

January 2019

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

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## We're learning in the kitchen!

### Babies

Give a clean kitchen towel to your baby to play with as you work in the kitchen. Encourage him to wave the towel, feel it in his hands, explore it with his mouth, or use it to cover a small toy on a highchair tray. Further develop skills by covering objects with the towel. Allow your baby to explore what it feels like with and without the towel over it. Explain what you are doing as you play with your baby and use words to describe the objects. [Read more.](#)

### Toddlers

Your toddler can use foods, like crackers and slices of cheese to build a tower. Can she make it taller by adding a layer? What happens to the tower if she eats a layer? If your toddler has difficulty building a tower vertically, try making shapes or patterns on the table horizontally. Describe the colors, sizes, and smell of the food. Help expand her vocabulary by saying or signing the items, colors and shapes in the patterns. [Read more.](#)

### Preschoolers

While your preschooler helps set the table, help him count the number of plates needed. How many forks will be needed? How many different ways can he fold a napkin? Does one person get a tall glass and another person a small cup? Once your preschooler has finished setting the table, have him assist with the meal. Encourage him to look at the recipe and say the numbers as you point to them and count the steps to make the meal. Find photos of the foods in magazines or online and matching words. If your child communicates with sign or is learning braille, make a recipe card using an alternate form of communication. [Read more.](#)

### Kindergartners

Use cooking to talk to your kindergartner about how food can change. What changes does she see when cookie dough is baked? Or eggs are scrambled? What happens if ice-cream gets too warm, or if cereal is left in milk? Encourage your kindergartner to help mix ingredients and observe changes. Provide opportunities for her to touch and smell the ingredients at each stage. Expand her imagination by painting a visual picture for her as you perform each step using rich descriptive words. Add the sign for each new word to your family dictionary. [Read more.](#)

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## 10 Books About Being in the Kitchen

*The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle

*Pancakes, Pancakes!* by Eric Carle

*The Kids' Multicultural Cookbook* by Deanna F. Cook

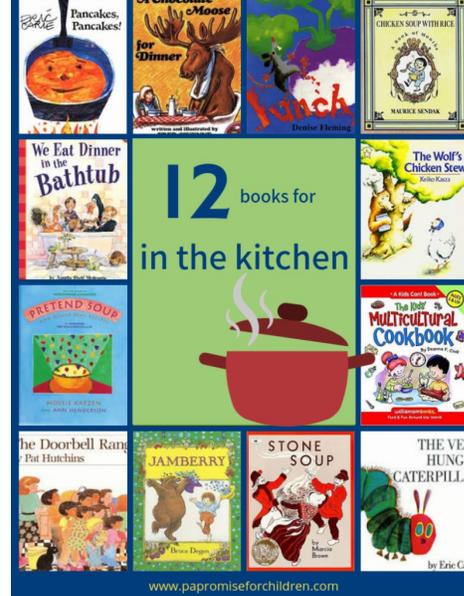
*Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown

*We Eat Dinner in the Bathtub* by Angela Shelf Medearis

*Lunch* by Denise Fleming

*Chicken Soup with Rice* by Maurice Sendak  
*A Chocolate Moose for Dinner* by Fred Gwynne  
*The Wolf's Chicken Stew* by Keiko Kasza  
*Jamberry* by Bruce Degen  
*Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes: A Cookbook for Preschoolers and Up* by Mollie Katzen

[Print this list!](#)



## Coats and Car Seats

Winter means keeping kids warm, but did you know that babies and young children in car seats should NOT wear puffy coats or snowsuits when in their car seat? The video below shows how a coat or snowsuit can compress under the harness of a car seat, sometimes up to four inches! This compression can cause the straps of your child's car seat to not fit properly, leaving a dangerous situation. Sleeping bags for babies can also add extra slack under the harness, creating an unsafe ride for your baby.

How should you keep your baby or young child in the car seat warm when it's cold?

- Dress your baby or young child in snug layers, like onsies and leggings. Add long pants, a long sleeved shirt, a hat and shoes and socks. You can even include a jacket.
- For babies, use covers specifically for car seats that are designed to give warmth. These covers should be approved by the car-seat manufacturer for your specific car seat.
- For older babies, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners, after securing them in the car seat, turn their coat around and put it on backwards (arms through the armholes) so the coat is on top of the harness, or use a blanket in the car.



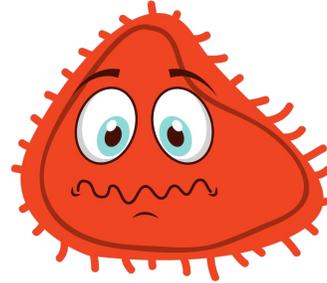
# January is National Mentoring Month

Do you know a grandparent, a special teacher, a pastor, a friend or neighbor? Anyone can be a mentor! Mentors can give advice and suggestions to help another cope or improve their skills. They can also show how they do something and provide encouragement and support.

[See if you have what it takes to be a mentor or how to find one.](#)

## Want to make germs disappear? Try this!

1. Put a small amount of hand lotion or petroleum jelly on hands. This represents body oils.
2. Sprinkle with a little bit of cinnamon. This represents germs.



[Find out the next step!](#)

## Information About Your Child's Development



What should you expect your child to do at a specific age? Would you like ideas on how you can support your child's development?

The [Early Learning GPS](#) is a free online tool to help new and experienced parents and caregivers get information about their child's development and ways they can help their child learn. Create a free account, answer a few questions about your child, then get resources, tips and other information to support you and your child.

## Our Favorite Pinterest Pins



[23 Easy Ways To Keep Your Toddler Busy On A Rainy Day](#)  
[Arctic Book and Craft Activities](#)  
[Teaching Feeling Words](#)  
[9 Winter Picture Books for Kids](#)

[Are you following the Yummy Tummy board on Pinterest?](#)

## Do you have a Preschooler?

Did your child start preschool? [Sign up for the FREE monthly Kindergarten, Here I Come eNews!](#) Each month get activities, tips and resources you can use to help your child prepare for and transition into their 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](#)

We are where you are.

