



Parents as Teachers®

Affiliate

OUR VISION IS THAT ALL CHILDREN WILL LEARN, GROW AND DEVELOP TO REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Jefferson City Public Schools Parents as Teachers

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Enjoying the Great Outdoors

by Katie Epema, PAT Coordinator for Jefferson City Public Schools

Now that the weather has started to warm up, it's a great time to get outdoors and play with your child! Beyond the benefit of enjoying time together as a family, studies have shown young children who get hands-on learning in nature do better on standardized testing when they get to school, are better able to concentrate, have lower stress levels, and are even less likely to exhibit violent or bullying behavior. As the American Academy of Pediatrics says, "spending unstructured playtime in nature, surrounded by dirt, trees, grass, rocks, flowers and insects, inspires children's play and offers physical and emotional benefits."

There are many ways to enjoy nature with young children, whether in your own backyard, at a park, or elsewhere.

Outdoor play is a great opportunity for children to use their large muscles as they throw, catch, and kick balls; run; jump, climb on playground equipment and learn how to "pump" on the swing. Toddlers can scoot themselves around on ride-on toys, and preschoolers can begin to pedal a tricycle or small bicycle with training wheels.

Small muscles can be developed as children manipulate small rocks with their fingers, pick a single blade of grass or a flower, or blow bubbles. Catching bubbles also encourages visual tracking and eye-hand

coordination. Children love to get their hands dirty with sensory play materials like sand, water, small pebbles, and even dirt and mud; digging, filling, dumping, pouring, and stirring.

Taking a nature walk will introduce your child to new sights, sounds, and smells. Pay attention to these and talk about them. If you are walking in your neighborhood, let your child collect interesting items such as leaves, rocks, or acorns (which can be used later for matching and sorting activities). If you are looking for a trail to walk on, explore the Katy Trail or take a walk on one of the Greenway trails found throughout Jefferson City (a map can be found at

http://www.jeffersoncitymo.gov/parks/trails/greenway/greenway_maps.php). Check out "Storybook Trails" in April, when you can walk, run, or ride your bike and enjoy a children's book at the same time. From April 4-11 enjoy "Tickly Octopus" at Ellis-Porter Riverside Park, and April 25-May 2, check out "Froggy Plays T-Ball" at Memorial Park. The Runge Nature Center (330 Commerce Drive, JC) has several trails suitable for small legs, including a few paved ones that are stroller-friendly. More "rugged" nature trails can be found at Binder Park, the Frog Hollow Nature Trail adjacent to the W. Edgewood Greenway, the new Green Berry Acres Park at 1915 Greenberry Road, and Clark's Hill/Norton State Historic Site in Osage City.

Sleep Tips & PAT Reminders

Discover how you can help make the time change easier through your child's sleep routine. Help PAT stay in touch with you via email and text.

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Upcoming Events & Feedback

See what's coming up with Parents as Teachers and in our community in March & April. We want your ideas for next year's programs!

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Connecting with Your Child

Learn more about how connecting with your child through daily activities can improve their behavior.

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Six Tips for Helping Children Adjust to Daylight Savings

By Karen Schwarzbach, CSC, CWP, Sleep Expert on www.littlelane.com

You think you've got sleep mastered. Your little one goes to bed at a consistent time, naps well (if she is still a napper) and sleeps through the night. But then daylight saving time begins! Does this mean that all your hard work goes to waste? It doesn't have to turn into a nightmare if you follow these simple tips.

The time change starts at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, March 13, 2016. We "spring forward" this time of year, which means that we set our clocks forward an hour. This may be difficult for your child because bedtime will be coming earlier. The recommendations below will help you create an effective plan and seamless transition for your child.

1. Begin before it begins!

To help your child get used to the new schedule, begin to acclimate them five to seven days before the actual time change. This way they will be somewhat adjusted to the new time because you have been preparing for several days. Start 5-7 days preceding the time change in preparation.

2. Start Slowly

[The National Sleep Foundation](#) recommends a modified transition to help the body adjust slowly and respond optimally to the change. If you choose to employ this gradual

transition method, bedtime will creep earlier for several days preceding the end of daylight saving time.

If you choose to try to get your little one on an adjusted schedule ahead of time, don't shift the full hour right away. Start with adjusting naps and night sleep 15 minutes at a time. Every day or two, push it another 15 minutes earlier. By Saturday you'll be on the last 15 minute adjustment in preparation for Sunday when the time actually does change.

3. Maintain Your Routine

Although you are adjusting the time your child falls asleep during the day and at night, continue to use the same routine, just at the adjusted time. Dim the lights, engage in quiet activity, read a non-stimulating book, sing a special song, a give a brief massage to maintain your child's readiness to fall asleep. With it being lighter later, you want to make sure that your room darkening efforts 'communicate' bedtime.

4. Remain Consistent

The important thing for the days leading up to the time change when you are trying to get your child on the new schedule is to remain consistent in how you manage your child's day, afternoon and evening. This may require a little bit of planning on your part but the most important thing is to stick with it.

5. Give Melatonin a Boost!

Research has indicated that exposing children to sunlight in the early afternoon actually boosts their melatonin production. Consider some backyard time or a walk before dinner to get in some of that melatonin-inducing sunshine!

6. Be Patient

While most children generally respond well to these modifications, some will resist, particularly if they are a bit older and have more awareness about household activities. For pre-schoolers, you may choose to have a conversation with them about the time change, maybe even creating an activity like drawing pictures of what it will look like outside at dinnertime after the clocks change or talking about the fun events that spring brings such as pool parties, barbeques and evening playtime in the yard.

Additionally, some babies have internal clocks set for a certain time and may be more resistant to change. However, stick with the plan and your little ones will eventually adjust.

Prepare yourselves and your family ahead of time and you will continue sleeping like babies even after the time has changed.

HOW MUCH SLEEP DOES MY CHILD NEED?

Age	Hours per day (in a 24 hour period)
0 - 2 months	10.5 - 18
2 - 12 months	14 - 15
1 - 3 years	12 - 14
3 - 5 years	11 - 13
5 - 12 years	10 - 11

Source: National Sleep Foundation

Help PAT Stay in Touch with Your Family

The Jefferson City Public Schools Parents as Teachers program currently sends monthly emails with reminders of upcoming events to each family who has provided an email address. If you have not been receiving them, please check with your parent educator or contact us at 659-2350 or katie.epema@jcschools.us so we can make sure we have the correct address on file.

If you would prefer to receive more frequent communication such as group connection reminders, weather cancellations, etc., we'd invite you to sign up to receive emails and/or text messages through Remind. To sign up, visit <https://www.remind.com/join/jcpat> or follow these directions to sign up via text or email: To receive messages via text, text @jcpat to 81010. You can opt-out of messages at any time by replying

'unsubscribe @jcpat'. Trouble using 81010? Try texting @jcpat to (573) 303-3799 instead. To receive the same messages via email, send an email to jcpat@mail.remind.com. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. If you would prefer to use the Remind App, it is available through the iTunes app store or Google Play store. We look forward to being better able to communicate with you!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Parenting with Conscious Discipline

A session with trainer Karen Hickman on "Building Connections & Establishing Routines" (most suitable for infant/toddler age) will be offered on April 4, 2016 from 6-8 p.m. at the Southwest Early Childhood Center (812 St Mary's Blvd.) This training is free and open to the public.

Limited child care is available for families enrolled in Parents as Teachers (including PAT Lite and those on the waiting list) and MUST be signed up for in advance. To secure a spot for your child(ren), call 659-2350 or email

katie.epema@jcschools.us.

Reservations for childcare will be available beginning March 21 and will close when all spots are filled. Walk-in spots the evening of the event will not be available.

Alphabet Adventure

Saturday, March 19 at 9:30 a.m. Meet us in the gym at the Southwest Early Childhood Center to learn about pre- and early-reading and writing skills. Activities best suited for age birth-5.

Carnival

Join the United Way's Early Childhood Advisory Committee in celebrating the Week of the Young Child on Saturday, April 16 from 9:30-11 a.m. ***Location change: the carnival will be held at the Knowles YMCA at 424 Stadium Blvd. instead of Memorial Park***

KidSight Vision Screening

All children ages 6 months-6 years of age are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to have their eyes checked on Monday, April 25 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the Southwest Early Childhood Center. No appointment is needed for this screening; you will be seen on a first come, first served basis.

Wanted: Your Family' Ideas!

As we begin to plan for our upcoming program year (August 2016-May 2017), Parents as Teachers would like your input about how we can best serve your family. You will receive a survey in early April asking for your feedback about the program in general as well as your parent educator, and suggestions for future program planning. If we have your email address, you will receive it electronically. If you have not provided one, your parent educator will give you a

paper copy of the survey, or we will mail one to you. Please take the time to fill it out. We do take your input into consideration when planning (while also following the guidelines set forth by the Parents as Teachers National Center and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for our program). Along with the feedback forms that you have filled out if you have attended a group connection event, this is your chance to help us offer the services that best fit what our community wants and needs. Thanks for partnering with us!

What's Going On Around Town?

The Missouri State Museum's "Storytime Saturdays" program series which began in February continues through May. These programs introduce children aged 3 to 6 years to Missouri's history and natural resources through stories and hands-on activities. Programs begin at 11 a.m. each Saturday and will be held at various locations throughout the history and resources halls in the east and west wings of the Missouri State Capitol. Topics for each week can be found at

<https://mostateparks.com/events/park/missouri-state-museum>

Spring means that **Runge Nature Center** has started up their programming for infants and toddlers again. Babes in the Woods (ages 0-2 years), Little Acorns (ages 3-6 years), and Little Acorns PLUS (for families with one child in the 0-2 age range and one child in the 3-6 age range) have different themes each month. Reservations are required and may be made starting the first of each month by calling 573-526-5544. Information about these programs and Runge's other special events can be found in their Habitat Happenings newsletter at <http://mdc.mo.gov/regions/central/runge-nature-center/habitat-happenings-newsletter>

Morning Movies at **Capital 8 Theaters** every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at 10:00AM in March and April. Those belonging to the Frequent Moviegoer Club (FMG) will be able to attend the special showing free-of-charge (up to 6 free admissions per show). Non-members will be charged \$1.00 per ticket. See the movie line up or sign up for the (free) FMG club at <http://www.goodrichqualitytheaters.com/programs/morning-movies/>

Saturday, March 19: City of Holts Summit Easter Egg Hunt, 10 a.m. Children ages 0-10 can join the Easter bunny at Greenway Park (282 S. Greenway, Holts Summit). Prizes and fun for all.

Saturday, March 26: Jefferson City Jaycees 29th Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Memorial

Park. This special event will be open to children ages 2 to 7 years. Children will be divided into age groups and the park will be divided into three sections. Parents will not be allowed in the hunting area except for the 2-3 year old area. Children ages 2-3 will begin their hunt at 11:00 am; ages 4-5 immediately after the 2-3 age group; ages 6-7 immediately after the 2-3 age group All proceeds go to benefit other community projects in Jefferson City.

The Missouri River Regional Library (214 Adams St.) has preschool storytimes for ages 3-5 years every Tuesday from 10:30-11 a.m., family storytime for all ages every Wednesday from 10:30-11:30 a.m., and Rhyme Time for babies and toddlers 2 and under the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month from 10:30-11 a.m. The library offers a monthly family movie night on the 3rd Friday evening of each month and other special events. Visit www.mrrl.org for more information on library events.

Barnes and Noble (3535 Missouri Boulevard) also has storytime on Wednesdays (10:30 a.m.) and Saturdays (11 a.m.). Visit <http://stores.barnesandnoble.com/store/2161?view=for> information on their events.

Sports Programs for your preschooler:

Smart Start soccer and baseball programs for children ages 3-5 and tee ball for children entering kindergarten are available through Jefferson City Parks and Recreation. Find more information at http://www.jeffersoncitymo.gov/programs_and_activities/youth_programs/index.php The YMCA also offers preschool soccer but sign-ups for the spring season are now past. The Holts Summit Optimist Club offers a tee ball program for children ages 4-6 years. Information on Facebook at Holts Summit Optimist Club or by contacting Amy at 573-291-8042 or coffee4ark@gmail.com.

FOR OTHER LOCAL EVENTS, VISIT
WWW.JEFFERSONCITY.MACARONIKID.COM,
& WWW.VISITJEFFERSONCITY.COM

Connecting with Your Child: Lessons from Conscious Discipline®

The Conscious Discipline® approach is based on the premise that connection, not attention, is what all people seek. When we acknowledge this, we move from attempting to control our children and make them behave to helping them be successful in following the rules.

Creating loving moments of genuine connection with our children will literally wire the brain to help develop impulse control. This allows us to move beyond power struggles to a willingness to cooperate. It also helps foster forgiveness instead of simply trying to forget, and provide the willingness needed to repair hurts in relationships.

A family that is connected creates healthy relationships between parents, between parents and children, between siblings, and between extended family members and the community at large. This connection grows in part through predictable routines and nurturing “I Love You” rituals.

Connection requires four critical elements:

- **Eye Contact:** Get down on your child’s level to achieve eye contact. When eyes meet, a connection is made to key brain structures for empathy and matching emotions (when your child sees the emotion on your face, they will sense the same feeling within themselves. When you are calm, they can calm). As soon as you have eye contact, download calm; “There you are. You’re safe. Breathe with me. You can handle this.”
- **Presence:** Being present in the moment means your mind and body are in the same place. Your mind is free from “chatter.” You are still enough to see the beauty in the child. Presence is about acceptance as we join together in the same moment, focusing on the same thing.
- **Gentle, Appropriate Touch:** Touch creates a hormone that is essential to neural functioning in the brain and learning. If we want smart, happy kids, then we need to provide more caring touch. Examples of appropriate touch can include hugs, kisses, high fives, snuggles, holding hands, carrying, sitting on parent’s lap or close by, pats on the head, back or hair rubs, playful wrestling or tickling (as long as your child is enjoying it...stop if they ask you to).
- **Playful Interaction:** Playfulness helps build bonds and creates a biochemistry for dopamine, which helps children pay attention and stay focused; increasing attention spans and boosting social development.

If you would like to learn more about how one-to-one connection activities provide your child with love, join us at the Southwest Early Childhood Center on April 4 from 6-8 p.m. for a session with trainer Karen Hickman on “Building Connections & Establishing Routines with Conscious Discipline®.” While primarily geared for parents of infants and toddlers, skills learned will apply to children of all ages. See the Upcoming Events box on page 3 for more information.

Make Time for 9

Children need 9 meaningful touches every day to feel connected.

The 9 minutes of the day that can make all the difference:

- **The first 3 minutes after children wake up and see you**
- **The first three minutes after coming home for the day**
- **The last 3 minutes of the day before they go to bed**

Turn these minutes into warm, happy moments!

Children need at least 9 minutes of face-to-face talk time each day.