

# Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

January: Week 1  
Health/Nutrition



*“The rules for parents are but three... love, limit, and let them be.”*

*– Elaine M. Ward*

## INFANT Inspiration

### *Mom's Nutrition and Breastfeeding*

While breastfeeding, focus on making healthy food choices to fuel your milk production. Choose protein-rich foods, such as lean meat, eggs, dairy, beans, lentils and seafood low in mercury. Also choose a variety of whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Drink LOTS of water!

## TODDLER Tales

*Make it Myself Snack* - Keep prepared veggies such as washed baby carrots and tomatoes or cut up cucumber, broccoli, cauliflower and bell peppers along with small containers of ranch dip in your refrigerator and encourage your toddler to eat healthy at snack time.

## PRESCHOOL Power

*Vegetable and Fruit Power* - Keep a bowl of fresh fruit on the counter or kitchen table at home for a healthy, eye-catching get-it-yourself snack. Pack pre-cut fruit and veggies into snack-size bags for perfectly-portioned munchies. Keep them at eye level in the refrigerator for easy access.



## New Year Resolutions for Better Eating Habits

We say it every year “this year I am going to cook more, eat out less and eat healthier!” Here a few manageable tips to help you and your family with your resolution:

**Prepare your own meals** - Cooking at home can help you take charge of what everyone is eating.

**Make the right changes** - When cutting back on unhealthy foods replace them with healthy alternatives. Replacing dangerous trans fats with healthy fats (such as switching fried chicken for grilled fish) will make a positive difference to your health.

**Simplify** - Instead of counting calories, think of a diet in terms of color, variety, and freshness. Focus on avoiding packaged and processed foods and opting for more fresh ingredients whenever possible.

**Read the labels** - It's important to be aware of what's in your food. Watch for high levels of sugar or salt.

**Drink plenty of water** - Water helps flush your system of waste products and toxins. It's common to mistake thirst for hunger, so staying well hydrated will also help you make healthier food choices.



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# Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

January: Week 2  
Early Literacy



*"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents."*

*– Emilie Buchwald*

## INFANT Inspiration

### **Book of the Month: Pat the Bunny**

*By Edith Kunhardt Davis*

This classic is a favorite because it's so interactive! You will love touching the bunny's fur, playing peekaboo, and more.

## TODDLER Tales

### **Book of the Month: Corduroy**

*By Don Freeman*

A funny story of a teddy bear in need of a home (and a button for his overalls for practicing small motor skills). He finds both, and a friend, when a little girl named Lisa uses her savings to buy him at the local department store and brings him home.

## PRESCHOOL Power

### **Book of the Month: Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No-Good Very Bad Day**

*By Judith Viorst*

Alexander wakes up with gum in his hair. Later, he falls in the mud and so much more. This story recounts how a day can go from bad to worse!



## Establish a Reading Routine

Establishing a reading routine at home is a great way to support your child's vocabulary development and reading comprehension; reading also promotes bonding. Here are some great tips for establishing your reading routine:

1. Select a special time for reading each day.
2. Choose a comfortable consistent place where you can read together.
3. Find a great book. Choose a book that your child will enjoy or even better, let your child choose.
4. Have fun reading the book. Make up funny voices and be enthusiastic.
5. Ask questions about the story. Point to words and pictures and elaborate.
6. Young children love repetition, so do not be surprised if they want you to read the book again and again.



# Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

January: Week 3  
Family Fun



*"Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them."*

*— Lady Bird Johnson*

## INFANT Inspiration

**Sensory Exploration** - To nurture sight and touch experiences, place your baby on a soft blanket and billow a scarf overhead. Offer a variety of objects (be sure they are large enough to not be a choking hazard) for your infant to touch and introduce new smells and sounds.

## TODDLER Tales

**Movement and Music** - Use containers such as empty oatmeal boxes and make a drum for your child. They can pat the drums with their hands or use small wooden spoons as drumsticks. Play music with a fast beat and parade around the room or go outdoors where your drummer can drum and stamp their feet to the rhythm.

## PRESCHOOL Power

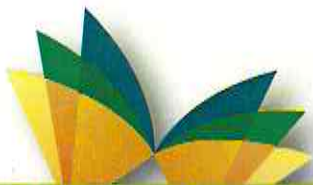
**Walking Vocabulary Builder** - Take a walk and point out objects and have your child try to name them. If you are inside, carry sticky notes on your walk and when your child names the object write down the word and post it on the object encouraging your child to spell the word with you! This is a really long sentence.



## Inside Fun When It's COLD Outside

Cold weather offers many opportunities to have fun inside. Here are some fun indoor activities to get your family moving and being creative!

- Act out a story. Read a book together; move around as your reading to give it action.
- Create an indoor obstacle course. Kids love to tumble over pillows, crawl through open boxes, and jump into hula hoops. (Make sure dangerous objects are removed from the path.)
- Turn up the music and dance. Move to the music like your favorite animals.
- Make a collage to hang on the refrigerator. All you need are old magazines, scissors (or tear the pictures if your child is too young for scissors), glue and some paper plates to glue your pictures on. Create a them for your collage.
- Cook together. Let your children plan a menu and let them be the chef with you as their helper.
- Have a camp out. Make a tent with blankets and chairs and grab your sleeping bags for an indoor camping experience.



# Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

January: Week 4  
Parenting Tips



*“Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do.”*

*– Benjamin Spock*

## INFANT Inspiration

### **Quick Response Time to Build Trust -**

Believe it or not the more responsive you are to your infant's needs, the less “spoiled” they will be as they get older. Bonding and responsiveness builds trust, and children with secure attachments tend to be *more* independent as they grow older.

## TODDLER Tales

**STOP instead of NO** - Hoping to avoid having “no” become your toddler's favorite word? Try to use the word stop to indicate that you need your child to think about what they are about to do. For example, you can say, “Stop, do you think your bowl will spill if you carry it like that?”

## PRESCHOOL Power

**Supporting Independence** - Supporting the development of children's self-help skills is important for a child's growing desire to be independent. If you have a child heading off to pre-k or kindergarten in the fall, now is the time to start working on supporting their self-help skills, including independent toileting and dressing.



## Avoiding Power Struggles

Are you finding yourself arguing with your two-year-old or sending your four-year-old to time out with frequency? It happens as your child begins to recognize themselves as an individual and as you try to keep control as a parent. It's the power struggle. Instead of viewing your child's “MY WAY” behavior as negative and reacting in a way that overpowers your child, view your child's behavior as a positive sign that they are becoming independent and wanting to make choices for themselves. When your child says “no” find ways to empower them by offering reasonable choices. Be creative by not asserting your power unless there is a health or safety concern. Put out three pairs of pants and say, “choose what you want to wear today” or provide options for meals like, “We have cereal, or oatmeal - which sounds yummy?” Remember, everyone loses in a power struggle so don't sweat the small stuff...it is actually OK to skip a bath every once in a while or eat pancakes for dinner!



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