

# PRESCHOOL PRESS



A Publication of the Anchorage School District STeP Center and the Early Childhood and Elementary Special Education Department

December 2004; Volume 2, Issue 4

## IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue of the Preschool Press, you will find articles for parents and preschool children on the following topics:

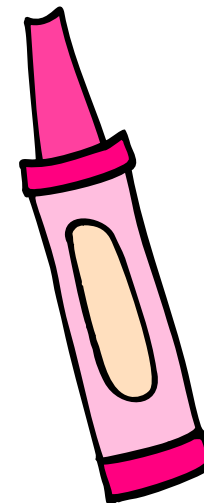
40 Developmental Assets  
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## ABOUT THE PRESCHOOL PRESS

This publication is designed for preschool families in the Anchorage School District - it is delivered via email early third Thursday of the month - to order, email [fraczek\\_eudora@asdk12.org](mailto:fraczek_eudora@asdk12.org) or call 742-3872.

## 40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

The Anchorage School District Safe and Drug Free Schools Program reminds all parents and educators that assets are the positive building blocks that young people need to grow up to be healthy, principled, and caring adults. The more assets young people have, the more likely they are to engage in positive behaviors, such as volunteering or doing well in school. In addition, they are less likely to be engaged in at-risk behaviors. The eight categories of assets are support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity.



To learn specifically about the 40 Developmental Assets for Preschoolers, go to the Search Institute website at: <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/preschoolers.html>.

## WHAT IS MATHEMATICS AND WHAT CAN PARENTS DO

The **National Council of Teachers of Mathematics** (NCTM), the world's largest organization devoted to improving mathematics education, is developing a set of mathematics concepts, or standards, that are important for teaching and learning mathematics.

There are two categories of standards: thinking math standards and content math standards. The thinking standards focus on the nature of mathematical reasoning, while the content standards are specific math topics.

When you focus on **problem solving**, children learn that there are many different ways to solve a problem and that more than one answer is possible. It involves the ability to explore, think through an issue, and reason logically to solve routine as well as nonroutine problems. In addition to helping with mathematical thinking, this activity builds language and social skills such as working together.



### What parents can do:

- \* Children are naturally curious about everyday problems. Invite your children to figure out solutions to everyday situations. You can do this by talking about the problem, asking your children for ways to solve it, and then asking how they came up with those solutions.
- \* Encourage your children to suggest problems and ask questions, too. Your children will learn how to figure things out and will learn that many problems can be solved several different ways.

**Reasoning** is used to think through a question and come up with a useful answer. It is a major part of problem solving.

### What parents can do:

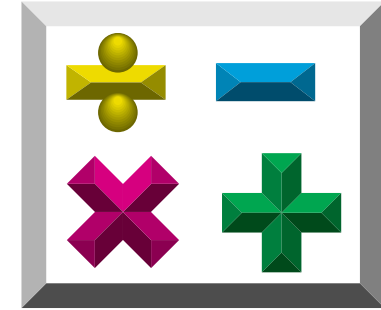
- \* To promote reasoning, ask your children questions and give them time to think about the answer. By simply asking questions and listening to answers, you are helping your children learn to reason.
- \* Ask your children to figure out why something is the way it is and then check out their ideas. Let them think for themselves, rather than try to figure out what answer you want to hear.

To learn more about what parents can do to help young children learn mathematics, go to: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EarlyMath/whatis.html>.

## USING MATH EVERYDAY

Whether it is getting up in the morning or riding in the car - every event in a preschoolers life can be a mini math lesson! Here's an example of a simple activity parents can try:

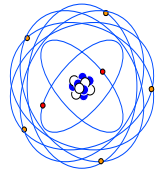
Little children can learn the names of different shapes. Traffic signs are a good place to start. Yield signs are triangles, highway signs are rectangles, and stop signs are octagons. Ask children about the signs they see. "Is this sign just like one you saw on another block?" Talk about how many sides it has, or how many corners it has. Older children may talk a lot about what they saw. "That sign is a rectangle. It has 4 sides and 4 corners." But for younger children, you may be doing most of the talking, "That sign is yellow. It is shaped like a triangle."



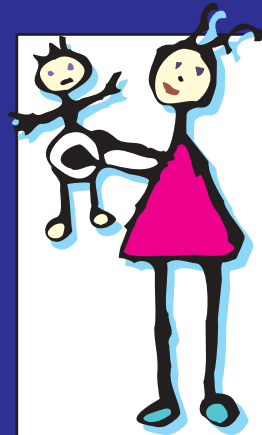
For more ideas, go to: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EarlyMath/activities1.html>.

## COMMUNITY FOCUS - MUSEUMS

Math is found everywhere! even at our local museums. From color and shapes in art to watching science come alive, local Anchorage museums provide many wonderful activities for young children. See a full listing of the Anchorage area museums at: <http://www.museums.state.ak.us/list.html#anchorage> and enjoy!



## TREASURE CHEST OF IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS



Child Check 337-9505  
Southcentral Hotline 563-3200  
Denali Kidcare 269-6529  
WIC 343-4668  
Poison Control 800-222-1222  
Childcare Connection 278-2273