

As They Grow

*An Early Learning Newsletter for
Families of Preschool Children*

**UW
Extension**
Learning for life

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Racine County UW-Extension

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Dear Families,

Like the first breath of fresh spring air, children renew and reinvigorate us through their innocence and special sensitivity. Children are each unique and outstanding in their own distinctive way. Look for opportunities to praise your children and let them know you love them just for who they are!

In this month's issue, we will discuss ways to communicate positively, examine an often overlooked safety hazard, and further discuss discipline. Also, please take special notice of page four where you can find workshops this summer. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

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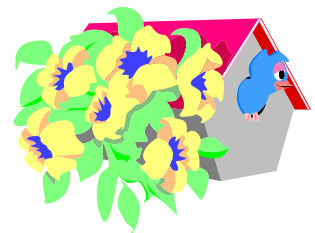
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COMMUNICATING POSITIVELY

Striving to communicate positively promotes the development of a strong self-esteem in children. You help a child feel safe and worthwhile when you:

- ◆ Show real interest in the child and his/her viewpoint.
- ◆ Respect your child's feelings and opinion.
- ◆ Invite the child's input and problem solve together.
- ◆ Work together to improve a situation.
- ◆ Care about the outcome of your discussion.
- ◆ Help the child be right instead of trying to prove him/her wrong.
- ◆ Make suggestions and requests, but refrain from orders, commands, and demands.
- ◆ Use peaceful persuasion instead of trying to dominate and force.
- ◆ Encourage cooperation.



The foundations you build in positive communication now will help to strengthen your relationship with your son or daughter as they grow older. Work to do your part to keep the lines of communication open and honest.

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Of all parenting responsibilities, discipline probably raises the most questions and dilemmas for parents.

What is discipline? It is all of our attempts to teach children correct behavior, values, and self-control. The word discipline comes from an old English word meaning “instruction.” Discipline is meant to be the instruction of children in the social skills of life.



The ways in which parents discipline varies. It depends on many things, including:

- **How we were disciplined.** The way we were disciplined and how we feel about that helps determine what we expect of our own children. Parents can make a conscious effort not to repeat unproductive discipline strategies that were used during their own childhood.
- **What we want for our children.** We value certain things more than others. Our priorities help determine our hopes and dreams for our children and what we will and will not tolerate from them. One behavior that is viewed as needing discipline in one family may not have the same view in another. Be careful not to cast value judgments on other families and their views on discipline.
- **How we see ourselves as parents.** The way we think other adults judge us as parents helps determine how we “play” our role and what we expect of our children. Some parents view discipline as a private matter that should be dealt with in the home. Others take the view discipline as an ongoing role for parents.
- **What is happening at the time.** What we want to accomplish in a given time period or day will affect our expectations of our children. It takes many years for children to learn correct behavior, values, and self-control. Children require a lot of practice and learn in small steps as they grow.

Appropriate discipline considers the child, the behavior, and the situation, since misbehavior is often the result of a combination of things. As a parent, look at your own role in problem situations. Do you expect too much of your children? Perhaps children are unable to do what you want. Have you stated your expectations clearly?

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES

- ◆ Treat children respectfully.
- ◆ Give children individual attention
- ◆ Use consequences rather than punishment.
- ◆ Give directions in a positive way.
- ◆ Use a minimum number of rules.
- ◆ Model good behavior.
- ◆ Follow through on the rules.

Family Smart/Kid Friendly

Workshops and parenting resources focused on discipline and challenging behaviors are available at locations throughout Racine County by calling:

- 262-939-1984 (eastern Racine County)
- 262-763-0809 (western Racine County)

Racine County UW-Extension provides workshops and resources through Family Smart/Kid Friendly, a collaboration with City of Racine Health Department, Love Inc., Next Generation Now, Racine County Human Services Department, United Way of Racine County, and Western Racine County Health Department.

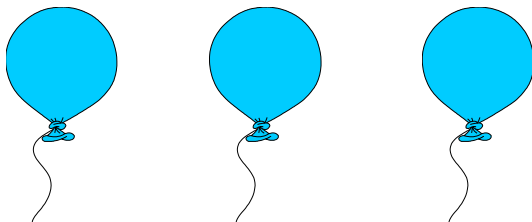
SAFETY WARNING

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) warns parents and caregivers of young children about the suffocation hazard of toy balloons and pieces of broken balloons. Many children have died as a result of suffocation involving uninflated balloons or pieces of balloons. Most of the victims were under six years of age.

Accidents involving balloons tend to occur in two ways. Some children have sucked uninflated balloons into their mouths, often while attempting to inflate them. This can occur when a child who is blowing up the balloon inhales or takes a breath to prepare for the next blow, and draws the balloon back into the mouth and throat. Some deaths may have resulted when children swallowed uninflated balloons they were sucking or chewing on.

The second kind of accident involves balloon pieces. Children have drawn pieces of broken balloons that they were playing with into their throats. If a balloon breaks and is not discarded, some children may continue to play with it, chewing on pieces of the balloon or attempting to stretch it across their mouths and suck or blow bubbles into it. Balloon pieces are easily sucked into the throat and lungs where they can completely block breathing.

Because of the danger of suffocation, the CPSC recommends that parents and caregivers do not allow children under the age of 6 to play with uninflated balloons without supervision. The CPSC does not believe that a completely inflated balloon presents a hazard to young children. If the balloon breaks, however, CPSC recommends that parents immediately collect the pieces of the broken balloon and dispose of them out of the reach of young children.



10 REASONS TO READ WITH YOUR CHILD

1. Because when you hold them and give them this attention, they know you love them.
2. Because reading to them will encourage them to become readers.
3. Because children's books today are so good that they are fun!
4. Because illustrations in children's books often rank with the best, giving them a lifelong feeling for good art.
5. Because books are one way of passing on your moral values to them.
6. Because, until they learn to read themselves, they will think you are magic.
7. Because every teacher and librarian they ever encounter will thank you.
8. Because it's nostalgic.
9. Because, for that short space of time, they will stay clean and quiet.
10. Because, if you do, they may then let you read in peace!



Poison Center

1-800-222-1222

1. When a substance is swallowed, give the person water only, until instructed to do otherwise.
2. In case of skin contact, wash the area with cool or tepid water for 20 minutes.
3. In case of inhalation, get the child into fresh air for at least 20 minutes.

In all cases, call the Poison Center at once.

SNACKING IS IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN

To keep up with rapid growth and high activity levels, toddlers need lots of nutritious foods. Infants and toddlers need more food—pound for pound than any other age group. But small sized tummies just can't hold the amount of food required in just three meals. So how do you handle this problem? Snacks! Don't think of snacks as cookies, candy, soda or other low nutrient treats. Think of a snack as a supplemental meal.

Children need lots of nutrition so pick healthy snacks like cheese, small pieces of fruit, raw vegetables, cereal, 100% fruit juices, yogurt, bread, and whole grain crackers. They don't need large snacks because too much food between meals may prevent children from being hungry at mealtime.

Children like foods that are easy to handle so finger foods are great. During snack time they can learn about different kinds of foods, different textures of food, and where foods come from, etc. Sometimes toddlers will reject a food at mealtime, but will be perfectly happy to eat it at snack time, so reintroduce it then.

Children like to eat food they can help prepare. Help your toddler make this recipe. Measurements don't have to be exact.

Choking can be a problem, especially for children under three:

- Never leave children alone while they are eating.
- Teach them to sit quietly while they are eating.
- Serve small portions and encourage children to chew their food well.
- Take seeds and pits out of their food.

Some foods that are more likely to cause choking include:

- Slippery foods like grapes, hard candy, hot dog chunks
- Small dry foods like nuts, seeds, carrot chunks
- Sticky foods like peanut butter, raisins or other dried fruits

Yogurt Parfait

- ✓ Vanilla flavored yogurt
- ✓ Graham cracker crumbs
- ✓ Your favorite fruit cut into small pieces (canned, fresh or frozen)

Make the parfait in a clear dish so you can see the layers. Put a layer of graham crackers in the bottom. Next, a layer of yogurt. Then a layer of fruit and another layer of yogurt. Top with graham cracker crumbs. Don't stir, the ingredients will mix as you eat.

UW-Extension Early Learning Series

- ◆ June 26 - Gender Issues: Young Children's Curiosity, Aurora Wellness Center, Burlington
- ◆ June 15 - Sibling Rivalry: Issues & Ideas - Racine County Office Building (Hwy 20 & I-94)
- ◆ August - Stress

To receive more information or to register for the seminars, call 262-886-8460. The seminars are part of Family Smart/Kid Friendly (*see page two*) and the Racine County Touchpoints Project.

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