

## October 2018

Fun activities, aligned with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards, to help prepare children for school success!

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## We're outside!

### Babies

Help your baby notice the outside moving objects. Draw his attention to the leaves blowing in the wind, the birds hopping from branch to branch, the children on their bicycles. Try using touch and smell when appropriate to engage more senses. Get closer, take time to get down on your baby's level and view how he sees the world. [Read more.](#)

### Toddlers

Lay a rope on the ground and have your toddler follow or walk directly on it. Start off with it in a straight line and then move it to different shapes (zig-zag, circle, wiggly, etc.). With it in a straight line, ask her to show you how she can move across the rope if she were pretending to be an animal, such as a turtle or kangaroo. Watch videos with animals moving to give your toddler more information on how animals move. For children with limited mobility ask your child to try the movement of the rope with their finger or eye movement. [Read more.](#)

### Preschoolers

Encourage your preschooler to use a magnifying glass to examine found outside objects. Ask her what she sees when she looks at different objects using the magnifying glass. Does she see anything with the magnifying glass that she couldn't see without it? This is a great opportunity to introduce new vocabulary through braille, sign, written and spoken word. Explore not only what you see, but how it feels and smells. [Read more.](#)

### Kindergartners

Take advantage of the sun by creating shadow monsters! Ask your kindergartner to create different shadow shapes using his body and encourage him to watch what happens to his shadow when he moves. How does it change when he holds items in his hand (like a ball) or opens his jacket or holds your hand? Use this opportunity to teach descriptive words like tall, short, small, and round. Make predictions about movement in relation to the shadow. Engage all your senses as you play in the sun with shadows, like asking your kindergartner how the sun feels on his skin and describing the things he smells. [Read more.](#)

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## 9 Books About Going Outside

*Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert

*Inside Mouse, Outside Mouse* by Lindsay Barrett

George

*Bump! Thump! How do we jump?* by Janice

Lobb

*Inside Outside Upside Down* by Stan Berenstain

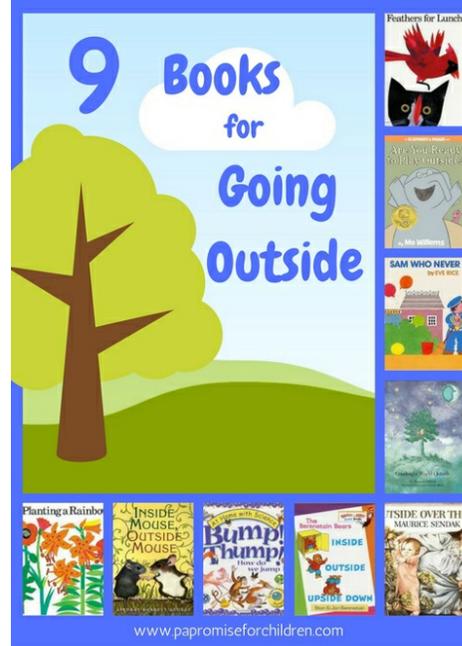
*Outside Over There* by Maurice Sendak

*Are You Ready to Play Outside?* by Mo Willems

*Feathers for Lunch* by Lois Ehlert

*Goodnight World Outside* by Frances Gilbert

[Print this list!](#)



## How a Mom's Mental Health Can Affect Her Baby

There are many factors that can influence the development of a baby during pregnancy and after birth. Until recently researchers knew little about the relationship between an pregnant mom's mental health and how her baby's brain would develop after it was born.

**New research** suggests that a mom's mental health can impact the development of her baby's brain after birth. It shows that babies whose moms had higher levels of anxiety and symptoms of depression may impact the parts of a baby's brain that plays an important role in healthy brain development and the baby's mental health outcomes as they get older.

### Did you know dads can experience depression and anxiety which can have an impact on their child's development?

Moms and dads who experience symptoms of depression or anxiety should talk with their doctor. Signs of depression or anxiety may look like:

- having trouble concentrating or completing routine tasks
- losing your appetite or not feeling interested in food
- feeling like you're is not a good mother or father
- lacking interest in your baby or feel anxious about the baby's health
- feeling overwhelmed by your situation and like there's no hope of things getting better

### Getting Help

Resources for families with young children:

- **If you need immediate assistance**, please use one of the resources now: Emergency: 911 or Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- **Programs in Pennsylvania**, like Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families America, Family Check up, Early Head Start and Parents As Teachers can help provide support and guidance to new families.
- **Postpartum Support International**: PSI Coordinators and other area resources such as groups, telephone support, and reliable services that are available for no charge. Also list local events, trainings and volunteer opportunities.
- **Postpartum Depression Philly**: In Philadelphia, many organizations are working together to find better ways to support new mothers with PPD. The goal is to help new mothers, their families and their support systems better understand PPD.
- **Postpartum Depression and the Baby Blues. Signs, Symptoms, Coping Tips, and Treatment** (Helpguide.org)
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**: Toll-free 24-hour hotline. 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-

The [video below](#) shows how a mom's interaction can play a role in how a baby reacts.



## Protecting Your Child From the Flu

Just as it does every year without fail, influenza season – also known as flu season – is coming. Many people don't realize it, but the flu can be a very serious illness. It causes thousands of deaths in the United States every year, some of which are among previously healthy children.

As a parent, the best thing you can do to protect your children from the flu is to get them vaccinated. Everyone around them should be vaccinated, too.



The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP) recommends the flu shot as the best choice for children for the 2018-2019 flu season.

Check out these resources to help protect your child from the flu.

- [HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#) for locations where you and your child can receive a flu vaccine
- [Preventing the Flu: Resources for Parents & Child Care Providers](#)
- [Flu: A Guide for Parents of Children and Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions](#)

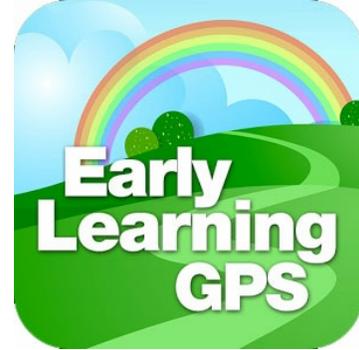
## Is your child meeting typical milestones? Use the Early Learning GPS to find out!

What do you expect your child to be able to do in six months or a year? How do you know if your child is meeting typical milestones? Learn more about children's developmental milestones and follow your child's progress with the Early Learning GPS.

Create a free map for your child to save important tips and resources and follow your child's milestones. Save family activities and compare child care programs. The information is from reliable resources like PA's Office of Child Development and Early

Learning.

Download the free app, or use the website at [www.earlylearninggps.com](http://www.earlylearninggps.com).



## Keeping Your Child Safe From Lead

Lead has had many uses over the years, from making paint flow smoothly or keeping your car from "knocking" to hardening plastics. However, unlike other metals like zinc or copper, lead has no uses in the body. In fact, lead in the body is harmful. And lead that gets into the body stays in the body for a long time. It takes about 27 years for half of the lead that is taken into the body to be excreted.



Lead can affect every organ of the body. Because young children are growing and developing so quickly, they are more susceptible to lead's toxic effects. [Find out what you can do to keep your child safe from the exposure to and effects of lead.](#)

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## Ways to help increase the number of words your child speaks

Are you picking up on your child's cues? Research suggests that being attentive to a child's needs in a warm, loving way is associated with a higher number of words that he or she speaks, especially early on. As children become toddlers, families' teaching activities become more important.

So families, make sure you let your child lead your interactions. If he shows interest in another activity, explore it. Describe and narrate the world around you. Name the objects you see, what they are, and where they go. Watch [the video for more info](#), then visit [PA's Promise for Children](#) to find ways you can help your child's development.



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## When Frightful Isn't Delightful

It's the season for ghosts, goblins and scary things-especially for young children! Even if your family does not participate in Halloween activities, there are displays at stores, schools or

activity centers.

Get ideas to help you help your child to understand and cope with some of the scary sights of the season.

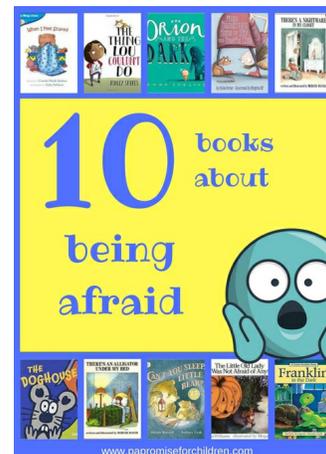


## 10 Books about Being Afraid

Children can have many fears--of the dark, going to bed, or new places. The fears can change with their age or experiences, and sometimes we don't understand their fears. But for children, those fears can be very real.

Talk with your child's teacher, doctor or health care professional if your child is having difficulty with fears, or you feel the fears are causing problems with your child.

You can also read books with your child about the fears others may have and how they coped with those fears. [PA's Promise for Children](#) has a list of 10 children's books about being afraid.



## What Can a Two Year Old Do?

What can a two year old do? Well, it depends. A child who is two years and one month may have very different development than a child who is two years old and eleven months. Those twelve months can make a big impact on what a child knows and can do. The [video below](#) shows the difference between a young two year old and an older two year old.

Want to know what to expect in your child's development? Check out the [Early Learning GPS](#).



## Our Favorite Pinterest Pins

[Fun STEM Activity Using Plastic Lids](#)  
[Science Books about the Seasons for Kids](#)  
[Outstanding new picture books](#)



Fall Leaves Math Tray  
Toddler Songs You'll Love

Are you following the [Boo! To You Halloween](#) board on Pinterest?

## Do you have a new Kindergartner?

Did your child just start Kindergarten? [Sign up for the FREE monthly Kindergarten, Here I Am eNews!](#) Each month get activities, tips and resources you can use to help your child have a successful Kindergarten year.



The PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) provides families access to high quality services to prepare children for school and life success.

Find more information about Quality Early Learning in Pennsylvania  
[Pennsylvania Department of Education](#) | [Pennsylvania Department of Human Services](#)  
[Pennsylvania Keys to Quality](#) | [Pennsylvania's Promise for Children](#)  
[Early Intervention Technical Assistance](#)

We are where you are.

