



Growing Together[®]

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Games & Activities

Cleaning a room teaches order

Did you know that cleaning up a room can help a child get ready for school? It can — by teaching her order and structure.

In her room, everything should have a place where it belongs.

Toys, for example, each have their place. Teddy bear goes here, the doll goes there, the ball here, the books over there.

As a child learns about individual objects and the places they go, she is learning basic lessons about space and how objects are organized in space.

Later on in school, this concept will help her learn the difference between “b” and “d,” “p” and “q.” □

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Developmental

The handy helper in your home

When you're tidying up the house and your youngster is underfoot, instead of fabricating play activities, invite him or her to share in family chores and responsibility.

For example, when preparing a meal, provide real tools and instructions for operating them. Keep the tools simple, like a hand eggbeater. If the equipment is placed at a proper height, there will be fewer spills.



Make sure a child is able to safely operate the tools you provide.

While preparing to wash dishes or load the dishwasher, children may be assigned the job of sorting the silverware.

In the dining room, offer a damp cloth to remove finger marks

from the woodwork or a soft cloth for dusting furniture in the living room.

Wastebaskets can be emptied into larger receptacles.

Sidewalks or porches may need to be swept with a broom.

In the bathroom there may be a tendency to splash in the water unless you suggest genuine work. Allow your youngster to wipe off glass cleaner from mirrors, windows, or tile.

Whenever possible, match up the child with the task he or she is most able to complete

There are many reasons for recommending practical experiences in the home:

- The exercise is equal to, if not superior to, such things as push-ups or knee bends.
- The need to pay attention—to choose, arrange, and use equipment—is a school-readiness skill.
- The ability to make decisions and then change them when they turn out poorly is essential for cognitive learning.
- The recognition for a job well done builds up good feelings about oneself. □

Learning to read

All parents would like for their children to become good readers. Yet parents are sometimes not too sure what they can do to help.

Some parents, in their desire to develop their child's literacy skills, may push too hard too early. Pushing a child who isn't yet ready is usually counterproductive. The parent becomes more and more frustrated, while the child begins to associate learning to read with anxiety and failure.

On the other hand, other parents are so confused and intimidated by conflicting theories regarding the so-called "one right way" to teach reading that they decide to leave it entirely to the teacher and the school.

In so doing, they unfortunately deprive their child of the unique learning environment which only the home can provide.

Is my child ready for reading? In determining reading readiness, it is essential to take one's cue from the individual child. The child's age alone is not an adequate indicator.

Some children who are not yet ready to begin reading will be content to listen to a story being read or just look at the pictures.

The child who is ready will want you to identify words in her favorite books. When your child starts pushing you, rather than the other way around, it's a good indicator that she is probably ready for reading.

How to foster a love of reading in the home: One of the best ways for parents to foster a love of reading in all children is by reading stories aloud. Even after children have learned to read, they still enjoy having a story read to them.

This should always be a fun activity—such as at bedtime—for both parent and child. Even in the daytime, a reading period should be limited to no more than 30 minutes at a time. As soon as the child shows signs of restlessness, it is best to stop and resume the reading at a later time.

Here are some suggestions that will help to make reading to your child at home more beneficial and enjoyable:

- Let your child know the importance of this reading time together by eliminating distractions or interruptions, such as telephone, radio, or television.
- Read the book in a lively and animated manner, using a different tone of voice for the different characters in the story.
- Look frequently into your child's eyes to maintain active interaction.
- Pause periodically to discuss what is happening in the story or to raise some questions: ("Is the little dog afraid?" "What do you think the girl should do next?")
- Discontinue reading—until some later time—if your child appears bored or restless.

Other ways to stimulate your child's interest in read-

ing: Some parents put identifying labels on objects in the child's room: bed, door, drawer, chair. Parents can also point out words on vegetable cans, cereal boxes, T-shirts, signs and billboards.

The more a child becomes aware of the written word in everyday living, the more interested she will become in learning to read.

Using the public library: Parents can also make use of the children's section at a local public library. This is a very good way to learn about an individual child's special interests.

Once a child shows an interest in a special topic, or in books by a particular author, the librarian can usually find more books related to those interests.

Many public libraries organize children's story hours and other programs to stimulate children's interest in reading.

Connecting reading with writing: It is also a good practice to connect reading with writing. Have your child develop a story which you can write down. When you read it back to her, point to each word as you say it.

After reading her own story to her a number of times, invite her to read it with you, helping her with the words she doesn't recognize.

It is best, at this stage, to ignore any errors she makes as this will only inhibit her desire to learn. □

Encourage a child to be creative

Every child has the potential to be creative. Creativity is the way in which your child uses her special gifts to express what is unique about her. It is not something reserved only for certain people.

You can help your child develop her talents so she can use them creatively. With opportunity and encouragement, she will learn to express what she thinks and feels about life in her own special way.

To be creative, she must first have "know-how." Then she will be able to use the basic tools and information to explore, playing around with what she knows to come up with a variety of unusual, interesting and unique combinations. That's what creativity is.

For example, she needs to know how to cook before she can combine ingredients in new and interesting ways to invest her own recipes.

A child also needs to use her talents in order to develop creativity. It's often easier to do something yourself than to let a child do it, but it's important to take the time to let her try things until she can do them well.

Learning perseverance is an important part of creativity. It takes a while to learn a new skill, and a child needs the chance to practice until she masters it. □

Facts about bread

What's the secret to keeping bread fresh?

Contrary to popular belief, placing bread in the refrigerator doesn't extend the life of the loaf. To keep bread fresh, store at room temperature in a dark, dry place such as a bread box or kitchen drawer. If you're not going to eat the loaf within a week, freeze it in its original packaging.

Is bread fattening? The notion that bread is fattening is simply a big, fat myth. On average, one slice of bread contains only one gram of fat and 75 calories, the majority of which come from complex carbohydrates.

As the body's preferred source of fuel, complex carbohydrates contain four calories per gram, compared to fat, which contains nine.

For lunch, try these low-fat treats:

- Spread a mixture of diced egg whites, fat-free mayo, water-packed tuna, dill weed and diced celery between two slices of bread and enjoy.
- Stuff a pita pocket with a mixture of cooked chicken cubes, pineapple chunks, low-fat cottage cheese, chives and red peppers. Garnish with lettuce. □



Something New!

"Grandma Says" is a twice-monthly special message that includes general parenting tips, words of encouragement, and children's book reviews. To receive your free issues, go to: www.GrowingChild.com/FreeGrandmaSays and enter your e-mail address.

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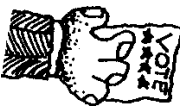
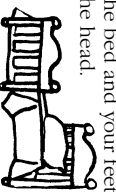





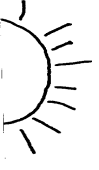
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Articles in **Growing Together** refer to both boys and girls. For simplicity, the pronouns "he" and "she" are used interchangeably unless otherwise noted.

www.growingchild.com

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>National Adoption Month National Diabetes Month Epilepsy Awareness Month Peanut Butter Lovers Month Prematurity Awareness Month</p>						
<p>4 Play some music and stretch to the left, stretch to the right, reach up, reach down, sit down, and stand up.</p> 	<p>5 Read a book and look for the letters A, B, and C.</p>	<p>6 Election Day.</p> 	<p>7 Wear something green.</p>	<p>8 Play catch with a big ball. Pretend it will break if you drop it!</p>	<p>9 Take a nap backwards: Put your head at the foot of the bed and your feet at the head.</p> 	<p>10 Sweep the sidewalk.</p>
<p>11 Veterans Day Fly the flag!</p>	<p>12 Count the shoes in one closet.</p> 	<p>13 Teach your child a song from your childhood.</p>	<p>14 Can you: Gobble like a turkey? Walk like a turkey?</p> 	<p>15 Learn how to jump a rope.</p>	<p>16 Tell a story using a hand puppet.</p>	<p>17 Play "Follow the Leader" with a long piece of string or yarn. (Let an adult pull the string for safety's sake.)</p>
<p>18 Mickey Mouse's birthday!</p> 	<p>19 Donate food to a local charity or food pantry.</p>	<p>20 "If I could be any animal, I'd be a _____."</p> 	<p>21 Think of things for which you're thankful.</p>	<p>22 Thanksgiving Day.</p> 	<p>23 Practice a home emergency drill.</p>	<p>24 Find four things that are hard and four things that are soft.</p>
<p>25 Play with a Frisbee™ outside.</p>	<p>26 Is your home child-proof?</p>	<p>27 Lie on the floor together and do leg lifts.</p>	<p>28 Think of three words that rhyme with "sunny."</p> 	<p>29 Attend a local basketball game.</p>	<p>30 Warm up some cranberry juice for a cold weather warmer-upper.</p>	