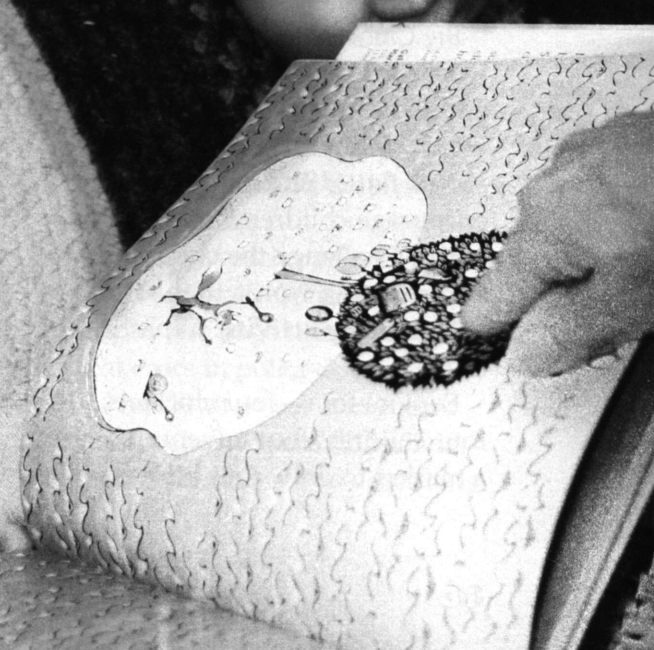
Diamond Life

SWIM!

BUS

One, Two, Buckle My Shoe
One, two, buckle my shoe;
Three, four, knock at the door;
Five, six, pick up sticks;
Seven, eight, lay them straight;
Nine, ten, a big fat hen

Bats at the Library



words onto their own cards and then to play with the words in and out of order.

Math activity: How many shares?

Gather a small group of children at a table. Place 12 counting bears (or other small manipulatives) on a tray in the middle of the table. Help children brainstorm ways to divide the objects among themselves. Does it work to have everyone take one in turn? What happens if there are five children? If the 12 objects are divided evenly between two children, what happens when two more children join the group? Listen to the children's solutions and ask questions to expand their understanding of equal shares.

Big Chickens

by Leslie Helakoski

When a wolf sneaks around the coop, the chickens flee and try to hide from danger. But for the silly chickens, running away is fraught with new dangers that result as four chickens "flurried, hurried, worried, and scurried" from one challenge to the next.

Literacy focus: Rhyming

Math focus: Counting

Literacy activity: Act out the verbs

Big Chickens is rich with action words that beg for interpretation and pantomime. Play with the words. Many rhyme like *tutted*, *putted*, *flutted* and *butted*—and encourage children to act out the verbs. Challenge the children to add rhyming words to the lists.

Numeracy activity: Explore four

Explore four—four chickens, four children, four adventures. Use a marker to draw four boxes on a

large sheet of paper. Challenge children to gather four objects in the environment and to place one in each of the boxes (one-to-one correspondence). Vary the activity for outdoors by drawing with chalk on a sidewalk.

Older children might explore arithmetic functions—addition, subtraction, and multiplication: How many objects do you have if there are two things in each box ($4 \times 2 = 8$)? Point and count aloud to verify the answers.

Oodles of Animals

by Lois Ehlert

In classic Ehlert style, colored paper collage is the basic structure of illustrations. These basic shapes—square, rectangle, triangle, circle, diamond, oval, heart, and teardrop combine to picture oodles of animals, each described in short verse.

Literacy focus: Rhyme

Math focus: Geometric shape

Movement activity: Mother May I?

Introduce the classic game using *Oodles of Animals* as inspiration. Gather the children in a group (older children in a line) and explain that you will give directions to move like an animal. If you want the game to be competitive for older children, arrange them in two lines. If a child moves without Mother's permission, that child simply joins the other group and play continues. Include movements like slither like a snail; swoop like an eagle; flit like a moth, strut like a rooster, and hop like a frog, for example.

Math activity: Identify the shape

After you show the page's illustration and read the short verse,

help children dissect the pictures according to basic shapes.

Encourage the group to be as descriptive as possible—"I see a large purple circle on the back of the ape. It has smooth lines." Introduce new words like *serrated*, *overlay*, and *background*. Offer shapes to the children and encourage them to build collages of their own animals—and to dictate a short verse to describe the animal or its activities.

The Twelve Dancing Princesses

retold by Rachel Isadora

This retelling of the traditional fairy tale is illustrated in the blazing colors and angular shapes of African art. When the princesses wear out their shoes, night after night, without leaving their bedroom, the baffled king offers a reward to whoever can solve the shoe mystery.

Movement focus: Dancing

Math focus: Counting, matching, attributes, musical beat

Movement activity: Find the beat

Build on Rachel Isadora's African theme with the rhythm of African drumming. The groups, African Drums and Soukouss Ta, have vocal-less recordings of authentic tribal drumming available at stores and libraries and from iTunes. Let children first listen to the music, then sway to the music while seated, and finally dance to the music. Talk about the book's illustrations of the dancing princesses and challenge the children to move as they imagine the princesses moving.

Math activity: Sorting by attribute

Gather counters or other manipulatives of one sort but

with different attributes. For example, buttons of different sizes and colors and with either two or four holes. Ask the children in the group to each choose one button, to examine it carefully, and to hold it up for the other children to see while describing its attributes—a big, red button with four holes, for example. Give children time to sort the buttons by attribute and to discover that some buttons share attributes without being identical. Ask: “Are there any identical buttons? Are there any pairs?”

To Market, To Market

by Anne Miranda

A reinterpreted of the nursery rhyme embellished with zany illustrations follows a shopper who settles for a simple meal of hot soup.

Movement focus: Balance, strength, stamina

Math focus: Counting

Movement activity: How many can you carry?

Let children test balance, strength, and stamina with an armful of stuffed animals. How many can each child hold on to while walking across the room? Increase the challenge by having children walk along a line of tape on the floor or a balance beam.

Math activity: Animal round up

Take the time to both read the book with children and then to slowly examine each of the illustrations. Encourage children to count the different animals on each page, pointing, naming, and counting one by one. Do the same with the soup ingredients at the end of the book. Take the opportunity to have a conversation about the different vegetables and the characteristics of each.

Hardworking Puppies

by Lyn Reiser

Ten puppies have big dreams—they want to be dogs with jobs like guarding, rescuing, and performing. Each finds a job and a hardworking human to help.

Literacy focus: Reading illustrations

Math focus: Counting, one-to-one correspondence, and arithmetic functions (subtraction)

Literacy activity: Knowing about dogs

Share the book first by looking at the pictures without reading the words. Encourage the children to talk about what they see, increasing vocabulary, using descriptive words, and recognizing how pictures tell an important part of the story.

Service dogs provide invaluable services under the guidance of their human handlers. Dogs can be trained for water rescue, to guide a blind or visually impaired person across a street, to console and comfort someone in a nursing home, to perform security searches at airports, and to guard property, for example. Help children recognize the different functions dogs provide—companionship, protection, and assistance—and explore the important ways people rely on their pets and service animals.

Math activity: One less

Encourage children to associate numerals with numbers of objects. With a marker, clearly write numerals from 1 to 10 in the center of 10 cards. In the lower left-hand corner, write out the word, *one* or *five*, for example. On the reverse side of each card draw boxes that correspond to the numeral—10, *ten*, and 10 boxes, for example. Laminate the cards for use in multiple activities. Let

children copy the number words, encourage them to make one-to-one correspondences, and to practice arithmetic skills like adding one or taking two away.

Counting Crocodiles

by Judy Sierra

A monkey is stuck on an island with only a lemon tree. Way across the Sillabobble Sea is a delectable banana tree. But the Sillabobble crocodiles, eager for a tasty lunch, challenge the monkey to count the crocs.

Movement focus: Hopping, skipping, balancing on one leg

Math focus: Counting

Movement activity: Monkey movement

With a marker, label sheets of lineless paper with rebus diagrams and words describing body movements like *stand on one leg*, *hop*, *squat*, *stretch*, *lean left*, and so forth and two additional papers, one with a picture of a lemon, and one with a banana. Tape the sheets to the floor—order doesn't matter—but tape the lemon picture at the start and the banana picture at the finish. Gather a small group of children and encourage them to move along the path using the monkey movements. Use a signal to encourage the monkeys to move forward toward the banana prize.

Math activity: Describe what you see

The illustrations in *Counting Crocodiles* are soft and detailed, making pointing and counting a challenge. But each page offers several numeracy options. For example, one page illustrates “Eight crocs in polka-dot socks.” With the children you can count tails (8), pairs of socks (8) individual socks (16) as well as describing



The Colors

Tickle My Shoe

Tickle my shoe,
Knock at the door,
Pick up sticks,
Lay them straight
Waiting for him.

and talking about other details including the monkey's companions, a fox and a snail.

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

by Eileen Christelow

Bedtime means saying "Goodnight" and then having a jumping party—until the doctor comes—and then doing it again!

Movement focus: Small and large motor control

Math focus: Arithmetic function (subtraction), ordering

Movement activity: Jumping with all your muscles

Children will readily jump up and down but movement skill requires precision, balance, and control of both large and small muscles. After sharing the book, recite the finger play with the children focusing on finger and hand muscles. Focus on further control by teaching children how control their bodies to fall safely, as athletes do. Teach the difference between tensed and relaxed muscles and challenge children to lower themselves to the ground with relaxed muscles. Help them identify the center of gravity in their bodies so they fall to the floor landing on their back side (on padded hips) rather than face down. And teach them to stretch their arms overhead during a fall so they don't try to stop the fall with a wrist or arm and risk breaking or straining it.

Math activity: Size order

In most families, children are different sizes. Build an ordering activity with five figures or objects and encourage children to talk about the difference as they order from smallest to largest. Vary the activity with weight—ordering from heaviest to lightest.

Caps for Sale

by Esphyr Slobodkina

Mischiefous monkeys take advantage of a peddler's nap, steal his hats, and mime his hard work.

Movement focus: Balance

Math focus: Counting money

Movement activity: Bean bag balance

Provide a collection of bean bags, one for each child. Challenge children to walk with a bean bag balanced on their head. Increase the difficulty by asking the children to sit and then stand, to squat, to tip-toe, to stand on one leg, and to turn around without letting the bean bag slip away. Ask the children why they think caps might be easier to balance than bean bags.

Math activity: 50 cents

Use this activity only with children who won't put coins in their mouths. Bring a collection of coins: 50 pennies, 10 nickels, 5 dimes, 2 quarters, and 1 50-cent piece. Work with the children to find out what they already know about *equivalencies* (10 pennies equal 1 dime, for example) and the sizes, shapes, and images on U.S. coins. Build on children's knowledge by attaching price tags to a few classroom toys (plastic fruit from the dramatic play center, for example) and helping children determine how many coins the purchase of each item requires.

One Too Many

by Gianna Marino

This simple barnyard counting book is enlivened by the hopping flea that finds itself making mischief as new animals arrive on the scene. Each spread features a numeral but no other text.

Movement focus: Four-legged movement

Math focus: Counting

Movement activity: Animal walk

Most barnyard animals walk on four legs—a challenge for two-legged humans. Children typically find this easier than adults—they start out closer to the ground. But for all mammals the practice can improve stamina, balance, and muscle control. Use an animal walk for transitions—from indoors to the playground, for example. Vary the animal and encourage children to move with the subtle variations as they gain experience—cows, horses, goats, pigs, and sheep have unique movements to copy.

Math activity: Can you count them?

One Too Many is a cacophony of animals—and most are illustrated in black and white. While working one-on-one with a child, try to count the animals by type—a real challenge. Help the child identify the animals that walk on two legs, and follow the silver hopping line of the tiny flea.



BUILDING A BUSINESS

Building business through a website

Many child care facilities use websites as part of their communication and marketing. If your facility doesn't have one, you may be missing an important opportunity.

Why have a website?

E-commerce has become an established part of doing business. A website can help you in the following ways:

- **Enhance business credibility.** A website is often the first look a prospective customer gets at a business. It's a preview before contacting you or visiting your physical location.
- **Keep up with the competition.** Other child care facilities in your area probably already have a website and are reaping the benefits.
- **Provide 24/7 access.** Because parents are busy, they go online at night and on weekends—for their initial shopping for child care and for updates about their child's care and education.
- **Post important information.** Your website could contain information that you now provide in print such as immunization schedules and enrollment applications as well as links to helpful sites.
- **Generate new business.** Person-to-person referrals from satisfied customers continue to be a key source of new business, but a website can draw prospective customers who are looking for care in a given neighborhood or want a specific kind of curriculum

or educational philosophy.

- **Recruit new staff.** Teachers looking for employment opportunities can obtain preliminary information about your facility and contact you.

Getting started

Whether you are just beginning to develop a website—or evaluating the one you already have—the key consideration initially is your intended audience. This will include current and prospective parents. Survey parents to learn what information they want and need from you.

Review the websites of other child care facilities. Content typically includes philosophy, curriculum, additional services such as dance lessons and computer learning, licensing and accreditation, staff qualifications and training, enrollment procedures, and employment opportunities.

Define your goals for the website and how it will stand out from other facilities. Goals might include improving communication with parents and attracting new parents.

A website requires a *web host*, a company that provides space on a *server* (a set of interconnected computers). Free web hosting is available, but you need to investigate the pros and cons. As an example, consider Google Sites. Besides being free, it offers templates for page design and allows you to edit pages easily. You will need to set up an account and abide by its terms and conditions.

Trade-offs may include the display of unrelated ads and pop-ups on your website so the web host can earn money, which won't be shared with you. The server may have limited bandwidth, causing your website to load slowly, or it may be so crowded with other websites that it will get overloaded and crash. In addition, your URL (Internet address) will likely include the web host's *domain name*, which might make it harder for parents to remember.

Inexpensive web hosting is readily available, starting as low as \$5-10 a month, depending on the features you choose. As an example, see www.smallbusiness.yahoo.com. Consider features such as security, virus and firewall protection, e-mail addresses that use your domain name, customer support, design and editing tools, tracking of site visits, unlimited Web space, and unlimited document uploads.

Choosing a web host and designing a website will be time-consuming. You might consider contracting with a *website developer* (an individual consultant or a company), but the fee could range from \$1,200 to \$5,000 or more. To find a website developer, ask for referrals from parents, colleagues, and other child care facilities in your area.

Update and maintenance

Think ahead to how you will maintain the website and keep

up with changes. Remember, information goes out of date quickly. A website is not a static brochure but a dynamic, changing information source.

Updates. Paying an outside professional to update your website periodically can be expensive. Check with your Web host or developer to make sure you can make changes in-house. This may require a *Web content management system* (WCMS), software that allows non-technical users with little training to change and add content.

Contacts. Consider how parents will communicate with you. Don't put your e-mail address on your home page because spammers are always trolling websites for e-mail addresses that they can use for *spamming* (sending unwanted e-mail messages). Instead, have users fill out an online response form or provide only your telephone number.

Consistency. Make your website fit in with the look and feel of your other marketing materials, including signs, newsletters, and handbooks.

Will parents find you?

We find information on the Internet by using *search engines*, such as Google and Yahoo. We type in a word or phrase and typically look at the top 10-20 results. Ideally, your website will contain words that make it rank high in search results. This improved website visibility is *search engine optimization* (SEO).

To decide which key words to use, brainstorm with staff: Which words are parents most likely to

Who's using the Internet?

The Pew Internet & American Life Project at www.pewinternet.org, offers these statistics.

- An overwhelming majority of adults of child-rearing age use the Internet—that is, 93 percent of adults 18-29 years old and 81 percent of adults 30-49 years old (2010).
- The Internet is growing as a source of national and international news, while TV is declining. Reliance on news from the Internet has risen from 14 percent in 2002 to 41 percent in 2010. By contrast, TV as a main source of news has dropped from 82 to 65 percent over the same period (2011).
- Shopping online has mushroomed. The portion of Americans who said they researched a product online jumped from 35 percent in 2000 to 60 percent in 2007. In addition, the portion of Americans who ever bought a product online rose from 22 percent to 49 percent during the same period (2008).

use in searching for child care? "Child care" and "preschool" are basic but too general. Consider adding more specific words like "best child care," the name of your town or neighborhood, the type of curriculum, or other unique features.

When you have a list of 10-20 phrases, rank them in order of importance and use the top ones often in the text. Use the phrases when writing page titles, bulleted lists, and body text of your website. It's better to place key words in the beginning of a section than at the end.

The final step is to submit your URL to a search engine. Find the Google search engine at www.google.com/addurl/?continue=/addurl and Yahoo at <http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/submit>.

Once the website is up, do searches to see where your website pops up in the results and modify accordingly.

Tips

- Use an easily readable type-face size. An estimated 80 percent of the population wears glasses or corrective

lenses. If they have to squint, they will leave.

- Limit each page to one or two screenfuls. Exceptions are informative articles and handbooks that parents want or need to read.
- Select photos that show your facility at its best—clean, orderly rooms and a safe, fenced play yard. Prefer shots of children actively engaged in learning over stand-still-and-grin photos. Get written permission from parents before using photos of their children.
- Avoid using animation and video unless they serve a useful purpose. Simple and straightforward works best.
- Avoid music. It takes time to load, and viewers may not share your music tastes.
- Avoid patterned or image backgrounds. They're hard to read and take longer to load.
- Proofread the text for grammatical and spelling errors.
- Check the website periodically to make sure text and photos display properly.

Next: What about social media?

MOVE IT

BUILD SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-EFFICACY WHILE FIGHTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY

by Kelly Allums-Featherston and Katherine Kensing Rose

“Good morning,” says Ms. Jones, greeting Katie and her mom. Katie kisses her mom and leaves to stow her backpack in her cubby.

“I took Katie to the doctor for her annual check-up,” says Katie’s mom. “The doctor said she’s in the 96th percentile for weight. Then he kept mentioning that she’s obese and that I need to increase her daily physical activity. She’s only 5 years old, but she has been really upset ever since. What does this mean, and how can I make her feel better?”

Other children are entering the class, so Ms. Jones replies, “Let’s talk more about this at the end of the day.”

As the mother leaves, Ms. Jones thinks to herself: “What should I say? I don’t know anything about weight percentiles or how a 5-year-old feels about being called obese. I’m a preschool teacher, not a dietician or a personal trainer. I can barely find time to exercise on my own, let alone help someone else.”

If you feel as this teacher does, read on. Something can be done to help children feel more comfortable about their weight. In addition, simple steps taken daily can positively impact the physical and emotional well-being of young children.

What the research says

A sense of confusion and inadequacy in both parents and teachers has become all too common in today’s society as more and more children are labeled overweight or obese (Ogden, Carroll, Curtin, Lamb, and Flegal 2010). Researchers point to the increases in weight and the fact that children are less physically active than they used to be (Lobstein, Baur, and Uauy 2004).

The combination of weight gain and physical inactivity has been linked to negative psychosocial issues such as silent labeling from peers and low self-esteem (Puhl and Brownell 2001). *Self-esteem* is the emotional component of how individuals value themselves (Bandura 1982). A related term, *self-efficacy*, is how we feel about our ability in certain situations or when performing skills (Annesi 2004).

Peer labeling (“the slow kid” or “the fat kid”) can have a strong impact on children’s perceptions about what they are capable of and their overall emotional growth. In fact, children as young as 3 can show weight bias, and children as young as 4 can connect that attitude to a person’s weight (Cramer and Steinwert 1998). Although labeling from children may be inevitable, the way that children internalize these feelings can be changed through guidance techniques and simple physical activity.

Self-efficacy: Build success with success

Self-efficacy is situation-specific self-esteem (Bandura 1997). This can be important because as children move through developmental stages they gradually become aware of the tasks they are good at and those that they are not so good at. Weaknesses or failed attempts can discourage children from attempting new tasks.

On the other hand, success can encourage repeated efforts and future success. This is why it is so important to help children feel capable and good at something. Also, accomplishments in one subject area can actually encourage future attempts in other areas.

For example, when Ginger's comments are respected and reinforced in a block-building activity, she will remember her feeling of accomplishment. This sense of pride encourages her to repeat the behaviors that made her feel good—not only in the block corner but in all areas of the classroom. The success enhances Ginger's self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Teachers and families can support children's accomplishments—and self-efficacy—in physical activities by connecting successes made during class physical activities to school work (and vice versa). Generally children grow and find successes across all developmental domains even if there is noticeable strength in a specific area. At no point in a child's education is it appropriate to assume that a child who is physically adept is less gifted cognitively. Indeed, despite the dumb jock stereotype, testing in elementary school and high school consistently links higher daily physical activity levels with higher academic test scores (Siegel 2006).

The key is to recognize a child's strengths and use those to encourage success in other skill areas. An exciting byproduct of using cognitive tasks to encourage physical activity (or vice versa) is that children build intrinsic, or internal, motivation. *Intrinsic motivation* is the idea that children can be motivated to complete a task because of an internal, self-pleasing drive rather than to get praise or a reward from someone else. The more successful children feel in a task, the more likely they are to initiate

future tasks. Children who have success during outdoor play—playing four square or completing an obstacle course—can often transition that self-efficacy into the classroom.

In overcoming obesity, it's possible that success can engender success, especially for less active children. The positive consequence is weight stabilization, overall health benefits, and improved self-image. Help children reflect on past experiences when presenting new activities that may be challenging. For example, "Can you remember when you first learned to ride a tricycle? Was it hard to pedal and steer at the same time? Did you sometime steer off the track or have trouble pedaling to the top of the hill? Now you're great at riding a trike. You never get stuck and you don't need any help!"

As you introduce a new activity—dribbling a ball or twirling a hula hoop, for example—talk with children about how it feels to fail and the feelings that come with success. Link skill successes across domains: "Last year you had trouble holding a pencil, but now you can write your name. Last year you had trouble standing on one foot but now you can hold your balance on one leg for 30 seconds!"

Use these guidelines for enhancing self-efficacy.

Build self-efficacy through past experiences of success. Similar to the story above, remind children of previous positive attempts or successes in other areas of their lives and relate them to the current task. If Stacy feels that her scissor-cutting skills aren't



as good as others and she wants to quit, remind her of another day in class when after working hard and trying many times, she built a tower 10 blocks high.

Build self-efficacy through vicarious experiences. Children learn from watching others. Children can actually gain self-efficacy for a task they have not attempted by watching someone else (who is just like them) be successful. If Jordan hesitates when first trying to walk the balance beam, for example, allow him to watch his closest friend make the attempt. Remind him that the other children are a lot like him—at first nervous but with practice and determination successful.

Build self-efficacy through positive verbal encouragement or social persuasion. The power of positive words! Children can be highly motivated to try a new task or re-try one based on a teacher's or peer's encouragement. Verbally reminding children that you believe they can try and accomplish something new can help to minimize personal doubts. For example, Nikki might think, "If Ms. Jones thinks I can do 10 jumping jacks, then maybe I really can."

Not only is self-efficacy boosted through experiences and social persuasion, but effective teachers can structure situations that increase the likelihood for success and decrease the chance of failed attempts.

Target physical activity

Make small changes in classroom routines—and

make them gradually. Abruptly increasing physical activity in your classroom or asking children to do too much too soon can create negative feelings toward the activity and have a negative impact on self-efficacy if they are unsuccessful.

Starting small is always best. Begin each class day with two to three stretches. A simple one is "Touch your toes, now reach to the sky." Add more vigorous activities—jumping jacks, kicks, or dashes to the back fence—and gradually increase the number or intensity based on the children's skill and age.

You can also gradually change movements through pathways (straight, side-to-side, zig-zag), levels (crouching low to stretching high), modes (moving on knees, feet, hands), and locomotor skills (jump, hop, slide, jog, skip).

When increasing activity, especially within the classroom, talk with the children about *acceptable personal space*. Mark the floor with tape or use body measurements (hold hands, form a circle, drop your hands, and take two giant steps backward) to create spaces that encourage freedom of movement. And remember: the children are always watching you. Children are great mimics. The more engaged you are, the more likely they will be too!

Set up physical activity stations or learning centers in the classroom and on the playground. Provide basic equipment like a boom box with disks or an MP3 player with speakers, chairs, laminated color spots, and floor or wall tape. Make a set of rebus



cards to give the children activity options—dance to music, jump along colored spots, or do jumping jacks, for example. With experience, children may practice one movement and then move on to another independently.

Offer choices and use the power of preference. Observe and talk with children about their favorite

CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE IF THEY HAVE OPTIONS.

games—bouncing balls, jumping rope, twirling hula hoops, playing hopscotch, or dancing with scarves, for example. Have the equipment outside and ready for the children during outdoor play.

Children are more likely to be physically active if they have options—that is, equipment choices. This can also help them try new physical activities in a noncompetitive environment to determine activity preference and build skill level without the pressure of a teacher watching. Give children confidence in their ability to make choices as you provide chances to increase intrinsic motivation (Sinclair, Stellino, and Partridge 2008).

Weight: Grow taller

Young children should not be encouraged to lose weight. Rather the goal is growing into one's Body Mass Index (BMI), which equates to getting taller. BMI uses percentile ranks to estimate the amount of body fat based on height and weight. Children in the 85th to 95th percentile are *overweight*; those with a BMI range above the 95th percentile are *obese* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011). While these calculations and determinations are too complex for children to comprehend, they are useful for teachers and parents to grasp both for understanding and addressing issues related to weight and exercise.

While classroom activities and discussions will not

immediately cause physical changes in a child's weight or BMI, positive internal progress will be made. Learn to look at physical activity and learning as complementary (one encourages the other). Whether you use positive experiences during outdoor play to encourage success in the classroom or vice versa, progress will be made toward pushing children to be active because they want to and enjoy it—an intrinsic motivator.

When the issue of a child's weight does come up, talk with children about individual differences and unique strengths. Sharing pictures of role models or heroes can be effective. For example, find photos of athletes from sports that require different abilities or sizes (golf, dance, gymnastics, swimming, soccer, and baseball, for example). Reinforce the observation that all athletes are strong, practice, and strive to improve their skills.

Reassuring parents

Let's revisit what Ms. Jones—or you—might say to Katie's mom, out of the hearing of other parents and children:

"I understand your frustration. Being labeled obese at a young age can be hard to deal with. But this is not a label Katie has to dwell on or keep forever. In my classroom I have already begun to make positive changes to increase daily physical activity levels. The new activities will be fun and achievable for all of the children in the group. We are also celebrating the individual differences among the children and talking about how what you look like does not define you."

Give Katie's mom time to respond and then continue: "Actually, building habits at home during these years is really important. Encourage your whole family to be active together by cutting TV time and taking walks after dinner. Family activity not only helps Katie physically but also gives her another model for leading a physically active lifestyle."

Give Katie's mom a printed handout with a list of websites that have activities and healthy eating options for the whole family. Send the handouts home to all parents, with a newsletter listing positive changes that you are making in the classroom.

Resources

American Heart Association. 2011. Healthier Kids. www.heart.org.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2011. What is healthy physical activity? www.cdc.gov/healthyweight.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2010. Tips for parents. www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/.

National Institute of Health. 2005. Preventing childhood obesity. www.health.nih.gov.

Let's Move. n.d. Make physical activity a part of your family's routine. www.letsmove.gov.

Physical Education Central. 2011. Preschool Physical Education. www.pecentral.org.

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STUDY GUIDE

In Texas, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) regulates the training of people who work in home- and center-based facilities.

Must training meet criteria? DFPS recognizes clock hours or continuing education units (CEU) from various sources including 1) workshops offered by local school districts, colleges or universities, or child care licensing; 2) conferences; 3) self-instructional materials; and 4) planned learning opportunities. See minimum standards, §746.1317 for center-based care and §747.1315 for home-based care for further details.

All training must include specifically stated learning objectives; a curriculum, which includes experiential or applied activities; an assessment to determine whether the person has met the objectives; and a certificate of successful completion.

Does DFPS approve training resources or trainers for clock hours? No. It's your responsibility to obtain relevant training from reliable resources. DFPS does recommend, however, that you preview all training materials and ask trainers to verify their knowledge of the subject—both experience and education, and training qualifications.

What is instructor-led training? This is usually a class led by an instructor, who communicates and interacts with learners by answering questions, providing feedback, and offering guidance or information on resources. Advantages include getting a break from the isolation of your work, networking and support, sharing knowledge, and learning about different practices in early care and education.

What is self-instructional training? This is training in which an individual works alone, at her own pace, to complete lessons or modules without the direction, assistance, or feedback of an instructor. That is why CPR and first aid training cannot be obtained through self-instructional training.

DFPS limits the number of annual training hours you can obtain from self-instructional materials. Check your minimum standards for details on these limitations; for home-based care, see §747.1325. For center-based care, see §746.1327.

How do I verify training for DFPS? To be counted toward compliance with minimum standards, the trainer or training source should provide you with a certificate or letter showing: your name, date of the training, title or subject of the training, the trainer's name or the training source for self-instructional training, and the length of the training specified in clock hours, CEU's, or college credit hours.

Keep all documentation in a safe place like a file cabinet or personnel file. DFPS licensing representatives may ask to review self-instructional materials to ensure training criteria are met. Do not mail your documentation to child care licensing or to the *Texas Child Care Quarterly*.

Can I use Texas Child Care for self-instructional training?

Yes. DFPS will recognize two clock hours of self-instructional training credit from this issue, provided you do the following: 1. Review the checklist at right. 2. Study all articles that relate to your work with children. 3. Respond to the checklist with documented evidence (written descriptions, photographs, and charts, for example). Continue to study the article until you can provide documentation and answer "Yes" to each skill. 4. Attach a copy of the checklist or a cover page to your documentation. Be sure to include your name, the date you completed the documentation, and identify the issue and titles of the articles you studied.

Learning objectives and evaluation checklist

Infant health and safety: Test what you know (page 2)

- I can provide written answers to the quiz at the start of the article—and evidence of any necessary corrections made.
- I can describe in writing the proper sequence for changing infant diapers.
- I can document my efforts to communicate with the families of the babies in my care about proper health and safety routines and practices.

As American as apple pie: Helping children understand and celebrate patriotism (page 8)

- I can describe in writing and give examples of at least three historical events that evoke patriotism.
- I can provide written anecdotal records that highlight the ways I help children understand the concepts of *patriot*, *country*, *nationality*, and *patriotism*.
- I can document with photos, lesson plans, portfolio entries, journals, and anecdotal records children's participation in at least six activities described in this article.

Talking with children about water safety (page 18)

- I can document with photos, lesson plans, portfolio entries, journals, and anecdotal records children's participation in at least two water safety activities.
- I can document with photos, lesson plans, portfolio entries, journals, and anecdotal records the ways in which I help children learn to be safe around water.

Developmental stuttering: A transition between early talking and eloquent speech (page 24)

- I can provide written anecdotal evidence of how I responsibly communicate with the children in my care.
- I can describe in writing at least three causes and appropriate responses to a child's developmental stuttering.
- I can document my efforts to communicate with families about typical language development, potential red flags, and appropriate conversation practices.

Numeracy and literacy: Picture books and numbers (page 30)

- I can document with photos, lesson plans, portfolio entries, journals, and anecdotal records children's participation in at least six activities described in this article.
- I can provide evidence of activity planning for at least three new literacy, numeracy, and movement activities based on children's picture books.

Move it: Build self-esteem and self-efficacy while fighting childhood obesity (page 38)

- I can describe in writing at least three significant research findings that support the need for physical exercise.
- I can describe in writing my understanding of how *self-efficacy*, *self-concept*, and *self-esteem* are related.
- I can document with photos, lesson plans, portfolio entries, journals, and anecdotal records children's participation in indoor and outdoor physical activities.

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Training opportunities

Texas Professional Home Child Care Association

Annual Enrichment Conference
 Sept. 15 - 18, 2011
 DFW Airport North Hilton
www.tphcca.org

Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

Annual Conference
 Sept. 22 - 24, 2011
 Arlington, Texas
www.texasaeyc.org

Announcements

The National Association for the Education of Young Children and BAM Radio Network have partnered to produce NAEYC Radio. Noted educators Rae Pica and Jerlean Daniel host interview programs that highlight best practices in early care and education, current research, and insightful commentary for educators and parents.

Currently, topics change monthly. The archive includes more than a dozen programs covering topics from federal education policies and preschool expulsion to math, digital media, and creativity. Each program is tailor-made for lively, invigorating, and meaningful in-service trainings, parent meetings, and individual investigation. Tune in at www.naeyc.org/newsroom/NAEYCRadio.

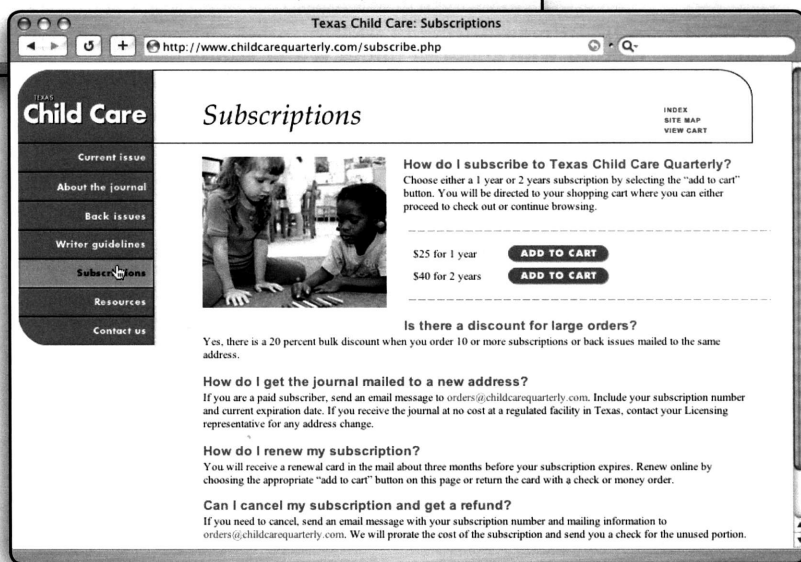
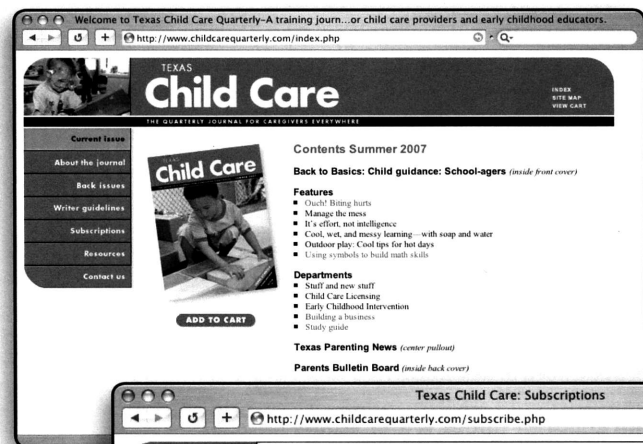
A related NAEYC resource is Early Learning News—a free, weekly email newsletter that provides readers with the latest news stories about early learning and the early care and education field. Sign up to receive the mailing at www.naeyc.org/newsroom/inthenews.

Special thanks

To the following for allowing us to take the photographs used in this issue.

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is to learn twice.**

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