

June 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 Neighborhood

Babies

Encourage your baby to explore different textures by providing him with items to feel, like bare feet in the grass or hands touching trees. Talk about what he is feeling and use words to describe the item (soft, rough, hard, smooth, etc.) Tell him about what he is feeling as it relates to his neighborhood. "This trees is in our back yard and gives us shade from the sun." If you cannot take your baby outside, bring the outside in. Put grass in a plastic container. Allow him to play with his fingers or toes. Pick up a blade of grass and tickle his hands, arms, legs, feet, or face. Smell the grass and talk about the color. [Read more!](#)

Toddlers

Encourage your toddler to still (just for a second or two!) and listen to the noises around her. What does she hear? Help her identify the noises she is hearing. Listen for birds singing, dogs barking or church bells ringing. Try a verbal and/or visual cue for her to stop and listen. You may need to guide her listening, "What is that? I hear a bird. Do you hear it? Where is it?" When you are out in the community, listen for those sounds you may not hear at home. (Traffic, church bells, horns, etc.) [Read more!](#)

Preschoolers

Compare large and small as your preschooler moves throughout his neighborhood. Help him decided if items are larger than he is (like a tree) or smaller than he is (like a dandelion) by having him stand next to the item. Now it's your turn. Have him help you decide if items are larger or smaller than you. [Read more!](#)

Kindergartners

Go for a walk with your kindergartner and have her help identify different items that begin with each letter. For those more difficult letters (like Y or Z), can she name items she'd like to see that begin with those letters? (Wouldn't she like to play with a yo-yo?) Take along homemade flashcards or a list of the letters of the alphabet so she has a reference to the letter and then the object that starts with the letter. Have her match the card with the correct letter by the object. [Read more!](#)

9 Books About Neighborhoods

My Neighborhood by Johnny Bregar

Keat's Neighborhood by Ezra Jack Keats

Curious George Neighborhood Friends by H. A. Rey

Welcome to My Neighborhood by Quiara Alegria Hudes and Shino Arihara

What Do You See in Your Neighborhood? by Bracha Goetz

Only One by Marc Harshman

Jobs Around My Neighborhood by Gladys Rosa-

Mendoza
Night on Neighborhood Street by Eloise Greenfield
In Lucia's Neighborhood by Pat Shewchuk

[Print this list!](#)



Featured Article: A Parent's Mind Matters

Guest Post by Dr. Marnie Aylesworth

Sometimes, our brains get in our way! Stress can be a huge reason for that and parenting can often create stressful moments. Our brains are wired to react impulsively when we are stressed. That means sometimes we do and say things when parenting that we wouldn't normally do or say. We react out of emotion instead of taking a step back to be thoughtful about how we respond to our child.

The good news is, it doesn't have to be that way. When adults find ways to manage their own emotions, kids have someone to model for them. We have to take care of ourselves before we can help others.

Mindful parenting is using easy strategies to train our brains to stop.... breathe....think, before responding to our child. Mindful adults tend to be better at controlling their emotions and their relationships with their child improve. The key to mindful parenting is to notice your own feelings when you are having a conflict with your child, learning to pause before responding, and listening to your child (if they are able to talk).

The [How to be Mindful During a 'Thought Parade' video](#) from the Center for Health Minds, shares strategies young adults or parents can use to relate to our flurry of thoughts with a more mindful attitude.



Find more information about mindful parenting at the [Gottman Institute website](#) or visit the [Center for Healthy Minds website](#).

Keystone Scholars Helps Families Invest in Child's Future Education

Beginning in 2019, the Pennsylvania Treasury Department is investing \$100 for every baby born or adopted to be used for the baby's future higher education expenses through the new program, Keystone Scholars.



To encourage families to plan early for their child's future education, Keystone Scholars will provide \$100 to all babies born or adopted in Pennsylvania starting in 2019, making Keystone Scholars the largest program of its type in the nation. The \$100 will be invested by the PA Treasury Department and will grow through the years right alongside their child. The Keystone Scholars account can be used for qualified expenses when the child pursues education after high school. These expenses include tuition, fees, books, and more at vocational and technical schools, community colleges, two-year colleges, and four-year colleges.

To maximize education savings, parents can open an individual PA 529 College and Career Savings Program account and link it to their Keystone Scholars account online to see all of their education savings in one place. [Read more.](#)

Summer Care

Many families will need summer care for their children. Did you know Pennsylvania has a website where you can search for a licensed program for your child? Visit www.findchildcare.pa.gov to find before and after school programs, and licensed child care programs offered during the summer and throughout the year.



Find Summer Meals in Your Community

Nutritious free meals are available for children and teens, 18 and younger, at many locations throughout Pennsylvania throughout the summer while school is out of session.

The US Department of Agriculture has a [map to locate a summer meal in your area.](#)



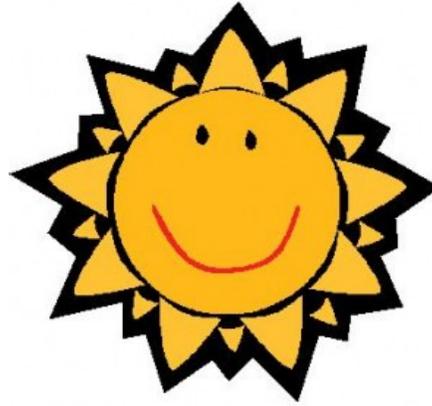
June is National Safety Month

Learn how to keep everyone safe where they live and play and all points in between. While the places your family spend time can be filled with wonderful experiences, they can also contain hidden

dangers. By learning what environments are safe for your family and child, you can help prevent accidents and keep your children healthy and happy. [Learn how to be safe where your family lives and plays.](#)

Keeping Your Child Safe in the Sun

A few serious sunburns can increase your child's risk of skin cancer later in life. Protect your child's skin from the sun's harmful UV rays anytime they're outdoors with sunscreen, a hat, sunglasses and shade. More sun safety tips from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).



Your Child and Juice

How much juice should your child drink? The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends children less than one year of age should not have fruit juice. Fruit juice offers no nutritional benefit to children less than one year of age. In addition, the evidence is clear that over-consumption of juice can lead to weight gain and tooth decay. [Click here](#) to see if and how much juice your child should drink.

6 TIPS FOR SUMMER SAFETY

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE THIS SUMMER



Six Tips for Summer Safety

Sun shining, warmer temperatures, it's almost time for summer fun! Help keep your child safe while having fun this summer season with [these six tips](#).

1. Prevent heatstroke
2. Secure pool areas
3. Protect from bug bites
4. Use sunscreen
5. Stay hydrated
6. Keep cool

Starting Kindergarten in the Fall?

Will your preschooler enter Kindergarten in the fall of 2019? [Sign up for the FREE monthly Kindergarten, Here I Am eNews!](#) Each month get activities, tips and resources you can use to help your kindergartner prepare for and have a successful Kindergarten year.

Our Favorite Pinterest Pins



- [100 of the BEST Books for Preschoolers!](#)
- [Activity-a-Day Summer Calendar & Weekly Plans](#)
- [9 Tricks to Get Your Kids to Drink More Water](#)
- [7 Ways to Handle a Toddler Tantrum in Public](#)
- [29 Dollar-Store Finds That Will Keep Your Kids Busy All Summer](#)

Are you following the [STEM \(Science, Technology, Engineering and Math\)](#) board on Pinterest?

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.

