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THE JOB COUNCIL PROVIDING WORKFORCE RESOURCES

Parent

Spring 2007

TIME NEWSLETTER

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Helping Toddlers Become Problem Solvers

All parents and teachers have seen the unique ability of toddlers to use toys and materials in unexpected ways. One child may turn a cup into a hammer or a basket into a hat. Another toddler may stand on a riding truck to try to reach a toy or pull over a chair to climb onto a bookshelf. Observant adults recognize these innovations as signs that children are learning to use their thinking skills to solve problems.

Experiences in problem solving help children develop curiosity and patience, along with thinking skills such as flexibility, and understanding of cause and effect. They learn to work toward achieving a goal, and gain confidence in their ability to reach a solution.

Even very young children make discoveries on their own. An infant who accidentally creates a noise with a rattle may then make the sound again and again on purpose. An older infant discovers that by looking under a blanket, he can find a hidden toy. A toddler who cannot pull a wagon up a hill by herself learns that she and a friend can push it up from behind.

By not rushing in and rescuing young children who are facing minor everyday problems, adults can help infants and toddlers develop confidence and increase their thinking abilities.

It's also helpful for parents and teachers to provide materials that encourage children to explore. Some toys, such as jack-in-the-boxes and busy boxes, provide opportunities to explore simple cause-and-effect relationships. Other common materials like empty cardboard boxes, plastic bowls, or scarves can provide open-ended experiences through which toddlers can make choices and decisions, and find different ways to manipulate the materials.

Other activities can involve materials such as clear plastic tubing (such as the tubing used for aquariums) which children can fill with bright materials, and watch the materials move as they shake the tubes. If you provide inclines or ramps of wooden blocks, a toddler can watch what happens as objects roll down inside the tubes. She may discover that some objects roll faster than others. He may learn about actions and reactions when he sets plastic bottles at the bottom of the ramp to create a unique bowling game.

(Whatever materials you provide to help children experiment with problem solving, remember to be very careful about choking hazards.)

These everyday materials are fun, and can hold children's interest for long periods. They also help children experiment with cause and effect and with gravity and physics. In addition to supporting cognitive development, problem-solving activities

help in the social arena as well. Groups of children engaged in these activities negotiate with their friends and learn how to solve interpersonal problems.

By providing interesting materials and enthusiastically reinforcing children's attempts to explore and solve problems, parents and teachers can stimulate children's development, promote advanced critical thinking, and help children take pride in their own abilities to find out more about how their world works.

Excerpted from "Using Everyday Materials to Promote Problem Solving in Toddlers" by Laura Segatti, Judy Brown-DuPaul, and Tracy L. Keyes - an article in the NAEYC journal, Young Children. Many articles and resources from Young Children are available on the NAEYC "Beyond the Journal" Web site, at www.journal.naeyc.org/btj.

Early Years Are Learning Years™ is a regular series from NAEYC providing tips to help parents and early childhood educators give young children a great start on learning.



SCAM ALERT! JURY DUTY

Although this is not targeted against child care we thought this was a good bit of information to pass along.

In this con, someone calls pretending to be a court official who threateningly says a warrant has been issued for your arrest because you didn't show up for jury duty. When you protest you did not receive notice of summons the person calling will ask that you verify your date of birth and social security number so they can clear this up for you. If you give them this info, you have given away your identity. Please never give your personal information over the phone unless YOU placed the call and know who you are giving it to and why.

This is a wide-spread scam and, because it is so intimidating, it is easy to get sucked in. It has been reported by CBS and you may visit the following sites for more information:
www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel05/092805.htm
or www.snopes.com/crime/fraud/juryduty.asp

Need Help With Child Care Payments?

You may qualify for Employment Related Day Care (ERDC).

Federal and state child care funds are available to low-income, working families from the Department of Human Services, depending on family size and income levels.

For more information, call your nearest Department of Human Services office:

Medford	776-6172	Ashland.....	482-2041
White City	864-8700	Cave Junction.....	592-4149
W. Medford	734-7516	Grants Pass	474-3101
Family Center			

Or on the web @ www.dhs.state.or.us to see if you are eligible. (follow this path)

- * Children & Teens
- * Child Care - Parent information
- * Copay estimate

If you need help with child care referrals, contact The Job Council's Child Care Resource Network at 541.776.1234 or toll free 1-800-866-9034 or on the internet at www.jobcouncil.org

Tax Exemption for Parents of Children with Disabilities

As in past years, the Department of Education is providing the following information to you as a resource for helping parents. Parents often contact school district special education staff for assistance in obtaining information concerning the Oregon tax exemption for parents of children with disabilities. This basic information will provide you and your staff an understanding of the exemption.

The Oregon Tax Code provides an additional tax exemption for parents of children with disabilities in Oregon. The procedure for claiming an exemption for the 2006 tax year is explained in the Oregon Individual Income Tax Return and Instructions, Nonresident and Part-Year Resident, and the Full-Year Resident booklets.

Who qualifies for the exemption?

Here are the changes to reflect our tie to the new federal definition of qualifying child. The age in our statute is overridden by the federal disabilities act.

Your child must meet all of the following:

- Qualify as your dependent for tax year 2006; and
- Be eligible for “early intervention services” or receive special education as defined by the State Board of Education of the state where the child attends school, however, learning disabilities or communication disorders alone do not qualify; and
- Be considered to have a disability as of December 31, 2006 under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related Oregon laws.

Eligible disabilities include:

- Autism
- Visual Impairment
- Mental retardation
- Serious emotional disturbance
- Traumatic brain injury
- Hearing impairment
- Orthopedic impairment
- Other health impairment
- Multiple disabilities
- Deafblind

What documentation must be submitted with a tax return?

The tax booklet explains that your child must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and an eligibility statement for one of the disabilities listed above. A copy of the IEP or IFSP coversheet and a copy of the student’s eligibility statement may be obtained from the school district. The coversheet and copy of the eligibility statement should be kept with the child’s permanent health records, as maintained by the family – they DO NOT need to be sent with the tax return. Write the child’s name on line 6c for “All dependents” (see page 8 of the Oregon Department of Revenue Full-Year Resident Instructions or page 16 of the Nonresident and Part-Year Resident Instructions at the link below for complete instructions).

Oregon Department of Revenue On-Line Instructions and Forms

You may reference the Oregon Department of Revenue Forms 40S and 40 with Instructions are available at the following link: http://egov.oregon.gov/DOR/PERTAX/formspit.shtml#2006_Tax_Year The Spanish translations of the Oregon Department of Revenue Forms 40S and 40 with Instructions are available at the following link: <http://egov.oregon.gov/DOR/PERTAX/espanol.shtml>

More Questions?

For general information you may contact Eric Richards, Director of Operations, Office of Student Learning & Partnerships, at the Department of Education at 503-947-5786. For advice or individual assistance in completing the tax form, consult a tax professional or the Department of Revenue at 1-800-356-4222.

DID YOU KNOW? YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE A TEACHING CREDENTIAL TO OFFER PRESCHOOL!!!

Preschool is all about school preparation. There are endless activities that support children’s early learning, listening skills and getting along with others.

- Explore language: Use full sentences, play with rhyming, break words down into their sounds and identify letters that go with the sounds.
- Make readers: Read to them, help them follow the words with their fingers, talk about how the pictures match the words.
- The basics of our world: Have activities that encourage the learning of shapes, colors, numbers, the alphabet, how their name looks as written, counting.
- Create opportunities: Let them practice being part of a group, listening, following directions, sharing and solving problems with other children.
- Self care: Allow them to use buttons, zippers, get dressed and use the bathroom with as much independence as they are ready for.
- Arts/Crafts/Science/Math: Mix colors, trace, paint different surfaces, play with magnets, noodles, paperclips, make collages, make shadows, study bugs, stack blocks, count things that are the same & different
- Play act & real act: Puppets, grocery store, doctor’s office & other dress up play expand into cooking, gardening and taking care of babies and dolls together.
- Find a preschool curriculum you like or call Child Care Resource Network for ideas.

Preschool Activity Ideas

1. Take time to answer their endless questions
2. Act silly with them sometimes
3. Praise them frequently
4. Make paper decorations, paper chains, paper rooms for theme day
5. Use crepe paper hanging down vertically to make a curtain for dramatic play
6. Make collages with a multitude of objects
7. Act out fairy tales or nursery rhymes, vary the stories
8. Plan a “trip” to another country

HOW YOU CAN BECOME A CHILD CARE PROVIDER IN SIX EASY STEPS.

Explore the opportunity of working as a self-employed individual from your own home. Child Care Resource Network offers all the technical assistance you will need to get started plus many ongoing services to support your business. Call Patty 842-2590 or Lisa 842-2591. Please, if you get our voicemail, leave only one message.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS CHECKLIST

This checklist will give you an idea of how prepared your child is for kindergarten and how you can assist with this preparation. Go over this checklist with your child and give them extra help where they need it. Go over the checklist at a later date to check on improvement.

Fine Motor Skills

- Puts a 10 – 12 piece puzzle together
- Holds scissors correctly
- Holds a pencil or crayon correctly

Gross Motor Skills

- Runs, jumps, skips
- Walks backwards
- Walks up and down stairs

Social Skills

- Uses words instead of being physical when angry
- Speaks clearly so an adult can understand
- Plays with other children
- Follows simple directions
- Expresses feelings and needs
- Goes to the bathroom by self
- Waits for turn and shares
- Talks in sentences

Below are some ideas gleaned from the Medford School District Booklet “First Steps”

How Parents Can Help At Home

Building Number Concepts

- Provide counting situations (how many spoons or how many people)
- Encourage child to read numbers wherever they appear (address, phone, TV, etc.)
- Take shopping (note prices, weight)
- Help cook (measurements)

Motor Development (Gross motor skills)

- Carry packages; mop spills; tie shoe laces; string beads; walk on a ledge, line or beam; catch a ball

Motor Development (Fine motor skills)

- Spread peanut butter on bread, fold clothes and towels, cut with scissors, pick up leaves or other small objects

Language (Listening skills)

- Listen for alarm (timer or clock), listen on the telephone, sign songs, listen to them tell stories, listen to the radio for information

Reading

- Identify objects in the environment with sounds (beginning or ending), purchase or borrow books to read with your child, help carry out simple directions, help identify alphabet letters they see in their environment, (in books, on food boxes, etc.) label common items around the house.

Expressive Language

- Tell a story about or identify the action in a magazine or newspaper picture, ask about the school day, ask about action of favorite TV show, say the names of objects in the environment.

Visual Perception

- Set the table, play “Simon Says”, sort objects (buttons, nails, socks, etc.) as a game, give directions using right or left

Beginning Kindergarten Skills

- Stays with the group
- Follows modeled steps in task
- Works independently on developmentally appropriate tasks
- Complies with teacher’s directions
- Feeds self independently
- Toilets independently
- Takes outer clothing off and puts it on independently
- Cleans hands, nose, and face independently
- Avoids dangers and responds to warnings
- Seeks adult help to resolve social problems or when hurt
- Communicates needs and preferences
- Come to adult when called/signaled
- Responds appropriately to questions and makes comments directed to him or her
- Relates ideas, experiences, or stories
- Modifies behavior when given feedback
- Defends self without aggression; uses self control
- Respects others and their property
- Expresses feelings appropriately
- Willing to try new activities
- Can attend/stay focused for 5 minutes for stories and instructions

