

As They Grow

An Early Learning Newsletter for
Families of Preschool Children

Volume 2, Issue 5
November/December 2006

CREATING FAMILY TRADITIONS

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What special holiday memories do you have of your growing up years? What do the holidays mean to you and your family now? What kind of memories are you building in your family?



Some experts believe that we are in danger of becoming ritual poor. Because we have such busy lives – “catch-as-catch-can” – we are losing our rituals. Kids love and need rituals. It helps them establish order in their lives.

Here are some things families derive from rituals:

- ◇ a sense of **security** – a feeling of belonging
- ◇ a shared **identity** – feeling a part of each other and their heritage
- ◇ **protection** – knowing what the future holds
- ◇ a **benchmark** – something to look forward to.

Families celebrate a variety of occasions, which encourage and nurture unique family traditions. These traditions affirm family values, strengthen family ties and preserve heritage.



PARENTING TIPS

During the holidays, these ideas may be helpful to your family:

- ◆ **Focus on people**, not things. Play games together, visit friends and relatives, talk about “when grandparents were children.”
- ◆ **Teach what you believe.** Talk about your faith and how celebrations differ from other families.
- ◆ **Start family traditions.** Fix an unusual dish, take pictures, sing songs, or do fun things together.
- ◆ **Help each child make a “wish list.”** Try to give each child at least one gift that he really wants. Talk about TV ads, and that no one has everything he wants.
- ◆ **Keep it simple and be sensible.** Try to avoid overdoing anything—spending, eating, drinking, or partying. Going overboard is not helpful to anyone.
- ◆ **Help your child give to others.** Let her make a small gift, or a coupon with a written promise to wash the dishes or give one big hug. Talk about the joy of sharing.
- ◆ **Try not to upset your small child’s naps and meals.** Avoid long car trips and too many activities. Be extra patient when she seems tired or cranky.

Child Care Resource and Referral of Kenosha and Racine Training Opportunities

The Child Care Resource and Referral Agency is located at the YWCA, 740 College Ave., Racine, on the second floor. To contact the staff for questions and information call 262-884-9890, or check-out their new website at: www.theccrrs-rksite.org.

Training offered for child care providers:

Nov. 7—Active Indoor Adventures: Activities for Winter; 6-8 pm.

Dec. 12—Taming Holiday Madness: Taking the “Craziness” Out of the Season; 11 am—1 pm.

Dec. 16—Stress and YOU! Decompress with Style; 10 am—12 pm.

Contact Mary Lofty for more information and to register at 262-884-9893.

TV AND FURNITURE TIP-OVER ACCIDENTS

The US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is issuing a warning to families about the dangers of television and furniture tip-overs that are killing and seriously injuring many young children. According to the CPSC these deaths and injuries occur when children are climbing onto, fall against, or pull themselves up on television stands, shelves, bookcases, dressers, desks and chests. To help prevent tip-over hazards, the CPSC offers the following safety tips:

- ◆ Verify that furniture is stable on its own. For extra added security and stability, anchor to the floor or attach to the wall all entertainment units, TV stands, bookcases, shelving and bureaus using appropriate hardware, such as brackets, screws or toggles.
- ◆ Place televisions on sturdy furniture appropriate for the size of the TV or on a low-rise base.
- ◆ Push the TV as far back as possible from the front of the stand.
- ◆ Place electrical cords out of children’s reach, and teach children not to play with cords. Remove items from the top of the TV that might tempt kids to climb, such as toys and remote controls.

WASHING HANDS FOR GOOD HEALTH

It’s that time of year when fevers, coughs, and runny noses reappear. Believe it or not, hand washing is the easiest, least expensive way to stop the spread of germs.

Make sure you teach your children the proper way to wash their hands. Since germs can’t be seen without a microscope, children may think they only need to wash their hands when they look dirty. Emphasize the importance of washing hands before eating, after toileting, playing outside or touching animals.

MOTIVATING YOUR CHILD

- ◆ **Accept children as they are.** They need unconditional love and acceptance to gain self-assurance. That doesn't mean that parents shouldn't discipline, but make it clear that it's the behavior that's unacceptable, not the person. Discipline means "to teach" not "to punish."
- ◆ **Praise children.** Praise can't start too young. A positive tone to your voice encourages children to want to do things for themselves. Praise what the child did, and try to encourage the child to feel good about the behavior or activity and his/her ability and skills used to accomplish the task. "You worked really hard to make your bed! I bet you feel really good about doing it all by yourself!"
- ◆ **Provide stimulating experiences for children.** Plan trips to the museum, zoo, library programs or holiday events that are low cost and can stimulate conversations and support children's interests. As children express an interest in something in particular, encourage their interest by talking and reading together.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR FAMILIES

Building Blocks is for children ages 0 to 4 and their families. It is a free gathering time for families to discuss parenting issues. The children are actively engaged in books and musical activities along with parents during the interactive session.

Family Smart/Kid Friendly Partnership's Building Blocks is offered for **6 weeks** at the **Waterford Library, 101 N. River Street**, on Tuesdays beginning on November 7th. The session begins at **10:30 a.m.** and ends at **11:15 a.m.** Please contact Linda Breuer at 262-763-0809 with any questions.

Family Smart/Kid Friendly East is sponsoring **4 weeks** at the **Racine Library, 75 Seventh Street**, on Wednesdays beginning November 29th. The session begins at **10:00 a.m.** and ends at **11:00 a.m.** Please contact Tina Ginner at 262-886-8492 with any questions. Please bring your young child and come join the fun!

TOYS! TOYS! TOYS!

Toys are at the top of most children's gift lists. However, parents and other gift givers need to remember that there is much more to selecting toys than just filling the wish list. Toys can cause injuries or even death.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that each year, more than 100,000 kids get hurt by their toys. Some are badly hurt. Some even die.

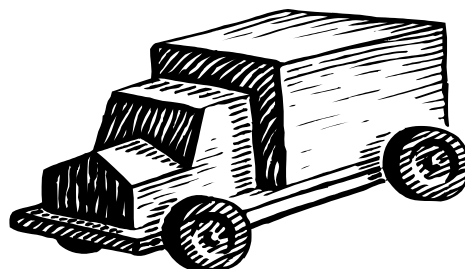
When buying toys, choose toys with care. Keep in mind the child's age, interest and skill level. Look for quality design and construction for all ages.

Make sure that all directions or instructions are clear to you, and, when appropriate, to the child. Plastic wrappings on toys should be discarded at once before they become deadly playthings.

Be a label reader. Look for and heed age recommendations. Look for other safety labels and warnings.

Give gifts that your child will not only value, but teaches values. The toys you choose show how you feel about prestige, creativity, and even caring. In addition, the number and cost of gifts teaches a child about life's limitations.

Limit toys to what is practical. For example, a child who has a toy box full of trucks probably will not get much more out of another truck. Expand his/her horizons with an airplane instead. Buy your child two or three gifts she will *really* enjoy, rather than a bag-full of presents that she will leave on the shelves.



UW-EXTENSION WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

- ◇ **November 13, 6:30-8:00 p.m. - Racine Library and November 27, 6:00-7:30 p.m. -Waterford Library—The Right Toys for the Right Ages: Developmentally Appropriate Toys for 0 to 6**, an hour and a half seminar providing ideas for toys that will stimulate and engage your young child’s brain without batteries, cords or computers. Contact Tina Ginner with questions at 262-886-8492 or to register contact Fay Tichy at 262-886-8460.
- ◇ **December 11, 6:15-8:15 p.m. -TV, the Media, and Young Children**, a two hour seminar held at the **Ives Grove Office Complex in Sturtevant**, will discuss the impact that television and advertising are having on our young children. We will discuss strategies to combat media hype and how much television is alright for children under the age of 6. Contact Tina Ginner with questions at 262-886-8492 or Fay Tichy to register at 262-886-8460.

CHILDREN AND MONEY

Children are not born with “money sense.” During this season of giving and receiving it is a great time to talk to your child about money. Children learn by what they see, hear, and experience. They learn by mistakes as well as successes. As a parent, you are teaching your children about money every day—not just by what you say, but also by what you do.

Preschoolers learn from doing. Preschoolers can begin to learn about money with your help.

- ◆ Play store with your child or several children in the neighborhood. Let the children buy and sell toys, food, or “pretend” items. (An empty box can be anything from cereal to a TV set, or you can save empty, cleaned out food boxes—they are props the children can really relate to from their everyday world.) You can use play money from games or make your own.
- ◆ Take your children on a shopping trip. Give them a small amount of money to spend. Let them decide what to buy and then pay the cashier. Later you can talk about the purchase. Were the children pleased, unhappy, satisfied, etc.?
- ◆ Give your children a chance to see you use money, pay bills and go to the bank. If money is short, it is okay to say “We don’t have enough money to buy you what you want right now.”
- ◆ Talk to your children about saving their money for larger priced items. It is important for children to understand that they need to save their money for things that they really want, especially when they are not a part of your family budget or one of their “basic needs.”

ATTEND THE MONEY CONFERENCE

Saturday, December 2, 8:30-3:30 at Gateway Technical College, Racine Campus. Cost: Adults - \$5, Youth (6-18) - \$2.50, Family Rate-\$10 (families of 4 or more), or at the door Adults - \$7, Youth - \$3.

For additional information contact Richard Entenmann of Asset Builders toll-free 866-304-6896 or Beverlee Baker of Racine County UW-Extension 262-886-8460 or go to: www.assetbuilders.org.

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- Better Kid Care E-Newsletter. “Heath and Safety Tips” Pennsylvania State University, 2006.
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This newsletter is a publication of the University of Wisconsin-Extension Cooperative Extension.

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