

Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

Volume 4.1
Health/Nutrition



"A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust."

– Gertrude Jekyll

INFANT Inspiration

Sensory Play While You Plant - While in your garden name the colors of the vegetables your baby is seeing or let them feel the grass with their hands.



TODDLER Tales

Gardening With Toddlers - Toddlers have a natural curiosity that requires direct sensory experience. Remember that younger children require careful supervision during gardening activities. Suitable tasks for younger toddlers include watering and harvesting.

PRESCHOOL Power

Eating My Home Grown Veggies! - Gardening with your preschooler is a great way to teach nutrition. Children love to try new foods, especially when they have grown them themselves. Let your preschooler choose what they want to plant and then be excited when they start eating their vegetables. Consider planting seedlings so your preschooler has less time to wait to see and taste the "fruit of their labor!"

Think gardening is not for you? THINK AGAIN!

Most children are natural gardeners. They are not afraid to get dirty. They are curious and like to learn by doing. Playing in a garden, a young child can learn to care for something over time, while closely observing the cycle of plant life. Gardening can introduce children to environmental stewardship, personal growth opportunities, social skills, new vocabulary, nutrition, health, science education, living skills and of course fun.

If you are thinking about starting a garden with your children here are a few tips:

- Give children their own SMALL garden bed
- A sandbox, old swimming pool, large tire or planters can be used as the foundation of the garden bed
- Provide sturdy child sized tools to use with close adult supervision
- Engage children through the entire process, from seed to table
- Show off their work



Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

Volume 4.2
Early Literacy



"I have found the best way to give advice to your children is to find out what they want and then advise them to do it."

- Harry S. Truman

INFANT Inspiration

Book Recommendation:

The Wonderful Things You Will Be
by Emily Winfield Martin

This rhythmic rhyme expresses all the loving things that parents think of when they look at their children. This is a book grown-ups will love reading over and over to young children.

TODDLER Tales

Book Recommendation:

If Animals Kissed Good Night
by Ann Whitford Paul

In a cozy bedtime chat with her mom, a young girl wonders how animal families might say good night. With art and playful rhymes, this book is perfect for bedtime snuggles.

PRESCHOOL Power

Book Recommendation:

Where the Wild Things Are
by Maurice Sendak

When Max is sent to bed without his dinner, he imagines an adventure to the land of the Wild Things, where he meets a crowd of fanciful beasts. This book is a great reinforcement of the unconditional love between children and parents.



A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words! The Value of Picture Books

Picture books speak to us in the same way photographs do. They touch our emotions, delight our senses, appeal to our whimsy, and bring back memories of our childhood. Picture books invite us to curl up and read them.

— Diana Mitchell, *Children's Literature* (2003, 71)

The term picture book refers to picture storybooks that have simple plots and contain, on average, about 200 words. Picture books represent a unique literary form that blends stories with art. In a picture book, the illustrations are as important as the text, and both work together to tell the story. When you share picture books with your children, be sure to pay attention to the illustrations, describe them in detail, and ask open-ended questions. Describing pictures and reading to infants and toddlers introduces them to new vocabulary. Let young children talk about what they see and how the pictures make them feel. Tell the story multiple times sometimes focusing on the written words and sometimes letting the pictures or the child guide the tale.



Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

Volume 4.3
Family Fun



"We are apt to forget that children watch examples better than they listen to preaching."

– Roy L. Smith

INFANT Inspiration

Spring Showers (Water Play) - Try using a fixed upright seat during bath time so your infant can safely splash with their head high above water. Use cups to pour water on and around your baby, trickling water up and down their arms to increase awareness of their body and to encourage visual coordination as they track the stream with their eyes. Never leave a child unattended when an activity involves water.

TODDLER Tales

Spring in my Steps (Gross Motor Play) - Playing hopscotch is a great way to help your toddler build coordination. Use chalk to create the hopscotch diagram on a patio or sidewalk. Have your toddler toss a small toy at the squares. Have them jump over the squares to get to the toy and pick it up. As they are jumping on each square be sure to call out the number.

PRESCHOOL Power

Sports and Games - Preschoolers are beginning to master many basic movements, but they're too young for some organized sports. Consider unstructured free play activities for your preschooler like running, tumbling, throwing, catching or swimming.



Fun Spring Activities for Families

With spring, many families are looking forward to warm days, flowers, and opportunities to get outside and play together. **Family fun is an important part of building a strong family identity and bond.** Traditions are often developed in times of fun. Those traditions help define your family and the memories your children will have for a lifetime.

Parents and children both benefit from spending quality family time together. Children feel special when their parents take the time to do fun activities with them. Benefits of having fun as a family include:

- Creating stronger emotional bonds
- Promoting better communication
- Increasing performances in school
- Decreasing inappropriate behaviors

So, plan fun activities like picnics in the park, visits to the zoo, impromptu outdoor games or any activity that makes you laugh together!



Wings

A Weekly Newsletter for Families

Volume 4.4
Parenting Tips



"The more people have studied different methods of bringing up children, the more they have come to the conclusion that what good mothers and fathers instinctively feel like doing for their babies is the best after all."

– Benjamin Spock

INFANT Inspiration

Sensitive Skin

Infants sometime develop any number of rashes and skin conditions especially during allergy season. A majority of these conditions are relatively harmless and clear up on their own or with appropriate treatment. If your infant develops a rash and seems to have sensitive skin, contact your pediatrician for treatment options.

TODDLER Tales

Recognizing Food Allergies

Food allergies can occur when the body reacts against harmless proteins in foods. The reaction usually happens shortly after a food is eaten. Because allergic reactions can vary from mild to severe and many symptoms and illnesses could be wrongly blamed on food allergies it is important for parents to contact their pediatrician whenever they believe their child is suffering from an allergic food reaction.

PRESCHOOL Power

Allergy or Cold?

It's sometimes difficult to know whether your child is suffering from hay fever or a common cold. While symptoms of allergies and colds often overlap, there are a few telling differences. The symptoms for hay fever are usually: a clear, watery nasal discharge, itching of the eyes, ears, nose, or mouth and spasmodic sneezing. When in doubt, always see your pediatrician for diagnosis and treatment.



Children and Allergies – What Can You Do?

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children have allergic reactions from coming into contact with allergens. Allergens can be inhaled, eaten, or injected (from stings or medicine) or they can come into contact with the skin. Some of the more common allergens are:

- Pollens from trees, grasses, and weeds
- Molds, both indoor and outdoor
- Dust mites that live in bedding, carpeting, and other items that hold moisture
- Animal dander from furred animals such as cats, dogs, horses, and rabbits
- Venom from insect stings
- Some foods and medicines

If your child has an allergic condition, try the following:

- Keep windows closed during the pollen season
- Keep the house clean and dry to reduce mold and dust mites
- Avoid having indoor plants
- Prevent anyone from smoking anywhere near your child, especially in your home and car

Always see your pediatrician for safe and effective medicine that can be used to help alleviate or prevent allergy symptoms.

