

Our vision is that all children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential.

Jefferson City Public Schools

# Parents as Teachers

Southwest Early Childhood Center

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## Sippy Cups and Your Child's Teeth

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(Article from the American Dental Association for National Children's Dental Health Month, February 2015. Reprinted with permission).

As soon as teeth appear in the mouth, decay can occur. One of the risk factors for early childhood caries (sometimes called baby bottle tooth decay or nursing mouth syndrome) is frequent and prolonged exposure of a baby's teeth to liquids, such as fruit juice, milk or formula, which all contain sugar.

Tooth decay can occur when a baby is put to bed with a bottle. Infants should finish their naptime or bedtime bottle before going to bed. Because decay can destroy the teeth of an infant or young child, you should encourage your children to drink from a cup by their first birthday.

Many training cups, also called sippy or tippy cups, are available in stores. Many are "no spill" cups, which are essentially baby bottles in disguise. "No spill" cups include a valve beneath the spout to stop spills. However, cups with valves do not allow your child to sip. Instead, the child gets liquid by sucking on the cup, much like a baby bottle. This practice defeats the purpose of using a training cup, as it prevents the child from learning to sip.

Don't let your child carry the training cup around. Toddlers are often unsteady on their feet. They take an unnecessary risk if they try to walk and drink at the same time. Falling while drinking from a cup has the potential to injure the mouth.

A training cup should be used temporarily. Once your child has learned how to sip, the training cup has achieved its purpose. It can and should be set aside when no longer needed.

(continued on page 2)

## It's Cold and Flu Season--Help Stop the Spread of Germs!

While we want to teach our children to share, germs are one thing we don't want them to pass on! Teach your child how to wash their hands with soap and water (scrubbing as long as it takes to sing the ABCs or "Happy Birthday" twice) and to "cover your cough" by turning away from others and coughing into the inside of the elbow instead of hands. Please also remember to let your parent educator know if anyone in your home is sick when you have a visit scheduled; we want to keep all the families that we visit healthy!



Parents as Teachers  
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## Sippy Cups and Your Child's Teeth (Continued)

### Tips:

For sipping success, carefully choose and use a training cup. As the first birthday approaches, encourage your child to drink from a cup. As this changeover from baby bottle to training cup takes place, be very careful:

- what kind of training cup you choose
  - what goes into the cup
  - how frequently your child sips from it
  - that your child does not carry the cup around.
- Talk to your dentist for more information. If your child has not had a

dental examination, schedule a "well baby checkup" for his or her teeth. The American Dental Association says that it is beneficial for the first dental visit to occur within six months of the appearance of the first tooth, and no later than the child's first birthday.

## Fact Sheet for Your Magical Smile

The following list is has been provided by Magical Smiles Family Dentistry (408 Dix Road, JCMO 65109. Ph: 573-638-3897, [www.magicalsmiles.com](http://www.magicalsmiles.com))

Good oral health starts before you are born!

A **pregnant mother** should eat right, take prenatal vitamins, maintain a healthy lifestyle and visit their Dentist regularly.

Start cleaning your child's teeth as soon as they come in. By your child's **first birthday**, he/she should no longer be using a *bottle, pacifier, sucking fingers or thumb*. If a bottle is needed at bedtime, it should only contain water.

Visit your Dentist twice a year starting at the age of 1 to prevent problems, pain, and **\$ave you money!!!**

**Everyone should brush after breakfast and before bedtime.**

Flossing habits should start very early in life, *so help your child floss once a day!*

Frequent sipping on sugary drinks and snacking on carbohydrates causes cavities to form. **The bacteria that live in your mouth turn sugars into acid, and form plaque. If plaque is not removed properly by brushing and flossing, the acid will eventually eat away at tooth structure and cause a cavity.**

Limit or **Stop the Pop!** Drink more water and less sugary drinks. Chew sugar free gum like Orbit.

Look in your mouth and your child's mouth! Cavities may look like **stain, dark spots or holes in the tooth**. Signs of gum disease or infection can include *red and puffy gums that bleed easily.*

Fluoride is a mineral that helps strengthen teeth and bones. It can be found in some baby formulas, some multivitamins, food, water supplies, well water, and toothpaste. **Fluoride also protects teeth and even prevents decay.** To find out if you have fluoride

in your water (filtered or not), call the Department of Natural Resources at 573-751-5331. Well water especially should be tested for fluoride content.

To prevent bad breath, brush your tongue!

Don't even start to smoke, chew tobacco or sue other drugs! These things not **only destroy our teeth and oral health**; they can cause cancers including oral cancer, systemic problems, and even **death!** A healthy mouth can help you keep a healthy body.

Oral piercing can cause **pain, swelling, infection, and nerve damage, broken teeth and gum recession**. Piercings can also be swallowed or inhaled.

Conditions like **pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, arthritis** and many others can be complicated by poor oral health. A healthy smile is usually attached to a healthy body!



# Building Moral Intelligence: Tolerance

Last school year we began to look at ways to help our children develop character using Michelle Borba's book *Building Moral Intelligence*. If you want to review the traits we have discussed (*empathy*--which helps a child feel the emotion of another, *conscience*--which helps a child know right from wrong, *self-control*--choosing not to act on an impulsive thought, *respect*--showing regard for the worth of someone or something, and *kindness*--showing concern about the needs and feelings of others), past issues of the PAT Newsletter are available on our website or from your parent educator. This month we focus on *tolerance*, and our summer newsletter will wrap up our study with *fairness*.

*Tolerance* is recognizing that all people deserve to be treated with kindness, respect, and understanding (even if we disagree with some of their beliefs or behaviors). In order to have tolerance, one must believe that all people have the right to make their own moral choices as long as they don't infringe on the rights of others. One must also appreciate the richness of human diversity and the positive qualities and contributions of people from all backgrounds, abilities, races, religions, countries, and cultures. Each person and family is unique, and tolerance allows us to try to find the good in all people.

When we help our children become tolerant, it will help them reject stereotypes, prejudice, biases, and hatred and learn to respect people more for their character and attitudes than their differences. As with any virtue, the best way to teach our children tolerance is not just through what we say, but by our example and what we do—moral behaviors are *caught* as well as *taught*. Because the foundation for tolerance is built in the home, modeling and nurturing tolerance should begin when your child is still young. Michelle Borba shares six key practices to help raise tolerant kids:

1. Confront your own prejudices.

We all have them, even if we aren't aware that they are there, and we communicate them (often unintentionally) to our children.

2. Commit yourself to raising a tolerant child. If you really want your child to appreciate and respect diversity, you must consciously decide early on to do so.
3. Refuse to allow discriminatory comments in your presence.
4. Provide positive images of all groups (including toys, books, videos/examples from TV, and public role models). The more your child sees how you embrace diversity, the more prone he'll be to follow your standards.
5. Encourage involvement with a wide range of people of different races, religions, cultures, genders, abilities, and beliefs. Make sure you display openness to people who represent a range of diversities so that your child imitates how you respect differences.
6. Live your life as an example of tolerance. Ask yourself each day, if my child had only my behavior to copy, would he see what I want him to emulate? Be willing to walk your talk.

Because learning to get along with people who are different from them will be a big part of our children's lives, we

want to help our children accept, respect, and celebrate the diverse talents, cultures, and contributions of others. The starting place to help children understand diversity is for them to look at their own ancestry. Family is where children acquire their primary language, knowledge of their ethnicity, spiritual or religious beliefs, and their values. Some ways to help your child understand his own heritage and begin to appreciate and respect also those of their friends and classmates include:

- **looking at family photo albums** with pictures of relatives past and present
- **creating an ancestry map.** Using a large world map, find the countries, states, and cities where relatives live or have lived
- **keeping a family journal** to track special family stories and memories, recipes, pictures, etc.
- **creating a family recipe book.** Include favorite recipes from different family members
- **provide children's literature representing your heritage** and
- **hanging a flag of your country of origin**, all the time or for special occasions.

For more ways to help promote your child's sense of self, see the Ages and Stages activities on page 5.

Children sort out their own identities and form ideas about themselves by figuring out how they are the same as or different from others. Children younger than five really don't see people as members of a particular group of any kind *unless adults draw*



*this to their attention.* See the column to the right to learn more about how children develop race awareness. Since it is a combination of learning and development that determines our children's attitude and behavior from a very early age, we can help by:

- **celebrating differences early on** (letting them know it's okay to be different). Try making a collage with magazine pictures featuring all kinds of people, depicting differences in gender, age, race, culture, backgrounds, physical appearance, and even moods
- **exposing our children to diversity.** Ignorance or lack of information is one of the most common reasons children develop stereotypes. Inexperience can lead children to have fears or insecurities about others. It is natural for us to feel uncomfortable with people who are different from us, but if we expose our children to diversity when they are young and talk with them about those differences, we can prevent them from developing fears and stereotypes that they can carry into their teens and adulthood.
- **giving straightforward, simple answers to questions about differences** (since preschoolers are naturally curious, they will likely ask questions like "Why is that boy sitting in a chair that

moves?" A short answer such as, "That chair is called a wheelchair, and it has a motor. His legs don't work the same as yours, so the chair is what he uses to get from place to place" is usually sufficient). Asking these kinds of questions is one way for them to sort out how they are different or the same from others as well as learn to feel comfortable with those differences.

- **helping your child look for what he has in common with others** instead of how he is different.

So why do we as parents need to be concerned about teaching our children tolerance, if they aren't naturally prejudiced? Studies have shown that by the time children enter school many have already developed negative ideas about groups different from their own. If these aren't countered, they can easily cloud children's views for the rest of their lives. Thankfully it is a combination of learning and development that determines our children's attitudes and behavior. As our children's first and most influential teachers, we have the responsibility to avoid planting seeds of hatred related to ageism, culturalism, sexism, "lookism" or racism with our remarks, subtle expressions, or gestures, and to prevent them from sprouting if planted by anyone else.

**Stages of Race Awareness according to Dr. Marguerite Wright, author of *I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla*:**

1. *Racial innocence* (under age 3): Most children are incapable of accurately identifying their skin color, much less their race. They see people as individuals and not as members of particular racial groups.
2. *Color awareness* (ages 3-5): When asked, "What color are you?" children are just as likely to describe the color of their clothes as the color of their skin. They continue to see people without prejudice with regard to skin color or race, but may begin to form negative associations with certain skin colors isfexposed to racial bigotry.
3. *Awakening to social color* (ages 5-7): Most children are unable to reliably identify their race, but can accurately identify their skin color and begin to make relative skin color distinctions. They may begin to adopt skin color prejudices, although they do not fully understand them.
4. *Racial awareness* (ages 8-10): Children now accurately identify their race using terms such as *Native American, Chinese, Hispanic, and African American*. Unless they are taught not to prejudge people based on their race, children may adopt full-fledged racial stereotypes.

**CHARACTER CONNECTION**

**FEBRUARY: HONESTY ("Doing and saying things that are truthful").**

Talk with your child about what honesty is and encourage it before dishonesty is a problem. Since younger preschoolers have a hard time distinguishing between fantasy and reality, they may not always tell the truth. Often they aren't intentionally lying, but are saying what they wish was true. (For example, if you ask if they ate all their supper and can see there is still food on their plate, but they tell you "yes" because they know you want them to finish it).

**MARCH: TRUSTWORTHY ("Keeping your promises").**

A story such as *The Berenstain Bears and the Truth* can help explain to your preschooler what trustworthy means: being honest, following rules, always keeping a promise, never being mean, not taking things that don't belong to us. Make sure to model being trustworthy by keeping your promises to your children too...if you say you'll read to them "in a minute," be prepared to do so.

**APRIL: ACCOUNTABLE ("Doing your job right").**

Teach your child what you want them to do and what your expectations are for them, and then praise them when they do what is expected. Give them simple tasks (such as helping clear the table, take clean laundry out of the dryer, etc).

**From Games to Play with Babies by Jackie Silberg (2011)**

Looking for more ideas on how to play with your child?

There's an app for that!

ZERO TO THREE's Let's Play App is a free app available for both iPhone and Android.

Let's Play provides parents and grandparents with fun ideas for keeping babies and toddlers entertained and learning, especially during daily routines like commuting time, chores, bedtime and bathtime, mealtime, and shopping. There are also "boredom busters" for any time. Parents can search activities by age (0-18 months, 18-36 months, and 3-5 years), tag favorites, and share activities via social media. All of the activities reflect children's typical skills at each age and are designed to support development in the context of play and family routines. Let's Play was developed by ZERO TO THREE, a national nonprofit organization focused specifically on the healthy development of babies and toddlers.

**0-3 Months: I See You**—Lie on your back and put your baby on your tummy. Call her name and raise her slightly to encourage her to lift her head to see you. Repeat this game over and over, praising the baby each time she lifts her head a little bit.

**3-6 Months: The Body Game**—Hold your baby in your lap. Touch different features of his face and name each one. Touch two features. Each time say, "This is (child's name)'s nose." "This is (child's name)'s cheek." Repeat several times. Take your baby's hand and place it on *your* nose and cheek alternately. As you guide his hand, say, "This is Daddy's nose" and "This is Daddy's cheek." If you touch and name only two features at a time, it will be much easier for the baby to begin to understand the words. Now ask the baby, "Where's your nose?" Place his hand on his nose and say, "Here it is!" Repeat with all of the features you named.

**6-9 Months: Where's the Doll?**—When a baby looks at herself in the mirror, she doesn't realize that she is seeing her own image. Hold your baby's favorite doll or stuffed toy and make it move around. Pretend that it is talking. Now hold the doll in front of a mirror and move it around in the same way. Ask the baby, "Where's the doll?"

**9-12 Months: Sleep Story**—Make up a story to tell your baby that uses his name. The story should describe things that your baby does during the day. The following is an example: *Once upon a time, there was a sweet little baby (your child's name). He played with his toys. At dinnertime, he drank his milk and ate his dinner. Every night, his mommy (or daddy), gave him a bath and lots of kisses. After his mommy (or daddy) laid him in his crib, he closed his eyes and went to sleep.* Use your child's name in the story as often as possible.

**From Games to Play with Toddlers by Jackie Silberg (2010)**

**12-15 Months: Body Part Game**—When a young child is beginning to name the parts of her body, play this game. Touch your ears, saying to the child "I am touching my ears. Can you touch your ears?" Give your toddler time and repeat the question if needed. If she is keeping up, use words that she doesn't usually hear, such as elbows, chin, ankles, back, and so on.

**15-18 Months: Fill in the Word**—Toddlers at this age can usually say a few words such as "Mama," "Dada" and their own name. Make up a story with your child's name in it. Each time you come to his name, ask him to fill in the word. For example, "Once upon a time there was a little boy named (your child's name). This little boy named \_\_\_\_ (let child fill in the word) went to the kitchen to eat his lunch." Keep making up the story, and each time say "This little boy named \_\_\_\_." Your child will really love playing this game, as young children love to hear their own names in stories.

**18-24 Months: Photo Albums**—Looking at family pictures is a lovely experience for all ages. Why not start a photo album for your toddler? Include in the album a separate picture of each member of your family, including the animals. If you are missing a certain person's picture, go visit that person with your child. Take pictures together add that picture to the album. You can also name a person and ask your child to find which picture they are in.

**From Games to Play with Two-Year-Olds by Jackie Silberg (2010)**

**Young Twos: Me and You**—Recite the following poem with your two-year-old, touching the parts of the body as you name them: "*I've got one head, one nose too. One mouth, one chin, and so have you. I've got two eyes, two ears too. Two arms, two legs, and so have you. I've got two hands, two thumbs too. I'll wiggle my thumbs and so can you.*" This is fun to do standing in front of a mirror. Your child can see her head, nose, mouth, and other parts of the body as you touch them. Recite the poem again, holding your child's hand and helping her identify the parts of the body.

**Middle Twos: When I Was a Baby**—Children love to learn about themselves as babies. This helps them feel important and special. Use a special book or box for your child to collect photos, birthday and holiday cards, artwork and anything else you or your child would like to include. Other things that you could include are: ads with pictures of his favorite foods, hand and footprints of him at different ages, and favorite toys as they are outgrown.

**Older Twos: Family Poems**—Select several rhymes or songs that your child enjoys. Record different members of your family saying/singing one of them. Play the recording for your child and see if she recognizes who is speaking. This is great fun and your child can enjoy the voices of her parents, siblings, grandparents, or friends at any time.

## Drop in and Play Center News:

If you haven't visited the Drop in and Play center recently, you'll want to come check out the big red barn, tractors, combines, and other farm toys donated by Henry and Jana Thompson and the Cole County Farm Bureau. We've also added a slide to work our big muscles when it's too cold to go outside, and a tool bench and tools!



As part of the JCPS district's commitment to student safety, the Southwest Early Childhood Center has been scheduled to receive security updates sometime within the next 30 days. As all doors to the building will now remain locked at all times, visitors will need to be buzzed in through the front entrance so we know who is in the building. This will affect the Drop in and Play center hours for the remainder of this school year, as office staff will only be available to monitor the intercom to buzz you in until 3 p.m. each day. If you are already in the Drop in and Play center prior to that time, you may stay until the previously scheduled closing time of 5 p.m. The evening Drop in and Play hours (remaining open through 7 p.m.) on February 3 and 11 and March 16 will remain unaffected, but on April 8 it will "close" at 3, and staff will be available to let you into the building starting again at 5 p.m. We appreciate your understanding and apologize for any inconvenience this mid-year schedule change may cause, as we partner together to keep all our children safe.

Please also remember that the Drop in and Play center is designed to be a place for parents and their children who are enrolled in Parents as Teachers to play **together**, and that cleaning up after yourselves is part of the play experience. Families are asked to sign in and out when arriving and leaving the center. In order to keep our room clean, we also ask that no food or drink (except bottles for babies) be brought into the center. Thank you.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Tuesday, February 10: "Learning About Self Through Play"** Group Connection, 6-7 p.m. Come enjoy activities with your child as you explore themes related to social-emotional development, such as developing a sense of self and early sibling and friend relationships.

**Friday, February 13 & Monday, February 16:** Drop in and Play center closed

**Saturday, February 21: Kindergarten Transition**, 9:30-11 a.m. If you have a child who turns 5 by July 31, 2015 you won't want to miss this event. Parents will have the opportunity to learn about how to help their child prepare for kindergarten from a panel of experts followed by a question and answer time (including representatives from both public and parochial schools), while children entering kindergarten will experience what a kindergarten classroom feels like. (Note: there will not be childcare available for children of other ages).

**Thursday, March 12: "Science; It All Adds Up"** Group Connection, 6-7 p.m. Come experience a variety of hands-on early science and math activities with your child.

**Monday, March 16: Hearing, Vision, and Developmental Screening** 9 a.m.-noon and 4-7 p.m. Call 659-2350 after February 1 to reserve a screening spot if you are on the waiting list or in PAT Lite, or if your parent educator has spoken with you about bringing your child in. ALL FAMILIES are invited to bring their children in for a vision screening with Saving Sight (all ages), and Early Head Start staff will be on hand to do hearing screening for babies-36 months using an OAE. No appointment is necessary if you are coming just for these; they will be done on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Monday, March 30-Friday, April 3:** Drop in and Play center closed (spring break).

**Tuesday April 14: Field Day** at Southwest, 9-11 a.m. (come and go). Let your child exercise their large muscles as they complete a variety of obstacle courses.

**Thursday, April 16: Wild Heart in concert**, 6-7 p.m. Come enjoy an interactive, family-friendly concert with a science and conservation message put on by local Emmy Award-winning entertainers Jan and George Syrigios.

**Saturday, April 18: Carnival** at MEMORIAL Park (note change of location), 9:30-11 a.m.

**Tuesday, May 5: Book Swap** 6-7 p.m. If your child has outgrown some of their books and you are ready to pass them on, please give them to your parent educator or drop them off in the box in our Drop in and Play center. Then come this day to pick out some "new-to-you" books for your child.