



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Academics

A start on telling time

When your child is hungry and impatient with the speed of mealtime preparations, point to the large hand of the clock and say to her, "We will have dinner when this big hand gets to the top (or bottom) of the clock."

Point to where the hand will be as you say this.

Then make every effort to meet this prediction accurately.

If she is not familiar with the clock, you will have to explain that the hand does move, but too slowly for her to see it.

Don't try to teach her hours and minutes at first. This is difficult even for some first graders to understand, though by kindergarten many children will understand the concept of hours. □

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Toys

Save those boxes!

If the supply of boxes is generous and constant, most children will be delighted to show parents how inventive they can be. For example: babies crawl into boxes, sit and grin. Sometimes they get stuck and cry. Then they learn how to back out.

Big brothers and sisters occasionally think of putting a string through a hole punched in a box. Then babies can pull boxes. Toddlers think boxes are cars. They think very big boxes are houses.

Ask at a local appliance store for a big box that used to contain a refrigerator. This big box will make a dandy puppet theater where the main character is a fierce shoebox crocodile (the box top is the lower jaw).

Some little boxes fit over hands for hand puppets. Some tiny boxes fit over fingers for finger puppets.

Middle-sized boxes fit over heads, with holes for eyes. Other boxes can make a whole suit of armor where the body pieces are attached by string at the joints. There's also a visor hinged with a string to go up and down.

Of course, there's a whole

world that can be made of miniature boxes—houses, farms for small animals, outer space cities that on closer inspection bulge with exotic cosmetic boxes, cheese boxes and toilet paper tubes. Elmer's™ glue holds it all together.

Oatmeal boxes make rockets. A paper plate with a wedge-shaped section cut out can be bent into a nose cone (plus some tape to hold it together).

Remember cigar boxes? They still make them.

Eggs come in boxes (get the molded kind instead of the folded kind). And egg box caterpillars are easy—kids can tear one strip of bumps from the molded box, draw eyes, and there it is.

Why not start a really fun project everybody can work on: a dollhouse. First, pile up boxes, one for each room. Glue them together, cut doors and windows, fold a piece of corrugated cardboard into a V for the roof.

Bend cardboard into a zigzag, wallpaper with ... no, the rest of the fun is up to you. □

Tips for getting kids to bed

Here are some ideas that may help at bedtime:

- Have a set bedtime. “When the big hand is on the seven” or “When the clock says these numbers” can be part of the routine. In this way, the clock, not the parent, is announcing the time to retire.

A warning of “ten minutes until bath time” is also useful so that fun isn’t suddenly interrupted.

- Minimize television and rowdy activities close to sleeping time. Allow the day to slowly and quietly wind down.

- A routine works wonders. For instance, a warm, calm bath followed by a ritual goodnight to the spider plant, the clock, grandma and grandpa in a picture, the dog, the piano, the sofa ...

If you keep it up long enough,

you may find yourself yawning. And speaking of yawns, a few of those don’t hurt either.

- If necessary, provide a small nightlight, a quiet radio, or a trusted companion.

Nick, age five, has a stuffed penguin fully a foot taller than he is, and no doubt Penny the Penguin helps keep away those things that go bump in the night.

- If your child doesn’t fall asleep at once, there’s no harm in reading or playing quietly in bed even after “bedtime.”

A child can’t go to sleep on demand any more than an adult can. But often, if you tiptoe in only ten or fifteen minutes later, you’ll find your youngster has been overtaken by the sandman.

Then just switch off the light and whisper, “Sweet dreams ...”

□

Developmental

Every child has the potential to be creative

Creativity is the way in which a child uses his special gifts to express what is unique about him.

Creativity is not something reserved only for certain people, although many adults have never learned a means through which they can share with others their own unique outlook on life.

Creativity is self-expression. It is a basic human need. People who have never developed their gifts so that they can express who they are can feel a sense of frustration and lack of fulfillment.

You can help your child develop his talents so that he can express them creatively.

There is no other human being who is just like him. He comes into the world with the seed of potential gifts that will make him different from anyone else.

He will respond in his own special way to each experience he has. He will be drawn to some things and people over others.

And with the opportunity and your encouragement, he will learn to express what he thinks and feels about life in his own special ways. □

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.

Two kinds of discipline

Parents frequently ask, “When do I start disciplining? Or “How do I discipline?”

You start disciplining a child as soon as she can understand **why** you are doing it and **learn** from the experience.

The earliest age is about one and a half, although some children may be nearer two before they really respond.

Discipline is a word that is often associated with a child’s bad behavior. It usually involves punishing the child for the behavior with the hope that she will not do it again.

A good example of such behavior would be if your child ran into a busy street each time you let her out of the house.

Since the results of being hit by a car are quite serious, this kind of action has to be stopped.

There is, however, another form of discipline that parents can teach their children. It involves training a child to control her behavior, desires and emotions in order to reach a certain goal.

That goal might be good grades in school, success in sports, arts, or a craft.

Self-discipline becomes even more important when a child becomes a young adult. It is the disciplined teenager who can successfully resist the attractions of alcohol, drugs, or skipping school.

How do you teach this second form of discipline?

- Start as early as you do with the first type.
- Encourage your child not to give up on a task just because it is hard or long.
- Show by example that practice and work pays off with increased rewards.

These rewards have to be readily seen at first in the form of praise, a favorite treat, extra allowance, and so on. Later the reward of “doing well” is all that is needed.

So, remember both types of discipline — the first type that keeps your child out of trouble, and the second type that teaches her how to live successfully.

Both are equally important; both require you, as a parent, to teach them. □

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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.

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Taking advantage of transition time

Most families spend a great deal of time “getting there.”

Some examples are time in the car, getting ready for school, getting ready for bed, meal preparation time, and bathing.

These are transition times. It is during these times that relationships are built.

You have a choice during each transition time. You can treat it like a task and be interested only in getting it done, or you can make some of these transition times “relationship building” times.

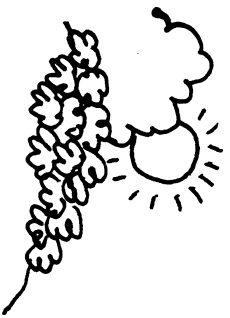






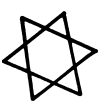

You might want to schedule five minutes extra for bath time so you can play “boat” with your child.

You can talk about your day when you pick up your youngster so he, in turn, will feel comfortable about talking about his day.

While moving from here to there in the car, you might use the time for casual conversation instead of talking about chores to do when you get home.

There seems to be a feeling of safeness for children in a car, which enables them to bring up important things ... if you listen. □

September, 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<p>1 Play an imitation game: Make a sound and everyone guess what it is.</p>	<p>2 V-J Day. What does this mean?</p>	<p>3 Look for shapes on your clothes. Can you find any circles or squares?</p>	<p>4 Name four things that are hot and four things that are cold.</p> 	<p>5 Try some yellow squash for dinner.</p>
<p>6 Look at family photo-graphs..</p>	<p>7 Labor Day. Picnic time!</p> 	<p>8 Draw a face on your fingertip. Now you have a finger puppet!</p>	<p>9 Tidy someone's sock drawer.</p> 	<p>10 Find two really ugly tee shirts.</p>	<p>11 Go outside and look for grasshoppers. What color are they?</p>	<p>12 Wear a hat today.</p>
<p>13 National Grandparents Day. Give your grandparents a call.</p> 	<p>14 Find a piece of paper that is not white.</p>	<p>15 Look in the mirror at your eyebrows. Make them go up and down.</p> 	<p>16 Name three things to eat that are good for you.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	<p>17 What shape is the sun? A smiley face? A coin?</p> 	<p>18 Make some lemonade.</p>	<p>19 Rosh Hashanah.</p> 
<p>20 Play with a funnel in the bathtub..</p>	<p>21 Eid-Al-Fitr</p>	<p>22 Pudding makes a fun (and edible) fingerprint.</p>	<p>23 Listen to the ocean in a sea shell.</p>	<p>24 Dumbo is a famous: -----</p>	<p>25 Play with a toy that makes noise.</p>	<p>26 Sweep the sidewalk.</p>
<p>27 What color are a piano's keys?</p>	<p>28 Yom Kippur</p> 	<p>29 Draw a picture of a friend.</p>	<p>30 Play "Guess Which Hand."</p> 