

Kids Klub Preschool

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY!



LYNNWOOD PARKS, RECREATION
AND CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT

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WELCOME TO KIDS KLUB PRESCHOOL

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Kids Klub preschool is a play-oriented program. We in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department value PLAY. We believe that play is essential to learning and human development. Learning in a play environment helps children grow and develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

Socially...play develops the basic skills for social interaction. Children learn how to cooperate, share, and be sensitive to the feelings of others during play.

Emotionally...play is a means of emotional expression. Children live in a world where they have little power over their daily lives. Play can reduce the feelings of anger, inadequacy, and provide experiences which enhance children's feelings of enjoyment, control and success.

Physically... play is important to children because when children run, jump, skip, yell and laugh. It contributes to their good health and the development of fine and large gross motor skills.

Intellectually...play is a learning situation for children. Through play, children are able to discover and explore, use their imagination, solve problems, and test out new ideas.

This "fun"-damental philosophy should provide you with a better understanding of how we approach and implement the preschool curriculum. We hope that your child loves to play and if so, they'll be sure to love preschool!

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

We believe in the importance of partnership between parents and teachers/school. The care and education of a child is best served when the school and families share a commitment to collaboration, open communication, and mutual respect. Parents are a child's first teacher, and we are honored you have chosen us as an educational partner. We are excited to nurture a love for learning for each child and help extend that learning at home. Our doors are always open, and we are here to help make preschool and Kindergarten prep a positive and successful experience. Please visit our website for more information about our program and the resource section at the end of this handbook for information on helping your child make a successful transition to preschool.

PRESCHOOL TEAM

The teachers for the preschool program are experienced and knowledgeable individuals who love working with young children. Each brings to the program unique talents, skills and abilities and of course their training in early childhood education. The Preschool Team truly appreciates the opportunity to work with your child this upcoming year.



Jamie Psaradelis has been one of our Preschool Teachers for 16 years. She has her associate degree in child development from Cardean University and has worked in Early Childhood for over 25 years. Teaching children is a gift and passion of Jamie's. She loves working with children, has a fun-loving attitude, and is creative in nature. In her spare time, she enjoys crafts, drawing, and spending time with her family and dog, Lucy! One day she hopes to write and illustrate a children's book.

Darci Bussman has been with our Preschool program for 10 years. She earned an Early Childhood degree from Shoreline Community College and has been teaching for many years. She took some time off to stay home and raise her two boys and step daughter but has returned to the Preschool field. She enjoys reading, hiking, snowmobiling, scrapbooking, cross stitching and spending time with her family. She volunteers during the summers by running a Cub Scout day camp and other scout related activities with her boys. She finds working with young children very rewarding and is looking forward to a great year!



Kacee Jaimes is the Recreation Coordinator overseeing the Youth and Teen programs for the City of Lynnwood. She has her associate degree in early childhood from Shoreline Community College. Kacee has 15 years of experience at the City of Lynnwood in their Parks and Recreation Department where she has worked in after school programs, taught preschool, directed summer camp and has worked numerous other events we offer. In her free time, she loves doing crafts, watching sports, traveling, adventuring outdoors and spending time with her husband, daughter and two dogs, Cooper and Hazel. Kacee finds working with our youth inspiring and a great reminder to enjoy life every day!

CONTACT INFORMATION

To notify Preschool Team of absences, changes, or other information, please use the preschool cell number. For inquiries or other preschool related questions, feel free to contact the preschool teachers or Youth/Teens coordinator. For payments, please refer to Customer Service.

Preschool Cell: (425) 754-9293 Preschool Office: (425) 5514 Customer Service: (425) 670-5732
Kacee Jaimes, Youth/Teens Coordinator: (425) 670-5524

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Children enrolling in the Kids Klub program must meet the following requirements:

Potty Training

Children must have *independent* toileting skills prior to the start of the program. Independent toilet skills involve many steps from the child such as undressing, going, wiping, dressing, flushing, and hand washing. Staff do not assist in this process. **Fully potty-trained children do not wear pull-ups.**

Separation from Parents

Children should be able to separate from their parents naturally without being overly anxious (i.e., crying or screaming hysterically.) We are committed to making the separation from your child as easy and comfortable as possible. An adjustment time will be implemented for the first two weeks. This time is set aside to observe and help your child adjust to the program by engaging the child in activities of their interest. We encourage parents to give their hugs, kisses and say good- bye. Children who exhibit ongoing parent separation anxiety may not be ready for preschool. They may need additional time to develop.

Enrollment Length

Once registered for the Kids Klub Preschool programs you are enrolled for the duration of the whole school year, September-May.

Age

Kids Klub Pre-K

Monday thru Friday: 9am-11:30am

Ages 4-5 (Children must be four years old by August 31st)

Ready Set Learn

Tuesday thru Thursday: 12:30-3pm

Ages 3-4 (Children must be three years old by August 31st)

REGISTRATION, TUITION & FEES

Upon enrollment, your child will be registered for the entire school year, September through May/June and set up with a monthly payment plan. Your credit card will be held on file and charged on the 1st of each month. Payments are a flat rate and will remain the same each month throughout the school year regardless of breaks or holidays.

Kids Klub Pre-K: (R)\$350 (NR) \$440
Ready, Set, Learn: (R)\$230 (NR) \$290

If you choose to remove your child from the program, we will simply unenroll your child and stop your payment plan at the point of departure.

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION

Children who are planning to attend the Kids Klub Preschool program should plan ahead. We strongly encourage returning and first-time families to take part in “Early Bird Registration”. This process allows parents the opportunity to reserve a spot in one of our Fall classes by paying a non-refundable deposit of \$45. There is a high demand for our preschool programs so be sure to take advantage of this opportunity. Early Bird Registration, which begins in March, is open to current and prospective preschool parents. The next registration window will not happen again until August.

LATE FEE

Children staying late will be supervised, however, a late fee will be charged for those who are chronically late, (which is defined by being late more than twice in one school year). If you know you are going to be more than 15 minutes late, please call the teachers at (425) 754-9293. The late fee is strictly enforced. Late fees accrue at \$1.00 for the first five minutes and \$1.00 for every minute following until the designated adult signs the child out. Late fee payments are due at the time of sign-out or before sign-in the following day.

GENERAL RELEASE FORM & PHOTO

Each child needs to have a current general release form completed by their parent. This is an online form, and a link will be sent to you upon enrollment. It helps us better communicate with families on a day-to-day basis, as well as in emergency situations. Should your contact information change, please be sure to update customer service along with a Kids Klub teachers. In addition, a recent photo (or color copy of a photo) of your child needs to be attached to this paperwork. This photo will not be returned.

MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

Please inform a teacher if your child will require any over the counter or prescription medications during preschool hours. A Medication Authorization Form signed by the child's physician must accompany all over the counter medications and prescription medicines. In addition, all over the counter/ prescription medications must be kept in its original container and be stored in the preschool classroom. Preschool teachers are limited to the type of assistance they are able to provide when giving medication.

ALLERGIES

Please notify a preschool teacher if your child has a severe or life-threatening allergic reaction to any foods, bee stings, asthma, etc. We want to be sure to make note of this when distributing snacks or playing outside.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Please take time to fill out your child's General Release and All About Me forms. Information regarding your child's needs is important to their success in preschool. Important information to share with your teachers includes, but is not limited to sensory processing concerns, food restrictions/dietary/allergy concerns, health issues, concerns about development/social emotional growth or lack of development, behavior issues/concerns, etc. Also, if your child is enrolled in speech therapy, occupational therapy or you have concerns they may need these services, please let teachers know. While we will try to take into consideration every accommodation, in some cases, our program may not be the right fit for your child. In such cases, we would set up a tentative enrollment to see if accommodations can be adapted in class for the student to be successful.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

In order to ensure the safety and comfort of each child during a natural disaster, an emergency kit, including food rations and water, is provided by the program. Parents are required to fill out an emergency card for their child. These kits will be kept onsite for the entire academic year but set aside for emergency use only. After the academic school year ends these kits will remain the property of the preschool program.

MEDIA & CONSENT FORMS

Parents must complete the Preschool Consent Form in your parent packet. This form allows us to communicate with you via email, add your information to our Class List and photograph your child at school. Photos include picture day, class activities, field trips and more. Please ask permission before taking photos in class and refrain from taking video or photos in the windows. Photos from the entire year will be uploaded to a photo sharing site and families will be given passcodes to access and download photos at the end of the year.

ABOUT MY CHILD

Included in your Parent Packet is an “All About My Child” form. Take the time to fill out this form as completely as possible. Please include concerns you may have about your child. This information helps your teachers get to know your student, how to best support them in school and connect you to resources and information.

SIGN-IN & OUT PROCEDURES

Parents must sign children in and out of class each day. This is a legal document so please sign clearly and enter accurate times. If someone other than the parent is going to be picking up the child, please make sure to inform a teacher in writing and include their name and contact information on your child's General Release Form. Let your teachers know if you need to make changes to your General Release form-i.e., adding/removing contacts, updating address, email, or phone numbers. Any adult picking up a child will be required to show photo identification until we are familiar with family members and their pick- up routines. Please refer to drop off and pick up expectations for more information.

DROP OFF & PICK UP EXPECTATIONS

Upon arrival, have your student try to use the restroom before getting in line. Please keep drop off & pick up lines against the Preschool wall (art wall). Before signing in, make sure to say your good-byes and give hugs & kisses. Once signed in, children will enter classroom to begin their day, including putting their tote bags away, sanitizing and joining in the activity. Upon sign out, teachers will call students to the door for dismissal. Make sure younger children stay in line with you. Please save all phone calls for after dropping off/pick up as teachers may have important information to communicate to you. Be sure to allow time for parking, as some days the parking lots can be full. Do not park in the Load/Unload loop if you are leaving your car unattended.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Our program is in a public facility. Out of respect and safety for our students and families, we ask that all outside inquiries be directed to Customer Service. Classroom doors will remain locked during class hours and curtains are available to deter unwanted loitering or interruptions. Please be courteous to other patrons by taking children to the playground to play as we do not allow running or horseplay inside, as well as not climbing on furniture, walls or partitions.

ILLNESSES & HEALTH PROCEDURES

We are proactive about keeping our class and participants healthy! Toys and surfaces are sanitized daily and as frequently as needed. We supervise and reinforce proper use of tissues, covering coughs and sneezes as well as proper handwashing. Families can help keep our class healthy by teaching and reinforcing these skills at home. Also, make sure students get plenty of rest, eat a proper diet, are dressed appropriately for weather and if they are not feeling well, keep them home. Sometimes taking a day or two of rest can help prevent serious illness and longer absence from school. (Remember-a sick child prefers to be in the comfort of their home, not spending the day at the sink washing hands.)

If your child is ill or contagious, please contact us (Preschool Cell: (425) 754-9293 Coordinator: (425) 670-5524) and keep children home. 24 hours without a fever, consistent or deep cough or vomiting before returning to preschool is a good guide. Green or yellow mucus may also be a sign of infection and an indicator that your child should remain at home. Please refer to our healthy classroom guidelines in the appendix for more details. If your child comes down with chicken pox, contracts lice, pink eye or other contagious disease, please inform the Recreation Coordinator at (425) 670-5524 immediately. We are required by the Snohomish Health District to notify other parents in the program of these highly contractible instances but specific information pertaining to a child is kept confidential. In the case of head lice, check your child daily for nits. A child needs to be nit free prior to

returning to the program. Teachers are required to check for nits prior to re-admitting a child to the program. For more information on head lice please visit the Snohomish Health Districts website at www.snohd.org. For chicken pox, pink eye, and other illnesses, please visit your health care provider and follow their medical recommendations.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

To ensure the safety of our students and teachers in the preschool program we follow the Edmonds School Districts school closure and delay plan. If the Edmonds School District delays school for two hours that means that morning and afternoon preschool classes will be cancelled for the day. Contact (425) 670-5732 by 7:00 am for updated information. If class is cancelled due to inclement weather, there will NOT be a make-up day scheduled.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND GUIDANCE

Each preschool class follows the same three simple rules: Safety, Teamwork, & Fun. Teachers will explain and review classroom rules regularly. All children are expected to follow these rules. When a child does not follow the rules or is harmful to others, behavior management and/or discipline is required. There are several steps that teachers take with a child in a behavior modification and discipline process.

Behavior Management

- **Modeling:** Adults will model, encourage and reinforce appropriate behavior
- **Redirection:** use positive, informative words to redirect or remove from the problem
- **Choices:** giving a child a choice between 2-3 things that will be a positive outcome no matter what their choice is
- **Renewal time:** time to step away, take a break and/or calm down. Teachers will take time to talk to the student after their renewal time to reflect on behaviors, feelings and steps going forward.
- **Loss of privilege:** child may lose a privilege if they are unable to cooperate or being unsafe. They may be asked to play in another area, with another peer, or at an activity alone until the teacher chooses.
- **New Start:** each day is a clean slate.

Discipline Steps

- Verbal Warning
- Renewal Time and/or loss of privilege
- Parent notification, verbal
- Written Warning/parent notification
- Parent Conference and behavior plan
- Withdrawal from the program

VERBAL AFFIRMATION & INCENTIVES

Our teachers provide children with lots of positive verbal reinforcement and incentives. These verbal cues and incentives are ways to reward children and encourage desirable behavior. Teachers try hard to be very specific when recognizing a student for good behavior or outstanding work. Examples of incentives that are used in the classroom are: stickers, stamps and the prize box.

DAILY ROUTINE

The daily routine and activities for each class varies slightly. Our daily routines provide an element of security and consistency for young learners. However, we reserve the right to deviate from the routine to capitalize on teachable moments.

PreK Schedule

30 Minutes – Sign In & Outside
10 Minutes – Snack
5 Minutes – Bathroom/Handwashing
30 Minutes – Circle Time
15 Minutes – Enrichment/Small Group
45 Minutes – Free Choice Centers
15 Minutes – Story Time/Closing Circle

RSL Schedule

45 minutes – Sign in & Outside
10 minutes – Snack
5 minutes – Bathroom/Handwashing
20 minutes – Circle Time
55 Minutes – Free Choice Centers
15 minutes – Story Time/Closing Circle

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Parents will receive a Newsletter at the beginning of each month via email. Sending materials electronically helps us save on copy costs and helps us be good stewards of our environment. Please let your teachers know if you do not have email access and need a printed copy. Newsletters include specific information on the following items....

1. Curriculum Highlights
2. Planned Activities & Special Events
3. Field Trips
4. Parent Tips
5. Health Tips
6. Volunteer Opportunities
7. Preschool Related Programs
8. Important Reminders

BOOK ORDERS

Once a month parents can place book orders with Scholastic Reading Club. A variety of books and activities are available to purchase by age, grade, and language. Teachers will provide order forms at the beginning of the month. Families will create an account online and use our Scholastic class code: HZHDC, to order and pay. All book orders must be completed by the designated due date. It can take approximately 2-4 weeks for orders to be processed. Orders will be shipped directly to the school and handed out to families in class. Refer to your parent packet handout for more information.

RPRE-K HOMEWORK PACKET

To help our Pre-K students be as prepared as possible for Kindergarten, we will send home a monthly learning activity packet (homework) with your Newsletter email. These packets are designed to be FUN, reinforce what we are working on in class, and should be completed at a pace of a page a day. Parents should monitor work, reading directions and helping correct pencil grip as needed. These packets also include ASL signs for the month and practicing at home helps increase fluency, confidence and fine motor skills. If you need assistance to help your child with homework at home, just ask your teachers for fun tips and tricks.

STAR OF THE WEEK & SHOW AND TELL

Approximately once per week, each class will have a designated Star Student. In PreK, we will celebrate a Star of the Week and in Ready, Set, Learn we will have Show-and-Tell. PreK Star of the Week will take home a special 'All About Me' poster and show-and-tell bag. They will get to share their poster and show-and-tell with the class, as well as have special duties all week long. For Show-and-Tell in Ready, Set, Learn, students will take home a show-and-tell bag and bring back an item to share with the class.

SNACK

We provide a snack and water daily. If your child has any food allergies or restrictions, please contact your teacher. The snack menu is posted in the newsletter each month.

BIRTHDAYS

Each month we will have a special class birthday celebration to honor all birthdays within that month. Dates will be posted in the monthly newsletter as well as the Parent Information Station. Kids Klub will provide special birthday snack for the class. Birthday children will receive a crown, card, and special prize. Please pass out invitations to parties before or after class (not in class). If you would like to bring a treat bag filled with toys or stickers, etc.... please let your teacher know. NO FOOD ITEMS.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Typically, we have 1 per month and are listed in the monthly Newsletter and on the Calendar:

- Pumpkin party
- Culture Celebration
- Graduation & More

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are part of our curriculum and an opportunity to extend learning beyond the classroom. Because we do not transport students, parent participation is required. Because field trips are an extension of our curriculum learning, we ask that only one adult attend and no extra siblings. We hope your student will be able to participate in field trips, but understand that schedules, transportation and other siblings can prevent families from attending. Cost for each student and one adult is covered by Kids Klub Preschool. Field trips are approximately 1 per quarter and listed on your yearly calendar.

BATHROOM BREAKS

Children are given frequent opportunities to take bathroom breaks. Our expectation is that all students must be fully potty trained in order to participate in our program. (This includes getting on/off the toilet, using tissue, dressing/undressing and washing hands. Pull ups are not allowed.) The restrooms that students use are located outside the preschool classroom. Teachers always accompany students to the restroom for supervision but cannot assist them. Stools and pump soap are provided for ease of access at the sink. (If your child is afraid of the automatic flusher, let us know so we can show you our trick!) Occasionally, potty accidents do happen, and children wet or soil their clothes. Please be sure to turn in your clothes kit and refill as needed. If frequent accidents occur, parents will be contacted to discuss and develop action plan. In some circumstances, families

may be asked to withdraw their child and re-enroll after more potty training is practiced and better skills are developed. Set your child up for success by dressing in clothing that is easy for them to manipulate, reinforce self help skills at home and practice using the facility restroom.

CLOTHING

Children should be dressed in clothes that can become wet, dirty, or messy as our “hands on” experiences may get on their clothes. Your child also needs to come in shoes that are appropriate for play and running-fit properly, closed-toe and heel strap. Children play outside daily, so dress your appropriately for the weather. Please label EVERYTHING with your child’s name. Students are asked to keep extra clothing at school in their clothing kit. These kits will remain on hand for accidents, necessary changes and be sent home for restocking and size/seasonal changes. If an article of clothing goes missing, please ask the teachers and check the lost and found. Any unclaimed clothing items are donated to Goodwill at the end of each month.

PRESCHOOL TOTE BAG

These bags are provided by Kids Klub-handed out on meet the Teacher Day! Tote bags help build a sense of responsibility, ownership and self-help skills. Students are required to bring it to class EVERY DAY. Feel free to personalize your tote bag with iron-ons, puffy paint etc. Be sure to clean out your tote bag EVERY DAY. Toys from home are not allowed.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEWING

The Kids Klub Preschool curriculum is comprised of 10 content areas and their individual objectives. The curriculum content was based on curriculum standards provided by the National Association for Education of Young Children. Each content area is outlined below and will be implemented in a way that values learning through play.

1. Social-Emotional Development
2. Physical Development
3. Language Development
4. Early Literacy
5. Early Mathematics
6. Early Science
7. Early Technology
8. Cultural Arts
9. Health & Safety
10. Social Studies

Social Emotional Development

1. Children will have the opportunity to engage with teachers who are attentive and responsive to them.
2. Children will learn to recognize and name their own feelings and the feelings of others.
3. Children have the opportunity to learn the skills needed to regulate their emotions, behaviors, and attention.
4. Children will develop a love for learning.
5. Children will learn to develop friendships and play cooperatively together.
6. Children will learn to resolve conflict in a respectful and constructive way.
7. Children will learn to understand and empathize with others.
8. Children will be introduced to and practice character education concepts.

Physical Development

1. Children are provided varied opportunities and material that support fine-motor development.
2. Children have varied opportunities and equipment to engage in large motor development.

Language Development

1. Children will have varied opportunities to develop competence in verbal and nonverbal communication.
2. Children will have varied opportunities to develop vocabulary through conversation, experiences, field trips and books.
3. Children will have varied opportunities and materials that encourage them to engage in discussions with one another.

Early Literacy

1. Children will have the opportunity to become familiar with print.
2. Children will have the opportunity to be read to regularly and view books.
3. Children will have multiple and varied opportunities to write.
4. Children are regularly provided multiple and varied opportunities to develop phonological awareness.
5. Children are given opportunities to recognize and write letters.
6. Children have access to books and writing materials throughout the classroom.

Early Mathematics

1. Children will have the opportunity to build an understanding of numbers and their relationship to objects.
2. Children will have the opportunity to recognize and identify number symbols 1-20.
3. Children will have the opportunity to recognize and identify shape names and composition.
4. Children will have the opportunity to categorize by one or two attributes such as size, shape, color.
5. Children will be introduced to math terms and their use in everyday conversations.
6. Children will have the opportunity to recognize, and name repeated patterns.
7. Children will have the opportunity to learn and understand the concept of measurement.
8. Children will have the opportunity to learn and understand time in the context of routines and daily life.

Early Science

1. Children will have the opportunity to learn about natural and life sciences through thematic units.
2. Children will have the opportunity to observe, explore and experiment through use of the five senses.
3. Children will have the opportunity to use simple tools to explore.
4. Children will have the opportunity to collect data and document findings.
5. Children will be encouraged to question and predict.
6. Children will be introduced to science terms in everyday conversation.

Early Technology

1. Teachers will use media to enrich learning and support teaching.
2. Children will have the opportunity to access technology that can be used with others or by themselves.

Cultural Arts

1. Children will have the opportunity to gain appreciation of art, music, drama and dance in ways that reflect cultural diversity.
2. Children will have the opportunity to learn new vocabulary related to art, music, drama and dance.
3. Children will have opportunities to develop skills associated with artistic expression.
4. Children are provided varied open-end opportunities to express themselves artistically.
5. Children will have the opportunity to respond to the art of other children and adults.

Health & Safety

1. Children are provided varied opportunities to learn about and practice good health habits.
2. Children have varied opportunities to learn about food and nutrition.
3. Children will increase their awareness of safety rules in the classroom and community.
4. Children will have opportunities to practice safety procedures.
5. Children will have the opportunity to discuss the role of health and safety professionals and their community agencies.

Social Studies

1. Children are provided a learning environment that fosters a positive sense of self.
2. Children are offered opportunities to become a part of the classroom community.
3. Children are provided with opportunities and materials to build their understanding of diversity.
4. Children are provided opportunities and materials to explore social roles in the family and workplace through play.
5. Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to learn about the community and country in which they live.
6. Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to learn how people affect their environment

The Importance of Getting to School On Time

Young children are easily distracted. A classmate who comes into the room after an activity has started causes disruption. Disruptions can take time away from valuable activities.

Your child wants time to visit his/her friends and settle into the classroom routine. Being late doesn't make that transition easy for them and they may feel anxious or rushed.

Some children are embarrassed when everyone's attention is drawn to them. Being on time means that they are not an unexpected center of attention.



Tips for Parents: Getting off to a good start

Be conscious of time: Set all your clocks and watches to the same time. If you're one of those people who is normally late, set them up a little so that you've got some "wiggle room". Things usually take longer than you think, so make sure you've allowed sufficient time to get out of the house and on your way.

Wake up when you're supposed to: Don't hit the snooze button for just a few more minutes. Set a time to get up and do it! This is much easier if you go to sleep on time.

Re-examine how long your daily tasks take: Make sure that you're not underestimating the time it takes to get ready and out of the house in the morning.

Plan your daily commute: Check out the shortest route, where traffic jams might occur and alternate routes. Do this before you actually have to arrive at school. Check the weather reports for road conditions during inclement weather.

Organize yourself: Pick out clothing the night before. Plan lunches and put together what you can the night before. If you need to take something with you to school, put it next to your keys or purse.

Eat breakfast at home: Don't hit the drive-through...eating at home takes less time, costs less and is healthier!

For children: Have their clothes ready (including coats and mittens). Make sure they get baths the night before. Inspect backpacks and make sure all the books, materials and other items they will need the next day are there—put it by the door for easy pick-up on the way out. Check for any permission slips that need signing. If you've got one with a diaper bag, restock each day.

Happy, organized parents = happy children= happy teachers!

Prepared by:

Southern Early Childhood Association

<http://www.southernearlychildhood.org>

HELPING your CHILD make a smooth transition to preschool

Preschool is an exciting time! Your child is embarking on a new adventure. He or she will have an opportunity to make new friends, share with others, and learn to wait his or her turn. We have many songs, stories, and activities planned to help make a smooth transition. Here are some things you can do to assure a great start to their day!

Make sure he or she:

- Is well rested.
- Is well nourished.
- Has enough time to get ready for school.
- Wears comfortable clothing (clothes appropriate for hands on art/activities and good shoes and a coat for playing outside).
- Keep ill children at home.

Upon arrival at Kids Klub, use the restroom and wait in line. Give hugs and kisses and make sure to tell them to have fun and let them know who will be picking them up. When doors open, sign in and students will enter the classroom. Inside, students will place their items in a cubby, sanitize and join in the activity. If needed, teachers will step in to complete the separation. At home, show interest in your child by listening to what he or she has to say about school. Praise your child's school work. Show support and enthusiasm for your child by staying in touch with the teacher, attending field trips, and volunteering to help with class projects.

We are looking forward to a fun and exciting year with your child!

The Kids Klub Preschool Team



The Importance of Teaching Kids to Be Self-Reliant

by kjohnson@haymarketca.com

Teaching a child to be self-reliant is one of the most crucial skills a parent can impart. Self-reliance is another word for “independence,” and training a child to be independent — to act and think for themselves — will be essential to their success and well-being later in life.

While day cares and schools can teach some aspects of self-reliance, most of this education has to come from parents. Parents play a crucial role in instructing their children to do things without help and moving forward confidently in various tasks.

Teaching your child to pick up after themselves, complete their homework on time or tie their shoes isn't always straightforward. But maintaining a commitment to progress is an essential part of parenting from birth until adulthood.



When teaching children self-reliance, **part of the process is showing them how to do things** – how to prepare food, pick up their toys, complete their homework.

Self Reliance vs. Dependence

To understand what we mean when we say “self-reliance,” let’s look at how the dictionary defines it. Merriam-Webster defines **self-reliance** as “reliance on one’s efforts and abilities.” Whether you were aware of it or not, as a parent, you began teaching your child self-reliance the first day they were born. Though babies, by definition, are not self-reliant, our actions and habits as parents all aim to move our children toward independence. For example, we encourage tummy time with a newborn so their muscles will grow strong and, eventually, they will roll over, sit up, crawl and walk. We praise babies for falling asleep in a crib rather than on our shoulders in anticipation of the day they will sleep through the night in their bed.

When parents employ a **self-reliance theory of development**, they typically find that their children possess:

- Good problem-solving skills
- High self-esteem
- Positive interactions with others
- Independence
- Ability to make decisions independently
- Sense of security even when alone
- Difficult to manipulate

The opposite of self-reliance is dependence, which is relying on someone else to accomplish something. Children are born depending on their parents, but if you don’t encourage them to develop the skills needed for self-reliance, that dependence may last long after it should.

A child who relies on their parent may beg to be carried instead of walking through a store. They might refuse to make a snack or dress themselves. Over time, this may evolve into relying on a parent to keep track of school assignments and deadlines and providing transportation to school and work. The child may also have frequent emotional outbursts and act out in various ways. Often, children who are overly reliant on a parent do not believe they can succeed alone.

When teaching children self-reliance, part of the process is showing them how to do things — how to prepare food, pick up their toys, complete their homework. But the other part of teaching self-reliance is fostering a child’s belief in their ability to accomplish things. When a parent encourages a child toward achievement, they are not “making” them do chores. They are teaching children what they’re capable of.

Symptoms of a Dependent Mindset

It's never too late to start teaching your child self-reliance. But how can you tell if they're somewhat stuck in a dependent mindset?

1. Low Self-Confidence

A child with a dependent mindset may genuinely believe they can't complete tasks. They may also feel they do not have worth or value to offer to their family or friends.

2. Lack of Direction

Dependent children may not know what they want and struggle to make decisions. They may be unmotivated to do chores or require a lot of convincing to get them to complete a task. They may also procrastinate until a parent becomes angry or fed up and jumps in to take over and finish the job for them.

3. Trusting Others Above Themselves

An overly reliant child may trust the words and judgments of others over their own. They believe they do not have the necessary knowledge or understanding of good morals to make sound judgments, so they will rely on the wisdom of others to make decisions.

4. Resentful

Dependent children may tend to resent situations or requests they perceive to be "unfair" or dwell on things they believe others "owe" them. They may be more likely to expect their parents to pay for things, do their work and cover up their mistakes because they believe it's what their parents are there for.

How to Teach Your Children Self-Reliance

Though it may be alarming to realize your child is showing signs of dependency, it's never too late to turn things around! Self-reliance is a valuable skill that will serve them well for the rest of their life.

1. Choose Your Words Carefully

The way parents speak to their children has a profound and lasting impact on a child's self-esteem. Carefully evaluate how you talk to your child. Are you choosing words that build them up and celebrate their strengths? Are you pointing out things they're good at and offering encouragement when they face new challenges?

If the answer to either of these questions is "no," it's time to revamp your vocab.

Start by taking the time to observe your child. Where do they excel? Perhaps your child is good at picking up crayons or helping fix dinner. Praise them for this and use these skills to encourage them to branch out. For example, you could say, "You did such a great job setting the table last night. I'd love it if you'd do that again tonight, too!"

In contrast, avoid words that may have negative consequences. For example, if your child forgets to turn in another homework assignment, resist the urge to yell, "Why can't you ever remember your work?" or something to that effect. Instead, turn it around and ask, "What happened here?" Allowing them to talk through the problem prevents negative labels while also allowing

them to practice problem-solving to avoid a similar situation in the future.

2. Encourage Decision-Making

You aren't going to ask your 2-year-old to make choices concerning your retirement portfolio, but they are capable of making smaller decisions, such as what to eat for breakfast, what game to play or what movie to watch. When you give children the opportunity to exercise control over specific situations, it gives them confidence in their abilities. Besides building self-esteem, children are more likely to stick with their decisions if they are the ones who made them.

For younger children, this may take the shape of offering an "either/or" option. For example, tell your child to pick whether they want to take a bath before dinner or after. As they graduate from early childhood programs, elementary-aged students can continue to develop their decision-making abilities with more complex problems. For older children, this may mean giving them guidelines for making smart choices. For example, you might say, "Please finish all your homework before dinnertime." This time frame allows them to choose when to complete this task by the deadline you have set forth.

3. Emphasize Independence

Yes, it would go faster if you tied their shoes, zipped up their coat and packed their backpack, but allowing your child to do these things for themselves encourages self-reliance. Assign your child age-appropriate responsibilities that can grow and evolve over time.

If they tend to be slow doing these things, the better option is to plan more time in your day for these activities rather than becoming frustrated. As your child grows, look for more things they can do on their own. That doesn't mean you can't help out, but limit your assistance when possible. For example, if you want your child to set the table, but they're still learning how to do that, set out all the elements they'll need – silverware, plates and napkins – then allow them to place them in the proper places on the table.

Focus on Effort

One crucial aspect of imparting self-reliance is to teach young children that every situation is an opportunity to adapt and change. This attitude teaches them to be open-minded and excited about the skills they will gain as they try new things. There are two ways to accomplish this goal. First, praise a child's effort, rather than their abilities. For example, instead of saying, "I'm so proud of you for getting an A on your test," you could say, "What helped you the most as you studied for that test?"

It's also essential to appropriately respond to a child when they fail or don't do something as expected. For example, instead of saying, "What were you thinking?" when a child tracks mud through the house, try saying, "What could you have done differently to prevent this mess?"

Making the effort to try new things and working through a setback or failure is valuable to a child's cognitive development. It also sets them up to understand the importance of self-reliance and making an effort even when things are challenging.

Foster Gratitude

Research has shown that [fostering an attitude of gratitude](#) has a profound impact on a person's ability to feel positive, overcome adversity, enjoy experiences and develop positive relationships. In children, this can also support healthy development and build new skills.

Being more grateful can start with understanding morals and teaching a child to identify the positive things around them. When children are little, this may be as simple as teaching them to say "Thank you" when somebody gives them something. As they get older, this may include conversations about exciting things that happened in their day, who they are thankful for or ways they can give to other people.

Fostering gratitude is also about what your child does NOT get. Don't make a habit of buying them a toy or piece of candy every time they go to the store with you. Don't immediately accede every time they ask for something new. When you shop for gifts for other people, avoid buying something for your child. Allow them to experience the joy of doing things for other people and the anticipation of special treats that only come once in a while. By doing this, you are teaching them to focus on and appreciate the special events and people in their lives.

Boredom Leads to Innovation

Believe it or not, allowing children time to be bored leads to innovation. And innovation can help children develop independence and self-reliance.

When faced with boredom, independent children have to reach deep into their minds to get creative. Doing so employs various cognitive processes, including problem-solving and use of their imagination. When children have the time and space to develop a solution to their boredom, it teaches them to persevere to find a solution, play independently and get creative. Boredom stimulates creative processes that become a lifelong habit, serving them well as they grow.

Being bored can also teach children not to rely on their parents for help or entertainment. When Mom or Dad is busy, it's up to them to entertain themselves. Resist the temptation to keep your child busy all the time and allow them to develop coping skills for the days when there isn't much on the agenda.

Spend Time With Your Kids

Though teaching your children to be independent is essential, it's also vital to intentionally spend time together with your child. Plan a family game night, bake some cookies or go camping in the backyard. Choose activities that require skills you can teach your children that will serve them well as they become more self-reliant. For example, if you make cookies together, teach them how to measure ingredients and how to safely use the oven. Allow children to take an active role in mixing the cookie batter and sharing them with others when they come out of the oven.

Family activities are a great way to teach children the skills they need to be independent when their parents aren't around. For example, your family can cultivate a vegetable garden, which teaches children about hard work, the environment and the value of growing food. Quality time spent together also reinforces a child's self-worth. It sends the message that parents and kids should enjoy spending time together. This confidence can then extend into cultivating independence.

Self-Reliance and Early Childhood Development

Teaching children to rely on themselves is an essential part of early childhood development. At Haymarket Children's Academy in Prince William County, [our goal is to come alongside parents](#) to encourage children and help them develop the skills and self-reliance they need to succeed as they grow. As Gainesville's premier provider of early childhood programs for elementary school students, HCA aims to provide a consistently excellent experience for early childhood education, along with opportunities for play-based growth and development.

BEST PRACTICES & HEALTH GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL



IF YOUR CHILD HAS:

- Runny nose or congestion
- Sneezing
- Watery eyes
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Fever of 100.4F or higher
- Chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Unusual fatigue
- Loss of taste or smell
- Taken medication to reduce a fever

BEST PRACTICE:

- Check for signs of infection:
 - Fever
 - green/yellow mucus
 - Additional symptoms
- If no signs of infection or additional symptoms/or possible allergy:
 - Contact health care professional for further evaluation/recommendation
 - Stay home 72 hours after symptoms have cleared
 - Practice self-help hygiene practices such as using a tissue, washing hands and keeping hands away from your face/nose/eyes

RETURN TO SCHOOL

GUIDELINES:

- If possible infection:
 - STAY HOME for minimum of 24 hours after symptoms have cleared
 - Contact health care professional
- No signs of infection/allergy diagnosis:
 - Bring a doctor's note to keep on file
 - 24 hours without any symptoms
- After 24 hours without any symptoms

- Automatic 24-hour exclusion after all symptoms have cleared

Please call (425) 754-9293
or email Kacee
klaines@lynnwoodwa.gov
if your child will be absent

Practice at Home!



Handwashing Song

(Tune: Frere Jacques)

Tops and bottoms,
Tops and bottoms,
In between,
In between,
Rub them all together-
Don't forget your thumbs,
Now they're clean!
Now they're clean!

While we rinse we say, "Bye-bye bubbles!
Bye-bye germs!", scrubbing all the bubbles
off as they go down the drain. 😊

10 Ways to Help Your Perfectionist Child

For many parents, getting children to do homework and study for tests is a nightly battle, and they would be thrilled to have kids who are self-motivated, hard-working, and very concerned about their success in school. However, the other side of the extreme can be just as difficult for parents, in a different way.

Some children are so worried about excelling at everything they do, in school and out, that they end up putting an extreme amount of pressure on themselves to succeed, and completely fall apart when they do not. Children who are perfectionists often have a skewed vision of what success means; they may become hysterical after missing only one question on a difficult test. They tend to have very high, even impossible to reach standards and a commitment to doing anything they can to reach those standards.



Although we are a society that places a great deal of importance on both academic and extracurricular success, skills that relate to the classroom or playing field are not the only ones that children need to thrive. Children also need to learn how to handle failure. Many parents believe that they are doing their children a favor by protecting them from experiencing failure, but what these well-intentioned parents fail to realize is that what they are really doing is preventing their children from developing the skills that they will need to cope with the multitude of mistakes and failures that inevitably arise throughout life.

Perfectionism can also be a concern because of its link to mental health disorders, such as eating disorders, anxiety disorders, and self-injury (popularly known as "cutting."). Though it is difficult to establish direct cause and effect when it comes to perfectionism and such disorders, a tendency towards perfectionism should indicate to adults that a child needs some assistance in learning healthy coping skills. Even if a child may not suffer from a major mental health disorder, the persistent drive to be perfect at all times sets that child up for constant worrying and disappointment. In addition, when a child is always concerned with demonstrating perfection in school and related activities, she misses out on times when she can simply enjoy herself.

Although it may be hard to completely change a child's perfectionist nature, there are many things that adults can do to help him find a better balance and not be so hard on himself. Consider the following ideas:

1. Although the pressure to be perfect often seems to come from the child herself, evaluate the messages that you are giving to your child. Even if you tell your child that high grades or first-place trophies do not matter to you, if she hears you bragging about such honors all the time, she may feel a great deal of anxiety about continuing to bring them home. Your child needs to understand that your love is unconditional, and not based on how she does in school. Point out other ways in which she makes you proud, such as when she helps others.
2. Keep the focus on the importance of learning new material or a new skill, rather than being the best. When your child brings home a perfect test score, say, "Wow, you worked so hard to learn that tough material," rather than, "Great job, another hundred percent!"
3. Address faulty or unhealthy logic in your child's thinking. Perfectionists tend to think in terms of "all-or-nothing," such as, "If I don't get 100% on this test, then I'm stupid."
4. Let children make mistakes. Offer minor assistance and support if asked, but let children turn in

work that is truly their own so they can get comfortable with constructive feedback. Allowing children to do their own work and make mistakes not only can decrease a sense of pressure on them to always present a perfect front to the outside world, but also gives them the confidence that they can succeed on their own without your help.

5. Have a mantra in your home, such as, "Everyone makes mistakes. The important thing is what you learn for next time." Even better, come up for another word to use instead of "mistake," such as "obstacle" or "detour."
6. Do not brush off school anxiety with comments such as, "Don't worry, I know you'll get an A, you always do!" Even though you may have good intentions, your child may interpret comments like these as adding more pressure to maintain his status. Instead, tell him that what matters is him putting in enough effort to learn the material, no matter what the grade is.
7. If your child is spending too much time on schoolwork, set a time limit so that your child has to stop working and relax a bit. Explain the situation to your child's teacher and ask for help with what you are trying to teach your child.
8. The pressure to be perfect may stem from school (or other areas where perfectionism is exhibited) being the only place from where your child derives self-esteem. Try to expand your child's notion of her identity by finding activities for her to participate in that do not involve scoring or competition – activities that simply exist to feel good and have fun. Be careful about over-scheduling, and make sure that your child has time "scheduled" to just relax.
9. Find activities for your child where she will not be the best. Help her learn how to handle being in such a situation. Do not let her discontinue the activity because it is difficult or uncomfortable.
10. Look for books and movies that provide role models of real people or characters who succeeded after a string of failures. Be a good role model yourself by not holding yourself to perfectionist standards and showing your child how you handle mistakes. Point out what you did and how you learned from it. Make sure that you are not deriving your own sense of worth only from your child's accomplishments.

Helping Young Children Control Anger and Handle Disappointment

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As a result of his teachers' careful selection of toys, materials, and play themes, 3 year old Eduardo now is able to benefit from his active participation in a full range of free play activities. Yet, it is still the case that without this level of planning and subsequent, ongoing praise, Eduardo would spend most days playing alone with a particular Tonka truck. On this day the truck has been retired from service due to a broken and now dangerous part. Visibly upset, Eduardo begins to whimper as his teacher explains the situation with the truck and promises to get it replaced soon. She offers Eduardo other play ideas and begins to play with other trucks herself encouraging him to join in. The disappointment is too overwhelming, however, and Eduardo just sits passively, shaking his head. No. His teacher next prompts several of his usual play partners to, "Ask Eduardo to help with their building." When asked, Eduardo screams "No," stomps over their building project and gets a predictable response from his peers. The teacher intervenes at this point to protect Eduardo, his peers and the ongoing program.

Mattie, a 4 year old in a local Head Start classroom is always the first to organize fun play when the water table comes out each Friday. She often talks with great anticipation and excitement (especially on Thursday) about what she is going to do at the water table with her friends.

On this Friday, the water table has been borrowed by the class next door and is not available. When Mattie realizes that the water table is not available she seeks out her teacher for help. She does this with a clear expression of frustration and disappointment. Her teacher explains what happened and asks Mattie to describe how she is feeling. She says she is frustrated. Her teacher acknowledges the legitimacy of her feelings and asks her if she can think of what she and her classmates have practiced when they feel frustrated. With some prompting, Mattie recalls the plan—takes three deep breaths, tell yourself to calm down, and think of some solutions. Mattie and the teacher generate some options at this point, including: a) playing with her next favorite toy; b) asking her best friend what she wants to play; and c) pretending to use the water table. She chooses b, and has a fun freeplay.

As young children gain a better understanding of emotions, they become more capable of emotional regulation. Controlling anger and impulse is perhaps the most difficult task of emotional literacy. In real life situations that are upsetting, disappointing and frustrating it is a tough undertaking to remain calm. Remaining calm in the presence of adverse situations is not about the suppression of emotions, but the dynamic engagement of affective, cognitive and behavioral processes. In order to regulate emotions one must bring into play the rapid and accurate recognition of physiological arousal, the cognitive process required to think, for example, "I need to calm down" and, the

behavioral pretense of taking a deep breath and reacting calmly. Children who learn to cope with their emotions constructively not only have an easier time with disappointments, aggravation, and hurt feelings that are so ubiquitous in the lives of preschoolers but they also have an easier time relating to other children and adults at home, in school or child care, and on the playground (National Research Council and Institutes of Medicine, 2000).

On the other hand, young children who have failed to master the early regulatory tasks of learning to manage interpersonal conflict and control aggressive and disruptive impulses are more likely than their self-regulated peers to display early conduct problems. Children with conduct problems and poor impulse control are more likely to be peer-rejected and do more poorly in school than children who are more capable at emotional regulation and problem solving (Strain, Kerr, Stagg & Lenkner, 1984). Before children can effectively manage interpersonal conflict, they need to be able to recognize and regulate their own emotional responses and stress level. Teachers can play a significant role in helping children learn to control their anger and impulses and to handle disappointment in appropriate ways by identifying and intervening with children who need extra help in developing these competencies. Some teaching strategies include modeling remaining calm; cognitive behavioral interventions; preparing children for disappointing situations before they occur; recognizing and reinforcing when children remain

calm; and involving parents and other care providers.

Model remaining calm

Teachers can model how to manage anger and handle disappointment for young children. For example, a teacher can share with her class how she felt angry when someone hit her car in the parking lot – but then she decided that feeling mad wasn't helping her think of good solutions – so she took three deep breaths and thought about something relaxing and then when she felt calm she thought of some solutions for fixing her car. In addition to recalling incidents when one felt angry but remained in control – teachers can also model remaining calm as naturally occurring disappointing, scary, frustrating and difficult situations happen throughout the day (e.g., a fire drill; being yelled at; having something break, etc.).

Teach children how to control anger and impulse

While it may be true that children often hear adults telling them to “calm down,” it is very unlikely that this simple direction will result in any changes in children's affect or behavior. In some instances this kind of command may even escalate a child's angry response. Cognitive behavioral intervention (CBI) strategies can provide children with the requisite skills to control anger and handle disappointment. CBIs offer strategies for teaching appropriate replacement skills to angry outbursts and aggression. CBIs engage a relationship between internal cognitive events and behavioral change through teaching strategies that guide performance and reduce inappropriate behaviors. Using CBI, teachers can provide young children with strategies to

modify their thoughts and promote self-regulation. With preschooler, many accidents occur in classrooms (e.g., children bumping into one another; children knocking over others' constructions) and some children interpret these accidents as purposeful, hostile acts. An essential ingredient of CBI is to help children reframe and modify their processes in order to substitute more neutral interpretations of others' behaviors. The “turtle technique” is a CBI strategy that has been used successfully with preschool and kindergarten age children (Greenberg, Kusche & Quamma, 1995; Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1997).

The turtle technique was originally developed to teach adults anger management skills then was successfully adapted for school age children (Robin, Schneider & Dolnick, 1976; Schneider, 1974). Since then, the turtle technique has been adapted and integrated into social skills programs for preschoolers (PATHS, Dinosaur School). The basic steps of the turtle technique are:

Recognizing that you feel angry
Thinking “stop”

Going into your “shell” and taking three deep breaths and thinking calming, coping thoughts, “It was an accident. I can calm down and think of good solutions. I am a good problem solver.”

Coming out of your “shell” when calm and think of some solutions to the problem.

Teaching the turtle technique to young children can happen at large and small group times. A turtle puppet is helpful and keeps children engaged during the lesson. The teacher can begin by introducing the turtle to the class. After the children get a chance to say hello and perhaps give a gentle pet, the teacher shares the turtle's special trick for calming down. The

turtle explains a time he got upset in preschool (selecting an incident familiar to the children is best). He demonstrates how he thinks to himself “STOP,” then goes in his shell and takes three deep breaths. After he takes three deep breaths, he thinks to himself “I can be calm and think of some solutions to solve my problem.” When he is calm, he comes out of his shell and is ready to problem solve peacefully. The teacher can then invite the children to practice turtle's secret. Children can “go in their shells” as a group and together take three deep breaths. Then an individual child can model the “turtle technique” in front of the class. Practice small group activities can include making paper plate turtles with moveable heads and arms that “go in their shell.” Children can then rehearse the steps with the paper plate turtle.

Preparing children to handle disappointment

Teachers can help children by rehearsing some strategies to handle disappointment before a potentially disappointing incident occurs. For example, Elizabeth knows that some children will be disappointed because she can only choose one “helper” to feed the pet goldfish. Before she announces who the helper will be she says to the class, “Remember, I will only be able to select one fish feeder today, and that may make some of you feel disappointed. What can you do if you feel disappointed?” The children together snap their finger and say, “Oh well, maybe next time.” Elizabeth says, “That is right you can say – ‘Maybe next time.’” After she selects the fish feeder, she reinforces the children who remained calm and handled their disappointment. Similarly, a teacher can prepare a single child for a disappointing

situation before it occurs. Elizabeth knows that Jordan will be disappointed if someone else is on his favorite swing on the playground. Before they leave for outside, she pulls Jordan aside and says, "When we go outside, someone else might be on your favorite swing. And you might feel disappointed. But, what can you do to stay calm?" She supports Jordan to remember his "turtle technique" and helps him think of some solutions such as asking for a turn, saying please and finding something else to do while the child finishes swinging. For added support, because Jordan may not remember when he is in the moment, Elizabeth gives him a small plastic turtle to hold. The turtle prompts Jordan to keep calm and think of solutions.

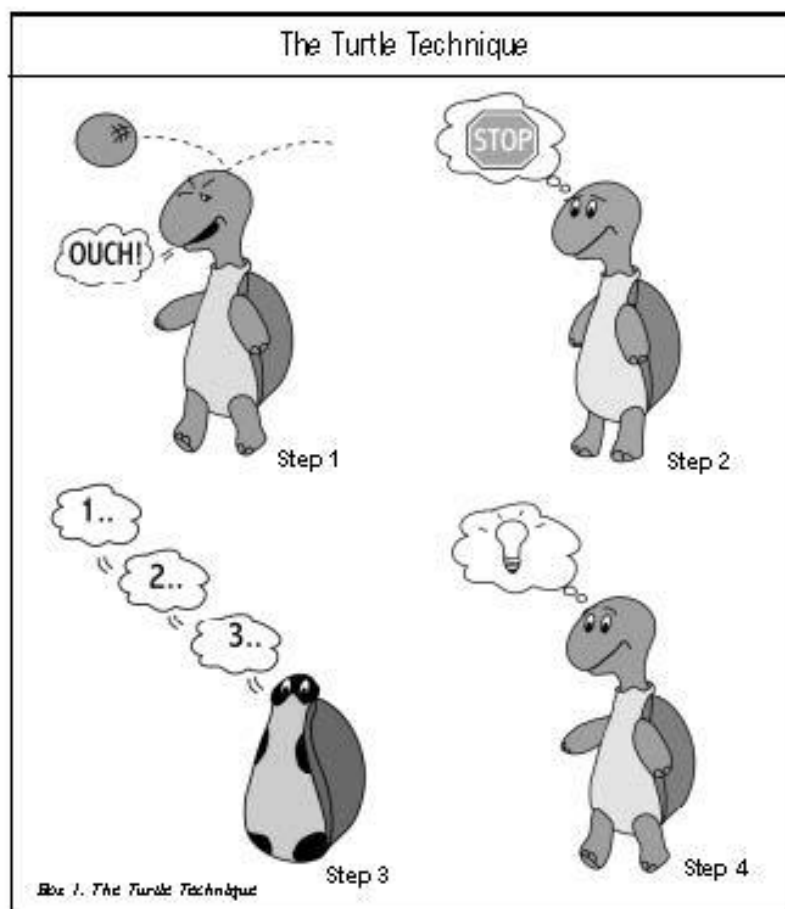
Posting pictures of the turtle technique (see Box 1) can remind children of the steps to calming down. These can be posted in several places around the room. Visual cues can be particularly helpful for very young children, children who are easily distracted, and children with communication delays. Strategically placed, the visual cues can serve as: a) a permanent reminder for children—that is, children don't have to remember the steps of the process, b) an efficient prop for teachers such that they can simply point to the next step and not disrupt the ongoing class activity with lengthy dialogue, and, c) a clear, concrete way to communicate with children the specific behavioral steps for which they are being reinforced.

Recognize and comment when children remain calm

There are four key features of a reinforcement system that are likely to help strengthen children's management of frustration and anger. First, it must be recognized that controlling one's emotions and subsequent behavior is hard work. As such, reinforcement needs to be frequent and powerful. As frequency depends on the occurrence of behavior, teachers need to be equally vigilant about planning as many opportunities for practice as possible. Teachers may also find that their impact is enhanced when they are especially vigilant to "catch those children being good" who may need the most support. A second key feature is to provide naturally occurring, vicarious reinforcement opportunities. For example, the exchanges that adults have with each other can be planned to achieve this aim. For example, Elizabeth might say, "Wow, Steven you really stayed calm when your watch broke. I'm proud of you."

Third, we recommend that children be provided the opportunities for self-reinforcement.

For example, children can choose among several favorite items and they can forecast at the beginning of the day what they would wish to acquire for managing anger and frustration. Finally, we recommend keeping reinforcers varied and fun. Box 2 outlines some favorite ideas to consider. This system, when implemented with a high degree of fidelity, sends a clear message to young children that handling anger and impulse in constructive and peaceful ways is greatly valued.



Turtle Technique Reinforcing Activities

Super Turtle Award: A certificate is given out at the end of the day noting how a child controlled their anger and impulse.

“Turtle Power” Necklace: A plastic turtle on a string is awarded to a child who was able to remain calm in an upsetting situation.

“Turtle Token Jar”: The teacher has a collection of small plastic turtle counters (or green pom-poms). Every time the teacher catches a child remaining calm and handling disappointment – a turtle token is placed in a clear jar. When the jar is full the class gets to have a turtle celebration.

“Turtle Stack”: Teachers have a supply of construction paper, turtle cut-outs. Each time a child is caught remaining calm in an upsetting or disappointing situation, the teacher puts a paper turtle on the wall. This turtle can have the child’s name on it. The next turtle earned is stacked on top of the first, and so on until the criterion is reached. The class then gets to have a turtle party.

“Turtle Tote”: The teacher selects a child who has done a remarkable job of controlling anger and impulse and sends them home with a stuffed turtle puppet for the evening. The child can then re-tell how they used the turtle technique to their parents.

Box 2: Fun, Reinforcing Activities

Involving parents

Given that there is great variation in child rearing practices specific to teaching children how to deal with frustration and anger, it is essential for teachers to establish effective home-school collaboration. At a minimum we suggest an ongoing

communication system in which a daily report card is sent home that: a) highlights how children have successfully negotiated a frustrating situation and b) suggests ways that family members might further recognize and encourage these accomplishments. An example home report is found in Box 3. In this same spirit of regular communication, teachers may also wish to phone home to report any extraordinary examples of positive child behavior. For many families this can be a most welcome change from the usual events that occasion phone calls from service providers.

For families that are interested in more directed and purposeful intervention in the home, teachers might choose to share a video of themselves modeling strategies, directly teaching a techniques, and reinforcing children for successfully calming down. Moreover, teachers should consider the possibility of arranging opportunities for families to share with each other the ways they have been able to encourage their children’s self-regulation.

Conclusion

Emotional regulation is fostered not only by the interventions and strategies described in this article, but also by the confidence and security that a warm, responsive relationship with a caregiver provides young children. Trusting relationships allow children to cope with emotions that, initially without even a feeling vocabulary to describe them or strategies to regulate them, can be overwhelming. Moreover this kind of trusting relationship, by definition, means that children will be more attuned, attentive, and responsive as adults model appropriate self-regulation and praise examples that occur throughout the day.

Strategies like the turtle technique and accompanying teaching supports can clearly offer children the cognitive and behavioral repertoire needed to be good managers of their feelings—particularly those occasioned by frustrating and anger-provoking circumstances. However, for children to be truly competent in the regulation of their emotions they often need additional teaching aimed

GOOD BEHAVIOR REPORT CARD

Eric Young
4/10/02



Dear Parent:

Today Eric did a great job of handling frustration and not getting angry when we ran out of his favorite cookies at snack. Instead of getting upset, Eric took three deep breaths and we talked about other good things to eat.

You can help Eric by:

Asking him to explain how he calmed down
Commenting on what a great job that was
Telling him that you hope he can do that again
when he is frustrated.

Thank you so much,
Mr. Phil

Box 3: Sample letter to parents

at helping them build a strategy for generating solutions or alternative behaviors to troubling events.

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WHAT'S WRONG WITH

W-Sitting



What does W-Sitting look like?

When a child is in a W-Sitting position, his bottom is between his legs, and his knees are bent with legs rotated away from the body – if you stand above him and look down, it looks like his legs are forming a “W”.

THEINSPIREDTREEHOUSE.COM

Why do kids W-Sit?

In this position, a child's base of support is wider and his center of gravity is lower, allowing for increased stability through the hips and trunk. It's a convenient position for play because kids do not have to work on keeping their balance while also concentrating on toys.

Why is W-Sitting a problem?

This position limits trunk rotation so that kids can't shift their weight to either side. This affects the development of balance reactions and the ability to cross midline. Hip and leg muscles can also become shortened and tight which may lead to “pigeon toed” walking and back or pelvis pain as they grow.

What can you do to help?

Encourage other ways to sit on the floor: side sitting (to either side), long sitting (legs out in front), pretzel sitting, or sitting on a low bench or stool.

Consistency is important! If a child is frequently in a W-sitting position, core strength may be an issue.

Check out our Core Strengthening Exercises for Kids at The Inspired Treehouse!

Toe Walking

What is it?

Toe walking is observed when a child balances on the balls of their feet without ever resting their heels on the ground while walking.

Why does it happen?

Toe walking can occur for various reasons, which can be determined under the guidance of your pediatrician, physical therapist, and/or occupational therapist. This often occurs in typically developing children, but can less commonly occur as the result of underlying conditions such as Cerebral Palsy or Muscular Dystrophy.

Often when children first learn how to walk, toe walking is observed, however it typically resolves itself by age 2. If toe walking persists, this can indicate the child having shortened or tight calf muscles, or sensory processing difficulties.



How can we help toe walking?

Fixing your child's toe walking depends on the underlying cause...



Muscular

- Child has weak, tight, or short muscles
- Strengthening exercises to make muscles stronger
- Stretches to make the muscles flexible
- Consult a physical therapist!



Tactile Processing

- Child avoids contact with an undesirable texture (ex: grass or carpet)
- Gradual exposure to such textures
- Therapeutic brushing (administered by occupational therapist)



Vestibular Processing

- Child is unaware of their inefficient walking pattern, and may feel balanced while on their toes
- Increase child's body regulation and awareness
- Bear hugs, animal walks, yoga poses

Sensory Processing

Vestibular System

Our inner ear's detection of our head position and speed/direction of movement.

Tells our body to make adjustments to help our balance, vision, muscle tone, and coordination.

Affects balance, coordination, attention, and regulation.



Sensation Seeking

If a child is Sensation Seeking, they typically enjoy sensory input and are constantly seeking for more within their environment.

Low Registration

If a child has low Sensory Registration, they interpret the sensory input around them less (at lower intensity levels) than others, and notice less in their environment.

Sensation Avoiding

If a child is Sensation Avoiding, they may appear bothered or overwhelmed by sensory input and tend to avoid these experiences as much as possible.

Sensory Sensitivity

If a child is Sensory Sensitive, they detect the sensory input around them more than others, and even notice sensory input that others may miss. They have a greater awareness of sensory input.

Signs of Difficulty

- Avoids **or** actively seeks out swinging, jumping, or climbing
- Lack of coordination, frequent falling
- Slow, cautious movement
- Easily becomes dizzy **or** never seems to become dizzy
- Watches moving/rotating objects (i.e. fans, clocks, etc.)
- Prefers to sit during activities **or** has difficulty sitting still/paying attention
- Slouches, holds head up with hands, prefers lying down

Activities & Ways to Help

- Somersaults and cartwheels
- Log rolling
- Hanging upside down

