



Building Blocks II

A newsletter for Acushnet, Berkley, Dartmouth, Dighton, Fairhaven, Freetown, Lakeville, New Bedford, Rehoboth, Seekonk, and Swansea families with children birth-age 8.

Reduce Your Child's Sugary Snacking

Limiting the amount of sugar your family eats is good for your teeth and key to your overall health. In honor of National Children's Dental Health Month, here are some dentist-recommended ways to start saying good-bye to unnecessary sugar throughout the day.

Limit the amount of juice your children drink, skip soda entirely, and always offer water or milk first. If your child does drink juice, serve the recommended, age-appropriate limits at mealtimes only. Allowing your child to sip on juice throughout the day

puts him at higher risk for tooth decay because you're giving those cavity-causing bacteria more opportunities to eat and produce the acid that eats away at teeth. Children ages 1-6 should have no more than 4-6 oz. of juice each day, which is about the equivalent of one juice box.

Choose snacks without added sugar, and avoid gummy, fruit snacks that stick to your child's teeth. Even foods like raisins can be troublesome because they adhere to teeth and stay there for an extended amount of time.

Kids love crackers and

chips. The truth? Many crackers are cookies with salt, which break down into sugar and get stuck in the tops of your teeth for long periods of time.

Set an example for your kids. Eat well, brush twice a day for two minutes, and floss once a day.



Always offer water or milk before juice.

Source:
www.mouthhealthy.org



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Your Child's First Dental Visit

As soon as your baby has teeth, she can get cavities, so schedule an appointment with a dentist when she gets that first tooth.

To get your child ready for the visit, talk to her about what's going to happen and

be positive. Have her practice opening her mouth for when the dentist counts and checks her teeth. Read books or watch videos about first dentist appointments. Ask for any necessary patient forms before

the visit so you can fill them out at home. Make a list of questions to ask. Schedule the appointment for when your child will be well rested and cooperative. Give your child a light meal and brush her teeth before

her appointment so she won't be hungry.

Source:
www.mouthhealthy.org



A Safe Place

A "safe place" can help children learn the important life skill of calming themselves down. It is an alternative to a time out; a place where children who are feeling rejected, alone, anxious, or angry can go to return them to a more peaceful inner state.

Sit with your child in his designated safe place, holding him and a transition object, such as a teddy bear. Tell your child that he can come to the safe place when he is angry or upset to calm down. Teach him to hug his bear and take two long breaths. Re-

peat with your child until he can go to his safe place to calm down all by himself.

If desired, sing the following song to the tune of "Rock-a-Bye Baby":

Snuggle up (your child's name)

In your safe place.

You can come here,



A beanbag is a wonderful safe place because it hugs you when you sit in it.

To have your own space.

When you feel scared

And want to feel loved,

Just cuddle yourself

And bear with a hug.

Source: [I Love You Rituals](#)

Teaching Self-Control

Children don't develop self-control until they are 3.5 to 4 years old. This can be very confusing for parents, especially when your 2-year-old who is so verbal and able to repeat the rules still reaches for that cookie! To help nurture your toddler's impulse control, try playing games.

Color one side of a paper plate red and the other green. Your child runs

toward you until you put up the red sign. Then she runs again when the sign is green. Play "freeze dance" with music. When the music is on, your child dances; when you stop it, she has to freeze. Read books about children who get angry or have tantrums, and talk about how to handle these big feelings. In pretend play, when a stuffed animal gets mad or does

something it shouldn't, problem-solve how 'Mr. Bear' might deal with the challenge he's facing.

Source: [zerotothree.org](#)

"Being able to vocalize a rule is not the same as being able to follow it!"

Family Fun With Socks!

Every household has socks! These can be used to create ideas for family playtime. As families play together, children learn skills like cooperation, turn taking, and problem-solving.

Sock Hop: Turn on



There are fun ways to use mismatched socks.

some music, take off your shoes, and dance together in your socks!

Sock Skating: Find a smooth surface (not wood floors) and skate away!

Jump Rope: Make a jump rope by tying sev-

eral socks together.

Sock Touch: Fill several socks with everyday items, such as a toothbrush, pencil, coin, comb, button, etc. Name the item by feeling it from the outside. Younger children can put their hands into the sock to touch.

Source: [www.truceteachers.org](#)

Infant Activities

Shower with Love: Shower your baby with hugs and kisses. Studies show that baby's trust and confidence grows with your displays of love. This turns into success at school later in life.

Meeting Strangers: Hold your baby in your arms when someone who baby does not know or recognize approaches. Greet the person and talk to baby about the new acquaintance. This will help your child feel more secure and

comfortable when meeting new people.

What's In a Name? As you sing songs, recite rhymes, or read stories together, try to incorporate your baby's name as often as possible. Hearing her name will catch your child's attention and interest.



Help baby feel secure and loved.

I Love You - Sung to Skip to My Lou

Lily, Lily, I love you.

Lily, Lily, I love you.

Lily, Lily, I love you.

Here's a kiss (hug) from me to you!

Source: Totline: A Year of Fun

Toddler Activities

Sharing Love: Talk with your toddler about how nice it is to show family and friends that you love them. Together, think of ways that you show love every day. Use words such as hugs, kisses, and smiles.

Sticker Fun: Give your toddler several stickers and ask him to place a sticker on a different part of your body (hand, elbow, nose, etc.) Repeat

as many times as you wish. You can also call out a body part and have your child place a sticker on his own body.

Laundry Sorting: Place several socks and shirts in a laundry basket. Have your toddler sort through the clothes in the basket and arrange them in two piles, one for socks and one for shirts. To make it more challenging, add pants and underclothing.

Source: Toddler Games

"Toddlers vocabulary will grow the more you talk with them."

Preschool/School-Age Activities

Alphabet Menu: As you prepare a meal, discuss what will be served and ask your child to create a menu. Fold a piece of paper in half. Have your child write the word or sound on one side of the paper, and draw a picture of the food on the other. Do this for each food. Have your child present the menu to the family. Make this activity fun, not a test. Your child

might copy words off of boxes.

Dice: Starting with one die, throw it, count the dots, and then perform an action that number of times, such as blinking, wiggling your nose, or touching your ear. Then have your child do the



Older children can count the dots and add them together.

same, and alternate back and forth. For older children, throw two dice, then count the dots and add them together. Play this game until a certain sum is reached.

Source: www.brighthorizons.com

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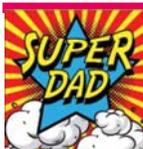
Attention Parents

Berkley Community School will be holding Kindergarten Registration from 3/26 through 3/29. An evening session will be held 3/28 from 5:30-7 pm. Call BCS at 508-822-9550 or visit <https://www.berkleypublicschools.org> to learn more.

Preschool Parent Information Night is 3/8 from 6-6:45 pm in the Cafeteria for families with children who will be 3 or 4 yrs. old by 8/31/18.

Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District is accepting applications for the 3 & 4 year old role model students for the 2018-19 school year until 2/28/18. Registration forms can be picked up at Assawompset Elementary and Freetown Elementary and at www.freelake.org. Call 508-923-2000 x 1712 with questions.

New Bedford Public Schools will begin Kindergarten registration in February for the 2018-19 school year. Call 508-997-4511 x 3275 or 3418 to make an appointment.



How to be your
kid's hero
Without the cape



Simple Gestures that Say "I Love My Son"



Consistent acts of love, no matter how small, mean everything to the ones on the receiving end. Here are simple gestures that say, "I love my son."

Play physically with him. Boys love physical contact. It is one of the biggest ways they connect. Take him down to the carpet and wrestle with him. Play tackle football in the backyard.

Give him spontaneous praise. Don't wait for a certain moment or performance. Turn to him and do it at any moment. Tell him why you are proud of him, and explain to him the qualities of a strong man he already possesses.

Talk to him about his favorite subjects.

Video games, toys, a certain TV show - when there is something exciting in our life, we want to tell the people we care about. He wants to tell you. Ask him questions and validate his enthusiasm.

Involve him in your to-do list. If you have

a lot of errands and household jobs to do, have him work with you. Tell him you need his help. He will feel empowerment and a sense of approval.



Even small acts of love mean everything to your child.

Be affectionate. Hug and kiss him every day. Give him a bump when you are walking together or rub his head. It will bring a smile to his face because he will know what you are saying.

Source:
www.allprodad.com