

Early Head Start Gazette

When Should I Start Reading to my Baby?

March 17

St Patrick's Day

Roots of Tradition:

Saint Patrick's day is held in honor of Saint Patrick, the missionary who brought Christianity to the Irish people in the 400's AD.

Did You Know? Over 34 million Americans are of Irish descent. That's almost nine times the population of Ireland!

Celebrations include prominent displays of the color green, eating and drinking, religious observances, and numerous parades.

The holiday has been celebrated on the North American continent since the late 18th century.

If you're wondering when to start reading to your baby, it's great to do right from the start! Children can be interested in different types of books depending on their age, development, temperament, and life experiences. Babies like books with interesting things to look at and touch; toddlers also like books that make noises and have fold-out sections they can lift to reveal hidden surprises; and preschoolers appreciate books

with more elaborate pictures, rhymes, funny words, and interesting stories.

Here are some tips for reading to your child:

Birth to 1 year:

- In the early months, hold your baby close and read, talk and sing to her.
- By 3-6 months of age, your baby will start to enjoy

looking at mirrors and pictures of faces, shapes, colors. She will begin to make sounds, reach out and touch the pictures. Choose books with interesting pictures and textures.

- By 6-12 months of age, your baby will sit in your lap, look at the pictures, touch the book, and put the book in her mouth. Use plastic and cardboard books, and point to and name the pictures for your



1-2 years:

- From 12-18 months of age, your baby might enjoy choosing the book from the shelf, sitting and holding the book, and turning the pages. Follow your child's interest in reading for as long as the book holds his attention. Ask "Where's the doggie?" and let your child point to it. Ask "What does the doggie say?" and

let your child respond.

- From 18-24 months of age, your child might begin to name familiar pictures and fill in words in familiar stories. She might even "read" to her dolls or stuffed animals and recite parts of stories. When you read, stop to ask your child, "What's that?" and give your child time to answer.

2-3 years:

- Your child will be able to handle books with paper pages. She understands how the pictures go with the story, and may look for her favorite books and favorite pictures. Be prepared to read the same book over and over. Ask her questions about what's happening in the book, and relate the story to her own experiences, "That truck looks just like the garbage truck that comes to our house!" Try dropping some words from the end of a rhyme and let her fill in the missing word. http://www.fisher-price.com/en_US/parenting-articles/language-and-learning/when-should-i-start-reading-to-my-baby

St Patrick's Day Carnations

Kids can watch white carnations turn green for a festive St. Patrick's Day flower. Estimated time to make this gift:

A few hours to overnight.

Materials: white carnations

- green food coloring
- water
- vase(s)

Optional baby's breath or other "filler" plant materials



- ribbons (optional)

Instructions:

Add several drops of green food coloring to water in a jar or vase. Make a fresh cut in lower part of the stem of each carnation, and place in the green water. Within a few hours, the flowers will have absorbed

the green coloration via the stem and the veins of the petals.

Other comments or suggestions to consider:

These can also be combined with daisies or other white flowers and fashioned into corsages or boutonnieres. It's true you can buy the flowers already green, but what would be the fun of that? For the youngest children, it is a science project of sorts, and while perhaps not nifty and new enough to wow the judges at the science fair, it is still fun to do at home. <https://www.familyeducation.com/fun/st-patricks-day-crafts-activities/st-patricks-day-carnations>

Why Every Employee Should Participate in a 401K Plan

Employer Matching Contributions

One of the biggest benefits of a 401(k) is the employer match. This is basically free money that an employer gives when a worker contributes to their plan. This additional money could add up quickly over the course of an employee's career.

Savers Credit for Participants

The savers credit encourages workers with low to moderate incomes to plan for retirement. The credit can decrease the amount of taxes owed by up to \$1,000 per year just for participating in a retirement plan, although the actual amount of the credit will depend on both income and marital status.

Deferred Tax Payments

The money that goes into a 401(k) plan is taken from a participant's paycheck before taxes are taken out.

Doing so effectively lowers take-home pay, which in turn decreases the taxes paid. It's important to note that while the money put into a 401(k) can accrue for years, withdrawals are taxed when they are taken out during retirement.

Maximum Contributions

The federal government sets a maximum amount of pre-tax income that an employee can contribute to a 401(k). For 2013, this amount is \$17,500, or \$23,000 if the



participant is over 50 years old.

Is it a good idea for employees to contribute the maximum amount possible? For most people, the answer is yes. When an employee puts a portion of each paycheck into a 401(k), the amount paid in taxes is reduced. The higher the tax bracket, the more money saved simply by not having to pay tax on it right away. Additionally, the extra money employees add every year works to earn them even more over time, thanks to the compounding effect. Once they hit that maximum amount, employees can start thinking about where to put the rest of their money if they have any left over.

<https://www.paychex.com/articles/employee-benefits/why-every-employee-should-participate-in-401k-plan>

How to Help Save the Environment (Adopting Your Yard)

1 Plant a garden. Create a garden plot with vegetables, fruits, and/or herbs. • Try to implement techniques so that your garden does not require fertilizers or excessive watering. For example, adding mulch to your garden will seal in water and make the soil moister.

• Include plants that produce your favorite fruits and vegetables so you won't need to buy these at the store.

• Use rain barrels or other containers to gather rainwater. Use this water on plants in your garden.

2 Make your yard-friendly to wildlife. Modern developments encroach upon natural habitats and pose risks to wildlife. Take some steps to make your yard friendlier to wildlife.

• Plant many different types of vegetation. Various creatures will visit your yard if you provide them with reason to be there. When you have many different types of vegetation, you'll attract different types of animals.

• Create a frog pond in your back yard. Frog populations are dwindling because their breeding areas are disappearing. If

you create a habitat for them in your back yard, they may breed there.

3 Reduce the area of lawn. Grass areas usually require more frequent maintenance with lawn mowers, weed eaters, and other gas- or electric-powered tools. Convert some of your lawn to garden or native plants, which will also attract wildlife.

4 Avoid pesticides, herbicides, and man-made chemical fertilizers. Pesticides kill hundreds of birds and other animals per year. If you have unwanted weeds, pull or hoe them out yourself, clip them down, or plant a ground cover in their place. • Check out permaculture, integrative pest management, poly-cropping, and other techniques to reduce or eliminate the need for chemical pesticides and fertilizer.

• If you do apply chemical fertilizer, apply no more than is really necessary. Ensure that excess fertilizer is not washed into storm drains or waterways.

5 Plant a tree. Add a tree to your yard.



Trees absorb carbon dioxide and emit oxygen, and they also improve area water quality and help make the ground more fertile for other plants. • Deciduous trees carefully located near your home can also help keep your home warmer in winter and cooler in summer.

• If you plant a fruit tree, you will have the added benefit of being able to harvest your own fruit instead of needing to buy it at a store.

6 Make a compost area. Designate an area in your yard to put your yard waste, fruit peels, and uneaten food. Find some worms who can break the waste down and produce a very rich soil that works great with your landscaping. Keep your compost heap as far from all water sources as possible.

7 Use a rake instead of a leaf blower. Ditch your noisy electric- or gas-powered leaf blower and use a rake to gather up leaves or other debris in your yard. • Similarly, use a broom instead of a hose to clean dirt from a paved area.

https://www.wikihow.com/Help-Save-the-Environment#Adapting_Your_Yard_sub

Announcements

Hello Parents!

I want to send a **THANK YOU** to all of the parents and family members that have been engaged and participating in the different activities happening at their sites; whether it is the monthly parent meetings, volunteering in the classroom, or working with your child on the home connections. **You all are doing an amazing job!**

I would like to share with you some of the great things we have coming up in our program.

FATHERS:

Please join us as we discuss topics such as personal development and life skills. The dates for this meeting are:

Seminole County: March 29, 2018

Orange County: March 27, 2018

Osceola County: March 1, 2018

IN-KIND WARS are still taking place. Each program will be competing to see who will accumulate the most in-kind and the winner will receive a pass around trophy and the right to brag, of course! In-Kind can be accrued through volunteering in your child's classroom or assisting with activities for the classroom in your home. Home Connections are also a great way to accumulate in-kind; please take the time to complete these activities with your child every night.

How to teach your 2-year-old to share

Practice taking turns. You flip one page of your child's bedtime book, and she flips the next. Or you stack a block on top of hers, then she stacks another on top of yours. You could also take turns putting puzzle pieces together or pushing a toy car down a ramp. Try give-and-take games, too: You hug her teddy, then give it to her to hug and return to you. You kiss her teddy, then give it to her to kiss, and so on. She'll begin to learn that taking turns and sharing can be fun and that giving up her things doesn't mean she'll never get them back.

Don't punish stinginess. If you tell your 2-year-old that she's selfish, discipline her when she doesn't share, or force her to hand over a prized possession, you'll encourage resentment, not generosity. "Never punish a child, especially a 2-year-old, for not sharing," says Susanne Denham, Ph.D., developmental psychology professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. "It is, after all, a very personal decision."

Talk it up. Help your child explore the emotions that relate to sharing. If a friend



is holding something back, explain to your child how her buddy might be feeling. For instance: "Josie loves her teddy, and she really wants to hug him right now." Help her put her own feelings into words too: "I know you want your doll," or "You're sad because Sofia took your car." Give your child plenty of praise when she does loosen her grip on something. At snack time, for instance, remark on how nicely she and her playmate are divvying up the cookies and point out how much fun it is to share a treat with a friend.

Cheer little steps toward sharing. Two-year-olds sometimes show their possessions — and even let others touch them — without actually letting go of them. "Encourage this 'proto-sharing' by telling your child how nice it is that she's showing her toy," says Denham. Eventually, bolstered by your praise, she'll feel secure enough to loosen her grip.

Set the stage. If you're expecting pint-size company, have your child put her "special" toys away before her friend arrives. In their place, provide playthings

that are easy to enjoy in tandem — blocks, tea sets, crayons and coloring books, dress-up clothes, and modeling clay, for instance. Tell your 2-year-old and her visitor that they can share these things, and compliment them when they do. If one of the children is heading for a toy her friend has a death grip on, distract her with a question, a snack, or another toy.

Respect your child's things. If your 2-year-old feels that her clothes, books, and toys are being manhandled, it's unlikely she'll give them up even for a moment. So ask permission before you borrow her crayon, and give her the option of saying no. Make sure that siblings, playmates, and babysitters respect her things too, by asking to use them and by taking good care of them when they do.

Lead by example. The best way for your child to learn generosity is to witness it. So share your ice cream with her. Offer her your scarf to wear, and ask if you can try on her barrette. Use the word share to describe what you're doing, and don't forget to teach her that intangibles (like feelings, ideas, and stories) can be shared too. Most important, let her see you give and take, compromise, and share with others.

https://www.babycenter.com/0_how-to-teach-your-2-year-old-to-share_63838.bc

Fruits and Vegetables in Season

Bell Peppers	Strawberries
Broccoli	Carambola
Cabbage	Cauliflower
Cucumbers	Celery
Eggplant	Guava
Grapefruit	Lettuce
Oranges	Mushrooms
Papaya	Potatoes
Peanuts	Radishes
Spinach	Snap Beans
Squash	Sweet Corn



Spinach in Baby Food Recipes - When Can Baby Have Spinach? Age for Introducing Spinach: (8)10-12 months

The Goodness of Spinach for Baby

Spinach is an amazing source of Calcium. Just 1 cup of cooked spinach gives you 42 mg of calcium. Spinach also contains respectable amounts of Vitamin A, Iron and Selenium too. Spinach is truly a wonderful leafy green that packs a lot of nutrients. On this page you will learn about introducing spinach to babies and find great spinach baby food recipe ideas too.

Spinach is an oxalate food as well as a nitrate food so for babies under the age of 8 months, eating homemade spinach in moderation, if at all, is a good idea

The best way to cook Spinach for baby food recipes

You may steam or boil spinach however I recommend sautéing fresh spinach in a wee bit of olive oil. Spinach is cooked when the leaves are soft, tender and have shrunk. Cooked spinach will appear to be stringy and "wilty".

Foods Good to Mix With Spinach

- Carrots
- Parsnip
- Peas
- Potatoes (white and sweet)
- Summer Squash - yellow, zucchini
- Lentils
- Chicken

<http://wholesomebabyfood.momtastic.com/spinachbabyfoodrecipes.htm>



Preventing the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year, but good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat and prevent flu.

1. Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.

3. Cover your mouth and nose.



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

4. Clean your hands.

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

6. Practice other good health habits.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>