

# Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

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First 5 Mono County



## KID BITS

### Sick-day policy

As flu season gets under way, review the school illness policy. It will explain when to keep your youngster home (if he has a rash, is vomiting, or had a fever in the past 24 hours, for instance). Following the rules will help others stay healthy—and ensure that your child can rest, recover, and return to school as soon as possible.

### Saying “I’m sorry”

Nobody’s perfect. Even good parents make mistakes. When you do, offer your youngster an apology and an explanation. *Example:* “I’m sorry I was late to your game. I wrote down the wrong time.” You’ll show her how to apologize—and she’ll see that her feelings are important to you.

### Reveal the number

Let your child practice number recognition with this “magical” activity. Use glue to write numbers on a sheet of cardboard. Once dry, put plain paper over the numbers, and have your youngster rub lightly with the side of an unwrapped crayon. He can name the numbers as they appear.

### Worth quoting

“Children learn to smile from their parents.” *Shinichi Suzuki*

### Just for fun

**Q:** The more you have of me, the less you see. What am I?

**A:** Darkness.



## Conversations build language skills

You talk to your child every day—what if you could use those conversations to build language skills and make her a better speaker and listener? With these tips, you can.

### Share opinions

Let your youngster practice stating her opinion. During a family project, ask for her input. Perhaps you’re organizing your pantry. You might have her suggest which foods to put on which shelf. Or if you’re planning a T-ball game, she could decide what to use for the bases and the scoreboard.

### Imagine “what if…”

Stretch your little one’s imagination while she learns to take turns during a conversation. Say “What if…,” and let her finish the sentence (“...our leopard gecko could talk?”). Then, pass around a beach ball (or a toy lizard), and the



person holding it tells what she imagines while others listen. (“The gecko would say, ‘Take me outside to play!’”)

### Travel down memory lane

Children love to hear and tell stories from their lives. Start by asking your youngster to recount a memory. (“Tell me about our trip to the farm.”) Use questions to prompt her to add details. “What color was the goat?” Next, she can pose a question for you. This is a great way to work on asking and answering questions, an important skill for keeping conversations flowing.♥

## A conference checklist

Parent-teacher conferences provide a glimpse of your youngster’s progress. Make the most of your meeting by preparing a list of questions to ask, such as these:

- ✓What are the most important things my child will learn this year?
- ✓How does he get along with other students?
- ✓What does he do well?
- ✓What can we work on at home?

- ✓What does my youngster like to do during free time?
- ✓What is the best way to reach you?



*Tip:* Tell the teacher what your child says about school. Also, let her know about any changes at home like a new baby or a grandparent moving in.♥

## Respect at home, respect at school

Respectful children tend to work and play well with others, leading to more success in school and better behavior at home. Encourage your youngster to practice showing respect with these ideas.

**Role play.** Take turns naming everyday activities (walking in the school hallway, playing in the sandbox) and acting them out respectfully. If your child is pretending to walk in line, he could put a finger to his lips to show he's staying quiet out of respect for people in nearby classrooms.



In an imaginary sandbox, he might move carefully around another youngster's castle—that shows respect for the hard work that went into building it.

**Write an acrostic.** Help your child make a “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” poster to hang on the refrigerator. Have him write the letters vertically down the side of a sheet of paper.

Then, help him write an example of respect for each letter, such as “Remember manners” or “Earth belongs to everyone, so don't litter.” Suggest that your youngster illustrate each one. He might draw himself remembering his manners by thanking the host of a birthday party, for instance.♥

### ACTIVITY CORNER

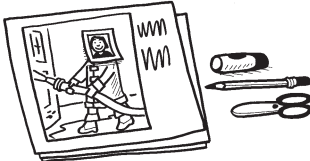


## Look, I'm the helper!

Firefighters, police officers, teachers, nurses—your town is full of people who help others. Your child can learn about the jobs of community helpers when she stars in her own homemade book.

**Materials:** old magazines, scissors, glue, paper, photos of your youngster

Let your child browse through magazines and cut out pictures of community helpers (librarian, mail carrier, paramedic). She could glue each one on a separate sheet of paper.



Next, have your youngster glue a photo of her face over each helper's face. She can write or dictate to you what she would do in each job. *Examples:* “I am a teacher. I help children learn.” “I am a police officer. I keep people safe.”

Finally, staple the pages together, and let her read her book to you. Which helper is her favorite? Which one might she like to be when she grows up?♥

### Q & A

## Siblings: Celebrate strengths

**Q:** My preschooler doesn't seem to be catching on to colors and letters as quickly as her big sister did. Her teacher says she's developing normally, but I can't help but worry. What should I do?

**A:** It's great that your daughter's teacher reports she's on track. Keep in mind that every child is unique and develops at her own pace.

Your children probably have different interests, which may affect how and when they learn. For example, one might prefer to sit and read while the other loves nature and enjoys exploring the outdoors.

Try not to compare your girls—little ones often overhear you even when you think you're talking quietly. Instead, celebrate each child's abilities. For instance, have your older daughter play an alphabet game with her little sister. Your younger one can learn her letters while her big sister takes pride in being the “teacher.”♥

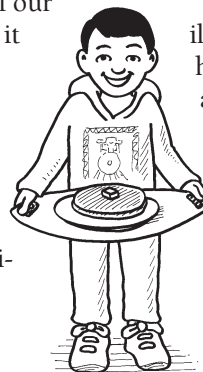


### PARENT TO PARENT

## Discovering family traditions

In social studies, my son Brady is learning about families and traditions. He was asked to draw a picture of our favorite family tradition and take it in for show and tell.

Brady's assignment led us to realize how many traditions we actually have. There's “Pancake Day,” where we eat pancakes for dinner the first day of every month. It was a tradition in my childhood—and my dad's childhood. Then last year Brady invented “Pajama Night.”



One Friday a month, we put on PJs right after dinner and play board games in the living room.

Brady decided to draw our family eating pancakes. After he shared his picture, he came home excited about traditions his classmates mentioned.

Thanks to his friend Sara, we now have “Crafty Saturdays” to look forward to. For our first one, Brady is going to finger paint while I work on the scarf I'm knitting.♥

### OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote school readiness, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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