

# PRESCHOOL PRESS



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

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## In This Issue. . .

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

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With Visual Schedules

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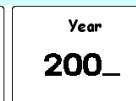
Special Education Community  
Forum

Alaska Statewide Special  
Education Conference

### [About The Preschool Press](#)

This publication is designed for preschool families in the Anchorage School District. It is mailed each month. E-mail subscriptions are also sent out so if you wish to receive this mailing, contact: [loutrel\\_barbara@asdk12.org](mailto:loutrel_barbara@asdk12.org) or call 742-3868.

Past Copies of the *Preschool Press* can be found on [www.asdk12.org/dept/step](http://www.asdk12.org/dept/step)



## ***A New Year . . . But Don't Forget the Old Routines***

### *Help Kids Learn Routines With Visual Schedules*

As parents, teachers, or therapists of children with language disorders or children with autism, it is easy to understand the importance of maintaining a daily routine. This allows the child to participate in a number of scheduled activities while decreasing the feeling of unfamiliarity or stress sometimes involved with change. It is important to teach the child these routines and to do this at a young age to allow carryover into the classroom setting.

#### Routines in the Home

Developing routines in the home prepares a child for school and promotes a sense of security. Even if your child does not have a diagnosed language disorder or autism, using visual aids to reinforce daily routines is beneficial to the child. Since a child understands long before he/she can express himself, using visual aids allows a child to make choices at an early age.

\* Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Snacks: Keeping a child on a routine for meals helps to establish a sense of order and aids in digestion. Try not to change meal times frequently and try to give snacks at the same time each day. If your child needs visual reinforcement, make a large schedule from poster board and use Velcro® to attach symbols for meals and snacks. If the time changes, be sure to move the symbol and discuss the change with the child.

\* Bedtime and Naptime: Keeping a child on a schedule will make these (sometimes trying) times easier on both you and your child. Incorporate symbols for each onto the timeline. If you need to change these times, be sure to move the symbol on the schedule and discuss the change with the child.

\* Playtime and Television: Make realistic icons (pictures) or use commercially available sets to represent your child's favorite activities and/or television programs.

\* Weekend Changes: Weekends are full of activities that will change the child's schedule. It is important to prepare the child for these changes. One way to do this is to change the color of the scheduling board (i.e., change from white to colored poster board). Just like during the week, change the pictures to closely resemble the day's activities. Incorporate in trips, visits, and bedtime changes.

\* Unexpected Events: Of course things will happen that don't fall into the schedule! Handle these changes two ways. If you can change the schedule before the event, do so while explaining to the child what is going to happen. If this is not possible, change the schedule after the event has happened, explaining to the child what has changed and what he/she will miss from the original schedule.

Author: Keri Brown, M.C.D., CCC-SLP Source: [www.superduperinc.com](http://www.superduperinc.com)

DON'T FORGET: YOU CAN USE THE BOARDMAKER COMPUTER PROGRAM TO CREATE PICTURES FOR YOUR VISUAL SCHEDULES BY CALLING THE STeP CENTER AT 742-3868.

## How Do I Introduce My Young Child to Reading?

Why read to a child who doesn't understand language or sing to a toddler who can't sing along? These activities help children make early connections between words and meaning. When parents read and sing to young children, they create a safe, warm environment for children to appreciate the love and value of learning. Children enjoy any activities that bring them closer to the caring adults in their lives. Reading doesn't begin with memorizing letters and sounding out words. Adults help lay the foundations for reading in a child's early years by pointing at and naming objects while dressing an infant, naming foods while shopping with a toddler, or cooking with a preschooler. Engaging in conversation, reading, singing, and playing games with young children are the most important building blocks for learning to read. Here are some suggestions for parents who want to help their young child become a successful reader.

### Birth to three

- o Talk or sing to your baby when changing diapers, bathing, or engaging in play.
- o Introduce cloth books with bright pictures for baby to look at.
- o Point to words on signs at the zoo, park, or while walking or driving. Read the words aloud to baby.
- o When your child begins to notice letters, name the letters for him/her. Read the words and explain what they mean.
- o Read short stories before bed. Ask questions about the characters, setting, etc.
- o Let toddlers "write" shopping lists with you. Give your child magnetic letters for the refrigerator, and teach them how to spell their name.



### Preschoolers

- o Allow preschoolers to help prepare recipes with simple steps.
- o Ask questions to preschoolers and kindergarteners about the print they see in books. Help children connect words to the pictures.
- o Choose books with lots of pictures. Simple concept books that teach colors and shapes are fun.
- o Play picture card games.
- o Provide materials for the child to "write" a story about himself or herself.
- o Continue to read bedtime stories, even if your child has learned to read.
- o Listen to the stories your child makes up, as well as their jokes and riddles.
- o Play simple word games like Scrabble Jr. or Boggle Jr.
- o Choose books with repetition so the child may anticipate what will be read.
- o Let your child see you reading for pleasure. Imitation is a powerful teacher.

**Author:** *Becky Spivey, M.Ed.*

**Source:** [www.superduperinc.com](http://www.superduperinc.com)

## Check the Anchorage Municipal Libraries for Preschool Storytime (Starts Jan. 16th)

### Mother Goose

20 minutes of nursery rhymes, songs and fingerplays for infants, birth-18 months and their caregivers.

Z.J. Loussac Public Library

Thursdays, 10:30am

Fridays, 2:30pm

### Lapsit

20 minutes of short stories, songs and lots of repetition for children 3 & under and their caregivers.

Z.J. Loussac Public Library

Tuesdays, 10:30am & 11:30am

Wednesdays, 10:30am

Thursdays, 7pm

Fridays, 10:30am

Chugiak-Eagle River Branch Library

Fridays, 10:15am

Scott & Wesley Gerrish Branch Library

Saturdays, 11am

### Preschool Storytime

A half hour of stories, fingerplays & songs for children 3-5 and their caregivers.

Z.J. Loussac Public Library

Thursdays, 11:30am

Fridays, 11:30am

Chugiak-Eagle River Branch Library

Fridays, 11:15am & 1:15pm

Scott & Wesley Gerrish Branch Library

Fridays, 11am

### Family Storytime

A half hour of books, songs & rhymes for children 5 & under and their caregivers.

Samson-Diamond Branch Library

Fridays, 11am

Also check some of the major Anchorage bookstores for their preschool storytime programs: Barnes & Noble (279-7323); Borders Books (344-4099); Title Wave Books (278-9283).

# Growing Up

## Getting Your Child Off a Pacifier

by Jennifer Vroom, M.S., CCC-SLP



Can using a pacifier for too long hinder my child's development?

There are many factors to consider when determining whether or not a pacifier is right for your child. There is still much debate over the potentially positive versus negative consequences of using a pacifier. Here are some of the pros and cons:

Pros: Pacifiers may be used...

- o As a sleep aid.
- o To comfort your child in stressful situations
- o To distinguish between a hungry vs. a fussy baby
- o To help with reflux
- o For infants who are tube-fed

Cons: Pacifiers may result in...

- o Breast-feeding difficulties
- o Dental Problems
- o Increased risk of middle ear infections.
- o Speech Problems: (Since using a pacifier involves an immature suck-swallow pattern, some children who use these over a long period of time may experience a delay in developing more mature tongue movements, resulting in sound errors.)
- o Swallowing Difficulties
- o Dependency
- o Negative Social Impacts

When is a child too old for a pacifier?

Even before babies are born, they display a natural tendency to suck on thumbs/fingers. It is a way to explore their environment and to provide comfort. Between 2-4 months of age, infants tend to have the most need for extra or non-nutritive sucking (i.e., not during feeding). Many children let go of the pacifier before 3 years of age. However, others continue to use them until age four or five. If your child has not yet given up his/her pacifier by three years, it's a good idea to go ahead and encourage decreased dependency on it.

Some things you can do to reduce use of the pacifier include:

- o Keeping the pacifier out of sight.
- o Being consistent.
- o Designating certain times of the day for the pacifier.
- o Slowly reducing the amount of time allowed for pacifier use.
- o Encourage good dental care.
- o Find other ways the child can comfort himself/herself versus resorting to the pacifier.
- o Decrease use at developmental stages. (For example, when a child is learning to crawl, you may want to begin limiting his/her access to the pacifier. You could continue to decrease availability as the child begins to talk.)

Other Points to Remember:

- o A pacifier should NOT be a substitute for nurturing.
- o Children learn from each other. (Children may be more motivated to stop pacifier use if other kids in his/her environment are not using them.)
- o Purchase a pacifier that's dishwasher safe.
- o Avoid too many changes at one time.
- o Be patient.
- o Give praise often!
- o You can always consult your child's pediatrician, dentist, and/or speech pathologist with any questions/concerns.

For more information go to the original article: [http://www.superduperinc.com/handouts/pdfs/68\\_Pacifier.pdf](http://www.superduperinc.com/handouts/pdfs/68_Pacifier.pdf)

## Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Dept.: Therapeutic Recreation

Therapeutic recreation provides quality recreation, education, social & cultural programs for people ages 3 and up who experience a disability.

Adapted Aquatics: All preschool classes are for ages 3-5 years and are held in the East High School kiddy pool. Saturdays, Jan. 13 to May 12

To register call one of the Regional Rec Centers:

Spenard Community Rec. Center: 343-4160  
Fairview Rec. Center: 343-4130  
Mountainview Office: 343-4355  
Lydia Selkregg Chalet: 343-6992  
SE Service Pool: 343-4509  
C/SE District office: 343-4202  
Dimond Pool: 343-4508  
Kincaid Park Outdoor Center: 343-4485

**Preschool Level 1** is a water adjustment class

**Preschool Level 2** is a beginner course



For other aquatic therapy programs call these agencies: Providence Hospital PT (565-6300), Healthsouth PT Center (550-6180), Chugach PT (272-8615)

## Educational Opportunities

February 17 - 23, 2007  
Anchorage Alaska  
Sheraton Downtown



### Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference

ASSEC 2007 *Many pieces, one big picture*

## MANY PIECES, ONE BIG PICTURE

The big picture is perhaps represented best by the richness and complexity of a large puzzle. The many pieces of No Child Left Behind fit nicely with IDEA 2004 and as they come together with early learning, student self-determination, assistive technology, individualized interventions and family and community supports the pieces create each student's unique picture. Throughout the creation, at times the right piece is found only after many tries and other times pieces slide smoothly into place on the first try. The ultimate goal of us coming together is to create quality education now, so that students have better lives when they leave school. Together we create the full picture, a truly beautiful work of art. We are the *Many Pieces* that create *One Big Picture!*

In preparing for this conference we were mindful of the desire of attendees to have a wide variety of professional development opportunities through workshops, credit classes, dynamic keynote speakers and a favorable combination of circumstance, time, and place to collaborate. Enjoy your conference and share in the efforts to enhance quality education and equalize educational opportunities for all children.

For conference schedule & topics go to:  
<http://www.assec.org/>

Hear Nationally acclaimed expert on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

*Diane Malbin*

Special Education Community Forum

Saturday, January 20, 2007

Clark Middle School

Anchorage, Alaska

8:30am to 1:00pm

Special Preview of FASD "Kid Focus" Tools from 1-2:00pm

Sponsored by The ASD STeP Center with collaboration from Stone Soup Group

Note Location  
Change



### "Mental Health Issues for Children with Special Needs"

Come join us over a cup of coffee for our Saturday disability information workshop. Learn about different disability topics, join discussions, and have the opportunity to earn credit for certification programs, salary advancement or training requirements.

Keynote: "FASD & Mental Health: Rethinking Problems & Solutions"

Breakout sessions will include topics on Behavior Health Goals, Positive Behavioral Interventions & IDEA 2004, Text-to-Speech & Voice Recognition Software, Wellness Recovery Management for Youth and other FASD topics. Free childcare provided by calling 742-3872, 24-hours in advance.