



Children's
FRIEND

April 2012

Head Start Newsletter



REMINDER: It is the goal of Children's Friend to keep all of our children safe. Therefore all adults picking up children at school or from the bus must have a valid photo ID with them at all times.



Build Self-Esteem

It's likely that when you consider the task of parenting, you consider fostering self-esteem one of the most important aspects. How your child feels about himself/herself is a key to success. To develop a positive self-concept, two needs should be met:

- *Your child should feel loved—unconditionally.*
Find ways to show your child that he/she is loved—not because of what he/she can do, but because of who he/she is.
- *Your child should know that he/she is special.*
Remind your child that he/she has value and can contribute. Helping a child see his/her own special qualities is a great way to support self-esteem.

What can you do to continue to foster your child's self-esteem? Here are some tips:

- *Help your child master his/her environment.*
Provide opportunities for your child to succeed. Then, praise your child for his/her accomplishments. For example, choose clothing items that are easy to put on and take off, keep frequently used items at reachable levels, and provide toys that are easily manipulated.
- *Encourage your child to initiate activities.*
Praise each effort, and gently guide him/her by offering some helpful hints. For example, if your child puts a shirt on backwards, praise the effort. Next time guide him/her by pointing out that the shirt's tag goes in the back.

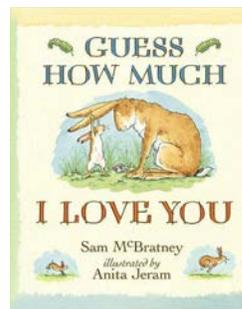
The Book Corner: Books About Self-Esteem



I Like Me!

The cheerful pig in this bubbly book likes herself in such a contagious way that every reader will see a great example of someone who has strong self-esteem.

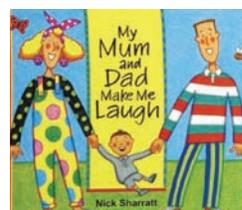
*Written & Illustrated by Nancy Carlson
Published by HarperCollins Children's Books*



Guess How Much I Love You

Through the characters Big Nutbrown and Little Nutbrown, this book beautifully shows the bond of love between parent and child.

*Written by Sam McBratney
Published by Candlewick Press*



My Mum And Dad Make Me Laugh

Simon's mom likes spots, but his dad likes stripes. The message of this cute story is that everyone is unique!

*Written by Nick Sharratt
Published by Candlewick Press*



Importance of Oral Health

Everyone knows that brushing and flossing is important for a nice smile, but the importance of healthy teeth can affect a child's total health. At Children's Friend, children brush their teeth after meals. Maintaining this behavior at home can prevent dental issues later in life.

Here are some things you can do to ensure good oral health for your child:

- Wipe your baby's gums with a damp wash cloth after each feeding.
- Brush your baby's teeth (even if it's just one tooth) gently with a soft toothbrush twice a day.
- Do not allow your child to fall asleep with a bottle.
- Make a plan to take your child to the dentist by the time they are 18 months old.
- Encourage your children to eat regular nutritious meals and avoid frequent between-meal snacking.
- Be a role model and brush with your children.
- Protect your child's teeth with fluoride.
- Use a fluoride toothpaste.
- If your drinking water is not fluoridated, talk to a dentist or physician about the best way to protect your child's teeth.
- Talk to your child's dentist about dental sealants. They protect teeth from decay.
- If you are pregnant, get prenatal care and eat a healthy diet. Your diet should include folic acid to prevent birth defects of the brain and spinal cord and possibly cleft lip/palate issues.



still have a hard time distinguishing fact from fantasy, their bad dreams can feel terrifyingly real.

Soothing Strategies

Answer the “what - ifs.” Children this age are mostly worried about what could

Preschool Fears

As four and five year olds begin to understand abstract concepts, their fears become more complex as well. They’re scared of what they can see and of what lurks in their imagination; the monster under the bed, things that go bump in the night, and what might happen when Mom and Dad aren’t nearby.

It’s no surprise that this is the peak age for nightmares. And since preschoolers

happen. If your child jumps at the sight of your neighbor’s dog, for example, calm her by explaining the dog’s behavior. Instead of saying, “The dog won’t hurt you,” be specific: “The dog sniffs you to get to know you. He barks because that’s how dogs talk.”

Don’t overreact to nightmares. When Ryan McCaffery, 5, has a bad dream, mom Candace does her best to calm her. “Sometimes I’m just so exhausted that

I let her stay with me, though,” admits the Atlanta mom. But it’s better to give a quick reassurance and tuck your child into her own bed; otherwise, you validate her fears.

Look for role models. If your child is terrified of the monkey bars at the playground, encourage her to watch an older sibling or another kid around her age play on them without pressuring her to take a turn. Seeing somebody she can relate to confronting her fear may give her a shot of courage.

Respect her feelings. Teasing your child or forcing her to confront a situation that terrifies her will probably backfire. But don’t overindulge the fear either, otherwise, you may convince her that she’s truly in danger. If your child freaks out every time she hears thunder, for example, resist the urge to scoop her up and hold her tight. Get down on her level and talk about it instead.

Source: Monsters Under the Bed: Understanding Kid Fears by Reshma Memon Yaqub, parents.com.



stores because he screams and it’s so frustrating. I am worried about him going to school and acting this way in his classroom. I try to tell him ‘no’ but he doesn’t listen. I feel like I have no control.”

When your child is pushing your buttons, it can be very frustrating! However, the more you understand what your child is trying to tell you (for example, when he/she is having a tantrum or hitting), the less stressed you will be in the long run. Look for any patterns or cues prior to your child’s challenging behaviors.

For example:

Is there a time of day when the behavior happens more frequently? Around bedtime or mealtime? Is it when he/she is changing from one activity to another?

What is your child telling you?

Does this sound familiar?

“My child has temper tantrums on a daily basis. He hits, kicks, bites, throws his toys, and screams. I can’t take him to

Who is around the child when this behavior is occurring? Are there kids or adults around? Are the people familiar to the child or strangers?

Every child expresses their emotions

in their own way. Sometimes, they use behavior as a way of letting you know that there is something else going on. By identifying patterns and understanding the behavior, you’ll be better able to help them manage their emotions.

Remember, you have your Head Start Team to help you understand what your child is telling you and figure out what the next steps are to help you and your child.

Here are some additional resources for information on children’s behavior, development, and various related topics:

<http://www.parenting.com/child>

For information on child development and behavior.

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/inclusivecommunities>

For those caring for children with or without disabilities.

<http://parenting-ed.org/parent-handouts.asp>

The Center For Effective Parenting provides information on many topics, available in English and Spanish.