

# As They Grow

An Early Learning Newsletter for Families of Preschool Children

**UW**  
**Extension**  
Learning for life

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## A Memory Book for Young Children

Children love to learn about themselves and their past. It helps them feel important and special. A fun thing to do for your child and yourself is to collect and organize reminders of these early years.

Chances are you have some memory-making tools already. You can use photographs, birthday cards, and certificates to start a memory book, scrapbook, or memory box. Add pictures your child draws, a piece of a favorite blanket, an outline of a hand or footprint, holiday cards, newspapers published on your child's birthday, notes from relatives, or anything else you would like to save.



All too soon these early years pass. A memory book will help you and your child enjoy remembering these special years!

## Sweet Treats

With Halloween just around the corner, many children will be eating sweets. Warn children not to eat any treats before an adult has carefully examined them for evidence of tampering.

It is important to teach preschoolers how to take care of their teeth. Forty to fifty-five percent of three to four-year old children have some tooth decay, and by age 12, this increases to 90%!



Tooth decay is caused when bacteria in the mouth interact with sugars. They produce acid that slowly dissolves the tooth surface, causing decay. Plaque, a sticky film that forms on teeth, allows the bacteria to stay close to the tooth surface, usually near the gums. To minimize decay, limit sugary foods your child eats by serving them only at mealtime. How often children eat sugar is more important than how much. The more times your child eats sugary foods during the day, the more opportunities bacteria have to produce acids that lead to decay.

Foods most likely to cause tooth decay are sweet and starchy foods that stick to teeth. Gummy or hard candies, honey and dried fruits all promote tooth decay. Teach your child to remove plaque through daily brushing and flossing. Start taking your child to the dentist before his or her third birthday.

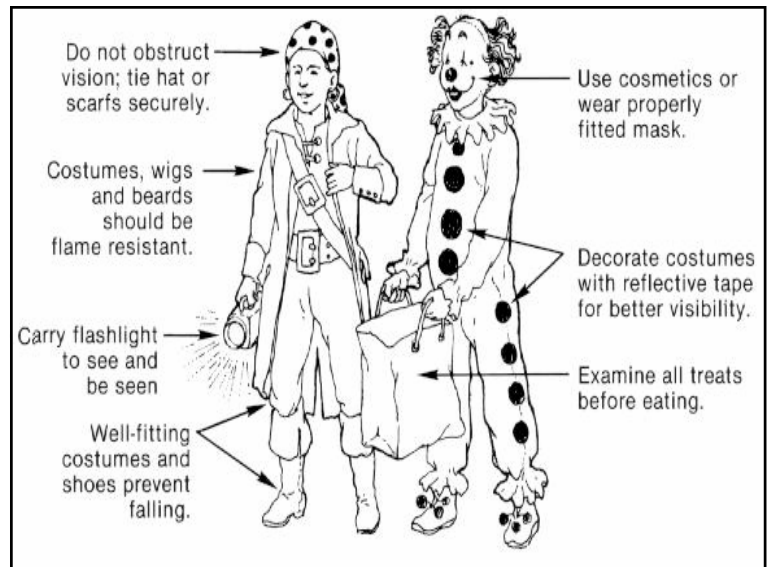
# Halloween Safety Do's & Don't

A few safety tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission can protect children who plan to go trick-or-treating this Halloween.

When purchasing a costume, masks, beards, and wigs, look for the label Flame Resistant. Although this label does not mean these items won't catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly once removed from the ignition source. To minimize the risk of contact with candles or other sources of ignition, avoid costumes made with flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves, or billowing skirts.

**Costume Designs:** Purchase or make costumes that are light and bright enough to be clearly visible to all motorists in the day or evening hours.

- For greater visibility during dusk and darkness, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that will glow in the beam of a car's headlights.
- Bags or sacks should also be light colored or decorated with reflective tape. Reflective tape is usually available in hardware, bicycle, and sporting goods stores.
- Children should wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes. Mother's high heels are not a good idea for safe walking.
- Apply a natural mask of cosmetics rather than have a child wear a loose-fitting mask that might restrict breathing or obscure vision. If a mask is used, however, make sure it fits securely and has eyeholes large enough to allow full vision.
- Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be of soft and flexible material.



**Pedestrian Safety:** Young children should always be accompanied by an adult or an older, responsible child. All children should WALK, not run from house to house and use the sidewalk if available, rather than walk in the street. Children should be cautioned against running out from between parked cars, or across lawns and yards where ornaments, furniture, or clotheslines present dangers.

## Car Seat Checks in Racine County

Dates/ Times/Locations:

October 6	10 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Caledonia
October 7	8 a.m. to noon	Town of Raymond
October 10	1:00 to 4:00 p.m.	City of Racine

For specific locations, contact: Erin Donaldson, Racine/Kenosha Safe Kids Coordinator  
**262 687-3366**

## Getting off to a Good Start

For many families this is the time of year when a child meets the challenge of attending a new day care, nursery school, preschool, or even kindergarten. Leaving your child in school for the first time may be hard for both of you. Your child will face new people, new things, new routines, and new limits. Your child may be scared about being alone and angry with you for leaving them.

"Separation anxiety" is common among preschoolers and means that the child is trying to become independent, but at the same time is still very dependent on parents. There are some things you can do to help your child get off to a good start in a new setting with little separation anxiety.

### **Talk with your child about what will happen.**

Make a "trial run" together. Visit the program with your child before the first day. This allows your child to watch and explore with your help.

### **Allow enough time to stay for a few minutes.**

Arrive a few minutes early so you can talk with the caregiver, put away your child's things and allow your child to get involved in an activity. With a calm face and hugs and kisses, say "Goodbye" when it is time to leave. Be sure to tell your child when you will return.

### **Let your child know how proud you are.**

When you pick up your child, greet with warmth and say how proud you are that your child made it through the day.

### **Communicate with caregivers and teachers.**

Talk to teachers and caregivers about adjustments and behaviors. Listen to both your child and their caregivers about this new experience.

Your child may exhibit some different behaviors for a while. After starting a new school, some children change their eating and sleeping patterns. Some children need more time curled up in their parents' laps or sucking their thumb. These behaviors will change as your child becomes more comfortable in the new surroundings.

## Bedtime Rituals

By the time parents get their preschoolers to bed, they're about ready for bed themselves! Sleep and sleep-related problems during the preschool years are normal but can be demanding for parents.



Children can be "expert delayers" in keeping parents in demand: a drink, a story, a kiss, the toilet, a hug, etc.

When a child appears in the living room or kitchen after being put to bed, the best policy is to take the child's hand and silently and unemotionally escort the child back to bed. Continue to put the child back every time.

Here are some tips to smooth out bedtime:

- ◇ Establish a regular bedtime, even if your child does not always fall asleep then.
- ◇ Calm things down an hour or two before bedtime. Relax rather than roughhouse before bedtime.
- ◇ Try to maintain a pre-planned schedule where everyone knows what will happen next. The schedule may include brushing teeth, bathing, talking, and reading stories.
- ◇ Use a night-light or leave the door open if it makes your child more comfortable.

## BEDTIME TIPS

**All Aboard!** Make a train on your way to the bedroom by assigning special sound effects — toots, chugs, and dings — and take turns being the engine and caboose!

**Overnight Guests:** Allow your child to choose a special stuffed animal or doll to be a special "guest"!

**Checking In:** Develop a "5-minute check" system where you agree to stop by your child's bedroom every 5 minutes just to say "Is Everything ok?" Then, your child agrees not to call you a dozen times after being put to bed!

**Beat The Clock:** Set a timer for 30 minutes before bedtime. Announce that your child has a half hour to play. Ten minutes before the timer rings, ask your child to pick up the toys and brush teeth, because when the bell rings, we all go to the bedroom to get ready for bed.

## Lead Hazards in Your Home or Center

Dust from deteriorated lead-based paint is the leading cause of lead-poisoning of our children. It's the dust flakes from old paint that carries the lead. We can't always see it. Fortunately, health and safety professionals are working against lead dust. They know where lead dust hangs out, and can tell us how to avoid getting exposed.

Help prevent lead dust exposure by cleaning floors, window frames, window sills and other surfaces weekly using water and disposable paper towel. Thoroughly rinse sponges and mop heads. Wash children's hands often, especially before they eat and before nap and bed times. Keep play areas clean. Wash bottles, pacifiers, toys, and stuffed animals regularly. If you rent, notify your landlord of peeling or chipping paint.

**All parents should know** that if lead poisoning is not detected early, children with elevated levels of lead in their bodies can suffer from: damage to the brain and nervous system, behavior and learning problems, slowed growth, hearing problems, and headaches.

*All children under six years of age should be tested for lead. Children may not show signs of lead poisoning.*

**Free lead testing:** City of Racine Health Department, City Hall, 730 Washington Avenue, Room 4, Racine  
**Call for an appointment: 262 636-9431.**

### UW-Extension Workshops for Parents/Caregivers

- ◇ **The Importance of Observation! 3 sessions (Childcare Providers Only)** Fee for the series is \$15.  
**Sept. 19, Oct. 23, Nov. 29, 6-8 p.m. — Ives Grove Office Complex, 14200 Washington Ave., Sturtevant**  
This 3-session workshop series will make a difference in your classroom climate, curriculum development, and teacher/parent/child interactions. Participants must attend the entire 6-hour, 3-session training to receive Registry Barcodes. **A \$15 check or money order** to Racine County UW-Extension, Attention: Tina Ginner, 14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant, WI 53177 must be received by mail or in person on or before the registration deadline of Wed., Sept. 12. Questions? **Contact Tina Ginner, 262-886-8492.**
- ◇ **Thriving with Your “Spirited” Child**  
**Tues., Sept. 25, 6:15-8:15 p.m. — Ives Grove Office Complex, 14200 Washington Ave., Sturtevant**  
“Spirited” children are “more” kids. They are more intense, emotional, persistent, moody, loud, sensitive, and active than other children.” Learn strategies for insight into how to parent or relate to the 3- to 6-year-old “spirited” child in your family or your classroom. Registry Barcodes available for Child Care Providers for \$5.00, payable the night of the seminar. **To register, call 262-886-8460 by Sept. 19.** Questions? Contact Barbara Stoffel-Emde, 262-833-8732.
- ◇ **Become a “Safety Sleuth”!**  
**Mon., Oct. 29, 6:15-8:15 p.m. — Ives Grove Office Complex, 14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant**  
Unintentional injury is the leading cause of death among children ages 14 and under! Investigate easy changes you can make every day to keep you family or childcare center safe. **To receive Registry Barcodes or verification of attendance, a \$5 check or money order** to Racine County UW-Extension, 14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant, WI 53177 must be received by mail or in person on or before the registration deadline of Oct. 22, or \$10 due the night of seminar. **Parents, grandparents, and those interested in issues related to young children may register by calling 262 886-8460 by Oct. 22.**

#### References:

Consumer Product Safety Commission, Halloween Safety: Safety Alert. CPSC Document #100. Nitzke, S. & Walker, S. (1991). Tots at the table. Kenosha/Racine Lead Free Community Partnership (2007).



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