

AS THEY GROW

Newsletter for parents of preschool children



University of Wisconsin-Cooperative Extension Family Living Education

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Dear Parent,

Think for a moment about your wildest dream, some place you'd love to visit, or some persons you'd most like to be.

Do you know how to "experience" all of these dreams? Yes, it's through BOOKS! The wonderful world of books opens many adventures for you and your child. How often do you read to your child? When was the last time you and your child visited the library?

Plan to include books and libraries in your child's life.

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QUALITIES OF A GOOD BOOK

Books are good for children for many reasons, the most important one being **enjoyment!** A book is good only if children enjoy it!

There are many books for beginning readers. Look for books that match your children's interests and some that expose them to new ideas and adventures.

Illustrations - the quality of the illustrations is especially important for young children. As a non-reader, they "read" the story through the pictures. When you look over the book, think about these points:

- ◆ many pictures stimulate the imagination
- ◆ pictures should be located on the same page or opposite the related text
- ◆ pictures create a mood in harmony with the word
- ◆ pictures show accurately the details of the text

Text - in a good book the story flows smoothly when read aloud and the words are appropriate for the age level of the child. In a storybook the plot is active and the characters are believable.

Format - Pages should be uncluttered. The print should be clear and large. Pictures should be bright and clear and have lots of detail.

PUNISHMENT VS. DISCIPLINE

Discipline teaches a child how to act. Discipline should make sense to the child. It should have something to do with what he or she has done wrong.

Discipline helps a child feel good about him/herself. It gives the child the chance to correct mistakes. It puts the child in charge of his/her actions.

Punishment only tells a child that he or she is bad. It does not tell a child what he or she should do instead. So punishment may not make sense to the child. Punishment usually has nothing to do with what the child did wrong.

Here are some examples of discipline and punishment. Can you see how they are different?

Scenario 1: A three-year-old throws his crayons on the floor.

Punishment: Tell him he is a bad boy and slap his fingers.

Discipline: Tell him to pick up the crayons. Explain that they could get broken or mark up the floor. Put them out of the child's reach until the next day.

Scenario 2: A two-year-old empties a wastebasket.



Punishment: Spank her and send her to her room.

Discipline: Explain she may not play with the wastebasket. Give her something she may dump and fill.

Sometimes a child is punished when nothing else seems to work. Sometimes a child is punished when he/she has made a parent angry. All parents get angry with their children at times.

Do not feel bad if this happens to you once in a while. But if you are very angry, count to ten before you talk to your child. Tell him/her you will talk to him/her later.

SOME WORDS ABOUT SPANKING

- **Spanking teaches a child that it is all right to hit people.**
- **Spanking can make a child feel that he/she is a bad person.**
- **Hitting has no long-term value in teaching desirable behaviors and contributes to aggressive behavior.**
- **Contrary to popular belief, “spare the rod, spoil the child” is not a passage from the Bible. It was written much later by English authors in the 16th century. Many people interpret the word rod literally to mean a stick. However, the Hebrew word for rod means an implement used to guide sheep. It was not used to hurt the sheep.**
- **Spanking teaches children what not to do, not what is the right thing to do. It stops the behavior for the time, but has no long-term value. Spanking chips away at the bond of affection between parent/caregiver and child.**
- **What goes on within the home teaches and prepares children to handle the “outside world.” Violence in the home is transmitted to the neighborhood.**

CREATIVE PLAY



Preschoolers love to make things. They assert their independence by spouting "I do it", "No, my way", or "Mine". They want to be able to do things for themselves.

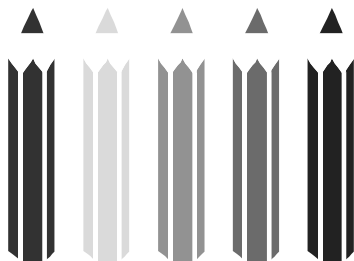
Have you considered making toys with your child - to encourage their creative play?

If you're working with your child in making creative play things - remember that they get frustrated at not being able to make things look the way they want them to.

Encourage them with words and let them know it is okay to be "creative." Display their handicrafts and masterpieces for everyone to see. Remember to display some at their eye level too!

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- ◆ Share your skills (drawing, painting, singing, or sleight-of-hand tricks) with your children. In drawing and painting, don't set standards too high or encourage imitation. Rather, let your child work out his or her own ideas. The fun of doing something together is what is important.



SMALL CHANGE



Even preschool children need to learn how to make decisions. Those trips to the grocery store are ideal times to teach some basics about good nutrition and decision making.

The next time you and your child are grocery shopping try this activity from the UW-Extension publication "Family Times":

"Toddler Shoppers"

- ◆ Decide which simple food items your child can choose. Limit these items to choices that can be made from the shopping cart: canned, fresh or frozen fruits, juices, nutritious cereals and/or dairy products.
- ◆ When you get to the right aisle, give your child a few moments to make his/her selection. Be sure to provide plenty of praise for doing a fine job and being a good helper.
- ◆ Put them in charge of holding coupons and looking for the coupon items on the shelves. Discuss the "cents off" from the coupon and talk about the amount saved.
- ◆ At meal times, point out the foods your child chose in the grocery store.

WAYS TO SAY "VERY GOOD"

You did it that time.

That's better than ever.

You're doing beautifully.

You did a lot of work today.

FANTASTIC!!

FOOD FACTS AND NUTRITION NOTES



Is fat bad for children? All children need some fat, but nobody knows the ideal amount. From the time they are born, fat is a normal part of food that children eat.

Children need fat for energy and proper growth. Without enough fat in the food they eat, their growth can be affected. Several experts have reported a slow rate of growth among infants and young children who consumed very low amounts of fat. The problem is that infants and young children have small stomachs and can't eat enough lowfat food to give them the calories they need.

Children do need some fat, but they don't need to eat large amounts of fatty foods. The habits that your child develops today will last a lifetime. The habit of eating lowfat foods can have lifelong benefits.

Children over two should eat what the family eats. They should have regular meals and planned snacks, and have a good variety of food. Follow these guidelines to help reduce the amount of fat your family eats to 30% of calories:

- ◆ use smaller amounts of margarine, butter, cream, lard, cooking oil, mayonnaise, oily salad dressings, rich sauces
- ◆ trim the fat and skin from meat and poultry
- ◆ prepare food by broiling, baking and steaming instead of frying and sautéing
- ◆ give your child snacks that are lower in fat, such as fruit, bagels with a small amount of peanut butter or cream cheese, or cereal with lowfat milk

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