



March
April
2009

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BUILDING BLOCKS

For Strengthening Families

March is National Nutrition Month!

Nutrition and Children! Adapted from: Samantha Ruffle

Here are 10 top tips on how to raise a healthier child!

1. **The water rule:** Drink only water at home. Ban soda, kool aid, and juice. Drink these only when you are eating out and only on special occasions.
2. **Keep a bowl stocked with favorite fruits:** Apples, oranges, kiwi, peaches, pears, plums and bananas are just a few of the delectable fruits you can choose from.
3. **Everyone in the home must eat healthy:** If your child has a weight problem, it is only a symptom of how the whole family eats. It is not fair to make a child eat differently than the others in the family. Healthy eating is a family affair.
4. **Give your child more free range when outside of the home:** Make sure most of your meals are at home (and are healthy), but when your child eats out, let them eat what they want. At home, talk about healthy choices. Do not lecture or scold your child for poor food choices, especially when you are eating out.
5. **Have treats in moderation:** A great way to teach moderation is to buy only one package of a treat like say, potato chips once a month. When it's gone, it's gone until next month. Eventually your child will learn to eat a little less, so they can have a little all month long.
6. **Learn and talk to your child about nutrition:** Chances are, if your child doesn't know much about nutrition, neither do you. Read some books or some articles and share what you have learned with your child. Even if they roll their eyes, and act like they don't care, they hear you.
7. **Find family activities that are active:** Turn on the music and dance. Go for a walk or a bike ride. Bowling, swimming, goofy golf, or even cleaning the house. Anything that gets your kids moving will do. Talk to your children about the importance of exercise.
8. **Limit video games and TV time:** Studies show that there is a direct correlation between body weight and the amount of time a child watches television and plays video games. Shut off the TV and send them out!
9. **Teach your children to cook:** This gives you the opportunity to talk about nutritious food choices and gives them a valuable skill they can use for the rest of their lives.
10. **Listen to your child:** While studies show that repeated exposure to certain foods is sometimes necessary in order to develop a taste for them, forcing your child to eat something they hate can cause food aversions.

LEARN THROUGH PLAY!

Parent Child Activity!
Facilitated by:
Parent Support Education Specialists

Learn Through Plays are an 1 hour playgroup based on an educational theme and an activity that corresponds.

Please call your local library to register.

Norton Library

March 11, 10:00 - 11:00

Canton Public Library

March 11, 1:00—2:00

E. Bridgewater Public Library

March 19, 10:00 - 11:00

Sharon Public Library

March 30, 10:30 - 11:30

Stoughton Public Library

March 31, 10:30 - 11:30

Dedham Public Library

April 1, 1:00—2:00

Canton Public Library

April 8, 1:00—2:00

Sharon Public Library

April 27, 10:30 - 11:30

Stoughton Public Library

April 28, 10:30 - 11:30

Music & Movement!

Come sing and dance to the latest and greatest children's songs!

March 24th

@ the East Bridgewater Library

1:00—1:45

April 28th

@ the West Bridgewater Library

1:00—1:45

Call Marsha Wright @ 508-559-1666 x 124 to register!

NUTRITION CORNER!



ANTS ON A LOG!

Ingredients:

Celery Stalks

Whipped Cream Cheese

Raisins

Wash and dry the celery, remove the leaves.

Cut into 2-3 inch pieces.

Spread Whipped Cream Cheese on celery.

Place the raisins across the cream cheese.

*Parent Tip—Using whipped cream cheese instead of regular cuts out calories!

Parent Workshops

Sibling Rivalry! Thursday, March 12, from 6:30—8:00 pm at Norfolk Public Library, 139 Main St., Norfolk. Ever wonder how to keep peace in your home? You don't need to be the UN Peacekeeper to develop the tools you need to have a calm and cooperative home. This workshop will help parents learn the tricks and tools on how to call a truce between siblings. Call Gina McGarrigle @ 508-559-1666 x 123 before March 9th to register.

PARENT/CHILD ACTIVITIES!

Teddy Bear Picnic! Wednesday, March 25, from 6:00—7:00 pm at the First Baptist Church on Park St. in North Attleboro. This is a parent/child nutrition workshop! Preschool children will learn about the "Food Groupies" and make their own healthy and delicious snacks. They will create a recipe book and participate in songs and other fun activities. Call Gina McGarrigle @ 508-559-1666 x 123 by March 23rd to register.

Provider Workshops

Mathematic TIC TAC TOE! Tuesday, March 3, from 7:00—9:00 pm at the Self Help Inc., CPC Office at 780 West Main St., Avon. This workshop will give you useful information, tools and materials to help raise the quality of your MATHEMATIC PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM! Call Carol Carver @ 508-559-1666 x 113 to register.

Visual Strategies! Wednesday, March 18, from 6:15—8:00 pm. at the CPC Office at 780 West Main St., Avon. Visual strategies come in a variety of forms, but all types can be a source of comfort for young children. In this workshop we will look at the various types of visual supports and how they help children. Call Marsha Wright @ 508-559-1666 x 124 to register.

Language Arts! Connect With The Standards! Monday, April 6, from 6:30—8:30 pm. at the CPC Office at 780 West Main St., Avon. Call Chris Pietroski @ 508-559-1666 x 120 to register.

Communicating With Parents!

Monday, April 27, from 6:30—8:00 @ Norton Public Library
Do you sometimes find it difficult to connect and communicate successfully with parents? Are you hesitant to bring up sensitive topics? This interactive workshop will discuss strategies to help you create partnerships with families through problem solving and communication. Call Karen Mitchell @ 508-559-1666 x 115 to register!

Many Families, Many Ways of Knowing! Wednesday, April 29, from 6:15—7:45 pm @ the Sharon Public Library in Sharon. Providers will learn how to support families from many backgrounds within their program. We'll take a look through a variety of cultural lenses at the issues faced in the context of early childhood settings. Call Marsha Wright @ 508-559-1666 x 124 to register!

LITERACY CORNER

Kindergarten Readiness - Going to School - Are You Ready?



Before school starts:

Preparing your child for their first school experience can make the transition to Kindergarten a lot easier. Use these strategies to prepare you and your child for their school experience. Adapt these to suit your child.

Practice going to school - Do a dry run to help familiarize your child to their new school.

Describe to your child what will happen on the first day. Talk about the sequence of activities. This helps children form pictures in their minds and will make things more familiar and less scary,

recommends Diane Levin, Ph. D. - professor of Education at Wheelock College. (Books listed below, may help with this particular aspect) Ask your child questions as to what they think school will be like. Questions like; "Is there anything that worries you about starting school?" will allow you to minimize any fears or concerns your child may have.

Start going to bed earlier - One to two weeks before the first day of school, establish an earlier bedtime to ensure that your child is well-rested. Meet children in the class - If you can, find out the names of the classmates. Try to get together before school starts so children have an opportunity to know each other.

Learn about the drop-off policy - Find out if parents can walk children to their class and if there's a time limit for the goodbyes. Give children control over what they can control - For example; allow children to choose the color of their backpacks. This will help children feel a part of the process.

Plan ahead how to say goodbye - Think about the individual needs of your child. A quick goodbye or perhaps an extra 5 minutes?

Read books about starting school - Reading these books will open a discussion about the school experience.

Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate

Tiptoe Into Kindergarten by Jacqueline Rogers

The Night Before Kindergarten by Natasha Wing

Information adapted from: www.pbs.org/parents/goingtoschool/first_days.html



Child Find: Check your local cable channel for contact information if you feel that your child may be experiencing learning difficulties or delays.

Check your school website for any information for K Screening, Open House, and School registration.

Example: www.avon.k12.ma.us

PROVIDERS CORNER

Provider FYI's

1 Inglesina Quad Stroller (slightly used)
Seats 2-3 or 4 children comfortably
Navy Blue/Collapsible/5 Point Harness
Call Peg Barry @ 508-238-0642

Need a licensed, qualified substitute for your childcare? Call Peg Barry to work out details. Peg requires 24 hours notice.
Call Peg Barry @ 508-238-0642

FYI

The Self Help Inc., Fuel Assistance Program is still taking applications for fuel assistance. The last day for an oil delivery is April 30th, 2009. If you feel you qualify, please call:

508-588-5440

Department of Early Education & Care!

ONLINE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR

Find Professional Development Opportunities in your area or across the state that meet your needs.

Search for professional development opportunities by:

Geographic Area

Core Competency

CEU's or Credit

Child Care Settings

Age Group Type



The Professional Development Calendar Search can be accessed from the Developmental Section on EEC's Home Page at:

<http://www.eec.state.ma.us>

