



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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Don't Miss out on Winter Fun!

by Katie Epema, PAT Coordinator for Jefferson City Public Schools

Just because the weather is getting colder doesn't mean that you can't have fun being active with your children! In this newsletter we will explore how to stay active in the cold winter months by bundling up to enjoy the outdoors, as well as finding other places to stay active. The Jefferson City area has indoor play areas such as the mall, Burger King, Chick-Fil-A, and McDonalds in Holts Summit.

Organized classes or activities such as ice skating, swimming lessons, dance or gymnastics make great gift suggestions if you'd rather your child have an experience instead of more toys.

If the cooler weather makes you want to stay indoors, have fun exploring the Runge Nature Center exhibits (330 Commerce Drive). Your children may especially enjoy the aquarium feeding times and puppet shows, or your 3-6 year old may enjoy a Little Acorns program. For more information on Runge events, visit <http://mdc.mo.gov/regions/central/runge-nature-center>. You can download or subscribe to their Habitat Happenings Newsletter for free.

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. On Saturday, November 21 there will be a magic show from 1-2 p.m. with magician Gerry Tritz. 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.

Other local family-friendly events including holiday festivities can be found at <http://www.visitjeffersoncity.com/events.php> and <http://jeffersoncity.macaronikid.com/calendar/>

The Parents as Teachers Drop in and Play center is open 9 a.m.-3 p.m. when school is in session and from 4-7 p.m. approximately once a month. Please see the calendar at <http://www.jcschools.us/Page/11191> for details. Don't forget to come for hands-on fun at "Messy Play Saturday" on January 23 at 10 a.m. at the Southwest Early Childhood Center gym (812 St. Mary's Blvd.)



Toys for Young Children (p. 2) & Staying Active in Winter (p. 3)

Looking for gift ideas for your children? Giving certificates for activities to do together, or classes such as gymnastics or dance can help keep children active and keep the "stuff" in your home at a minimum. Open ended toys and materials (which can be used in multiple ways) are also good ideas. Learn more on pages 2-3.



Conscious Discipline® Tips

Participants in the Parenting with Conscious Discipline® training sessions have been learning calming techniques such as the "balloon." See page 4 for directions on things to try with your children.

IN THIS ISSUE

Good Toys for Young Children by Age and Stage

In addition to being safe, good toys for young children need to match their stages of development and emerging abilities. Many safe and appropriate play materials are free items typically found at home. Cardboard boxes plastic bowls and lids, collections of plastic bottle caps, and other “treasures” can be used in more than one way by children of different ages. As you read the following lists of suggested toys for children of different ages, keep in mind that each child develops at an individual pace. Items on the list—as long as they are safe—can be good choices for children who are younger or older than the suggested age range.

Toys for young infants—birth through 6 months

Babies like to look at people—following them with their eyes. Typically, they prefer faces and bright colors. Babies can reach, be fascinated with what their hands and feet can do, lift their heads, turn their heads toward sounds, put things in their mouths, and much more!

Good toys for young infants:

- Things they can reach for, hold, suck on, shake, make noise with—rattles, large rings, squeeze toys, teething toys, soft dolls, textured balls, and vinyl and board books
- Things to listen to—books with nursery rhymes and poems, and recordings of lullabies and simple songs
- Things to look at—pictures hung so baby can see them and unbreakable mirrors

Toys for older infants—7 to 12 months

Older babies are movers—typically they go from rolling over and sitting, to scooting, bouncing, creeping, pulling themselves up, and standing. They understand their own names and other common words, can identify body parts, find hidden objects, and put things in and out of containers.

Good toys for older infants:

- Things to play pretend with—baby dolls, puppets, plastic and wooden vehicles with wheels, and water toys
- Things to drop and take out—plastic bowls, large beads, balls, and nesting toys
- Things to build with—large soft blocks and wooden cubes

- Things to use their large muscles with—large balls, push and pull toys, and low, soft things to crawl over

Toys for 1-year-olds

One-year-olds are on the go! Typically they can walk steadily and even climb stairs. They enjoy stories, say their first words, and can play next to other children (but not yet with!). They like to experiment—but need adults to keep them safe.

Good toys for 1-year-olds:

- Board books with simple illustrations or photographs of real objects
- Recordings with songs, rhymes, simple stories, and pictures
- Things to create with—wide non-toxic washable markers, crayons, and large paper
- Things to pretend with—toy phones, dolls and doll beds, baby carriages and strollers, dress-up and accessories (scarves, purses), puppets, stuffed toys, plastic animals, and plastic and wood “realistic” vehicles
- Things to build with—cardboard and wood blocks (can be smaller than those used by infants—2 to 4 inches)
- Things for using their large and small muscles—puzzles, large pegboards, toys with parts that do things (dials, switches, knobs, lids), and large and small balls

Toys for 2-year-olds (toddlers)

Toddlers are rapidly learning language and have some sense of danger. Nevertheless they do a lot of physical “testing”: jumping from heights, climbing, hanging by their arms, rolling, and rough-and-tumble play. They have good control of their hands and fingers and like to do things with small objects.

Good toys for 2-year-olds:

- Things for solving problems—wood puzzles (with 4 to 12 pieces), blocks that snap together, objects to sort (by size, shape, color, smell), and things with hooks
- Things for pretending and building—blocks, smaller (and sturdy) transportation toys, construction sets, child-sized furniture (kitchen sets, chairs, play food), dress-up clothes, dolls with accessories, puppets, and sand and water play toys
- Things to create with—large non-toxic, washable crayons and markers, large paintbrushes and finger paint, colored construction paper, toddler-sized scissors with blunt tips, chalkboard and large chalk, and rhythm instruments

- Picture books with more details than books for younger children
- CD and DVD players with a variety of music
- Things for using their large and small muscles—large and small balls for kicking and throwing, ride-on equipment (but probably not tricycles until children are 3), tunnels, low climbers with soft material underneath, and pounding and hammering toys

Toys for 3- to 6-year olds (preschoolers and kindergarteners)

Preschoolers and kindergarteners have longer attention spans than toddlers. Typically they talk a lot and ask a lot of questions. They like to experiment with things and with their still-emerging physical skills. They like to play with friends—and don’t like to lose! They can take turns—and often possible by older preschoolers and kindergarteners.

Good toys for 3- to 6-year-olds:

- Things for solving problems—puzzles (with 12 to 20+ pieces), blocks that snap together, collections and other smaller objects to sort by length, width, height, shape, color, smell, quantity, and other features—collections of plastic bottle caps, plastic bowls and lids, keys, shells, counting bears, small colored blocks
- Things for pretending and building—many blocks for building complex structures, transportation toys, construction sets, child-sized furniture (“apartment” sets, play food), dress-up clothes, dolls with accessories, puppets with simple puppet theaters, and sand and water play toys
- Things to create with—large and small crayons and markers, large and small paintbrushes and fingerpaint, large and small paper for drawing and painting, colored construction paper, preschooler-sized scissors, chalkboard and large and small chalk, modeling clay and playdough, modeling tools, paste, paper and cloth scraps for collage, and instruments—rhythm instruments and keyboards, xylophones, maracas, and tambourines
- Picture books with even more words and more detailed pictures than toddler books
- CD and DVD players with a variety of music
- Things to use their large and small muscles—large and small balls for kicking and throwing/catching, ride-on equipment including tricycles, tunnels, (continued on page 3)



STAYING SAFE AS THE SEASONS CHANGE

As days get shorter and the weather turns cooler, please keep the following in mind:

Personal safety is an important concern for everyone. To assist your Parent Educator, please leave your outdoor lights on after dark and clear ice and snow from entrances.

Parents as Teachers follows the Jefferson City Public Schools' guidelines for inclement weather. If school is cancelled due to poor weather conditions, the Drop in and Play center will be closed and any scheduled activities (such as screening events or group connections) will be cancelled. Please check the district website at www.jcschools.us or the Jefferson City Public Schools Facebook page, or call the district information line at 635-JCPS. The following will also broadcast school closing:

KWOS AM RADIO	950 AM
KLIK AM RADIO	1240 AM
KFAL AM RADIO	900 AM
KBIA FM RADIO	91.3 FM
KATI FM RADIO	94.3 FM
KPLA FM RADIO	101.5 FM
KBXR FM RADIO	102.3 FM
KOQL FM RADIO	106.1 FM
KJMO FM RADIO	97.5 FM
KCMQ FM RADIO	96.7 FM
KJLU FM RADIO	88.9 FM
KCLR FM RADIO	99.3 FM
KZJF RADIO	104.1 FM
KMFC	109 FM
KWWR	96 FM
KRMS	97.5 FM
KRCG TV	CHANNEL 13
KOMU TV	CHANNEL 8
KMIZ TV	CHANNEL 17

Home visits are not automatically cancelled in the event of a snow day, as road conditions may improve during the course of the day. Your parent educator will be in contact with you regarding your visit so you can decide together to keep your visit or reschedule.

As wintertime road conditions vary across the school district, please be in contact with your parent educator if she is scheduled to come to your home even on a day when school is in session if road conditions where you live are treacherous.

(Toys continued)

taller climbers with soft material underneath, wagons and wheelbarrows, plastic bats and balls, plastic bowling pins, targets, and things to throw at them, and a workbench with a vise, hammer, nails, and saw

- If child has access to a computer: programs that are interactive (the child can do something) and that children can understand (the software uses graphics

and spoken instruction, not just print), children can control the software's pace and path, and children have opportunities to explore a variety of concepts on several levels.

Remember, your child's favorite "toy" is YOU! Nothing can replace spending time with your child.

*Article by the National Association for the Education of Young Children at www.naeyc.org

Baby, it's cold outside!

As the leaves turn color and the temperatures become brisk, parents begin thinking of long hours spent indoors with their young child. But cooler weather doesn't mean you have to limit your child's active play. Here are some ways to keep your child moving even when the temperatures dip.

Bundle up!

Your little one can still enjoy outside adventures in cool weather if dressed properly. Dress your child in layers, rather than in a single heavy garment. She'll need one more layer than you. Keep thermal/synthetic layer underwear next to the skin, then a wool or fleece layer and make sure the outer layer is a water-resistant material. Avoid cotton, as when cotton gets wet it stays wet. Ninety percent of heat loss occurs from a child's head, so wearing a hat is essential. Mittens and boots complete your child's protective clothing.

Dressing your child in layers allows you to loosen or remove some clothes to prevent overheating. Toddlers and preschoolers need to be able to move freely in their outdoor clothing to get the most benefit from playing outdoors. Remember to dress for the weather yourself so you'll be comfortable while you let your child have a good, long outdoor playtime.

Look for indoor play places

Tummy time is exercise for babies, and crawlers want to do just that—crawl! Make sure your baby has plenty of time on the floor, out of infant carriers and car seats. Baby proof the room where your baby spends time on the floor and supervise him at all times. Then you can feel confident letting your baby exercise by rolling, crawling, or walking.

Visit a shopping mall in cold weather and you are likely to see parents with babies and toddlers. Some malls even have play areas for little ones. A large, relatively empty space will allow your child to run and play. Make use of community resources such as indoor swimming pools or recreation centers.

Organize a play group in a church or business multi-purpose room. Perhaps the basement of your home or apartment building can accommodate active play. Add a riding toy and a large ball and you have a place that encourages your child to be active. Be sure to take advantage of Parents as Teachers group connections that offer vigorous indoor activities.

Go out and about!

Cool weather activities can be so much fun for you and your child. Bundle up and go outside. Jump in a big pile of leaves! Hop through the crisp, cold snow! You will be teaching your child that being active is a year-round possibility.

Tips for safe cold weather play

- >Dress in layers
- >Wear a hat and mittens
- >Don't play outside if temperature is 10° or colder
- >Drink water to remain hydrated
- >Change clothes when they become wet
- >Have a snack for energy
- >Keep young babies inside in very cold weather

*(Article reprinted from a Parent Page from Parents as Teachers, co. 10/14) Parents as Teachers is the trusted resource providing a proven home visiting model for the most respected organizations and professionals who meet the evolving needs of families. Our work with the professional community helps young children grow up healthy, safe and ready to learn. Our internationally recognized network of organizations and professionals supports hundreds of thousands of families in all 50 states as well as many other countries through a proven parent education model featuring in-home visits with parents and children. Parents as Teachers affiliates equip parents with knowledge and resources to prepare their children for a stronger start in life and greater success in school. For more information, visit www.ParentsAsTeachers.org. Parents as Teachers | 2228 Ball Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146 | 314.432.4330 | ParentsAsTeachers.

Conscious Discipline®

Active Calming Techniques

According to the Conscious Discipline® approach, the biggest threat to a child's sense of safety is an out-of-control adult. The key to safety is a conscious, mindful adult. As we as parents become more conscious of what "pushes our buttons" and how we react to conflict, we can learn to stay in control of ourselves and in charge of children in a manner that models the same skills we seek to teach.

The first step in any stressful encounter is for us as parents to take a deep breath to calm ourselves down and remind ourselves "I am safe. I am calm. I can handle this." Three deep breaths shut off the fight or flight response in the body so we can maintain self-control. The calming technique known as S.T.A.R. is the first step to use when feeling triggered.



S.T.A.R.= Smile, Take a deep breath And Relax.

Once you have done this and feel calm, you can breathe with and for your child when life isn't going their way, and keep them safe. Teach your child how to S.T.A.R, and encourage belly breathing where the tummy goes out when the air goes in, and in when the air goes out. Also help children learn to exhale slower than they inhale. (You might ask them to breathe in like they are smelling a flower, and out like they are blowing out a birthday candle).

The four core active calming techniques used in Conscious Discipline are S.T.A.R., balloon, pretzel and drain. For a printable of these visuals and descriptions that can be used for teaching strategies to your child and to post for them to use, visit http://consciousdiscipline.com/resources/safe_place_breathing_icons.asp



Balloon-- Place your hands on top of your head and interlace your fingers. Breathe in through your nose as you raise your arms, inflating an imaginary balloon. Release the air in the balloon by pursing your lips, exhaling slowly, lowering your arms and making a "pbbpbbpbb" sound.



Pretzel-- Standing up, cross your ankles. Now cross your right wrist over left, turn your hands so your thumbs are facing the floor, put palms together and interlace fingers. Bend your elbows out and gently turn your hands down and toward your body until they rest on the center of your chest. Put your tongue on the roof of your mouth. Relax and breathe.



Drain-- Extend arms out, pretending your arms are faucets. Tighten arm, shoulder, and face muscles. Exhale slowly making a "ssshhh" sound and release all your muscles, draining out the stress.

Parenting with Conscious Discipline®

It's not too late to join us for the rest of the series on the seven skills of Conscious Discipline for parents of toddlers-school age children (Adult Assertiveness & Encouragement--November 9, Choices & Empathy--December 14, Child Assertiveness & Positive Intent--January 4, Consequences--February 22, Integrating All 7 Skills--March 21) and/or the April 4 session for parents of infants and toddlers on "Building Connections and Establishing Routines." Sessions run from 6-8 pm. and are held at the Southwest Early Childhood Center at 812 St. Mary's Blvd. For more information or to register, visit www.jcschools.us/domain/168, or call 573-659-2350.

Limited childcare is available for families enrolled in Parents as Teachers (including PAT Lite) or any other program at the Southwest Early Childhood Center. Children MUST be registered for child care in advance by calling 573-659-2350 or emailing Katie Epema at katie.epema@jcschools.us. Child care spots for a particular session will be filled on a first contacted, first served basis with registration opening two weeks prior to the session (opening Nov. 30 for the Dec. 14 session, open Dec. 14-21 for the January 4 session *due to Christmas break*, opening Feb. 8 for the Feb. 22 session, opening March 7 for the March 21 session, and opening March 21 for the April 4 infant/toddler session).