

Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START



Early Learning Center At George Earle
Ms Sara Gutierrez, Principal

KID BITS

Safety first

Help your child stay safe at school with these clothing tips. Make sure she wears shoes that fit properly and either tie or have Velcro. They're less likely to cause accidents than floppy shoes like sandals or clogs. Also, avoid baggy clothes and cords or strings on clothing that can get caught in playground equipment.

Words that fit

Boost your youngster's vocabulary by asking him to guess words he'll hear when he goes somewhere. *Example:* "Can you think of three words they'll use at the birthday party?" (*presents, cake, candles*). Then, suggest a few more challenging words, like *helium* and *piñata*. Try this in a variety of situations (grocery store, visiting Grandma).

Family traditions

Traditions can strengthen relationships and bring your child comfort. Notice which activities your family shares regularly, and stick with ones your youngster especially enjoys. They might be as simple as blowing good-bye kisses through the school bus window. Or they could involve a special holiday dish or a Saturday morning ritual.

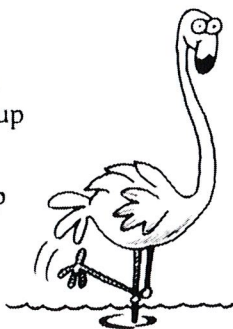
Worth quoting

"Play is the highest form of research."
Albert Einstein

Just for fun

Q: Why does a flamingo hold up one leg?

A: If he held up both, he'd fall down.



Better behavior

Through loving discipline

As your child grows up, it's natural for him to challenge you. Sometimes, it seems easier to just let him have his way. But all youngsters need limits, and they need parents to guide them.

Discipline works best with a balance of love, respect, clearly defined rules, and understanding. Here are some secrets of effective discipline.

Make the rules clear

Your child will behave better when he knows what to expect. Talk about family rules, explaining the consequences clearly. For example, for a rule such as "Take care of belongings," you might tell your youngster that if he leaves his bike out, he doesn't get to ride it the next day. As he learns to read, write down the rules and put them on the refrigerator as a reminder. *Tip:* Children are more likely to remember the rules if there are a few broad ones, rather than many specific ones.

Strengthen little fingers

These hands-on activities can help your child develop the muscles she needs for handwriting, using scissors, and other fine-motor tasks:

- Let her thread beads onto pipe cleaners to make bracelets and rings.
- String a piece of yarn between two chairs. Your youngster could use clothespins or binder clips to hang doll clothes on her "clothesline."
- Show her how to roll clay into small balls. Then, she can connect the balls with toothpicks to build a sculpture. ♥



Be consistent and firm

You can expect your youngster to "test" the rules from time to time. When he does, try to stand your ground and apply the set consequences. Being firm and consistent lets him know that you mean what you say.

Give positive feedback

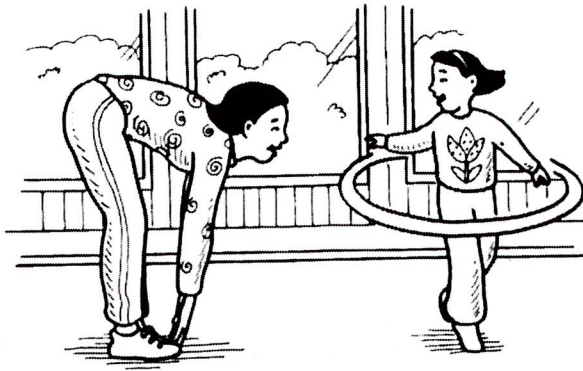
Focus more on what your child does right than on what he does wrong. This will encourage him to try even harder to behave. When you see behavior you want repeated, let him know. *Example:* "I like how you cleaned up your room." ♥



S-t-r-e-t-c-h your child's attention

Youngsters often like to zoom from one activity to the next. But as your child gets older, a longer attention span will help her learn in school. You can increase her ability to focus with these ideas.

Build up gradually. As a rule of thumb, your child should be able to focus for the number of minutes matching her age plus one minute. Start there (have a 4-year-old work on putting away toys for 5 minutes),



and increase a minute at a time as she seems ready.

Look and listen. Turn everyday activities into tasks that require concentration. In the car, you might ask her to look for words on signs that start with the first letter in her name. Or have her listen for a particular

word or phrase in a song on the radio and clap each time she hears it.

Make it a game. Work together to make up a series of movements, adding a new one on each turn. For instance, you could begin by touching your toes. Then, your youngster has to touch her toes and add another motion, like spinning around. She'll need to pay close attention to remember the sequence of movements.♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Waiting games

Waiting is part of our everyday lives. The next time you hear "How much longer?" try one of these ideas to occupy your child.



1. Take the change out of your pocket, and let your youngster sort it. Tell him the names of the coins, and talk about how they're alike and different. "The quarters and dimes are both silver. But the quarters are big, and the dimes are small."

2. Work on counting forward and backward. For an extra challenge, have your child try counting from a number other than 1. For instance, if you say, "7....," he would continue, "8, 9, 10."

3. Do an alphabet search. Look around and find the letter A on a sign or poster. Take turns finding the letters in order until you reach Z.♥

PARENT TO PARENT

A calming effect

My daughter Anna always seemed to be bouncing off the walls—at home, at school, just about everywhere. I didn't know what to do.

Since my sister's son is also very active, I asked her for advice. She suggested that Anna get as much exercise as possible. So we try to go for a walk or play in the park almost every day. On other days, I take her to ride her bike or play running games with the other kids on our block.

I've noticed that Anna is especially "wired" when she's overtired, so I make sure she gets plenty of sleep. The difference these changes have made to her behavior is wonderful—and I'm calmer, too!♥



How people feel

If your child knows how to talk about his emotions, he'll be able to control them better. He'll also find it easier to understand how others feel. Help him recognize and share his feelings with these suggestions:

● Together, make a list of emotions (surprised, excited, mad, disappointed). Then, look through magazines and photo albums, and talk about how people in the pictures might be feeling. Ask your youngster to explain

how he picked each emotion. *Examples:* "The hockey player is *excited* because he won a trophy." "She is *upset* because she spilled chocolate milk on the carpet."

● Let your child hear you use specific words to describe family members'

feelings. You might say, "I feel *grumpy* because I haven't eaten," or "I know you're getting *frustrated* trying to teach the puppy tricks."♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote school readiness, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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