



Badlands Head Start: PRENATAL TO FIVE



March/April 2017 **Newsletter**

Upcoming Dates

March 22nd	Policy Council Meeting
March 23rd	TREC Board Meeting
April 17th	No Centers
April 19th	Policy Council Meeting
April 20th	TREC Board Meeting
April 24th	No center in Belle Fourche

The Week of the Young Child

The Week of the Young Child™ is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world's largest early childhood education association, with nearly 80,000 members and a network of over 300 local, state, and regional affiliates.

NAEYC first established the Week of the Young Child™ in 1971, recognizing that the early childhood years (birth through age 8) lay the foundation for children's success in school and later life. The Week of the Young Child™ is a time to plan how we—as citizens of a community, of a state, and of a nation—will better meet the needs of all young children and their families.

Today we know more than ever before about the importance of children's earliest years in shaping their learning and development. Yet, never before have the needs of young children and their families been more pressing.

The Week of the Young Child™ is a time to recognize that children's opportunities are our responsibilities, and to recommit ourselves to ensuring that each and every child experiences the type of early environment—at home, at child care, at school, and in the community—that will promote their early learning.

Join us by celebrating the Week of the Young Child April 24-28. The themes for the days are:

- Music Monday!
- Tasty Tuesday
- Work Together Wednesday
- Artsy Thursday
- Family Friday

Activity ideas can be found throughout this newsletter, as well as on the NAEYC website:
<https://www.naeyc.org/woyc>

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn

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The Week of the Young Child—Music Monday!

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

Activity Idea - Supporting Math Readiness through Music

Music is one of the first ways children experience math. Without thinking, our bodies react to music. When we hear music, we rock our babies, tap our foot, or clap along. These responses are reactions to musical elements such as steady beat, rhythm, and melody, all of which reflect mathematical concepts. Even the youngest of children can respond to music and the mathematical principles behind it. Here are three musical elements that relate to math and some activity ideas to try at home.

Steady Beat is what you respond to when you hear music and start tapping your toe. The steady beat is repetitive and evenly spaced. Listen to “Old MacDonald,” “Bingo,” or “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” and you will hear the steady beat.

How it relates to mathematics: Emphasizing the steady beat by clapping or moving to the music supports children’s development of one-to-one correspondence. *One-to-one correspondence* is matching up one thing with something else, such as one clap for each syllable. Clapping to the steady beat also is a way to emphasize the *math concept of “more.”* Through music, toddlers can show they understand what “more” means even when they do not yet understand numbers. For example, if you clap once and then ask, “Can you clap more than I clapped?” a toddler will most likely clap more than once.

Activities to try: While singing a song, emphasize the words that fall on the beat by stomping or clapping on each beat. You can have your child stomp or clap harder on the downbeat (most accented note in each measure).

To work on one-to-one correspondence, try having your child repeat a basic clapping sequence. Ask, “Can you clap as many times as I do?” As your child gets better at this, you can add rhythm to your clapping.

Songs that build on themselves help children grasp the idea of “more.” After each verse or every few verses you can ask, “What’s next?” or “Should we sing more?” Songs that invite children to join in with each verse also promote this concept.

Rhythm is similar to, but different from the steady beat. A song’s rhythm varies, while the steady beat is constant.

How it relates to mathematics: Rhythm helps children learn to recognize *one-to-one correspondence* and to identify and predict distinct *patterns*. Being able to recognize and anticipate rhythmic patterns helps children remember or predict the words to a song or a rhythmic story.

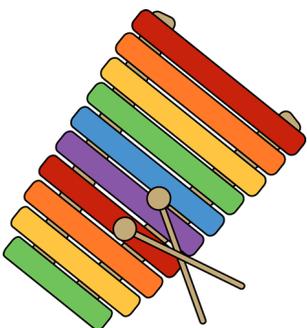
Activities to try: Even newborns can learn about rhythm as their parents sing lullabies to them. Rock with your child while you sing, and pat gently on your child’s back so that he can simultaneously hear and feel the patterns in the music. If the words themselves make a pattern, your child can also see a pattern in your mouth movements.

Invite toddlers and preschoolers to repeat, predict, and/or extend rhythmic patterns. For example, sing “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” with your toddler. Stop after “With a moo moo here,” and wait for your child to repeat the phrase or extend the pattern of the song by adding “and a moo moo there.”

Melody is the movement from one note to another, or in other words, the tune. Consider the familiar song “Old MacDonald Had a Farm,” focusing on the repetitive pattern “E-I-E-I-O.” You may notice that the first E and I are repeated on a higher note, the next E and I are repeated on a lower note, and the O is sung on an even a lower note. This is the song’s melody.

How it relates to mathematics: Children can use melodies to recognize *patterns*, such as how notes are repeated within a song.

Activities to try: Offer instruments like a xylophone (or piano, if you have one in your home), shaker, drum, or even a pot and a wooden spoon to play a song. Ask your child to play her instrument at a specific note of a simple song (such as on “star” of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”) as you play the rest.



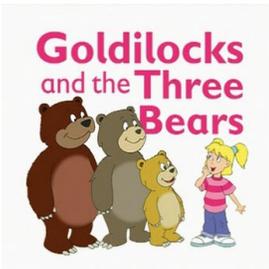
The Week of the Young Child—Tasty Tuesday

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

Activity Idea - Read and Eat

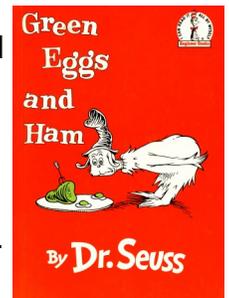
Cooking offers a way to bring what we learn from books into our daily life. While cooking we build relationships, engage the senses, and develop literacy and math skills.

Many classic children's stories lend themselves to cooking with children. Here are some examples:



Goldilocks and the Three Bears: The story of the Three Bears is a predictable story and one easily sequenced by young children due to the repetition (Papa Bear's big items, Mama Bear's middle sized things and Baby Bear's tiny things). Sequencing is a skill that is needed in daily life, as well as in reading and math comprehension. And of course this story begs for a porridge meal (oatmeal, cream of wheat, etc.) Children will, of course, want theirs "Just right," just like Goldilocks.

Green Eggs and Ham, by: Dr. Seuss: Add a little green food coloring into scrambled eggs for your child after reading the book together. If your picky eater doesn't like the look of green eggs, ask him "Would you eat them in the boat? Would you eat them with a goat?" He may reply, "I do not like green eggs and ham. I do not like them, Sam I Am." Who can deny Dr. Seuss as the king of rhyme? Learning to rhyme is a skill needed before children learn to read. Many adults remember the rhymes from Dr. Seuss books and making time to rhyme with children is a fun way to learn this skill.



Pancakes, Pancakes, by: Eric Carle:

This book illustrates the old fashion way to make

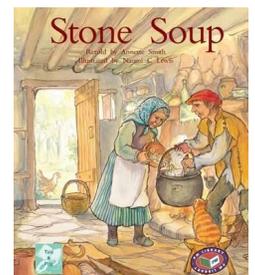


pancakes beginning with graining the flour. Take the time to make pancakes from scratch with your child. Foster writing and math skills by creating a pictorial version of your pancake recipe with your child. Make simple drawings to depict ingredients. For example, you can say: "We used one egg, Can you make a drawing that shows how many eggs we need for this recipe?"

Pancakes from Scratch

- 1) In a large bowl, mix 1 cup of flour with 1 tablespoon of sugar.
- 2) Beat in 1 egg.
- 3) Gradually mix in 3/4 cup of milk into the mixture until the batter is smooth.
- 4) Melt butter in a hot pan, and then pour the batter into the pan.
- 5) When the batter begins to bubble, flip it over and let it cook until golden brown.

Stone Soup: The classic story, *Stone Soup*, tells about a weary traveler who arrives in a village hungry and without food. None of the villagers wish to share food with him until he says he can make soup from a stone. The villagers offer first an onion, and finally some juicy beef bones. Whenever you make soup, turn it into stone soup. Together you can chant "Soup from a stone. Fancy that?" and "It tastes good now but it would taste better if we had some juicy beef bones." This book also allows for a discussion of generosity.



The Week of the Young Child—Work Together Wednesday

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

Activity Idea - 10 Prop Boxes for Learning

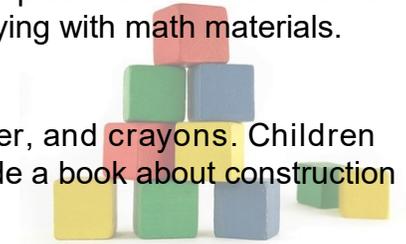
Bring the spirit of learning centers into your home with prop boxes—plastic bins or cardboard shoe boxes you fill with materials and props related to one topic, such as math or writing. Label the prop boxes with words *and* a picture of what's inside, so your child can easily identify the one they want to use. Store the boxes in a closet or even under a bed. If your child has never experienced an activity such as water play, introduce him to the activity and model the use of materials in the prop box by playing along for awhile.



Take cues from your child. If she wants to draw, bring the appropriate prop box to a table and let her explore and make her own discoveries. The same goes for music or playing with math materials.

Here are 10 ideas:

1. Blocks: Store blocks in plastic tubs, along with a clipboard, paper, and crayons. Children can create buildings and roads, then make signs to go with them. Include a book about construction that your child can look through for ideas.



2. Pretend play: Fill a box with clothes, and accessories to make children's pretend play more exciting and elaborate. You can create separate prop boxes for different play themes—for example, a small briefcase, paper, and pens for a prop box related to office play. Let the children's interests and imaginations guide their selection of clothes and props.

3. Art: Keep a box handy with different types of paper and drawing and painting materials. Add safety scissors and paste, so children can make collages or experiment with other art techniques.

4. Math: Include board games and puzzles. Add empty egg cartons or ice cube trays and materials for sorting, like buttons. Add materials that children can use in inventing their own games—paper, crayons, and dice, along with pennies or buttons to use as player pieces. Add a ruler, a tape measure, and other items for measuring size and distance.

5. Reading: Store books and magazines your child will enjoy in a basket that can be carried around the house or even outdoors. At bedtime your child can move the book basket near his bed for easy bedtime reading. You might also set aside a shelf in your child's room.

6. Writing center: Fill a basket with paper, markers, notebooks, pens, pencils, envelopes, a ruler, stationery, and note cards. Your child can set up the writing center wherever she wants to write.

7. Water play: The bathtub and the kitchen sink are logical locations. A small basin on top of a trash bag and towel on the floor can also work. Fill a plastic container with props such as sponges, basters, strainers, and cups so your child can learn the different ways the objects interact with water.

8. Cooking: Store a child-size apron, a collection of favorite recipes, and unbreakable bowls and utensils in a low kitchen drawer. Invite your children to join in while you prepare meals and snacks. Get them in the habit of washing their hands before and after handling foods.

9. Music: Use oatmeal containers, old yogurt cups, and other materials you have on hand to make homemade instruments (like a rainstick or a drum) with your children. Store these instruments in a box and add other items, like castanets or maracas. Children love to create music.

10. Science: Make science a routine activity by filling a box with a few investigation tools, such as magnets, prisms, a magnifying glass, and binoculars. Also put in a clipboard, paper, and crayons or pencils. Take a walk to collect natural items, then invite your child to investigate them using the tools. Ask questions such as "What do you think might happen?" to help them observe and make predictions.

The Week of the Young Child—Artsy Thursday

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

Activity Idea - Playdough Power

Squishing, rolling, sculpting, and molding playdough are a fun way for your child to learn. Playdough allows children to use their imaginations and strengthen the small muscles in their fingers—the same muscles they will one day use to hold a pencil and write. Using playdough with family, or friends supports your child's social skills such as sharing, and taking turns. Playdough also encourages children's language, literacy, science, and math skills—all at the same time!

Homemade or out of a can, playdough can provide hours of fun and learning. Besides the playdough, all you need are a clear surface, a few household items that can be used as props (to either add to a creation or to create impressions in the playdough), and lots of time for fun.

When children use playdough, they explore ideas and try different approaches until they find one that works. They compare and contrast objects, actions, and experiences. In their experimenting, children come up with their own ideas, satisfy their curiosity, analyze, and solve problems. These are all skills that help children learn and succeed in school. By having family members or friends play and discuss with them, conversation can be lead to focus on vocabulary building (introducing new words), mathematical concepts (such as comparing and shapes), science (such as cause and effect), and literacy (creating stories, or shaping letters).

Playing with Playdough helps children with:

- Social and Emotional Development
- Creativity and Imagination
- Learning Language and Literacy
- Learning Science
- Learning Math
- Physical Development

Playdough Props

- Cookie Cutters
- Buttons
- Blocks
- Small toy animals/people
- Toothpicks (older children)
- Twigs
- Plastic forks, spoons, knives

On-Cloud-9-Playdough

Ingredients:

- 1 cup water
- Food coloring
- 6 cups flour
- 1 cup vegetable oil

Mix water and food coloring in a bowl.
Your child may wish to drop in the food coloring and watch it spread.

Add flour and oil to the bowl, then stir with a wooden spoon. Knead until smooth.

To reuse the playdough, store in the refrigerator in an airtight container.

Kool-aid Playdough

Ingredients:

- 3 Tbsp. oil
- 2 cups boiling water
- 3 cups flour
- ½ cup salt
- 2 pkg Kool-aid

Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl, then add the oil and boiling water. Stir and knead until it makes an elastic consistency. You may have to add more flour depending on the texture.

You can store this in a zip lock bag for weeks.

Bouncy Playdough

Ingredients:

- 2 cups baking soda
- 1 1/2 cup water
- 1 cup cornstarch

Place ingredients in a bowl and mix with a fork.

The adult then places the mixture in a saucepan and brings to a boil on medium heat. Stir constantly with a spoon until thick.

To reuse the playdough, store at room temperature in an airtight container.

The Week of the Young Child—Family Friday

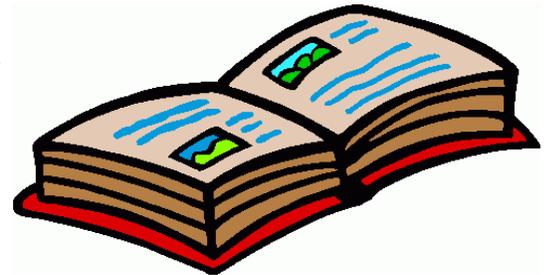
Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

Activity Idea - 8 Tips for Making Homemade Books

Does your infant or toddler enthusiastically point out images of herself on your computer? Does your preschooler ask you to repeat stories about him over and over? A powerful way to interest young children in reading books is to make books about their routines, families, life events and vacations. It's a keepsake for you and a conversation starter for your child. It's also an inexpensive way to help your child learn to love books.

Here are some tips for homemade book making:

- 1. Include photos of familiar people and objects to connect the book's contents with real life.** Take pictures of family members, your child's favorite toys, and other familiar things to help your children talk and learn more about their world.
- 2. Keep it simple and short.** A few photos on white pages with simple text make the book easy for a young child to follow. Clip art, stickers and scrapbooking decoration can be distracting. Keep the page content minimal.
- 3. Very young children find it hard to turn thin paper pages.** You can buy thicker card stock at most stationary stores and glue your own images over cardboard pages. Using lamination or plastic page protectors are other ways to make pages thicker.
- 4. Preschoolers may enjoy co-authoring books with you.** They can draw pictures and dictate text. You can ask questions to encourage them to add more ideas and you can write down what they say. Writing together helps children feel their stories are worthwhile and coaches them to think about the components of storytelling such as the concept of beginning, middle and end. You are also showing them that written words have meaning to people.
- 5. Children enjoy being able to predict what's next.** Repetition and rhyme help children with this skill. You can even make your book similar to your child's favorite book. For example, if Thomas loves *Brown Bear* you could write, "*Thomas, Thomas, what do you see?*"
- 6. Choose your topic based on your child's needs and interests.** If you are moving, make a book about moving. If your child is anxious about the daily routine make a book about that. If your child loves trains, make a book about your visit to the train station.
- 7. Read your book with your child.** Ask open-ended questions about the people, places and stories on the pages.
- 8. Be playful.** Show your child that books and learning are fun!



The activity ideas for the Week of the Young Child came from the NAEYC website:

www.naeyc.org/woyc

Visit the site for additional activity ideas.

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn

2016 Tax Prep Information

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

Items you will need:

- ◇ Valid ID
- ◇ Social security cards (personal, and for all dependents being claimed)
- ◇ 2015 Tax Returns (for verification of additional information)
- ◇ All forms (W2s, 1098s, 1099s, etc)
- ◇ Identification for Child Care Provider (if claiming)
- ◇ Identification for deductions and credits (if claiming)
- ◇ Bank Routing Number and Checking or Savings Account number (necessary if you anticipate a refund and would like it direct deposited)



VITA free tax prep is for families with a gross income below \$54,000 looking for a simple tax return.

Locations:

Where: Black Hills State University, Spearfish, Jonas Hall Computer Room 205

Appointments: Walk in only

Dates/Times: Mondays and Wednesdays from 2 PM to 7 PM between February 27th and March 29th. Closed the week of March 6th to 8th.

Parking: Before 4 PM, you must park in visitor parking. After 4 PM, you may park anywhere.

Where: Lakota Funds Office in Kyle, and mobile sites throughout the reservation

Appointments: By appointment only. Call Inez Spencer at 605-455-2500.

Dates/Times: After January 23rd, 2017. Call 605-455-2500 to schedule an appointment.

Update from Butte County

It is almost SPRING!!! We have been very lucky this winter. We have had some beautiful days to get outside. So I am going to give you two activities for outside and one for inside that you can do with your children. (We all know we are good for at least one more snow before May.)

Michele Kreuzer-Ranken — Butte Co. Area Service Manager

Activity Idea - Crayon Rubbing

Take a walk with your child and collect different shape and textured objects. It can be leaves, twigs, rocks, etc.

Bring them home and then take thin white paper and place over one or two of the objects. Then, rubbing the paper with the side of the crayon help your children make an imprint of the objects.



When you are done you can talk about the different textures and designs that were made.

This is a fun way to increase fine and gross motor skills.

Activity Idea - Wash Em Up

You will need: a bucket, large clean paint brush, some water, and other cleaning supplies like clean rags or sponges. (You can also include child safe toys or objects to clean).

Fill the bucket with water.

Take your child outside and teach them how to paint using the water and brush.

Then let them explore the other cleaning items and watch them use them the way your child sees you use them. They can even have fun cleaning their toys.



This increases language skills, gross motor skills, and eye hand coordination.

Activity Idea - Finger Puppets

You will need old cotton or rubber gloves, scissors, and markers.

Cut off the fingers of an old glove to make finger puppets. Use marking pen to draw on faces. You can also add other details with fabric scraps and glue.

Then have a puppet show.

This increases language and fine motor skills.

Michele Kreuzer-Ranken — Butte Co. Area Service Manager



Harding and Perkins Happenings

Greetings from Harding and Perkins Counties!

Each community has been hit with the flu bug this past month, but hopefully everyone is on the mend and the flu bug has flown away for the season!

Bison Center students enjoy playing in snow when the temperature allows, visits to the library, celebrating friendship day, and had special guests come to center to teach the children about dental awareness. The children have enjoyed “shopping” at the H-S grocery store that is set up at in the dramatic play area of the center, as well as mastering the pre-kindergarten skills they work on every day.

Along with daily pre-K academic skills, Lemmon center teachers have made indoor play fun and exciting for the students when the temperatures are too cold to go outside by setting up a coffee shop in the dramatic play area, playing instruments, reading books, and exploring sensory items.

Amber, our Perkins County Early Head Start home visitor, continues to provide fun and educational services to the families she serves, as well as providing information and resources for the parents. Socials for HS and EHS in Lemmon are March 13th and 20th at 5:30pm.

Harding County is in the process of hiring new home visitors for EHS and HS, so hopefully our home based program will be up and running again after the delay of services. I want to thank all the families for their patience as we go through this process, and get new staff on board! HC socials in March are the 7th from 9-11am and the 21st from 3-5pm.

Ruth Adams

Area Services Manager Harding and Perkins counties



Children at the Lemmon Center learning how to take care of Gidget, the class’s pet guinea pig.



Song Corner

Singing songs and doing finger plays support children's language development. It helps children build their vocabularies which will aid them later on as they begin to learn to read.



If it's Windy

by Jean Warren

(To the tune of "If you're Happy and You Know It")

If it's windy and you know it, swing and sway.
If it's windy and you know it, swing and sway.

If it's windy and you know it,
Then your clothes will surely show it.

If it's windy and you know it, swing and sway.

If it's sunny and you know it, then go play.

If it's sunny and you know it, then go play.

If it's sunny and you know it,
Then your clothes will surely show it.

If it's sunny and you know it, then go play.

If it's rainy and you know it, splash about.

If it's rainy and you know it, splash about.

If it's rainy and you know it,
Then your clothes will surely show it.

If it's rainy and you know it, splash about.

If it's snowy and you know it, stomp around.

If it's snowy and you know it, stomp around.

If it's snowy and you know it,
Then your clothes will surely show it.

If it's snowy and you know it, stomp around.

The Weather Dance

by Jean Warren

(To the tune of "Frere Jacques")

It is snowing, it is snowing
Falling down, falling down.

Gently, gently floating,
Gently, gently floating,
To the ground, to the ground.

It is raining, it is raining
Falling down, falling down.

Pitter, pitter, patter,
Pitter, pitter, patter,
Splashing down, on the ground.

It is windy, it is windy,
Watch it blow, watch it blow

Twirling round and round,
Jumping 'cross the ground,
See it blow, to and fro.

It is sunny, it is sunny,
All around, all around,
Spreading lots of sunshine,
Making shadows sometimes,
On the ground, on the ground.

5 Little Raindrops

Five little raindrops
plopping on the floor,
One plopped away,
and then there were four.

Four little raindrops
dripping on the trees,
One dripped away,
and then there were three.

Three little raindrops
splashing on my shoe,
One splashed away,
and then there were two.

Two little raindrops
starting to run,
One ran off,
and then there was one.

One little raindrop
drying in the sun,
It dried all up,
and then there were none!



The Rainbow

by Jean Warren

(To the Tune of "Jingle Bells")

The sun is shining,
The sun is shining,
Shining all around
Can you see the shadows -
it makes upon the ground?

Rain is falling,
Rain is falling,
From the clouds up high
Can you see the rainbow -
it makes up in the sky?

Message from Melissa

This time of year can feel a bit crazy with the weather shifting from 65 degrees one day to snowing and blowing again the next. This month's newsletter focuses on weather activities you and your child can do together.

MAKING MUD

Making mud outdoors is always fun for young children and educational. Through playing with dirt and water, your child will learn important science concepts about how dirt and water interact with one another, as well as, develop your child's five senses. If it's a little too cold outside, bring the fun inside! Bring in an extra-large container of dirt and let your child help sift it to remove stones, twigs, leaves, and other items. You can set the nature items aside to use later in a collage or as a sorting activity. In an old plastic dishpan, or similar container, help your child stir the dirt with water, starting with a combination of three parts dirt to two parts water and adjusting the amounts as necessary. Invite your child to explore the mud with his or her hands and fingers: How does it feel? What does it look like? Sound like? Smell like? This is an activity that can keep your child busy for hours!



CLOUD ART



Have your child create cloud art with cotton balls, paper, and glue. Simply have your child stretch out some cotton balls and glue them onto a piece of paper. If you have crayons or markers available, have your child draw a picture to go with the clouds. If you don't have paper available, you can use paper bags or cardboard. If you don't have glue, you can make paste by following the recipe.

No Cook Paste

Ingredients:

1/2 cup flour, water, and salt

Directions:

- 1) In a bowl, mix flour with enough water to make a mixture that's gooey, but not runny.
- 2) Add a pinch of salt and stir.

WIND WALK

On the next windy day, take your child outside for a walk. Together, look for all the things the wind is moving around.



- Can you see a flag blowing in the wind?
- Is there a leaf being pushed along the road?
- Are the tree branches swaying?
- Stand still for a moment and enjoy the feeling of the wind blowing across your face.

Help your child understand that even though the wind is invisible, we can still see the effects of the wind.

BE THE WIND

Let your child pretend to be the wind. Place several cotton balls on a table. Have your child sit or kneel so that he can blow across the top of the table, sending the cotton balls off the table with his breath. You can use other items such as leaves, feathers, etc. You can make it more challenging by placing heavier items such as small twigs or rocks on the table as well. These items will require your child to blow harder to make them move. You can also turn this into a math activity by counting the number of objects with your child, sorting objects by lightest to heaviest, or by using a ruler or measuring tape to measure how far your child blew various items across the table.

Misty Wilbur

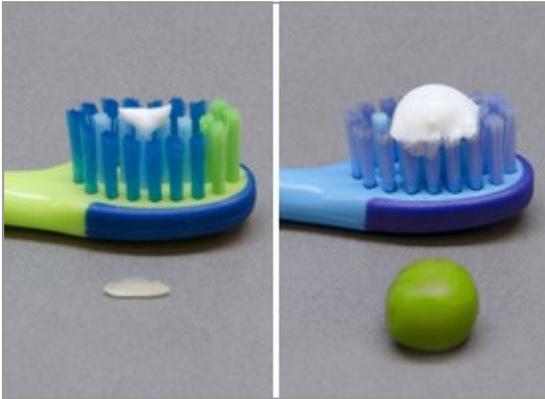
Health/Nutrition/
Safety Specialist

Health Corner

Brianne Sambo

Health/Safety Coordinator

Healthy Habits

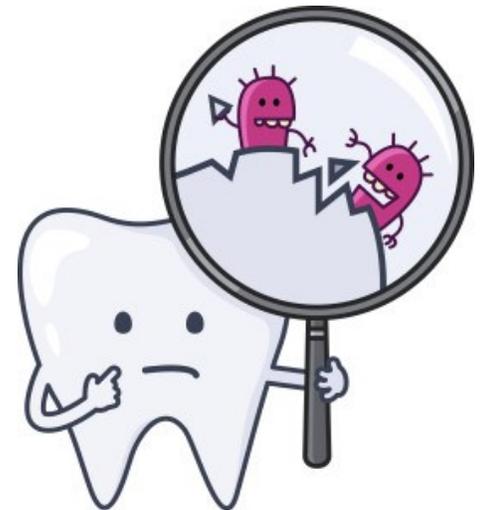


Your child's baby teeth are at risk for decay as soon as they first appear—which is typically around age 6 months. Tooth decay in infants and toddlers is often referred to as Baby Bottle Tooth Decay. It most often occurs in the upper front teeth, but other teeth may also be affected. In some cases, infants and toddlers experience decay so severe that their teeth cannot be saved and need to be removed.

The good news is that tooth decay is preventable! Most children have a full set of 20 baby teeth by the time they are 3-years-old. As your child grows, their jaws also grow, making room for their permanent teeth.

Cleaning Your Child's Teeth

- Begin cleaning your baby's mouth during the first few days after birth by wiping the gums with a clean, moist gauze pad or washcloth. As soon as teeth appear, decay can occur. A baby's front four teeth usually push through the gums at about 6 months of age, although some children don't have their first tooth until 12 or 14 months.
- Until you're comfortable that your child can brush on his or her own, continue to brush your child's teeth twice a day with a child-size toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. When your child has two teeth that touch, you should begin flossing their teeth daily.
- For children younger than 3 years, caregivers should begin brushing children's teeth as soon as they begin to come into the mouth by using fluoride toothpaste in an amount no more than a smear or the size of a grain of rice. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day (morning and night) or as directed by a dentist or physician. Supervise children's brushing to ensure that they use the appropriate amount of toothpaste.



- For children 3 to 6 years of age, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day (morning and night) or as directed by a dentist or physician. Supervise children's brushing and remind them not to swallow the toothpaste.

Your Child's Mental Health

"It's My Turn!"

Does this phrase sound all too familiar? How about "It's mine" or "I want it!" If you've spent time with a toddler or preschooler for a good length of time, you're familiar with these types of phrases all too well. So how do we get our child to learn how to self regulate and what exactly does that mean anyway?

Emotionally, self-regulation is the ability to calm yourself down when you're upset and cheer yourself up when you're down. It's the ability for a child to manage their behaviors, thoughts and emotions in a successful way. Not an easy task for a 3 or 4 year old! Yet one of the most important skills that help predict future success at school and even in the work place. It's normal for young children to react to situations that occur with impulsivity. However, we know impulsive actions are often not the best in solving problems. With a little impulsivity the above mentioned scenarios can often look like this...

"It's my turn."- the child pushes in front of the child ahead of him.

"It's mine."- the child grabs the toy truck from his friend.

"I want it!"- the child begins to scream loudly and stomp her feet.



We must remember that self regulation doesn't occur magically and it definitely takes time for children to grow and learn how to implement this important, but rather complex skill. So how as adults can we learn to help? Well, like most other things, we must first be great role models! Show your child what good self regulation looks like. When you're stressed, tired, hungry, angry, etc. tell them and show them how you relax and regulate yourself rather than reacting in an impulsive or hurtful way. Help them learn how to change their internal thermostat. Helping them to calm down first enables them to think more clearly and face the situation at hand without acting in a harmful way.



Try using the analogy of your child's body being like an engine in a car. If it's running too high (their heart is beating fast and they're overly excited), help them to recognize this and learn ways to slow their engine down. Maybe even the opposite is true. It's time for school and they seem tired and don't have enough energy. Their engine is running too slow. You may have to help them rev it up a bit! Run up and down the stairs or take a lap around the front yard.

Tips for Helping Your Child With Self Regulation

- Model self-control and self-regulation in your words and actions when you are frustrated with a situation at home.
- Provide structure and predictability. Children with self-regulation problems are internally "unstructured." The more freedom and flexibility they have, the more likely they are to demonstrate uncontrolled behaviors.
- Anticipate transitions and announce changes in your home or family schedule.
- Be careful with play dates. Pairing your child with other children who are impulsive and reactive and face the same challenges can sometimes escalate the problem.
- Don't be afraid to immediately re-direct inappropriate words and actions. Your actions will make your child feel safe and send a clear message to the rest of your family too.

Seek help if you feel things just aren't improving. Don't be afraid to discuss your child's self-regulation problems with your teacher or family doctor. Early identification and intervention can save you and your child years of stress and pain.

Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

March 2017

Badlands Head Start: Prenatal to Five



KID BITS

Practice fairness

Develop your youngster's sense of fair play with routines that encourage taking turns. To pick a board game, write family members' choices on separate slips of paper, shake in a paper bag, and draw one. Next time, draw another slip. Or assign each person a different day of the week to choose the bedtime story.

Make music together

Hold a family music night as an excuse to create a little noise together. You could play toy xylophones, tap oatmeal canisters with wooden spoons, or sing silly new words to favorite songs. You'll build memories while boosting your child's imagination and sense of rhythm.

Rub-a-dub

Bathing a doll or another washable toy is more than good clean fun. Soaping up a washcloth, rinsing out shampoo, and drying the doll will build skills your little one needs to bathe herself. Sneak in some bath-time safety, too. ("Check the water temperature to make sure it's not too hot before you put your doll in the tub.")

Worth quoting

"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known." *Carl Sagan*

Just for fun

Q: What two things can you never eat for breakfast?

A: Lunch and dinner.



Trying new things

Some children are fearless in the face of new experiences. Others, not so much. When your youngster seems hesitant to step out of his comfort zone, consider these tips.

Rehearse first

Role-play to give your child a stress-free way to prepare for something new. Perhaps he's shy about meeting the youngster who just moved in next door. Together, practice what to do and say. He could walk up to you and say, "Hi, my name is Andy. Do you want to play?" This will also help him get comfortable introducing himself to new classmates or other children in after-school activities.

Take small steps

Use a familiar experience your child enjoys as a stepping-stone to try a new one. For example, if the big playground slide seems too scary, he could try the small slide first. Next, an older sibling may offer to slide down the big one before



him. After that, you might stand by the bottom of the slide while he goes down on his own. Each small accomplishment will build his confidence.

Present choices

Your little one will be more inclined to embrace something different if he has options. Say you want him to try new vegetables or other foods. Tell him you're thinking of making either broccoli or kale with tonight's dinner—which would he prefer? Giving your youngster some control allows him to feel safe to make his own choices.♥

Paint-palooza!

Painting without a brush stretches your little artist's creativity and strengthens her hand muscles. Offer tools like these.

● **Plastic spoon.** She could dab finger paints on paper and swirl with the back of the spoon or paint with the handle.

● **Cotton swabs.** Have her use swabs with watercolors to paint in coloring books.



● **Eye dropper.** Mix food coloring in water, and let your child decorate an empty shoebox or egg carton, one drip at a time.

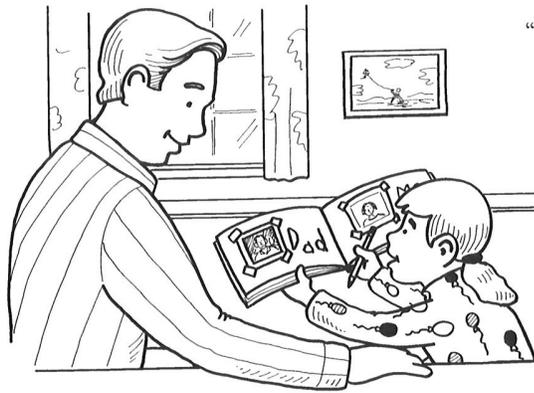
● **Sponges.** Cut sponges into shapes. Your youngster can dip them into paint and stamp onto poster board.

● **Spray bottle.** Fill a spray bottle with water, and head outside together to "spray paint" pictures on the side of your house or on a fence or sidewalk.♥

Write your name (and mine, too)

“J-e-n-n-a, that’s my name! How do you spell your name?” Learning to print names is an exciting early writing experience for your child—and an introduction to the idea that letters form words. Explore the names of people she knows with these activities.

Skywriting. Have your youngster pick a name to write—say, Abby for her big sister. As you call out each letter, she can



“write” it in the air with her finger. Remind her to use a capital A for the first letter and lowercase letters for the others.

Name puzzles. Cut bookmark-sized strips of papers, and help your child print a different name on each strip. Have her cut the names into pieces to make personalized puzzles for her family members or friends to put together.

Photo book. Gather photos of friends and relatives. Let your youngster paste each one on a separate sheet of paper and write the person’s name. Staple the pages together to make her own picture book of names. Then, she could read her “name book” to you.♥

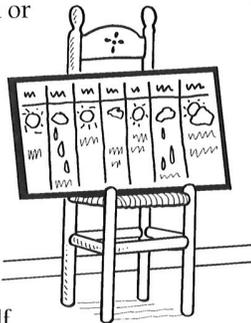
ACTIVITY CORNER



Be a weather reporter

The changing season is a perfect time to introduce your youngster to *meteorology*—the study of weather.

Together, watch or read the weather report. Encourage him to notice the current temperature and conditions, as well as tomorrow’s forecast. Then, have your child track the weather himself.



On a sheet of paper or a whiteboard, help him make seven columns and write the days of the week on top.

Every morning, let him check the weather outside and record it. On a bright day, he might draw a sun and write “Sunny” underneath. On a rainy one, he can outline raindrops and write “Rain.” As your youngster makes new weather charts each week, he’ll get a sense of weather patterns—and he may even be able to predict tomorrow’s weather!♥

Let me think...

Asking *how*, *what*, and *why* develops your child’s ability to reason and think logically or creatively. Here are ways to use questions to help him put on his thinking cap.

Request advice. When you play or do projects together, ask your youngster for instructions. “How can we get this tent to stay up?” Pose follow-up questions, too. “What should we set up next at our campsite?”

Spark imagination. Inspire thinking—and a few giggles—with questions about silly scenarios. *Examples:* “Where would cats want to go if they could fly?” or “How would you get your teacher’s attention if you were invisible?”

Seek explanations. Go beyond yes-and-no answers with questions that ask why. If your child names orange as his favorite color, encourage him to tell you why. Or if he says Joey is lucky because he’s the big brother, ask, “But why are you lucky to be the little brother?”♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Encourage dads to volunteer

When I first started volunteering at my daughter Audrey’s school, I noticed mostly moms in the classroom. I knew other fathers would enjoy spending time at school, too, so I invited Audrey’s best friend’s dad to volunteer with me. He was surprised by how great he felt helping out—and how excited his daughter was to see him there.

The word spread, and now more dads are

making time to volunteer. We do things like read to the kids, lead games on the playground, or help out with crafts. Last month, one dad brought in his plumbing tools and demonstrated how he fixes leaky faucets at his job. And next month, I’m going to lead potato sack races at field day.

Audrey is proud to see me at her school, and her friends feel the same way when their dads—or moms—volunteer.♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote school readiness, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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Early Years

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KID BITS

Spring check-in

Help your child end the school year on a great note by checking in with his teacher. Call or email to find out whether there's anything he should work on before summer, such as writing his name or sharing toys. The teacher might explain how she's supporting him in school or suggest ways to practice at home.

Safety at play

With the arrival of warmer weather, your youngster may be zipping around more on her bike or scooter. Keep her safe by making sure she always wears a helmet. Each time she puts it on, do a quick check to make sure it fits, the strap is tightened properly, and it isn't cracked or damaged.

Taming screen time

A few small changes can help trim screen time from your child's routine. Start by turning off the TV when no one is watching. If it's on in the background all day, your child will probably want to watch. Then, if he asks to play with your phone or tablet, suggest an active game like tag or hide-and-seek instead.

Worth quoting

"The important thing is not to stop questioning." *Albert Einstein*

Just for fun



Q: You can make it but never see it. What is it?

A: Noise!

Math + nature = fun

"Let's go out and play—with math!" Sticks, rocks, seeds, and leaves are a few of the "please touch" materials your youngster can use to practice counting, measuring, and making patterns. Together, gather some objects from the ground, and enjoy these math activities.

Counting

Help your little one draw 10 circles on a sidewalk with chalk and number them 1–10. Then she can fill each circle with the correct number of natural objects. She might put a single feather in the "1" circle, two leaves in the circle labeled "2," three sticks in the "3" circle, and so on. She'll practice matching each number with the amount it represents.

Measuring

Have your child choose a stick and use it to measure bigger objects. Point to a low-hanging branch and ask "how many sticks long" it is. She could measure the length by moving the stick down

the branch end to end. Also, she might find little pebbles, all the same size, and measure how many pebbles long her stick is (say, "14 pebbles long").

Pattern making

Arrange items into a pattern (twig, acorn, dandelion, twig, acorn, dandelion). Your youngster continues the pattern by adding the next three items (twig, acorn, dandelion). Next, let her start a pattern for you to continue. Another idea is to leave an item out of the middle of the pattern—the other person's job is to add the missing piece.♥



Throw a dance party

The family that wiggles together giggles together—and gets active together! Try these dance ideas.

Change the tempo. As a song plays, have one person randomly shout, "go," "slow," or "freeze." For "go," dance at top speed. For

"slow," show off your moves in s-l-o-w motion. If the leader says "freeze," everyone stops in place. Let a different dancer call out tempos for the next song.

Add a move. Stand in a circle. Your youngster does one dance move (a jump, a spin, a wiggle). The next person copies that move and adds a new one. Keep going around the circle, copying all the previous dance steps. (Help out if anyone forgets a move.) When you've all had three turns, perform the whole dance together.♥



Relying on myself

What should your child do when he makes a mistake? How can he find something to play with when he's bored? These strategies will teach your youngster to rely on himself more.

Solve problems. Oops, your youngster accidentally knocked over his sister's block tower or made crayon marks on the table. How could he fix the problem all by himself? Suggest that he pretend he's in a time machine so he can go back and "erase" what happened. He might



decide to rebuild the tower or wipe off the marks on the table. Then, it's time to put his plan into action!

Head off boredom. Does your child ask you for help because he doesn't know what to play? Together, brainstorm activities for when he's bored. *Examples:* Drape blankets over chairs to

make a cave, design "cakes" with play dough. He can illustrate a poster with the ideas and hang it on his bedroom door. If he's looking for something to do, he could pick one.♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

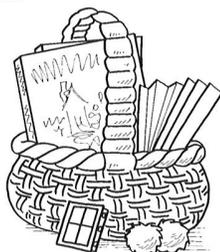
A basket full of poetry

A-tisket, a-tasket, create a poetry basket! When your youngster puts together her own poetry baskets, she will visualize what's happening in a poem and build reading comprehension skills.

Materials: children's poetry books, basket, household items

Select a poem to read aloud. Then, encourage your child to use a basket to collect objects related to the poem. If you read, "Cottony clouds seen out a window," she might get cotton balls from the bathroom and a miniature window from a block set. Or if the poem is about wind, she could fold a paper fan and wave it around to create wind.

Reread the poem, and let her use the items in her basket to act it out. She'll build reading comprehension as she follows along. Next, help your youngster read a new poem. This time, you can gather objects and act it out for her.♥



Q & A

Talk about bullying

Q: My daughter says that another girl is always mean to her at school. It sounds like bullying. What should I do?

A: First, try getting a little more information from your daughter. You might ask, "What does your classmate do that's mean?" Then, contact the teacher to share your child's concerns. The teacher can keep an eye on the situation and help you figure out what's going on.

This could be bullying, where a youngster with more "power"—perhaps she's a little older or more popular—hurts, teases, or excludes another child. Or it's possible the girls just aren't getting along.

Regardless, talk to your daughter about bullying. Let her practice being assertive. For instance, she can look her classmate in the eye and say, "I don't like it when you call me names. Stop." And tell her she should always go to an adult if she's scared or upset. If the problem continues, follow up with the teacher to discuss next steps.♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Backseat learning games

Whether my sons and I are going to the store or heading out of town to visit relatives, we make the most of our car time by playing games along the way.

My three-year-old, Lance, is learning his colors so we invented a game called "Rainbow." We race to see who can find something to match each

stripe in the rainbow—in order. The first to get to violet wins.

Mason, who's five, is learning letters. We keep a bag of magnetic letters in the car, and the boys take turns choosing one. Then we see how many words we can spot on signs or buildings that start with that letter.

The games give us something to do together, and I'm glad the boys are practicing what they're learning in school.♥



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