



# Badlands Head Start: PRENATAL TO FIVE



## September/October 2017 **Newsletter**

### Upcoming Dates

<b>September 5th</b>	<b>First Day of Centers</b>
<b>September 12th</b>	Lemmon Screening
<b>September 19th</b>	Buffalo Screening
<b>September 22nd</b>	Bison Preschool Screening
<b>September 20th</b>	Policy Council Meeting
<b>September 21st</b>	TREC Board Meeting
<b>September 27th</b>	10am-3pm Kyle Screening
<b>September 28th</b>	9am-2pm Oglala Screening
<b>October 9th</b>	Native American Day <b>NO CENTERS</b>
<b>October 18th</b>	Policy Council Meeting
<b>October 19th</b>	TREC Board Meeting

### **South Dakota Bridge to Benefits!**

Bridge to Benefits is a multi-state project sponsored by South Dakota Voices for Children and the Children's Defense Fund Minnesota. It is designed to improve the well-being of families and individuals by linking them to public benefit programs and tax credits. To see if you or someone else may be eligible for support programs including: health care, energy assistance, food supports, school meal program, child care assistance and tax credits go to [sdbridgetobenefits.org](http://sdbridgetobenefits.org) and click **START** to use the Eligibility Screening Tool. You will be asked a few simple questions, but it will NOT ask you for information that identifies you, such as your name or Social Security number. The screening process is easy, confidential and free! If you qualify for any programs it will let you know how to apply or where you need to apply in your county.

Submitted by Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

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Belle Fourche Office: 605-723-8837  
or 800-598-5859

Bison Office: 605-244-5500

Kyle Office: 605-455-2799

Newell Office: 605-456-1370

Buffalo Office: 605-375-3179

Lemmon Office: 605-374-3134



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## Message from the Executive Director

Head Start and Early Head Start Families,

As we begin a new Head Start and Early Head Start program year, I am excited and ready for the services that we have the opportunity to deliver to many communities in Western South Dakota. It has been a busy summer at the administrative office preparing for the upcoming year and finishing out projects that will ultimately benefit the families in our program. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about some of the new things we're bringing to families and sites, and we shall begin with the Lemmon playground.



While examining the Lemmon playground over the past couple years, it became readily apparent to our team that we needed to add some more friendly equipment to accommodate the younger Head Start children and our toddlers in the Early Head Start program. We examined our budget and determined that we were able to place a dual purpose slide and a swing set on the existing playground. TREC – BHS saw this as a valuable project that could add lots of fun and memories for teachers, parents, and children in the Lemmon area. We are set to begin installation of the equipment this fall and cannot wait to see the results and smiles on the kids' faces while they challenge their gross motor skills on the slides and swings!

Also, between spring and summer, we spent time getting trained in the art of coaching our teachers, home visitors, and other members of staff. The coaching process allows in-depth professional development to occur in a one-on-one setting. As compared to traditional training seminars, this method has proven to provide more sustained impact for team members. When it comes to working with children and families, we want to do everything we can to provide long-lasting, positive impressions of their Head Start experience.

In addition to coaching, we welcomed a new member to our Leadership Team. Butte County has grown in terms of our program over the past few years. With the combination of home and center-based services, it became apparent that another Area Services Manager was necessary. In August we welcomed Suzy Braun to our team. Suzy has been involved with early childhood programs and training for the past 25 years. She comes with both administrative and hands-on experience with kids and families. She will be a great resource for teachers, families, and kids in our Belle Fourche center-based program.

Last, as many already know, we made a major move this summer with regard to our Belle Fourche center-based site. We packed up our belongings and took over a new building in early August. The new building, which is much larger, will serve multiple functions for families in Butte County. It will house our Head Start classrooms, Early Head Start Home Visitors, and function as a socialization site for both programs in Butte County. It has been a lot of work, and pretty chaotic at times, but the team has done well in preparing the site for children and families this fall!

In closing, I want to reiterate how excited we are to work with your kids to help them become school ready. I am extremely confident in the team we put together. They have all the tools and abilities to help out and make this year a successful one. Welcome back, and I look forward to meeting some of the new families in the program.



Best,  
Marcus A. Bevier  
Executive Director

# How Parents Can Be Advocates for Their Children

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist

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Parents are often the best educational advocates for their children, especially children with a learning disability. The Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities (CCLD) has developed the following tips to help parents champion their child.



## Know the rules

All public schools abide by specific laws and regulations, which provide special services for children with learning disabilities who qualify for such services. The criteria for eligibility varies from state to state, but all schools must adhere to a minimum federal standard. To find out the laws in your state and your rights as a parent, contact your local school district office, or state Department of Education.

## Get to know the people who make decisions about your child's education

Connect with educators and administrators in both casual and formal settings. Talk with your child's teacher on a regular basis. If possible, volunteer in the classroom and help out with school functions. If you have concerns or problems that a teacher can not or will not address, be willing to follow the chain of command through the school, and if necessary, to the district office. Remember that you as a parent have the right to request that the school evaluate your child if you think he or she may have a learning disability. Be sure that your request is in writing.

## Keep records

Parents should maintain an organized file of educational records and assessment information. Take notes during telephone and face-to-face meetings, and ask for people's full names and contact information when communicating by phone or by email. In addition, keeping less formal examples of children's academic progress, such as homework papers, artwork, and writings, may be useful in establishing patterns and documenting both abilities and challenges.



## Gather information

Read books and articles on learning, attend conferences, and join a parent support group or affiliate organization in your area. Get comfortable with education acronyms and jargon. Ask professionals lots of questions, and don't be afraid to ask for clarification if their answers are confusing or complicated.

# How Parents Can Be Advocates for Their Children Continued

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist



## Communicate effectively

Come to meetings prepared, and know the specific outcomes you want. Be clear, calm and direct when speaking and put things in writing whenever possible. Listen, and take time to think about pertinent information. Consider when documentation or data might help your case, and present it in an orderly and readable format. While assertiveness and persistence are crucial, anger and aggressiveness can work against you and can damage important relationships.

## Know your child's strengths and interests and share them with educators

By highlighting a struggling child's capabilities and talents, you not only help professionals know your child as a whole person, you can also assist in identifying learning accommodations.



## Emphasize solutions

While there are no miracle cures or magic bullets for learning disabilities, it's important to stress the positive, and to help identify ways to improve your child's experience. Once appropriate programs have been identified and agreed upon, make every effort to encourage follow-through.

## Focus on the big picture

Simply put, don't sweat the small stuff. Knowing the specifics of a law may be important on one level, but constantly arguing technicalities can ultimately waste time and inhibit rapport. Try not to take things personally, and always consider both sides of the story. Details are important, but don't let them get in the way of negotiating the best educational experience for your child.

## Involve your child in decision making as early as you can

Learning disabilities are a lifelong issue. Mastering self-advocacy skills is one of the keys to becoming a successful adult. Resist the natural urge to pave every road for your child, and respect and support your child's need to take informed academic risks.



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# Harding and Perkins Happenings

Fall is quickly approaching with cooler days, changing leaves, and the beginning of the 2017-18 Head Start and Early Head Start services. Home visits resume the week of September 5<sup>th</sup> with the process of enrollment paperwork, dental and physical requirements, screenings, socials, and weekly visits. Home visitors are excited to be implementing the Parents as Teachers curriculum which appropriately aligns with the required Head Start standards. Home visitors attended a week-long training in May and look forward to working with parents in implementing this new curriculum.



Harding County welcomes back home visitors Alicia Kokesh and Catherine White. Alicia will continue in the role of Head Start home visitor, while Catherine will resume her position as Early Head Start home visitor. The screening date for HC is September 19<sup>th</sup>, with a social that day from 9-11 am, all taking place in the basement of the Buffalo Regional Clinic at 209 Ramsland St. The Buffalo clinic will be offering physicals that day to coincide with our social, but unlike in the past, the physicals will not be free, however, they would be considered Well Child Checks as per insurance. Please call the Buffalo Regional Medical Clinic at 375-3744 to set up an appointment. The other social date at our site is September 26<sup>th</sup> from 3-5 pm.

Bison Center welcomes back lead teacher, Cheri Butsavage, assistant teacher Lisa Harpster, and nutrition support, Sarah Lemer. Their social date is September 18<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 pm.

Lemmon Center staff includes lead teacher Brittany Ruen, assistant teacher Saydee Corcoran, and our new nutrition support staff, Sharon Smith. Amber Ingles resumes her position as Early Head Start home visitor. Social dates for Lemmon include September 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:30 pm for Early Head Start, and September 25<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:30 for both Head Start and Early Head Start.

Another new addition to this year will be the implementation of a coaching and reflective supervision program that will further enhance staff's skills, knowledge, and delivery of services, as well as providing professional development opportunities.

I look forward to meeting our new families and reconnecting with returning children and parents.

**Ruth Adams — Harding and Perkins counties Area Service Manager**

## All The Leaves Are Falling Down

By: Diane Chancy

To the tune of: "London Bridges Falling Down"

All the leaves are falling down, falling down, falling down (*Imitate leaves falling down*)

All the leaves are falling down, it is fall.

Take the rake and rake them up, rake them up, rake them up (*Imitate raking leaves*)

Take the rake and rake them up, it is fall.

Make a pile and jump right in, jump right in, jump right in, (*Children jump forward*)

Make a pile and jump right in, it is fall.

Song submitted by: Melissa Pickle

# Update from Butte County

A new program year has just started and everyone is excited to try new things. Fall is a wonderful time to get outside and enjoy nature. No matter how young or old, a nice walk in the park or a trip to a farmers market can be fun for the whole family. If you take a walk you can pick up different objects found in nature. You can touch them and describe how they feel. Do they have a smell? If so then compare it to other objects you have found. A farmers market is a great place to explore also, since most have locally grown produce. Your child can explore different texture and smells. You might even find something new to try. The whole family can be involved in the cleaning and cooking process.



Please enjoy the activities listed below and I hope everyone has a great year.



**Michele Kreuzer-Ranken — Butte Co. Area Service Manager**

## Activity Idea - Leaf Lotto

### MATERIALS:

- Clear contact paper
- Matching pairs of leaves, at least three different kinds

Let your child find two each of several kinds of leaves. Sort them in to pairs. Cut contact paper into squares and peel the backing off. Place a leaf on the sticky side of one of the squares, spreading the leaf as flat as possible. Carefully place another square on top, sealing the leaf inside. When you are done doing this with all the leaves, let your child find the matching pairs.

## Activity Idea - Nature Sticky Picture

### MATERIALS:

- Self-adhesive plastic
- Light-weight objects from nature

Take your child on a short nature walk. Let them collect small pieces of grass, leaves, seeds and wildflowers, and put them in a bag. When you get home, peel off the backing of a large piece of self-adhesive plastic and let children put their objects onto the sticky paper.

## **The Leaves on the Trees**

By: Jean Warren

To the tune of: "The Wheels On The Bus"

The leaves on the trees are yellow and brown,  
Yellow and brown, yellow and brown.  
The leaves on the trees are yellow and brown,  
All through the town.

The leaves on the trees are falling down,  
Falling down, falling down.  
The leaves on the trees are falling down,  
All through the town.

The leaves on the trees make a crunching sound,  
Crunching sound, crunching sound.  
The leaves on the trees make a crunching sound  
All through the town.

Let's rake all the leaves into a mound,  
Into a mound, into a mound.  
Let's rake all the leaves into a mound  
All through the town.

The children in the town jump up and down,  
Up and down, up and down.  
The children in the town jump up and down  
On the leaves on the ground.

Song submitted by: Melissa Pickle

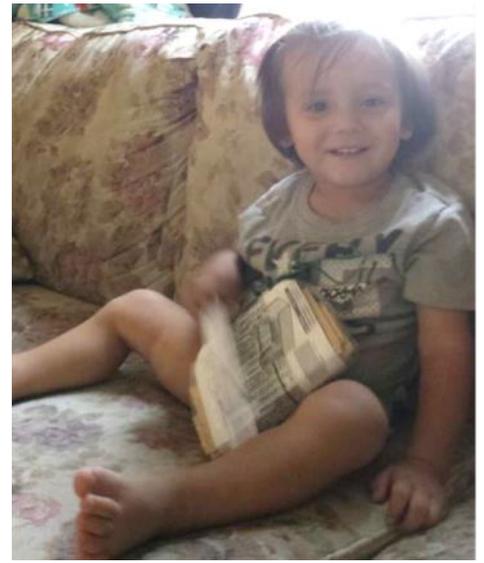
## Activity Idea - Treasure Hunt

### MATERIALS:

- Some treasures to hide. It could be anything your child might like.
- Paper and pencil for clues

Hide a treasure in your yard. Then give your child a series of clues, one at a time, to lead them to the treasure. They have to find each clue, which has directions on where to find the next clue and finally to the treasure.





**Butte County  
Cluster B  
received  
birdhouse  
projects that were  
donated by  
The Home Depot  
store #3027 of  
Osage Beach, MO.**



# Belle Fourche Center Update



Hello!! My name is Suzy Braun. I recently joined the Badlands Head Start: Prenatal to Five team as the new Belle Fourche Center Manager. This is a brand new position and a brand new center. I am so excited to be starting in at the beginning of this new period for Badlands Head Start.

I grew up in the northeast corner of the state on a big farm with an even bigger family and extended family! As a child growing up, the Black Hills area were always a favorite for family camping trips, after moving here I have discovered even more beautiful places to hike and camp. I can't wait to start discovering all that the Belle Fourche area has to offer!!

I moved to the Rapid City area 5 years ago and have loved exploring and learning all the wonderful places in the Black Hills and now the Belle Fourche area. My career has taken me to many great places; New York City to be a nanny, the Albany and Sarasota Springs area in upstate New York to be a toddler and preschool teacher, center director, Albany County Family Court Child Care Director, and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. I then moved back to South Dakota and was the Executive Director of a training and technical assistance program in Aberdeen that served 13 counties in northeast and northcentral South Dakota. Moving to Rapid had me working for another training and technical assistance program before making the move to Badlands Head Start.

I am so thrilled to be working with the fantastic crew at Badlands Head Start, they have made me feel so welcome and a part of the team. I'm also excited and looking forward to getting to know many of you and to assist in helping to make a positive impact in our community.

## Suzy Braun — Belle Fourche Center Area Service Manager

### Little Turtle

I had a little turtle,  
His name was Tiny Tim,  
I put him in the bathtub,  
To see if he could swim;  
He drank up all the water,  
He ate up all the soap,  
And early in the morning,  
There was a bubble in his throat. POP!



### Old MacDonald

Old MacDonald had a farm,  
e, i, e, i, o  
And on the farm he had a chick,  
e, i, e, i, o  
With a peep, peep here  
And a peep, peep there  
Here a peep, there a peep  
Everywhere a peep, peep  
Old MacDonald had a farm,  
e, i, e, i, o



(Repeat verse adding animals as you go)  
Duck, quack; Cow, moo; Pig, oink; Horse, neigh;  
Dog, woof; Cat, meow; Turkey, gobble; Lamb, baa

### Fingers and Toes

Each time you say "fingers," have your child wiggle her fingers. Each time you say "toes," have her wiggle her toes.



Fingers and toes, finger and toes,  
Here are your fingers, and here are your toes.  
Wiggle your fingers, wiggle your toes.  
Here are your fingers, and here are your toes.  
Wave with your fingers, wave with your toes.  
Here are your fingers, and here are your toes.

# Message from Melissa

Fall is my favorite time of the year. The days are getting cooler, the air feels crisper, and everywhere you look is nearly bursting with color! I hope you take advantage of these changes in the weather to take your child outdoors and to explore of all of the learning opportunities that nature has to offer. Here are just a few ideas to make the most of your time with your child outdoors.

**Leaf Art:** Go for a walk with your child to collect leaves of varying sizes, shapes and colors to create a collage. Talk with your child about how the leaves are similar and different from one another, if they feel different from each other, what colors the leaves are, how they are shaped differently, what types of trees they come from, etc. You can use construction paper and glue to create the collages or simply place the leaves on clear contact paper. This activity helps to build your child's vocabulary, to increase your child's understanding of the properties of leaves, and encourages your child's creativity.

**Color Walk:** Take advantage of the weather by going on a color walk with your child. Pick a color, such as red, and have your child point out all of the things he or she sees in that color. You can talk about all of the different shades of the color during your walk as well as all of the different animals, plants, and items that come in the color too. This activity will not only help your child learn about colors, but also increase his or her ability to observe the world.

**Raking Leaves:** You can turn the chore of raking leaves into a fun activity for you and your child. Have your child help you rake leaves into various piles. If you don't have a child sized rake, have your child use his or her hands to pick up the leaves and carry them to a pile. Talk with your child about the types of leaves being picked up, their colors, sizes, etc. You can also count how many piles of leaves there are and discuss the sizes of each pile, pointing out which ones are bigger and which ones are smaller. Finally, let your child jump into a big pile of leaves! By doing this activity, you are helping your child to develop his or her large muscles, get much needed exercise, and to increase his or her vocabulary.

***Melissa Pickle - Program Services Director/Education-Disabilities Specialist***



# Health Corner



Misty Wilbur—Health, Nutrition,  
Safety Specialist

Brianne Sambo—Health & Safety  
Coordinator



## Car Seat Safety

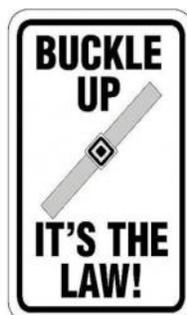
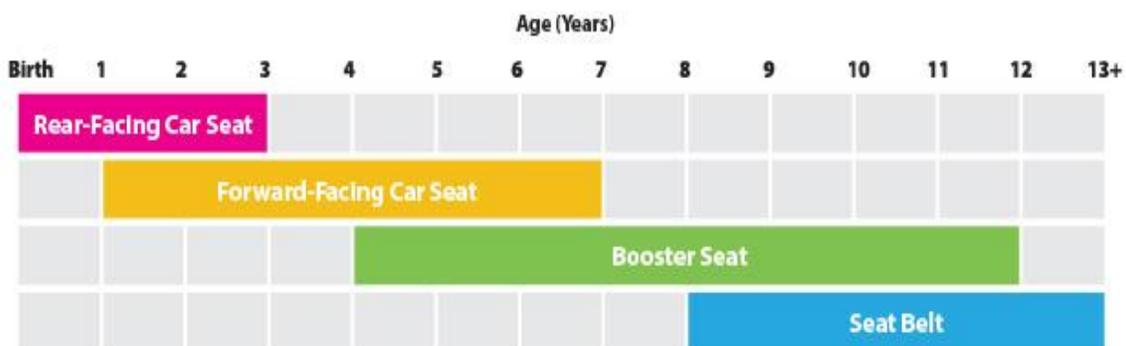
Did you know?

TREC Badlands is a part of South Dakota's Child Safety Seat Distribution Program. Receiving a free seat requires participation in one of the following programs: WIC, Child Care Assistance, Head Start, Medicaid, CHIP, or SNAP.

Contact our office for more information.

Listed below is an age car seat recommendation for children . PLEASE NOTE: Child's height and weight are also used for seat selection. Visit resources below for more information.

Image from : safercar.gov



### Reliable resources:

Parents Central @ [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov)

Safety Belt Safe U.S.A @ [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)

Safe Kids Worldwide @ [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

# Your Child's Mental Health

## Helping Your Child Prepare for School

Welcome Back! I hope all of you had a wonderful summer! Seems like it has just flown by! Here we are again entering a new school year. For some, this will be the very first time for you and your child. For others, you will have experienced this before and are all so familiar with the hustle and bustle of school starting. There are school clothes to buy, earlier bed time routines to begin, open houses to attend and lots of questions to answer from your little ones. It's a perfect time to think about how to help your child begin their school year with a successful start.



Many children will begin their new adventure with parents noticing mild to no changes in their child. Other children will struggle a bit more. Some will show you their anxiety and worries through their behaviors. If your little one appears more anxious, here's a few tips to help them. First and foremost, remember to breathe yourself! This is a big step for mamas and daddies too! Your child is very in tune and perceptive to you and your feelings. Watch what you say in front of your kiddos about your own worries and feelings. Secondly, make sure you answer your child's questions about school. Try to present this an exciting adventure your child will soon be embarking upon. Thirdly, keep your child well rested. Sleep is so important and has such an impact on a child's behavior. All of us tend to act differently when we're tired! Always start with basic needs. Ask yourself, is my child tired or hungry? Do they feel safe?

Should your child struggle when you drop them off in the mornings, evaluate how to make their transition easier. Make sure you're not overly rushed in the morning, that your child has time to wake up and eat breakfast (if they're not eating at school), and that you're saying good bye to them. Avoid lingering around too long at school in the morning as this sometimes can actually reinforce your child's anxiety. This can give your child a subtle message that you're nervous too. Praise your child for their act of courage and bravery. Focus on the positives of what they share each day. Most importantly, remember you're the expert on your child. Visit with your child's teacher about any concerns or question you may have. This will be beneficial for your child and teacher as they get to know your child's personality and unique needs. Should their anxiety persist or grow in intensity, speak to their teacher. Badlands Head Start and Early Head Start have resources available to further assist if needed. Again, Welcome! I look forward to meeting all of you and your sweet children!



**Rebecka Funk MA. LPC-MH - Mental Health Consultant**

# Administrative Staff



**Marcus Bevier**  
Executive Director



**Melissa Pickle**  
Program Services  
Director/Education-  
Disabilities Specialist



**Beverly Smith**  
EHS Fiscal Specialist/  
Facilities/  
Transportation



**Dorothy Richards**  
HS Fiscal Specialist/  
Human Resources



**Wanda Dunn**  
Family/Community  
Specialist



**Jessica Carmichael**  
Admin Assistant



**Jessica Cox**  
EHS Data Support



**Jean Parks**  
HS Data Support



**Brianne Sambo**  
Health & Safety  
Coordinator



**Misty Wilbur**  
Health & Nutrition  
Specialist

# Butte County Home Visitors



**Michele Ranken**  
Area Service Manager



**Traci Baker**  
HS Home Visitor



**Guadalupe Estrada**  
EHS Home Visitor



**Lindsay Franks**  
EHS Home Visitor



**Rebecca Larson**  
EHS Home Visitor



**Kristi Williams**  
EHS Home Visitor



**Betty Zwetzig**  
EHS Home Visitor

# Belle Fourche Center



**Suzanne Braun**  
Area Service Manager



**Rosie Prentner**  
Center 1  
Teacher



**Jenny Opbroek**  
Center 1  
Assistant Teacher



**Pamela Riesland**  
Center 2  
Teacher



**Shirleen Thomas**  
Center 2  
Assistant Teacher



**Alma Meza**  
Nutrition Services

# Oglala, Lakota, and Bennett Counties



**Sharon Condon**  
HS Home Visitor



**JoAnn Rooks**  
HS Home Visitor

## Harding County



**Ruth Adams**  
Harding & Perkins Co. Area Service Manager



**Catherine White**  
EHS Home Visitor



**Alicia Kokesh**  
HS Home Visitor

## Bison Center



**Cheri Butsavege**  
Teacher



**Lisa Harpster**  
Assistant Teacher



**Sarah Lemer**  
Nutrition Services

## Lemmon Center & Perkins County



**Brittany Ruen**  
Teacher



**Saydee Corcoran**  
Assistant Teacher



**Sharon Smith**  
Nutrition Services



**Amber Ingles**  
EHS Home Visitor

# Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

September 2017



Badlands Head Start: Prenatal to Five

## KID BITS

### Stay informed

Be sure you don't miss out on information from your child's school. Have him show you what's in his backpack each day, and sign up for class or school email lists. If you use an electronic calendar, visit your school website to learn whether you can link to it so important dates are filled in automatically.

### Time to relax

Put relaxation on your family's agenda! Each day, set aside 15–30 minutes for an activity that helps everyone unwind. You might find time right after work or on weekend mornings. Together, look at family photos, blow bubbles, or lie on a blanket in the yard and watch the clouds, for example.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Little ones often need extra time to think about what they want to say and to put it into words. During conversations, wait and let your youngster speak for herself. Your patience will help her become a confident speaker—and show her how to be a good listener, too.

### Worth quoting

"The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you." *B.B. King*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What can you add to a bucket of water to make it lighter?

**A:** Holes!



## I'm a student!

Your child has an exciting job—she's a student! Encourage her to embrace her "big kid" role by talking about what successful students do.

### I follow routines

From circle time to story time to music class, your youngster's school day is full of fun activities. She can get used to her new routine by making a book about it. Suggest that she draw a picture of each activity (circle time, recess, math) on a separate sheet of paper. Help her write (or let her dictate) captions, such as "We go to the cafeteria for lunch." Staple the pages together, and read her book with her.

### I learn something every day

Invite your child to share her new knowledge with you. Reserve a special spot on a bulletin board or the refrigerator to post projects and papers she's proud of. Then, ask questions about what she's learning. *Example:* "I see you



drew squares and triangles. How are the two shapes different? How are they the same?"

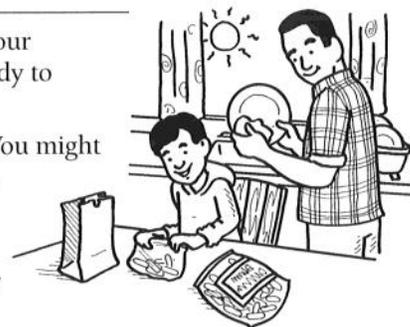
### I work with others

Your youngster is part of an important community—her classroom. Play school at home so she can practice working alongside others. Have her create a "learning center" like one in her classroom, and use it together. The two of you could sort and count toy cars in a "math station" or stir together oil and water in a "science lab."♥

## Sunny starts

Starting the day on a positive note lets your youngster head off to school happy and ready to learn. Try these ideas for upbeat mornings:

- Use humor to get your child out of bed. You might sing a silly song or tell a knock-knock joke.
- Give each family member a job to make getting ready a smooth operation. You can wash breakfast dishes while your youngster packs snacks.
- Before you leave the house, hold a "morning huddle." Tell your child what to expect after school, such as who will pick him up or what's for dinner. Then, exchange hugs and an "I love you."♥



## Zippering toward independence

It's fun for kids to learn to button, zip, and tie. Here are strategies that will make your youngster more independent at home and in school.

**Buttons.** Use stickers to show your child which button goes with which hole in his shirt. Place one sticker next to each button, and put a matching one beside the hole where it belongs. Your youngster can remove the stickers as he fastens each button.



**Zippers.** To help your child zip his jacket, teach him to say, “1, 2, 3, zip!” On 1, he moves the zipper pull to the bottom of the jacket. On 2, he inserts one side into the other. On 3, he grabs the zipper pull and zips it up!

**Shoelaces.** Bulkier laces offer a better grip for your youngster’s little fingers. Consider replacing thin shoelaces with

thicker ones or swapping out flat laces for rounded ones. *Tip:* Let him try tying the laces when his shoes are off, or have him tie *your* shoes.♥



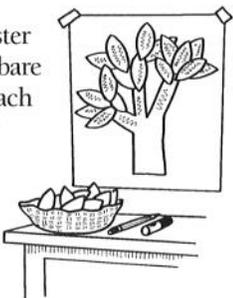
### ACTIVITY CORNER

## Plant a kindness tree

Does kindness grow on trees? It does when your family tries this activity that encourages your child to be kind to others.

Help your youngster draw a big tree with bare branches and label each branch with a family member’s name.

Hang her tree where everyone can see it. Next, have her cut leaves from colored paper and place them in a bowl near the tree along with a pencil and a glue stick.



Whenever someone notices a family member being kind, select a leaf, write about or draw a picture of the kind act, and glue the leaf to that person’s branch. *Examples:* “Tony picked up my toys” or “Mommy held the door for a lady pushing a stroller.” At the end of the week, read all the leaves aloud, and “plant” a new tree for next week.♥

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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### Q & A

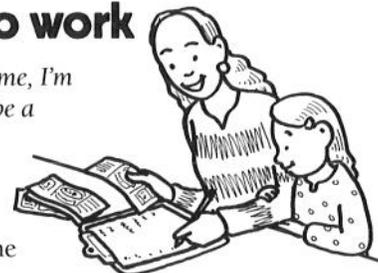
## Back to school, back to work

**Q:** Now that my daughter is in school full time, I’m working days instead of nights. How can I be a part of her school?

**A:** There are plenty of ways for working parents to be involved. Talk to your daughter’s teacher about how you can volunteer from home or at after-school events.

Maybe the teacher needs someone to repair torn pages in books or to collect and count food package labels for a manufacturer’s reward program. Or perhaps you could hand out programs before the school musical or type and photocopy an announcement about a class party.

If your workplace would make an interesting field trip, ask your employer about the possibility of having the class visit. Little ones will enjoy seeing how newspapers are printed or going behind the scenes at a restaurant, for instance.♥



### PARENT TO PARENT

## A is for...

When my son Mark started learning his ABCs, he accidentally invented an alphabet game for us. He was playing with his magnetic letters on the refrigerator and said, “A is for alligator.” Then, he pretended to be an alligator creeping across the floor. I decided to turn his idea into a game using all the letters.

I had Mark put his letters in a pillowcase and shake them up. Then, we took turns pulling out a letter and acting out something that started with it. The other person had to guess the

letter. Mark hopped like a bunny for B, and I painted with an imaginary brush when I got P. The letter X was tough, so we worked together on that one—we decided to be pirates searching for treasure because “X marks the spot!”

The “act it out” game is still one of Mark’s favorites, and it has been a great way for him to have fun with—and learn—letters and their sounds.♥

