

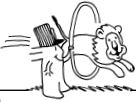
Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

March 2007

UMES Child & Family Development Center
Ms. Donna Long, Director

KID BITS



Great job!

Did your youngster misbehave a lot today? Try to end the day on a good note. At bedtime, praise him for something he did well: "You were so quiet while we waited at the bank." He'll feel proud and may try to behave better the next day.

What's the chance?

Grab a pair of dice, and give your child a lesson in probability. Let her toss the dice 10 times while you record how many times each number comes up. Can she predict how the next 10 rolls will turn out?

No-mess art

To bring out the creativity in your little artist without too much mess, try these tips. Cover the work space with an old vinyl tablecloth. Make a paper bag into a smock by turning it upside down and cutting holes for the head and arms. *Tip:* Add a few drops of dish soap to paint so that stains will come out of clothing more easily.

Worth quoting

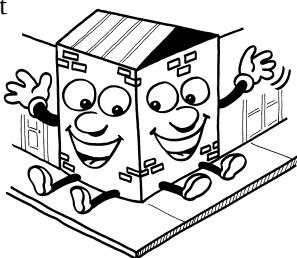
"Imagination is the highest kite one can fly."

Lauren Bacall

Just for fun

Q: What did one wall say to the other?

A: I'll meet you at the corner.



Character checkup

What are the keys to raising a child who is polite, helpful, and honest? Let him see these qualities in you and others, and then give him lots of chances to practice. Here are a few ideas.

Polite words

Teach your youngster polite phrases, and find opportunities to use them. When he's leaving a birthday party, have him tell the host, "Thank you for inviting me. I had a good time." If you let him hand a cashier money for something, he can say, "Thanks. Have a nice day."

Use a toy telephone to teach phone manners. Give your child real-life practice by suggesting that he call relatives or answer the phone.

Helpful acts

Encourage your child to help around the house. He can tear lettuce for a salad, carry a bag to the car, or throw trash away. Try to avoid saying, "You're too little to..."

Read books about helpful characters, such as *Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile* by Bernard Waber. Ask your youngster to name things Lyle does to help others (he feeds the ducks).

Honest deeds

Let your youngster see you turn in a



wallet you find at the mall or return too much change in a restaurant. Model honest behavior: tell his real age at an amusement park, even if the ticket will cost more.

Admit your mistakes, and accept your child's apology when he's honest about his own. That way, he'll be less likely to tell lies.♥

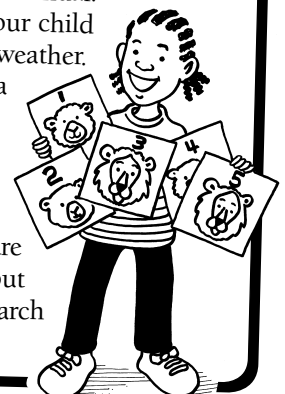
Lion or lamb?

If March comes in like a lion, will it go out like a lamb?

Your youngster will have fun answering that question with this activity. She'll also learn weather vocabulary and practice counting and using a calendar.

Each morning in March, have your child look out the window to check the weather. If it's cold or windy, she can draw a lion on that day's calendar square. If it's mild or sunny, she can draw a lamb.

When the month ends, have your youngster count the squares. Are there more lions or lambs? How about the last week of the month—did March go out like a lion or a lamb?♥

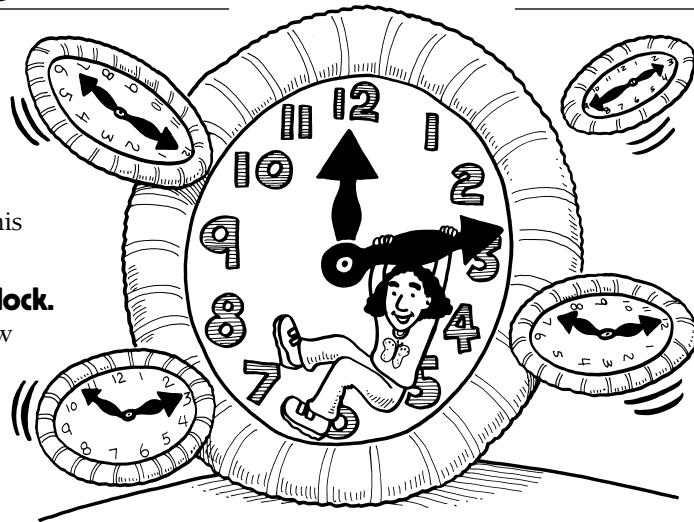


Telling time

It takes time to learn to tell time. Use these activities to help your youngster work on this important skill.

■ Take a close look at a clock.

Move the big hand to show how it counts minutes and the little hand to count hours. Explain that the second hand counts seconds, and it takes one minute to go all the way around. What can your child do in a second (say a word), a minute (put on



her pajamas), or an hour (go to library story time)?

■ **Make a paper-plate clock.** Help your youngster write the numbers 1–12 around the plate’s edge, cut hands from construction paper, and attach them to the center with a paper fastener. Have her look at a real clock and move the paper hands to match the time. What time does it say?

■ **Learn about digital clocks.** Show your child how to read a numbers-only clock, like an alarm clock. “You say the hour first, then the minutes.” Then, have her write the time she goes to school (9:00) or eats dinner (6:30).♥

PARENT TO PARENT

“I” messages

At a recent work conference, I was pleased to learn a new discipline trick to use at home. The speaker taught us about using “I” messages for sharing our feelings without making someone feel bad.

So when my son whined that he couldn’t find his mittens, I said calmly, “I feel frustrated when you talk that way because I can’t understand what you’re saying.” He didn’t respond, but he went off to look for his mittens.

Later, I tried it with my daughter: “I feel grumpy when I have to ask you so many times to get ready for bed. It makes me tired.” She looked surprised and actually said, “I’m sorry, Mom.”

My “I” messages don’t work every time, but they do work a lot. And the best part is that I let my children know how I feel without raising my voice.♥



Q & A

In the news

Q: How can I help protect my child from all the upsetting things that are in the news today?

A: No matter how hard we try to shield youngsters, they’re bound to pick up bits of troubling news. When your daughter asks, try to explain simply, and avoid giving her more information than she needs.

For example, news about war can be scary. Reassure your child that she is safe at home and at school. You might tell her you hope the countries that disagree will talk about their problems instead of fighting. Also, share positive articles, such as a story about a teacher who won an award.

Note: It’s good for your youngster to see you reading the newspaper. However, you might consider watching TV news after she’s in bed or listening to news on the radio after you drop her at school so she doesn’t see or hear troubling news.♥



ACTIVITY CORNER

Word search

Your youngster will have so much fun with this hide-and-seek word game, he might not even realize he’s learning to read.

You’ll need: a dozen slips of paper, pencil

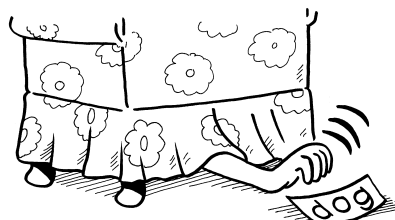
On each slip, write a word you think your youngster can learn (dog, car, boy).

Have him cover his eyes and count to 10 while you hide the words around the room—under a sofa cushion, behind a chair—and send him searching.

When he finds all the words, help him read them by sounding each one out together. Then, hide them again in a different room.

After playing this game several times, your child will recognize the words. Try again using new words.

Tip: Point out the words he has learned when you find them in books.♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.
3035 Valley Avenue, Suite 103, Winchester, VA 22601
540-723-0322 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com
ISSN 1540-5567