



EARLY INTERVENTION
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EI WATERING CAN

Little Sprinkles to Help Your Child Grow

Winter 2015



MOCKING BIRDS

Make your little mocking birds sing!

Parents who respond to babbling have babies that talk sooner!

A new study suggests that how parents respond to their infants' babbling sounds may foster their infants' language skills. Playfully mimicking or returning infant babbling lets the child know that he or she can communicate, and this knowledge helps the infant learn the complex sounds that make up speech. Babies whose mothers returned their babbling sounds showed a more rapid increase in babbling that sounds more like spoken words. Infants whose mothers directed their infants' attention to something else rather than responding to the babbling did not progress as rapidly in language and communication skills.

When babies get responses to their babbling, it tells them that their sounds are effective in getting a reaction from their caregiver. So, when this happens, babies increase their vocalizations and have more interactions with their caregivers, giving more opportunities for learning. (Information adapted from Dr. Julie Gros-Louis)

When your baby makes sounds, here are some things you can do to encourage language learning:

1. Respond as if the child is actually communicating something, or talking about something, by telling her what she's looking at.
2. Pretend to have a conversation with your baby. Ask him questions and give him answers when he makes sounds.
3. Try to match your child's vocal tone. If she uses a high pitched sound, you can respond with a similar pitch.
4. Try sitting in front of a mirror with your baby or holding him facing you so he can see your facial expressions when you are responding to him.



PUFFY SNOWFLAKE PAINTINGS

Winter is upon us, and it is not always warm enough to go out and play in the snow. This a fun activity without much of a mess that dries quickly compared to paint. These puffy snowflake paintings are a fun open-ended art project. Children can dot, dot, dot and practice imitating vertical and horizontal strokes to help develop fine motor/ pre-writing skills.

In a bowl, mix equal parts of salt and self-rising flour. Add a few drops of food coloring especially for snow designs.

Next add enough water to make it the consistency of pancake batter. Pour into an empty dishwashing soap bottle or something similar with a cap. Then have fun painting on thick cardstock paper placed on a cookie sheet.

Once you are done painting, microwave your cardstock picture for 30 seconds on high. Your child's painting is dry and super puffy.





MIRACLE GROW

Fun snack ideas that kids can make when they are snowed in on a winter day!

CHEESE HAMMERS & TOWERS

Cut a variety of cheese into small squares. For a hammer, poke a pretzel into each one. Kids can connect their cubed cheese with the pretzel sticks to construct cheese towers! A great fine motor activity!

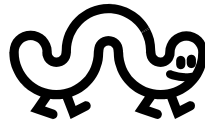


SHAKER PUDDING

Pour 2 cups of milk into a jar/container with a lid, add 1 small box of instant pudding mix, and shake for one minute. Kids will love to “shake up” their own snack!

MAKE A TASTY FACE

Spread peanut butter onto a rice cake. Use chocolate chips or M&M's to make facial features - or for a healthier option use raisins or other dried fruit to make your face.



WIGGLE WORMS

Babies need lots of time to move to avoid “container syndrome”

While babies need to sleep on their backs for safety, it's important to allow infants lots of time to move freely. Babies who spend too much time in “containers” like swings, carriers and bouncy seats can often develop flattening of the skull and developmental delays from not having enough freedom to move. There are some simple things that you can do to prevent “container syndrome” delays.

- Increase tummy time during your baby's waking hours. Put colorful toys in front of him to encourage reaching and lifting his head. Place your baby on his belly on your chest to look up at you for a fun and bonding tummy time.
- Vary feeding positions. Breastfed babies alternate sides when feeding. If you bottle feed, be sure to switch sides, too.
- Sometimes use a sling instead of a stroller when taking your baby for a walk. The pressure will be kept off the back of her head, and she will be free to move her arms and legs.
- Place toys to the sides of your baby out of reach to encourage rolling over.
- Play with your baby on the floor while baby is lying on his side.
- Do a sit-up with your baby after every diaper change.
- Sit with your baby between your legs on the floor to work on core strengthening instead of using a Bumbo seat.
- Limit the use of baby walkers as she can form tendencies such as tip-toeing, leaning forward and a false sense of security when out of it.
- Avoid naps and overnight sleeping in car seats.

Physical development is just as important as the mental development of your children, and the two often go hand-in-hand. As tempting as it is to use all of the new baby products for convenience sake and safety, be sure to keep your child on the floor as much as possible during that first year to encourage movement and active play. If you must use them, limit time in “containers” to about 20 minutes. If you think your baby has flattening of the skull or developmental delays, talk to a Pediatric Physical Therapist about ideas for adaptive equipment and/or ideas for positioning.



THE DIRT PILE

Fun and messy ideas to help your toddler explore

Snow Dough

So easy, bright white and even crunches between your fingers like snow!

Supplies:

2 c. cornstarch

1/3 - 1/2 c. vegetable oil

3-4 T. silver glitter

Mix the ingredients together with a spoon until combined, then use fingers to rub the oil right into the cornstarch until it is completely integrated. It should feel smooth, slightly damp and will take a form if molded.

Tip: This can get messy if played indoors, so use a large drop cloth or old tablecloth under the tub to make cleaning up easier!

What they are learning as they play:

Sensory: exploring through sensory investigation, learning new descriptive language

Literacy: story telling, vocabulary development



SOCIAL BUTTERFLIES

Ideas to beat the winter blues with your child

- Celebrate summer in the winter. Have an indoor beach day on a snowy day. Wear shorts and sunglasses and build "sandcastles" on a beach towel with blocks or play-doh and some shells from your last trip to the beach. This is a great activity to include a friend from next door in.
- Have an indoor camp-out. Make a tent from chairs and blankets and take a nap in sleeping bags. You can even roast some marshmallows in the oven.
- Take a trip to the local mall for some interaction with other kids at the mall play area. Encourage your child to watch the other kids, and you can help him introduce himself!
- Bake cookies. Your child can learn to take turns dumping ingredients in with his brothers and sisters or with you.
- Invite some friends for a winter snow party! Take your summer sand shovels to dig in the snow or fill spray bottles with water and food coloring to "spray paint" designs in the snow. And don't forget to show your child how to make snow angels!



THE EARLY BIRD

Winter activities perfect for you and your young child

Wed-Sat: 10a-5p, Sun: 12-5p

Discovery Space Science Museum

112 W. Foster Ave., Suite 1, State College, PA

Kindermusik Sing & Play Class at Robert M. Sides Family Music Center,
1801 North Atherton St., State College

1/5: Activities at the Altoona Public Library:

Toddler Time at 9a

Mother Goose on the Loose at 9:30a

Story Hour at 5:30p

2/25-2/28: Disney On Ice Princesses and Heroes
Johnstown War Memorial Arena

3/14: Easter Bunny Brunch from 12-2p at the Hollidaysburg YMCA for all ages!
Members \$5/person or \$25/family, Public \$7/person or \$35/family

3/28: Missoula Children's Theatre *Rapunzel* at Mishler Theatre, Altoona



PARENT TIPS & TOOLS

Ideas for helping toddlers manage behavior



BITING

Many toddlers and young children bite. Developmentally, younger children don't have ability to express their feelings; they just really feel them and react, sometimes by biting! Your child is not biting purposely to annoy you or even to hurt someone. The good news is that there are many ways to reduce and to stop a child's biting.

Why do children bite?

- To communicate their frustration
- Because they are challenged in play by other children
- Because they understand the cause and effect and get a reaction
- Oral stimulation /teething
- Copying / learning from other children who bite
- Coping with uncomfortable feelings-hungry, overtired, angry, frustrated, afraid, overwhelmed, or bored

Although biting is normal, it is unacceptable. What can we as caring adults do to stop it?

Observe: Look for the when, where and whys of the biting. Look for patterns.

When a child bites:

1. Gently push the child's head into the bite to cause her to release her hold to prevent further skin tear.
2. Separate the child and calmly and clearly define the problem.
3. Return to give attention to the person bitten. Do not scold or insist on an apology.
4. Return to acknowledge child's feelings and show him what to do instead.

Consider prevention:

1. Teach your child simple emotion labels when he is calm.
2. Teach him to say "No" and to ask for help from an adult.
3. Teach sharing, trading, turn taking, and how to get help when you are playing with your child and other children.
4. Offer chewy, crunchy snacks or acceptable chewy toys.

5. Make sure your child is rested and avoid overstimulating or stressful situations when already tired or sick.
6. Make sure your child has fun, novel activities and opportunities for motor play.
7. If your child is sensitive or anxious, talk about upcoming changes, his feelings and eliminate confusion and uncertainty as much as possible.

When your child is in a biting stage, try to stay within arm's reach, and be patient. Talk to other people who care for your child and make a plan. Read books like *Teeth Are Not for Biting* by Elizabeth Verdick (available in board book at the library). Don't bite back, punish, make a big deal or shame your child for their emotional reaction. Remember, biting starts as a communication but can turn into a habit. Understanding your child's emotions and teaching replacement skills make a positive difference, and one day he will no longer be biting!



*"Life affords
no greater responsibility,
no greater privilege,
than the raising
of the next generation."*

- C. Everett Koop

