



The Parent Connection

Tips, Tricks, and Tidbits

SCCAP's Child Care Resource and Referral's Quarterly Newsletter

October-December 2019

**BE A BUDDY
...NOT A BULLY!**

Two letters make a big difference!

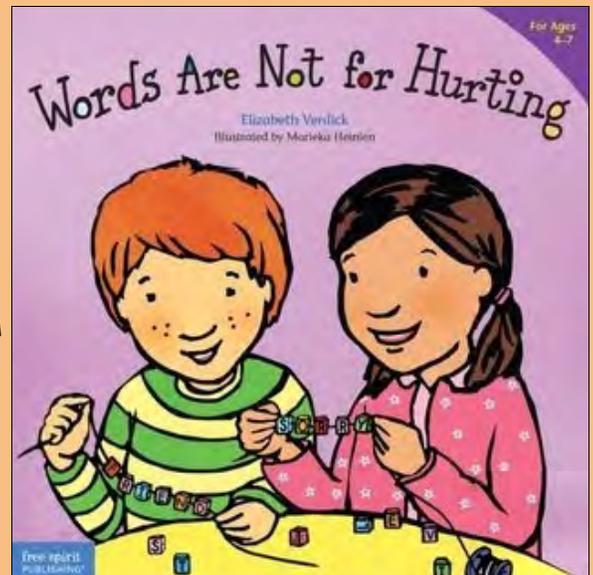


**October is
National
Bullying
Prevention
Month**

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Parents know all too well what it means to be bullied or to be a bully. However, it can get a little complicated when you try to explain it to a child. You don't want to make your kids afraid to go to school or other public places where they might run into a bully but at the same time, they need to understand what it means. You have to explain bullying to a child before you can teach them how to avoid it or they won't really understand what you're trying to tell them.

The older children get the more words they know and can use-including hurtful words. This book teaches children to think before they speak, then choose what to say and how to say it. They learn that there is a connection between hurtful words and feelings of anger, sadness, and regret. They explore positive ways to respond when others say mean or unkind words to them. And they discover the importance of saying "I'm sorry," two little words that can be a big help. This book includes activities and discussion starters that parents, caregivers, and educators can use when working with children.



Halloween Safety Tips for Young Children



- All children under 12 years old should go trick-or-treating with an adult.
- Make sure your child carries a flashlight, glow stick or has reflective tape on their costume to make them more visible to cars. If possible, have your child wear a bright colored costume.
- Make sure costumes fit properly and children can see through their mask to avoid tripping.
- In case it's chilly outdoors, make sure your child's costume is loose enough for warm clothing to be worn underneath — but not long enough to cause tripping. Avoid oversized shoes and high heels.
- Instruct your children NOT to eat any treats until they bring them home to be examined by you. Discard anything that's not sealed, has torn packaging or looks questionable. Also, remove gum, peanuts, hard candies and other choking hazards.
- Children should NOT eat open candy or homemade treats unless you personally know the giver.
- Keep your young children close to you, walk safely and watch for cars in driveways that might be pulling out.
- Do not go to houses that don't have any lights on.
- Be careful near jack-o-lanterns lit with open flames.
- When you return from trick-or-treating set limits on eating treats. Allow your child one small piece of candy. Children can still have fun sorting, counting and trading treats with siblings or friends.

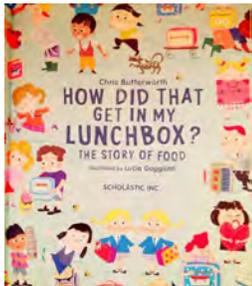


Establishing Healthy Eating Habits

With the Holiday season upon us it's a great time to talk to children about how to eat healthy. Establishing healthy eating habits is critical for kids (and parents!). It helps keep them focused, sleep better and learn and achieve in their everyday lives. Looking for some ways to make meal times fun? Try these ideas.

Give them food for thought. Most kids think of food as either "good" or "bad" for you. Help them identify food as fuel instead. Just like a car needs gas to go, our bodies need food to think, play and move. When we fill up our "tanks" with healthy food options, our energy levels soar and our brains are ready to work.

Eat this, not that. You are what you eat, so give kids plenty of information about healthy food choices. For example, show them that the most nutritious foods have the least number of Ingredients (fruit, vegetables, whole grains).



Get your read on. There are tons of great children's titles out there about healthy eating. Classics such as *Gregory, the Terrible Eater* or *Green Eggs and Ham* are great to read aloud for your younger grades. Other fun books like *The Boy Who Loved Broccoli* or *How Did That Get in My Lunchbox? The Story of Food* can spark some conversation about where our food comes from.

Show where healthy food comes from. Take a field trip to a farmer's market or a dairy farm and have the children meet the people who grow healthy food. If the farmers allow, let them pick and taste test the crops, or try milking a cow to see where our dairy products come from. Extra credit if you take your learnings back home and try growing your own veggie plants!



Have a cooking demonstration. Find a healthy snack or recipe to share and prepare it in front of the kids—they'll love watching (and helping) mom or dad cook for them and will really love the part about eating it afterwards! Try fruit smoothies, trail mix, yogurt parfaits, veggie wraps or berry popsicles.

But first, breakfast. Mornings are the perfect time to kick start your bodies with nutrients, but 58% of Americans don't eat the most important meal of the day. Encourage your children to make breakfast part of their morning routine and choose healthy options that will get their day off to a great start.



5 New Traditions to Celebrate Thanksgiving with Children

~Show thanks every day of November

Some families go around the table on Thanksgiving Day and have every person say a few things they are thankful for. While that tradition is a good one (and probably a common one), why not kick it up a notch and share what you're thankful for every day of November? You can do this creatively by having your kids write down one thing they're thankful for each day on a leaf made out of construction paper and make a "gratitude tree," or you can simply share what you're thankful for around the dinner table each night.



~Participate in a turkey trot



A turkey trot is a fun family run that typically takes place during the week of Thanksgiving. You can usually choose to do a 5K, a 10K, a toddler trot, or a family fun run. At most trots, all participants receive a frozen turkey as a parting gift, which you can then donate to a shelter to continue the tradition of giving. Not only is this an exciting tradition to start with your family, but it will also burn off some of the calories that will be consumed later on!

~Volunteer at a food drive

More than one in five kids in the U.S. are living in poverty. An excellent tradition to start with your kids is to take them to a local homeless shelter to donate food or help serve the hungry. Find your local food bank through Feeding America, take your kids to the store and let them pick out items to donate, and go deliver the food together. You will teach your kids the importance of giving back and helping others, in addition to showing them just how thankful they should be for their own situation.



~Make an extra Thanksgiving dinner to celebrate

Start a tradition with your kids where you make a "mini Thanksgiving feast" with just your immediate family on November first (or any day that works for you) each year. This is a perfect opportunity to teach your children how to cook! Together, you can prepare a chicken or turkey, and make stuffing, mashed potatoes and any other family favorites. Keep the date far enough from Thanksgiving Day so that you aren't sick of turkey by then. This will allow you to enjoy peaceful quality time with your immediate family before all craziness that naturally comes with entertaining guests.

~Debut "Elf on the Shelf"



To lighten it up a notch (and keep your kids well-behaved throughout the season), a fun Thanksgiving tradition to start with your kids is to debut "Elf on the Shelf" every year on Thanksgiving morning. Perhaps set him next to the pumpkin pie in the fridge, or give him his own seat at the dinner table. Thanksgiving officially marks the start of the Christmas season, so there is no better time to surprise the little ones with an Elf!

FUN SNOW DAY ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

#2



BUILD A LIVING ROOM CAMPSITE

Turn out the lights, wear PJs, bust out the sleeping bags. If you don't have a tent, build a fort using blankets, couch cushions and pillows. Hide chocolate bar, graham crackers and marshmallows in the pantry for snow days. s'mores.

#4



MAKE MAGAZINE MOSAICS

Have kids cut out different colors from the pages into small squares. Next, sketch a design on a paper plate. Then use glue and a paint brush to make a colorful mosaic.

#1 CREATE SNOW ART

Bring some color into the outdoor fun. Filling empty spray bottles with food coloring and water, then letting the kids unleash their inner winter wonderland artist! Kids can design rainbows, flowers or self-portraits or even add color to snowmen.



#3 SCHEDULE A PLAY DATE

At the beginning of each school year, make a snow day roster with neighbors who want to participate. Make rotating shifts throughout the day, allowing each parent a little peace and quiet to catch up on their own tasks as well.

#5 BAKE, BAKE, BAKE

If it's too cold to enjoy the snow outside, bring the fun into the kitchen. Make some yummy treats that everyone will enjoy.





Christmas Activities for Kids and Families

1. Wreath-Makin

Everybody loves a festive wreath! Take the kids outside for a quick winter walk to gather evergreen branches and pine cones, trim some from the bottom of your Christmas tree or just buy some at the store. Attach your greens to a foam or wire ring (a bent metal coat hanger works well) and allow the kids to decorate it with Christmas ornaments and bows. Or make a preschooler-friendly paper wreath featuring tracings of your child's cute little hands.

2. Christmas Movies

Spending an afternoon or evening watching Christmas movies is a must! (You could also spread out your movie marathon over the course of a week.) Let each family member choose a favorite holiday flick to watch with the family.

3. Popcorn Garland

Have some leftover popcorn from your movie night? Upcycle it! Make some homemade garlands for your family's Christmas tree, doorways, or mantle. All you need is a needle and some thread or fishing line. Try using fresh cranberries, too. Younger kids can count out the berries or popcorn to make a cool alternating pattern, and parents or older kids can do the threading.

4. Christmas Cookies

Peanut-butter blossoms! Chocolate Chip cookies! Gingerbread men! There are just too many tasty holiday cookies to choose from. Children of all ages can get involved in the kitchen on "cookie day." Younger kids can add pre-measured ingredients, stir the bowl and decorate cooled cookies. Older kids can pitch in at any stage.

5. Cookie Swap

So what do you do with all those cookies? Host a cookie swap! Have everyone bring over a few dozen of their favorite cookies (homemade or store-bought), sample and swap! Encourage people to bring the recipes to swap, too!

6. Homemade Christmas Ornaments

Decorating a Christmas tree is probably already on your to-do list. Make this holiday tradition even more special by adding a new kid-made Christmas ornament each year. Mark the year on your ornaments so that you can keep track of when each cutie was created!



Interested in becoming a Child Care Provider?

The Child Care Resource and Referral Center can help you get started running your own child care business!

For more information give us a call at:

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The Child Care Resource and Referral Center

Offers parent education opportunities! We are here to answer all your questions about children and child care!

(518) 234-2568

TOLL FREE (866) 849-2402

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Email us at:

childcare@sccapinc.org

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Visit our office located at:

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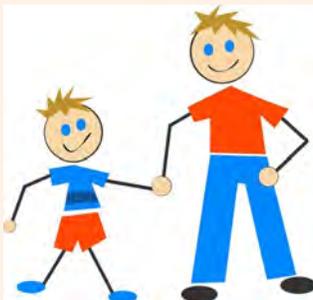
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