



Child's Day

Preschool · Kindergarten · Child Development Center

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Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Discipline

Explain your expectations

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

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

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

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

Developmental

A sense of order

Here are some ideas to help teach your child a sense of order in his life:

1. Provide for the order of toys and possessions. Make easy-to-reach boxes and shelves available for playthings to be sorted and separated.



2. Provide for the order of space, particularly if you have more than one child and limited area. Decide what goes where—sports equipment here, doll corner there, a place for paint and materials, library, cars and trucks and so on. You will find fewer conflicts when the territory is divided in advance.

3. Provide for the order of

time. This will help children to anticipate events, to plan them and learn how to postpone what they are currently involved in and do it later.

How do you teach this by providing order of time?

- Plan meals at the same time; try to have the family eat together.
- See that bedtime is consistent as is the sequence leading up to it. A bedtime story helps a child anticipate a happy experience.
- Well-established habits will make a child's day predictable and secure.

Many families cannot arrange their affairs in such a way that everything is always in its proper place or that everything always happens on schedule. This is a description of the ideal.

A good general rule is to try to get things in their proper place and try to work out a schedule where events in your family's day occur with dependable regularity. This will help you child as he comes to grips with school learning tasks. □

Requesting cooperation

For the most part, adults usually speak to each other in a courteous way. If an adult does command another adult, then it is usually because he or she feels superior in some way.

When we speak to children, we often forget to use courteous words and we command them as though they were inferiors. For example, a busy father might say, "Pick up all those toys!" instead of saying, "Would you pick up those toys, please?"

Children need to be shown respect with our talk so that they develop self-respect. Children who feel of equal value to other people will speak to others with courtesy and respect.

Parents are often under pressure to meet deadlines and get things done. It is easy to command children when in a rush, but children pay the price for this.

Instead their cooperation can be solicited with courteous requests. If they do not then cooperate, then consequences can follow.

For example, a parent who is late says to her five-year-old, "Please put your jacket on quickly. Then when we are driving, I will play our guessing game with you."

Positive communication gives us the chance to teach them courteous and creative language as well. □

Sand and water make simple, inexpensive playthings

Sand play is continually fascinating to a child.

Pouring, patting, shoveling, carrying, transferring sand from one container to another—all of these are stimulating pastimes from which a child learns important concepts: hard, soft, heavy, light, wet, and dry.

We usually think of bath toys as floating toys—but consider what a child can learn from squeezing sponges and washcloths, dipping up water in a cup, filling a bowl. She will find that a bowl may float when empty but it will sink if she fills it with water.

Some things will float, some things will sink! Her young mind is already taking mental note of these differences and the seeds of scientific curiosity are being sown.

As children play with sand and water by filling, pouring and re-pouring, they are practicing hand and eye coordination as well as learning about some of the properties of natural elements.

Truly, play is learning and as youngsters play with sand or water, they build up a valuable background of experiences from which they will later develop important concepts about quantification. These concepts will be basic to their later success in arithmetic. □

Eliminating mealtime battles

Getting children to eat properly has been a problem for many generations of parents.

Children usually start life enthusiastic about food until, somewhere along the line, they see parents making an issue out of it.

It's one of the few areas in a child's life where she has total control, and she will play it for all it's worth.

It may sound unorthodox, but the less parental attention paid to food, the more children will ultimately develop wholesome eating habits. Here are some basic rules:

- Don't notice. Act unconcerned about what is eaten and who is doing the eating. Nothing foils a child's intent on a power struggle more than an "opponent" that won't take part.
- Don't act eager. Don't prepare an alternate selection if the child "doesn't like" what's being served. Tell her you hope she'll like the next meal better.
- Limit between-meal snacks. If a child is regularly refusing meals yet whining later for food, say, "Sorry the kitchen is closed now, but we'll be eating again at dinner."
- Obviously these suggestions don't apply to a child who is sick or who requires a special diet. □

Developing a love of reading

One of the most precious gifts that any parent can give a child is a love of reading.

If you help your child to develop an interest in books at an early age, you will open the gates to a world of wonder, knowledge, and entertainment—for the rest of his life.

One of the ways to instill a love of reading is to help a child choose books that will interest and excite him. A good place to start is your local library. Librar-

ians are trained to identify books that are suitable for your child's age level.

After the librarian has directed you to appropriate books, let him browse through them to select the ones he wants you to read to him at home.

It is important to occasionally set aside some special time during the day for reading: after dinner or before bedtime, for example. Just make sure to give priority to this special time with

your child.

In this way he will learn: (1) He is an important person in your life, and (2) you place a high value on reading.

When you read to your child, try lots of different reading materials. The more you read to him, the more you will become aware of his particular interests and tastes.

If you find one library book in particular that has captured his interest—for example, one that he has asked you to read and re-read five or six times—consider buying him his very own copy to keep in his room. Be sure to put his books on a low shelf where he will have easy access to them.

Finally, let your child become aware of your own love of reading. Talk to him about the things you like to read. Your own good example—more effectively than any words—will help instill in your child a life-long love of reading. □

Games & Activities

Snapping snapshots is lots of fun

Although you can expect a certain strangeness in snapshots taken by preschoolers, they can do it, and it's worth it to let them.

Their point of view is different from yours; so is their eye level. Their pictures give you a window into their world.

Corners of ceilings and their own two feet appeal to three- and four-year-olds. They love to aim up into the treetops.

They're pleased and proud of a picture of a rock, a sidewalk crack, the dog's tail.

They take pictures of people from behind, and faces from very close up.

Older children can take their own Tricky Pictures to see if they can fool the younger kids. They are very clever at it.

Textures interest children: rug, fur, basket, stone, concrete, wood, grass, sand, bark, and burlap.

And they will almost certainly get a kick out of pictures taken from odd perspectives: a flag pole straight up, a kettle straight down.

Give them one of those disposable, inexpensive cameras already loaded with film and see what treasures they photograph. □

Born Musicians
Discover the Gift of Song

Ask about
music classes
for **your** child