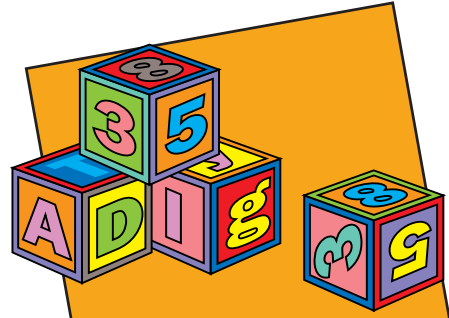


PRESCHOOL PRESS



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

March 2004; Volume 2, Issue 6

CHILD CHECK SCREENING PLANNED

The Anchorage School District's Preschool Child Check program provides free developmental screening for preschool children, ages 3-5. These screenings help determine if preschoolers have delays in development or problems that could affect their ability to learn. A child's movement, speech/language, and thinking skills are included in the screening. If concerns are found, ASD personnel will assist parents in getting the help their children need.

On Monday, April 4, 2005, the Anchorage School District in conjunction with Chugiak Children's Services and FOCUS will conduct a screening at Chugiak Children's Services. If you are interested in having your preschool child screened, please call 337-9505 to make an appointment.



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 or call 742-3872.

IN THIS ISSUE

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

- Child Check Screening Planned
- Reading is Rhythm and Music
- Special Reading Activities with Your Preschooler
- Share the Adventure of Reading
- Important Numbers to Remember
- Child Check Printable Brochure

READING IS RHYTHM AND MUSIC

By Mrs. Ev Irving-Bowman Preschool Sp Ed Autism teacher



Music and songs are wonderful pre-literacy reading skills. You don't have to carry a tune, but fun and enthusiasm go a long way! What songs or poems or nursery rhymes do you remember as a child? If you liked it, so will your child.

For instance many kids enjoy "Twinkle, twinkle, little star", which is great to start with. Now you can sing it, do the finger plays and the familiar routines, but go one more step and add pictures and words. You may want to just add the "star" to hold up for that word. After a couple of times of singing it then add a visual for another word-such as "twinkle" or "up"

It is amazing that once you add visuals to a song and pair them with the written words how fast your son or daughter starts recognizing shapes, letters, words, and are reading what's next. Many nursery rhymes are often available on the internet and if you look for rebus rhymes you will find both words and pictures that go along with each word. Some internet resources for nursery rhymes include:

Musical Nursery Rhymes:

<http://www.indianchild.com/nursery%20rhymes.htm>

Nursery Rhymes from Mother Goose:

<http://www.zelo.com/family/nursery/>

Nursery Rhymes from Around the Word:

<http://www.mamalisa.com/world/>

If you sing a bedtime chant, a song to your child, or even a family ritual, just make it visual and add a picture with the words underneath. You can make a song book with your top 5 songs, and eventually it will grow to 10 songs and you'll be amazed at how fast the pictures and words become familiar to your child. Happy singing and reading with your child.

SPECIAL READING ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR PRESCHOOLER

By Libby Pederson, Mt. Iliamna

Pre-reading is so important for young children and can start as soon as they are born. Starting your child with books/pictures at a young age will teach them to love books and will help them learn to read as they get older.

Some ideas/tips for reading with your young child:

- * Read the back of the cereal box when eating breakfast, have your child tell you what they see
- * When eating at most restaurants you can get a kids menu, which usually has a picture to color along with short funny stories or games. Read these to your child and help them complete the activities.
- * Find a storybook that goes along with your child's favorite movie. Read that to you child and discuss things that may be the same or different.
- * Stop by your local library and let your child choose some books either to take home or to read there. Remember that the books are free to use as long as they are returned on time. (Have a calendar at home and mark the date they are to be returned. This way you child can also see how many days they can have the books).
- * Look for books on tape or CD. Preschoolers really enjoy putting on headphones and listening to stories.
- * Magnet letters on the fridge can be used to practice early spelling activities like your child's name.
- * Label items in your home (mirror, sink, door, window, etc).
- * At bedtime try using a flashlight under the covers while you read a story.
- * A fun website for young children is <http://www.starfall.com/> - this marvelous website includes a **Learn to Read** section combines explicit instruction in letter-sound relationships, word recognition skills and reading comprehension strategies with opportunities to apply and practice these skills. This type of systematic, explicit phonics instruction follows the recommendations of the California Department of Education.



SHARE THE ADVENTURE OF READING

By Catherine Heady, Turnagain Elem.

One of the best ways to revisit your own childhood is by reading books to your children. Although you are the reader, you can get just as lost in whatever imaginary world you are visiting as easily as your child. Remember, it is not so important to read every word of a story to the preschool child. Watch for loss of interest. If this happens you need to shorten and sweeten the story line! Don't be afraid to shorten the sentences or add to the story by mentioning your child or people you know as some of the characters. Sillier yet, make up ridiculous sentences and let your children "catch" you! You will be encouraging some nice language and thinking skills while thoroughly enjoying yourselves. You are also setting the stage for your child's future success in school.

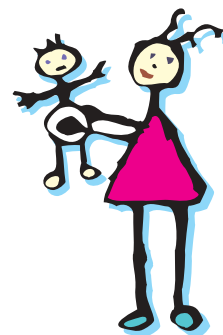


Preschool children love repetition. You could read say, "The Three Little Pigs" several nights in a row. You can exaggerate the voices and before long, your child will be imitating you.

Simple stories are also the easiest to sign. Eventually your child will know the story line well enough to "read" you the book! Although there are preschoolers who do read, the most important skills you want to encourage in your preschool child are those that promote a positive sense of themselves and a positive, loving relationship with you. Reading books with young children should be a shared adventure. You will be creating moments that you will both cherish for a lifetime. The objective should be your joint attention to and enjoyment of the storyline and illustrations.

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





Age 3 Developmental Check List

By age three your child should be able to:

- Run without falling very often.
- Walk up and down stairs.
- Imitate drawing a circle (even if it is not quite round or closed)
- Build a tower of at least 8 blocks.
- Point to 6 parts of the body (hair, nose, eyes, feet, hands, mouth) when asked.
- Name several objects (like chair, box)
- Follow simple directions.
- Count to 3.
- Repeat simple songs or rhymes.
- Match colors and shapes.
- Put on some clothes without help.
- Speak to most adults and be understood.



Age 4 Developmental Check List

By age four your child should be able to:

- Stand on one foot for a few seconds without falling.
- Catch and throw a ball.
- Cut with scissors.
- Hold crayons with fingers not fist.
- Ask "how" and "why" questions.
- Answer questions like: "What do you do when you are hungry?"
- Speak in sentences of about 5 words.
- Recognize and name 3 or 4 colors.
- Enjoy playing with other children.
- Dress themselves completely (with help on pullover shirts and sweaters).
- Count to 5.



Age 5 Developmental Check List

By age five your child should be able to:

- Climb a ladder to a slide.
- Hop on one foot for a short distance.
- Draw a simple house and person.
- Cut with scissors on a straight line.
- Count five objects.
- Copy a picture of a square.
- Explain what objects are used for (example: a knife is used for cutting).
- Understand the concept of "yesterday", "today" and "tomorrow".
- Understand words like "on", "under" and "behind".
- Match colors and shapes.
- Go to the bathroom without help.



Red Flags! Signs of Possible Problems

- ▶ Rubbing eyes or complaints that eyes hurt.
- ▶ Holding things close to see them.
- ▶ Red or watery eyes.
- ▶ Turned or tilted head when looking at things.
- ▶ Crossing one or both eyes.
- ▶ Trouble or not seeing things that are far away.
- ▶ Having lots of ear aches.
- ▶ Seems to listen with only one ear.
- ▶ Talking very loud or very soft.
- ▶ Seems sad or cries for no reason.
- ▶ Destroys objects without reason.
- ▶ Purposely hurts others or self.

All About Developmental and Learning Milestones for Your Child



How Do I Know...

Every parent wants their child to grow up healthy and happy. But how does a parent know?

The first five years of a child's life are very important. It is during this time that the child learns to move about, communicate and interact with the environment around them. They develop learning styles and personalities as well as patterns of behavior they will carry into adulthood.

So how does a parent know if their child's development indicates a problem with movement, communication or learning?

Some children have difficulties with learning and development that can be detected early. Observation and developmental models are tools that can help a parent evaluate their child's progress. Early childhood screening can detect problems as well.

Look at the general developmental models for 3, 4, and 5 year olds. Keep in mind all children do not develop at the same rate but the check lists will give you ideas of things to watch for. If your child has trouble with any of the items listed and you are concerned, we can help you find out if your child may need special help through free early childhood screening.



Anchorage School District

What if I Suspect...

What if I suspect my child may have a problem?

The school district is required by law to identify and screen all children who may need special education services by age five. The Child Check Program provides FREE screening for children ages 3 to 5.

Screening involves checking your child's vision, hearing, speech, thinking and movement abilities. Specialists will talk with you about your child's history and development. Screening usually takes about an hour and a half.



How Do I Arrange for...

How do I arrange for screening for my child?

To find out more information about screening or to arrange an appointment to have your child attend a screening session, call the Child Check Program.

Child Check Program
Chester Valley Elementary School
1751 Patterson St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99504
337-9505 phone
337-5033 fax

What if Screening...

What if screening indicates my child may have a problem?

If the screening results suggest that there is a problem, you will be given specific suggestions and recommendations that are individualized for your child.

Sometimes the results are indicative of a concern that may not need to be addressed by additional testing. If that is the case then staff will discuss ways you can work with your child to help ensure progress in problem areas.



What About Younger...

What if my child is younger than three or older than five?

If your child is younger than three and you suspect he/she may have a disability, contact: Programs for Infants and Children at 561-8060 Ext. 3001 in the Anchorage area, or, FOCUS at 688-0282 in the Chugiak-Eagle River area.



For more information
or to request copies
of this brochure call
742-3874