



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Games & Activities 

Draw a house

Here's a game that works well for two children—or many children at a party.

You'll need a large piece of paper suitable for drawing for each person, and a blindfold.

Each person uses a crayon and—while blindfolded—attempts to draw a picture on the paper which is taped to a wall.

Before beginning, decide what picture is to be drawn—a house, a dog, a person, for example.

Make sure the artists know how to find the edges of the paper to avoid drawing on the wall. And set a reasonable time limit.

When everyone has had a turn, all the artists can decide which drawing comes the closest to the subject that was chosen. □

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Music 

Soothing away a jangled day

Most people like and respond to music—it is one of the most natural things in the world.

All cultures—primitive and advanced—sing, dance and play instruments.

Still, no one knows exactly why music makes us smile, or why it calms children. It just does.

To relax both you and your children, soft, gentle music usually works best.

One little suggestion that sometimes works at naptime is to tell children they don't have to sleep, but they do need to be quiet and listen to the music.

At other times, music can be a source of great fun with simple games you make up yourself. Kids will love it if you participate too.

Here are a few not-so-common ideas to get started:

• **Roll around the clock.** Put on a song with a good, strong beat and get down on the floor and roll.

It sounds silly and it's even sillier to see a bunch of kids and adults rolling around on the floor.

Some people have even been known to laugh out loud!

Singing along and rolling at the same time is perfectly acceptable for any age!

• **March to the beat.** Give everybody a hat and a noisemaker (make your own from simple, safe kitchen items) and march in time to the music.

This is an excellent experience for learning about rhythm and matching movement with sound.

• **Line dancing.** Hold hands and teach little ones a few simple steps you can all do together.

If you know the words to the song, sing along. Kids LOVE to sing and dance with mom or dad!

Remember the Bunny Hop? If you do, teach it to the kids. (If you don't remember, Google™ Bunny Hop.)

This is great fun and a good way to channel all that extra energy. □



Growing healthy, happy children

To grow healthy and strong, children should have good food, plenty of sleep, exercise, and fresh air.

Children have emotional needs, too. To be both healthy and happy, every child needs to have:

- A set of moral standards—to know the difference between right and wrong.
- A belief in the human values—kindness, courage, honesty, generosity, and justice—beliefs he learns from those around him.
- Friendly help in learning how to behave toward persons and things in his world.

This can mean something as simple as how to treat a neighbor with kindness or how to care for a cherished pet.

- Grown-ups around him who show by example how to get along with others.

Every child needs to know:

- That his parents and others he comes in contact with frequently have confidence in him and his ability to do things for himself and by himself.
- That there are limits to what he is permitted to do, and that his parents will hold him to these limits.
- That although it is all right to feel jealous or angry, he will not be allowed to hurt himself or others when he has these feelings. □

Teasing

Parents frequently ask how to help their child combat teasing from peers or older children.

Children who engage in a cruel kind of teasing of other children usually come from homes where sarcasm and hostility are used constantly—sometimes fashioned in joke form.

Even though some adults engage in gentle teasing with other adults, it is inappropriate to engage in this practice with a preschool child. The adult may consider it funny or well intentioned. But the young child has not developed the sophistication needed to handle this practice. So, it becomes a form of emotional cruelty.

What can parents do to help their child deal with teasing from other children?

A parent's presence is an effective way to keep older children in line. When trouble appears to be developing, the parent can redirect the children to some other form of play or introduce a new activity.

Children usually take their cues from their parents' behavior. If parents do not appear to be upset themselves, the child will more likely remain calm. However, if parents become angry in front of their child or retell teasing or bullying incidents, these experiences may become magnified in the child's mind. This tends to reinforce the child's feelings of fear and timidity.

When parents are over-protective, they intervene to "rescue" their child too soon or too often. This teaches the child that

the only defense is the parent's presence.

Over-protective parents may inhibit their child's development of self-confidence and positive self-esteem. It is important for parents to maintain a healthy balance between watchful concern and unnecessary intrusion.

So, what can you do to help your child combat teasing and its effects?

- (1) Eliminate teasing from your own behavior.
- (2) Be present but quietly out of the way when your child is playing with other children.
- (3) Let your child deal with problems he is capable of handling without your immediate intervention.
- (4) Keep cool and don't become agitated when your child tells you stories about how he was tormented. Listen to his story, comfort him for a minute and then observe more carefully how the children are playing together.
- (5) Avoid discussing the episode with others in your child's presence.
- (6) Maintain a sense of humor which is good both for you and your child. □

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.

Nature for the very young

A young child learns best from direct, personal experience.

A toddler may be able to point to a picture-book duck and say, “Quack! Quack!” But until she encounters a real, waddling, swimming duck, her understanding of a duck will be limited.

If nature learning makes you think only of forests and seashores, remember that many

valuable, first-hand experiences can easily be provided close to home.

With a plastic squirt bottle, a child can gently mist a spider’s web, instantly creating the beauty of early morning dew—and an opportunity to marvel at the spider’s unique talent for creating an engineering marvel.

A child can rub baby oil onto favorite stones, deepening their

colors and making them shine.

Sit down carefully and watch the busy work of ants as they scurry to and fro. You can wonder out loud about what they’re carrying, where they’re going, and what they’re going to do when they get there.

Why not set up a bird feeder near a window? Even small babies enjoy the sight of colorful, fluttering wings.

An older child can help prepare a peanut butter and birdseed ball for the feathered visitors.

Even the idea of a bath can be made fun and interesting by considering how other creatures take a bath—the robin who jumps into the outside birdbath or a handy puddle and the cat who patiently and carefully washes her face each morning with her paw and tongue.

Most parents know more about nature than they think—and the child in your home is just waiting to hear the fascinating stories you have to tell. □

Discipline

Discipline with kindness

Around three years of age, children are able to understand an explanation of right and wrong. Younger children may know the difference but have difficulty understanding how discipline is related to their misbehavior.

A three-year-old, however, is able to understand the relationship between her misbehavior and the form of discipline you choose to impose.

Keep this in mind the next time you reprimand your three-year-old. Think about how you would feel if you were in her shoes.

Would you feel hurt, misunderstood, or angry if people treated you the way you are treating her?

Or would you feel they understood your point of view even though they weren’t pleased with

what you had done?

If someone yelled at you or made you feel bad because you’d misbehaved, what would you learn from the experience?

Would you learn to commit acts for which you were punished when you thought you could get away with it?

Would you learn to hide the truth from your parents or caregivers in order to avoid punishment?

Wouldn’t you prefer that your child trust you rather than be afraid of you?

Wouldn’t you prefer that she learn not to do something because she understands why it’s wrong rather than from fear of punishment?

A good rule would be to treat children of all ages as you would like to be treated. □

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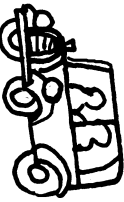



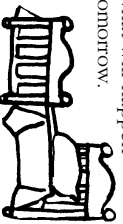
Growing Child also publishes: **Growing Child** (birth-six years), and **Growing Up** (grades K-12).

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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

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Take turns humming a song and then guessing its title.</p> 	<p>2</p> <p>Look for things outside that are really yellow.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Election Day</p> 	<p>4</p> <p>Send a letter to an elderly friend.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Wear something purple today.</p> 	<p>6</p> <p>Any marshmallows in the house? Count the number you find. Maybe you could have some hot chocolate to go with the marshmallows.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Talk about the television shows, videos and CDs you watch. What could you do instead of watching TV?</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Can you wink one eye? Try it.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Draw a picture of a really fantastic bug!</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>Talk about what you did today.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Veterans Day</p> 	<p>12</p> <p>Gather some rocks. Line them up by size.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Sing: <i>She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain.</i></p> 	<p>14</p> <p>Pretend it's summer! Spread a blanket on the floor and have an indoor picnic!</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Learn a new word today.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Many cartoons characters originated in storybooks. Ask the librarian to show you some of them, like <i>Curtious George</i>.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Find a hill to climb.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Get a group together and pick up litter in your neighborhood.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Do you have winter birds? Watch for them outside.</p> 	<p>20</p> <p>Show the baby how a stuffed animal can sing and dance.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Make a pretend car out of a large cardboard box.</p> 
<p>22</p> <p>Check toys in the toybox and the house to make sure there are no sharp or broken points or other broken parts that could be harmful.</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Count your ears and toes.</p> <p>1 2 3 4</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Play with a Frisbee.™</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Give somebody a helping hand with a chore today.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Thanksgiving</p> 	<p>27</p> <p>Eid-al-Adha</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Visit a pet store and look at all the fish.</p>
<p>29</p> <p>At bedtime, talk about what will happen tomorrow.</p> 	<p>30</p> <p>Birthday of Winston Churchill. Who was he?</p>	