Every Child Learning Every Day

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READY TO LEARN

Pique curiosity with these books

By Dr. Stan Steiner

Children come with a natural sense of wonder. Connecting books with their curiosity leads to healthy intellectual growth. To extend their knowledge even further, spend some time exploring the outdoor connections.

"Momma's Magical Purse," by Paulette Bogan 2004, Bloomsbury. It has been said that mothers think of everything and they carry everything in their purse. You don't believe me? Neither did cousin David, and Rachael is out to prove him wrong in this humorous tribute to moms.

"The Neighborhood Mother Goose," by Nina Crews, 2004, Greenwillow. Imagine Mother Goose rhymes with a contemporary setting. Hard to imagine? Check this cool poetry book combining verse, photo imagery and your neighborhood.

"Actual Size," by Steve Jenkins, 2004, Houghton Mifflin. Caldecott winner Steve Jenkins has an amazing eye for seeing and telling the curious facts of nature through eye-catching collages and succinct text.

"Doors," by Roxie Munro, 2004, Chronicle Books. Doors hold a fascination for the young at heart from the time they are mobile until they move through adulthood. This cool pop-up book provides over 50 doors to open and search for a host of objects.

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Dr. Stan Steiner teaches Children's Literature at Boise State University. You may find more book reviews at http://education.boisestate.edu/ssteine.

IdahoSTARS creates partnerships

Dear Reader:

Early childhood care and education providers are essential to the success of children later in life.

An important effort is under way to honor and support this profession in Idaho. It is called Idaho STARS, Idaho State Training and Registry System.

IdahoSTARS represents a partnership of government and community groups all concerned with the well being of young children. Major groups involved include the Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children, the Department of Health and Welfare, the University of Idaho Center on Disabilities and Human Development, and city and county licensing and health departments.

IdahoSTARS will help coordinate the different programs for early child care providers and parents of young children.

Dr. Marilyn Howard
Superintendent of Public Instruction

One of the exciting new project IdahoSTARS is spearheading is voluntary professional development, mentorships, and other incentives for early childhood and education providers.

You can learn more about these programs at www.idahostars.org.

The State Department of Education also is partnering with IdahoSTARS.

Department staffer Mary Bostick serves on IdahoSTARS advisory board.

Earlier this year, we helped distribute IdahoSTARS' quarterly newsletter to providers of early childhood care and education.

And we plan to continue showcasing IdahoSTARS partnerships like the one featured on Page 2.

We all want the best for our youngest and IdahoSTARS helps us all strive for that high goal.

READY TO LEARN

Enlist children in letter writing to family, friends

Children learn about all the ways that children and adults use print through being part of writing letters.

Here's one example.

When your 3 or 4-year-old child misses her friend or grandparents, you can say, "Let's write her a letter and invite her to come for a visit!"

Here your child can dictate what he or she wants to say down to the last detail.

While you write down your child's words, you are showing some of the conventions of writing, like starting at the top of the page, using the word "Dear," writing most of the letter in the middle of the page, and signing your name at the end.

Your child will want to use the marker to "write" on the page too, and maybe add some pictures. After she is done, explain that her friend or grandparents need words in order to understand.

After this, your child can dictate what they can do on their visit, such as play a game, or eat an ice cream cone.

Now you can say "We have to say that this letter is from you. We write that her at the end of the letter. We write Love, from you!"

Now you can go on to explain that the letter goes into an envelope and to the mailbox, and that the letter carrier will deliver it to your child's friend or grandparents.

You can have her help with the envelope and take the letter to the mailbox.

Here are some books about letters:

"A Letter to Amy," by Ezra Jack Keats;

"Hail to Mail," by Samuel Marshak;

"Messages in the Mailbox: How to Write a Letter," by Vera B. Williams and Jennifer Williams;

"The Jolly Postman," by Janet and Alan Ahlberg.

RESOURCES

Scholarship supports early childhood providers

A scholarship program is now available for providers of early childhood services.

T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) is a unique scholarship program that reflects a partnership among the Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children (IAEYC), the scholarship recipient, and the sponsoring child care center or home where the scholarship recipient works as each party shares in the cost of the scholarship.

The goal of T.E.A.C.H. is to increase the level of education of early childhood caregivers working with young children while making the educational process more affordable, increasing wages, and reducing staff turnover.

This scholarship program has been offered to Idaho's early childhood professionals since 1999.

T.E.A.C.H. provides money to take early childhood courses toward a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA), associate's degree or bachelor's degree in early childhood.

Scholarship can be used for:

Tuition and books;

Reimbursement for part of the release time provided by the sponsoring program enabling the scholarship recipient to attend class or study during work hours;

A travel stipend for the scholarship recipient each semester to travel to and from campus;

A bonus for the scholarship recipient upon successful completion of one year of school;

Academic counseling and administrative support.

For information contact: The (IAEYC) at 1 (208) 345-1090 or visit : http://www.idahoaeyc.org/PAGES/teach.html

NUTRITION

Growth chart child's body development

As a parent, you probably wonder if your child's growth is normal. That's natural. And making sure is part of your responsibility.

No two children grow alike.

In every way, your child is an individual. That's true for his or her body size and growth pattern, too.

It makes no sense to compare your child's growth to your friends' children. If your child was born prematurely or a little late, that makes a difference, too.

Your child may grow like you. The way your child grows depends a certain amount on genes. As you watch your child grow, consider the ways your family members grew when they were kids.

Also think about the types of food and activity choices usually made by each member of the family.

Who is your child most similar to?

Checking a Growth Chart

Your child's height and weight are marked on his or her own growth chart as part of regular health exams with your doctor. The chart shows:

Your child's growth pattern and progress.

How your child fits within healthy ranges for his or her age.

Ask to see and discuss your child's growth chart.

In May 2000, the Center for Disease Control released an updated set of children's growth charts in May 2000 for use in children from infancy to age 20.

You can also learn more about growth charts and which one is right for monitoring your child's growth at: http://pediatrics.about.com/cs/growthcharts2/.

READY TO LEARN

Grocery store trip offer learning moments

A trip to the grocery store can provide easy lessons in shapes and colors and letters and words.

Birth to 1 year – Show and describe items as you put them in the cart. For example, if you are buying apples say: "Look, this is an apple. It's red. It's round. We're going to buy five." Then count the apples as you bag them.

1 to 3 years old – Ask your child questions like: What color are the apples? Can you help me count the apples? Depending on your child's ability you may need to give the answers. Point out signs with words that identify the items you are buying. Point and identify the letters in the words. Let them hold cans and you can identify letters and colors for them or ask them name letters and colors.

3 to 5 years old – Ask your child identify objects and their location. For example: "Where are the apples? What color are they?" Let them put the apples in the bag and count them together.

Skills needed for kindergarten – Know names of colors, shapes, beginning counting, and letter recognition.

Books & other resources – "Barney and Baby Bop Go to the Grocery Store," by Donna Cooner, "Maisy Goes Shopping," by Lucy Cousins, and "Just Grandpa and Me," by Mercer Mayer.

INFORMATION

When in the sun, make sure slip, slop & slap

From the American Cancer Society

Summer is here, and with it comes more time outside with the family - and more time in the sun.

But parents may forget this hidden danger lurking in the sky and send their kids outside without protection. Kids can suffer severe, painful sunburns. And in the long run, these burns in childhood can also increase their risk for skin cancer as an adult.

"The best way to avoid sunburn and skin damage is to adopt a year-round safe-skin regimen," said William Ramsdell, M.D., dermatologist and spokesperson for the American Cancer Society.

"Important sun protection methods include effective use of sunscreen, hats, protective clothing, sunglasses and staying out of the sun when ultraviolet (UV) rays are most dangerous, generally between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m."

Slip! Slop! Slap!®, the Society's awareness campaign, is designed to let kids and their parents know how easy it is to protect themselves while in the sun.

Slip! Slop! Slap! is a quick way to remember the most important sun protective behaviors:

Slip! - Slip on a shirt. Wear protective clothing when out in the sun. Choose clothes made of tightly woven fabrics that you can't see through.

Slop! - Slop on sunscreen. Wear sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher on any exposed skin. Apply sunscreen 15-20 minutes before going outdoors, and be sure to reapply as necessary, especially after swimming, sweating or toweling off.

Slap! - Slap on a hat. Wear a wide-brimmed hat that shades the face, neck and ears.

Also be sure to protect your eyes and the surrounding skin with sunglasses. Wear 99-100 percent UV absorption sunglasses to protect the eyes. For information about cancer, call toll free anytime 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit the American Cancer Society Web site at www.cancer.org