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**New Bedford Public Schools
Kindergarten Registration by
appointment only.**

**Call 508-997-4511 x 14651
to schedule your child's
appointment today!**



Laying the foundation for life long learning.
www.brainbuildinginprogress.org

Early Childhood Programming Near You!

Contact Jocelyn Carvalho at jcarvalho@paceccw.org for more info.

Parent Workshop: Landlord-Tenant Rights; Tuesday, March 12 10AM-11AM at PACE Family Center, 361 Cedar Grove St. New Bedford; Call 508-979-1927 to register.

Play & Learn Together: Dartmouth, Thursdays 10AM-11:30AM at Southworth Library (March 7, 14, 21, 28 and April 4, 11) Call 508-979-1927 to register.

Play & Learn Together: Acushnet, Mondays 10AM-11AM at Acushnet Public Library (March 11 and March 25) Contact mcarlsen@paceccw.org to register.

School Readiness Beginnings: Freetown, Fridays, 10AM-11:30AM at Freetown Elementary School (March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5 and 12). Call 508-999-9930 x 129 to register.



Buildin g Blocks

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

Toilet Training 101

Toilet training is a natural process that takes time. Rather than manipulate your child by offering him treats or special rewards, trust that he will learn it when he is ready.

Invite your child to participate actively in bathing, diaper changes, and other self-care routines from the time he is born. Communicate each detail respectively: "I'm going to lift your bottom so I can

wipe you. Can you help me lift?" Be careful not to transmit negative messages about body parts, feces, or urine. Avoid using words like "stinky," "dirty," etc. Model toilet use and make a clean potty available. Never force or coax your child to use the potty. This can delay the learning process and lead to constipation or other problems. When your child seems to be signaling an urge to eliminate, offer the potty as an option.

source: janetlansbury.com



March 2019

Volume 9, Issue 9

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"Signs of Spring" Scavenger Hunt

Make a scavenger hunt to search for signs of spring with your children. It is both fun and educational! You could make a big scavenger hunt on one occasion or search for the signs every time you go outside for a walk.

Here are some things to look for:

- warmer temperatures
- melting snow
- longer days
- growing grass
- singing and migrating birds
- active bugs

This publication was compiled by the PACE Child Care Works CFCE Program with funding from the MA Department of Early Education and Care.

Health Is in Your Hands

It is estimated that hands transmit 80% of infections. Good handwashing is frequently called the "do-it-yourself vaccine" because this simple act can help protect you and your family from infection and disease. The key to removing the most germs is in the mechanical action of hand washing, not in the products used. The friction created by rubbing your hands together breaks up and removes biofilms on the skin and nails that house pathogenic bacteria.

Teach your children to rub their hands together for at least 20 seconds, or to sing "Happy Birthday" twice while washing. Remember to rub the tops of your hands and fingers too!

Consider using a nail brush to clean under your children's fingernails, where a lot of dirt and pathogens get trapped. Source: livinglibations.com

Teaching Your Child To Use a Knife

Teaching your young child to use a knife has an impact on social health and self esteem, according to many early childhood studies.

Start with a plastic knife and simple activities such as buttering bread, cutting playdough, etc. Talk about the parts of the knife, the proper way to hold it, how to



source: zerotothree.org

keep fingers clear of the blade, and how to saw back and forth gently. Talk about safety rules: knives are for cutting food only; keep food on cutting surface; put down knife when not in use; always handle knives when calm.

Be prepared to stop the activity when your child becomes silly.

Let Your Child Make Choices

Making choices helps them feel grown up and good about themselves. As children learn to do things for themselves, they will want to make some of their own decisions. Parents should encourage this by giving their child a chance to make a choice between juice or milk or taking the doll or

or the ball to Grandma and Grandpa's. At first, give simple choices. Open-ended choices can confuse your child. Ask, "Do you want a banana or cheese?" instead of "What do you want to eat?" Let him make his choice only when you will stick to his answer. Source: Totline



Infant Activities

Sound of the Day: Choose a sound that your baby has babbled frequently. Repeat this sound many times during the day, using it in words, songs, or babbling it yourself.

Follow the Light: In a dark room, hold your baby in your arms and shine a flashlight on an object-Say things like "I see your crib." "Your elephant is on your blanket." Make it disappear and reappear by turning the flashlight on and off.



source: Totline: A Year of Fun

Toddler Activities

Friends: Invite a friend over to play. Take pictures of your toddler with her friend. Later, show the pictures to your child and talk about them, emphasizing what friends do: play together, take turns, give hugs, share, and have fun.

Matching Game: Give your toddler three identical objects, such as teaspoons. Pick up each spoon, name it, and pretend you are eating something with it. Let your child hold each spoon, feeling its shape and texture. Replace one spoon with a fork. Pick up the fork and say its name. Pretend to eat with it. Let your child hold the fork and feel its shape and texture. Ask your child to give you a spoon, then ask for the fork. Praise your toddler when she gives you the right one.

Preschool/School-Age Activities

Table Place Cards: Use small squares of paper, about 3x3 inches. Have your child paint or draw on each piece. Then fold it in half so it stands up. Neatly print each person's name on a card. You or your child can do the printing, or you can write names on another piece of paper and have your child copy them.



I Spy: Select an object in the room or car and give clues so your child can guess what the object is. Give a hint of color, shape, use, etc. Have your child ask up to 20 yes or no questions to see if he can figure out what it is. Then, switch and have him pick the object while you ask the questions.