



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Science & Nature

Wake up with March!

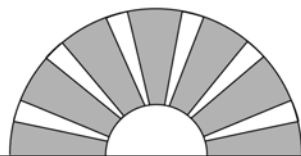
Children like to go outside (and take you with them) almost any day of the year. And most children love to study nature.

Since March is the “awakening month,” animals appear which have been asleep or hiding through the cold months. The badger and chipmunk are among them.

A walk outside now will spark interest in how these and other creatures live—in winter and summer.

If you’re a city dweller or if it’s just too nasty to go outside, a quick trip to your local library will provide an afternoon’s entertainment and plenty of information about local animals’ lifestyles.

Pictures of most small (and large!) animals are readily available at most libraries. Pictures of migrating birds are available also.



Child’s Day

Preschool · Kindergarten · Child Development Center

2525 Wallingwood Drive # 100 • Austin, Texas 78746
Phone: (512) 327-3274 • FAX (512) 327-3281

March, 2003

Behavior

Telephone rules

Most children have rules to follow at home—but when a parent gets on the telephone, they misbehave because there are no specific rules for that time. Does this sound familiar? There are several ways to keep misbehavior from occurring when you’re on the phone.

- Do you interrupt your telephone conversations to find out what your child wants? Do you yell at your child as he misbehaves? In doing so, you tell your child that it’s okay to be rude when you’re on the telephone, and that conversation can be interrupted.

Establish a new rule: Unless your child has obviously hurt himself, ignore him until you are finished talking on the telephone.

- When it’s impossible to ignore his actions, excuse yourself and physically put your child in his room with a brief explanation that when you are finished, he may rejoin you.

- Announce ahead of time that you are going to use the telephone and explain what behavior is expected of your child. “You may not climb on counters, touch the CD or TV, or yank on the telephone cord.” Then be sure to tell her what she may do. “You may look at a book, color a picture, do a puzzle or play quietly in

your room.”

Make it clear that your child is to leave you alone until you are finished and that you will then be happy to listen to her needs.

- Back up those rules with consequences to be faced. Children have to test rules—it’s part of their growth process. When you make the announcement that you are going to use the telephone, also mention the consequences if the telephone rules are broken.

An effective consequence is the loss of privileges. Television viewing is a privilege, so is playing with a friend or having a special snack. Whatever the privilege, it has to be something that has meaning to your child, so that taking it away for misbehavior shows you mean what you say.

- For toddlers it helps to have a special toy or play item that is used only when you are on the telephone. Take it out when you announce your plans to use the telephone and put it away when you are finished.

- Always praise good behavior.

Having these rules gives your child an understanding of what behavior is and is not acceptable when you’re on the telephone. Follow these rules consistently and misbehavior will eventually stop being a problem. □

What to do when your child says, “No, No, No!”

Sometimes it seems like the only word a child seems to know is “NO”—and he says it loudly and constantly.

Why?

Because “NO” is a powerful word. When a child says, “NO,” it brings people up short. It draws attention and a lot of words from them.

There are several ways to handle a child when he’s always saying, “NO.”

The first is to realize it’s nor-

mal behavior for young children. Knowing this will help you keep calm when your child is contrary.

Secondly, avoid asking questions that require a yes-no answer. Instead of asking, “Would you like some carrots?” say, “Here are some carrots.”

Obviously, if you give your child the option of saying “NO” and he says “NO,” you are in a bit of a bind.

Finally, it may sometimes be

necessary to ignore resistance and proceed gently but firmly along the path you have chosen.

It is important not to be impressed by the fuss he raises when you do this. Pay as little attention as possible, avoid looking at him, and don’t try to reason with him or “sweet talk” him when he is actively resisting.

The extra attention merely reinforces his resistance and he learns quickly that it brings him more attention. □

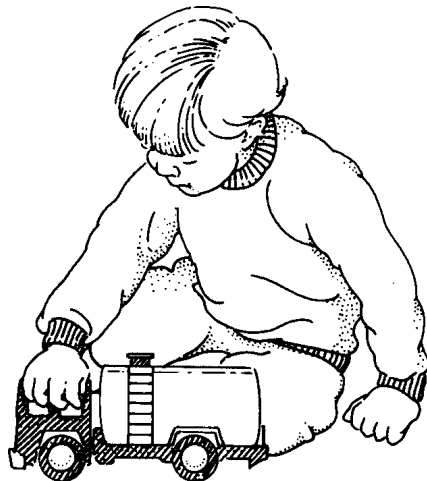
Favorite playthings provide additional benefits

In the preschool years, children learn much from repetition. They will return again and again to a favorite toy, book, or puzzle or a favorite set of materials such as blocks.

Each time children play with these familiar objects, they learn something new about them. That information was always there to be learned, but the child who returns to the familiar toy is not the same child who played with it a month ago.

Now she brings to her play everything that she has experienced and learned since the last time she handled the toy or material. Because of this added experience, she is now ready to learn more from her present play than she could have learned a month before.

For example, the child who originally wanted to pick up and throw individual blocks may now be ready to sit down and begin to stack them purposefully.



The toy, puzzle, book, or set of blocks is the same—but as the child brings more to the activity, she learns more from it.

A tip for the toy room: As you sort through and dispose of old toys, hang on to a few of your child’s favorites and put them away.

The next time she’s sick, bring them out for her to play with. The benefit is twofold: (1) The child will be delighted to see these familiar playthings and they will be welcomed as old friends; and (2) even though she is now older, these toys from a younger age level are easy for her to play with and require little effort on her part—a definite plus when she’s feeling under the weather. □

Learning to get along with others

Parents can help children practice their skills in getting along with other children by making up “What would you do if...?” stories for children to complete.

Then the children can act them out or simply respond to them in their own words.

Stories like this give children a chance to practice typical situations with other people and discover those ways of behaving that make them most comfortable.

Parents can make up stories that they know would help their children with the relationships in their own lives. Here’s an example:

“Tom was playing at his friend’s house. He accidentally broke one of his friend’s toys. What do you think his friend did? How do you think he felt? What do you think Tom did? How do you think he felt? What would you have done if you were Tom? If you were Tom’s friend?”

This kind of activity is good for children to play with siblings or friends, also. It could help them begin to understand each other’s point of view better, a very important part of getting along with each other.

□

Self-esteem for parents

Strong self-esteem is an important part of healthy parenting. Parents with healthy self-esteem have a vitality, energy, and confidence which enables them to fulfill goals, overcome hardships and problems, and experience fulfillment in life.

One way parents can build up their self-esteem is by writing down a list of accomplishments at the end of each day.

That daily list becomes written proof that every day—despite any controversies or hardships you faced—you made something good happen.

It is also important to do at least one thing each day for your own personal pleasure. This can be something as simple as making yourself fresh-brewed coffee in the morning, or reading a chapter in a book at lunchtime.

The objective in such an exercise is to remind yourself that it is worthwhile to do things you enjoy regardless of what anyone else thinks.

If you feel good about yourself, you’ll feel better about your role as a parent. □

You can’t peek!

Tell your kids you’re going to play a game that involves writing words, and they absolutely cannot peek. The reason is you’ll be writing words on their backs!

Start by having one child lie face down or sit with knees pulled up. Then slowly draw a letter (or word) on the child’s back with your finger. The child’s job is to guess the letter (or word) you’re drawing.

Adjust the game to fit the children’s capabilities. Younger children can recognize one letter or number. Older children can try words.

When everybody’s had a turn, suggest S-N-A-C-K-S! □

MusiKids

is available at
Child's Day

Request a **free** trial session!

\$200
Reward



for referrals!
Ask for details!