



# Growing Together<sup>®</sup>

Newsletter for  
parents of preschool children

Games & Activities

## Are you my mummy?

When you find yourself in the middle of a rainy day and the kids are howling for “something to do,” here’s a simple game that will keep them occupied and busy.

The only ingredients are several rolls of inexpensive toilet tissue and several lively children.

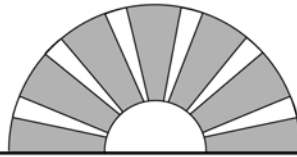
Divide the group into pairs—one is to be the “mummy”, the other the “wrapper.”

The object is to completely wrap up the mummy, leaving slits for eyes and nose, of course.

The first pair finished wins.

What’s the best method to wrap the mummy? Kids will quickly decide if they want the mummy to twist and turn, or if the wrapper should do the moving.

It’s not as easy as it sounds—you may want to take a turn yourself! □



# Child’s Day

Preschool · Kindergarten · Child Development Center

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

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## Social Skills

### How to help a child be more popular

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

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

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

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

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

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

**DON’T** compare him with other children.

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

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

## Academics

### Promoting math readiness

To help preschoolers get ready for math, give them practice by using number, size and quantity words. Make a point of using these words yourself and ask your child questions so that he has to use them in her answers.

For example, at mealtime, ask your child if he wants a **lot** or a **little**, **less than** this or **more than** this, and so on.

Cut an apple in half and say, “Here’s **one half** for you and **one half** for me.”

Ask him **how many** pieces he wants, if he wants a **big** piece or a **little** piece.

Show your child a picture of himself and others or a picture of family members. Ask him, “Who is the **tallest**?” “Who is the **shortest**?”

Let him help cook. Show him how to measure out **two tablespoons**, mix in **one-half cup**, and so on.

Give him the measuring cups and spoons and a pan of dried beans to experiment with to see **how many teaspoons in a tablespoon**, **how many half cups in a cup**, and so on. □

## Choking prevention poster

The statistics are alarming. Airway obstruction is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths of children under the age of one year in the United States.

According to the National SAFE KIDS campaign, 88 percent of deaths and nearly 80 percent of hospital emergency room visits for airway obstruction injuries involved children four years old and under.

Any item that can block a child's airway is a choking hazard. And, as most parents can testify, infants and toddlers put anything and everything in their mouths.

Choking occurs when food or small objects, such as toys with small parts, buttons, popcorn, or grapes get caught in the throat or block the airway, preventing oxygen from traveling to the lungs

and brain.

After more than four minutes without oxygen, brain damage or even death can occur.

As the old saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." To avoid airway obstruction in children, prevention is clearly the best strategy.

Remembering the information and tips that can help prevent choking in children is difficult for busy parents and caregivers. Therefore, the International Food Information Council (IFIC) Foundation recognized the need for easy-to-use information to help prevent airway obstruction in young children.

In partnership with the National SAFE KIDS campaign, the IFIF Foundation developed a poster for parents, educators, childcare providers, and health professionals. The poster, "Pre-

vent Childhood Choking: It's Up to You," is printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other side to provide this most important information to a wide audience.

Although childhood choking occurs all too frequently and often with tragic results, these accidents can often be prevented. The choking prevention poster may help parents and caregivers readily remember these important tips.

To order the poster, write to Choking Prevention Poster; International Food Information Council, 1100 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 430, Washington, DC 20036.

Single copies are free; additional copies are \$1.50 each (make check to International Food Information Council Foundation.) The poster is also available on line at <http://www.ific.org/publications/brochures/chokingpos.cfm>. □

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## Discipline

### Can you say 'no' to your child?

There will be many occasions when your child will make unreasonable requests or demands and you'll find yourself saying "no." This is not bad.

We live in a world of rules and limits. Children whose parents or caregivers never say "no" quickly become over-gratified and, later on, may become easily frustrated.

Many parents who cannot say "no" choose to reason with their child, offering words of justifica-

tion and logic for their decisions.

In turn the children may react by crying or yelling because they prefer a "no" response to a lecture.

There are parents who really believe that it is not healthy emotionally to say "no" because it may stunt their children's creativity and spontaneity.

These parents bask in their children's impulsive, engaging personalities while ignoring their

selfishness, bad manners, and lack of cooperation.

Finally, there are parents who have never been able to say "no" to themselves—to their drinking, smoking, or buying habits. How can they say "no" to their children?

Setting limits, which means saying "no," is a form of discipline. Saying "no" to children's unreasonable demands will not mean loss of love. □

## Scribblers just can't help themselves

Scribblers just can't help themselves. They've just got to close their fists around those fat crayons and scribble.

Around and around they go, in circles, zigzags, blurs, and blobs. Unfortunately, scribblers sometimes like to use walls for their canvases.

If you provide an alternative for the scribbler—like a large chalkboard and colored chalk, an easel with newspaper and paint, or lots of plain paper (the back of computer printouts or a roll of shelf paper)—you'll have fewer pictures on your walls.

Scribbling may look like nonsense to adults, but there is some sense in it for a child.

When children learn to stop their arm movements in time, those big circles become faces. Tight, round scribbles make eyes, looser ones make curly hair.

Sweeping lines stop short for arms, fingers, mouths, and spiky hair. Pounding with the point of the crayon makes snow.

Scribbling is necessary preparation for drawing—and writing too. But it's hard to know what to say when you're presented with a scribbled work of art.

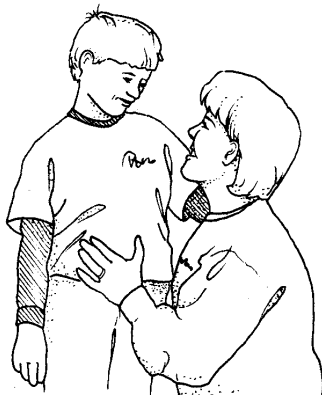
So, just tell the truth. "I really like purple scribbles" is probably the most honest, appreciative and gracious thing you can say! □

## A worthwhile self-concept

Parents who help their child develop a healthy self-concept, or a sense of being worthwhile, are giving the child one of the most fantastic gifts imaginable.

The self-concept is the sum total of all the beliefs an individual holds about himself.

How is self-concept developmental?



It is not something we are born with. Rather, we develop self-concept over time. It results from our interpretation of the events that occur in our lives, and from our successes and setbacks in coping with life's challenges.

The home and family provide the primary context for self-concept development. Homes where each family member is valued, where there is freedom to take risks, and where there is permission to grow and change are likely to produce high self-concept in children.

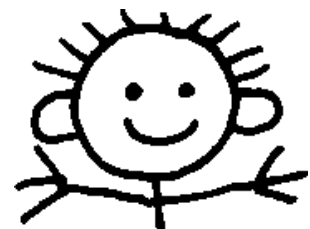
On the other hand, the chances of low self-concept in-

crease when the home and family atmosphere is characterized by teasing and blaming.

Yet parents do not deserve all the credit if a child develops high self-esteem or all the blame if he develops low self-esteem. It is the child's own interpretation of what is occurring that determines self-esteem.

And, for whatever reason, some children persist in taking in all the "bad me" data while filtering out the good messages—or vice versa.

You can do something worthwhile every day—listen to your children. And let them know, in no uncertain terms, of your love for them. □



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