



Head Start Gazette

February 2021

Help your child understand what it means to be honest:



Model Honesty

Kids watch and model adult behavior. A study from the University of California, San Diego, found that elementary schoolchildren who heard a lie from an adult about the presence of candy in another room were more likely to lie to cover up their misbehavior. If we want our children to be honest, we need to be good examples of honesty.

Talk About Honesty in Books or Media

When you are reading or watching together, point out when characters tell the truth — and when they don't. Use characters to talk about why it's important to tell adults when they need help. It might sound like this: "Oh, she lost her mom's necklace and she feels sad. What should she do? . . . Yes, she could tell her mom what happened and then they could look for it together. That's being honest."

Explain What It Means to "Tell the Truth"

At this age, kids don't always know the difference between truth and fiction. In their mind, if they don't tell you they broke something, you won't know and the problem will magically disappear. Begin to teach them the concept of "honesty" and "truth" through simple, supportive conversations. It might sound like this: "In this family, if we break something, we say, 'I did it.' That's telling the truth. And then we clean it up together!"

"You took your brother's toy and now he's crying? Thank you for telling me that. You told the truth. Now let's go give it back and help him feel better." <https://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-3/character/honesty>

Simple ways to build your child's writing skills:

Left Handed

Handwriting practice printable worksheet



Encourage Creative List Making

Lists are a great early writing activity and can include both pictures and writing. Brainstorm lists that children can create, such as a list of things they do in the morning to get ready for school, a list of activities they want to do during school vacation or a list of people they want to give cards to for a holiday such as Valentine's Day. Let them tell you the words to write down and then let them illustrate the list. When kids write lists about routines, things they did on vacation or things they plan to do on the weekend, they practice sequencing — a key writing skill.

Keep Writing Materials Handy

Thick markers, crayons and paint brushes are ideal for the youngest writers since they are still developing the small

muscles in their hands that help them hold tools. Likewise, large paper is best as they learn to control the size of their marks. Give them time each week to mark and color on blank paper; this will help them develop vital fine motor skills that will help them in the future.

Make a Book Together

All it takes to make a book is paper and crayons/markers. Staple pieces of paper together or fold them in half, and then invite children to illustrate each page. Ask them to tell you what they have drawn, and then write it down under the picture. Once they have filled all the pages, read it back to them. At this age, it may be more a collection of images than a story, but children will love hearing their book read aloud to them!

Make Sand, Playdough and Soap Letters

Here are some ways to practice alphabet mark making before kids put pencil to paper: In sand, encourage kids to use their fingers to draw lines and shapes. As they get older, take their finger and help them draw larger letters in the sand. You can do a similar activity with a stick and a patch of dirt.

Roll playdough into long "snakes" and then use those to form lines and shapes. This helps kids see, and feel, how shapes fit together. During bath time, use your finger to trace a large letter on your child's back. Start with a familiar letter, like the first letter in their name. Then ask your child to guess what letter you traced. <https://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-3/literacy/writing>

Ways to Get Your Finances in Shape for 2021



EVERY TIME YOU BORROW MONEY, YOU'RE ROBBING YOUR FUTURE SELF.

- Nathan W Morrisein

1. Set up a detailed budget

Knowing where your money goes every month is essential to getting on track financially. Moreover, to that end, you will need a budget. Your budget does not have to be anything fancy -- a basic spreadsheet will do. List each recurring monthly expense, as well as any expenses (like annual professional license renewals) that do not pop up monthly, but you need to pay for nonetheless.

Of course, to account for all of your expenses, you need to comb through your bank account and credit card statements from the past year. However, once you have your expenses mapped out, you can see where you are overspending and find ways to cut back.

2. Automate your saving

Taking some of your paycheck off the table by sending it straight to savings is a good way to avoid falling victim to impulse purchases and to stay on track to meet your savings goals. With an automatic transfer, you arrange for a portion of each paycheck to move from your checking account to your savings account right off the bat. That way, at the very least, you will not fall short due to forgetfulness.

3. Identify "gotchas" that have hurt you in the past

We all have our weaknesses -- purchases that derail our savings plans and tempt us to spend money we should not. Maybe your "gotcha" is takeout food. Maybe it is last-minute travel, or designer clothing items you love snagging on sale. No matter your personal weakness, figure it out ahead of time so it will not cause you to fall short on your goals.

You are probably thinking that means you cannot indulge in that weakness. Not so. Rather, you need to incorporate it into your budget. You may have to make other sacrifices to do that. For example, if you really want to order

takeout or delivery once a week, you may need to spend less on entertainment. The key is to understand where you are likely to go wrong in your savings efforts -- and work around it.

4. Build a robust emergency fund

Unplanned bills can throw your budget off-course and land you in a world of debt. In the coming year, make it a priority to build a full emergency fund -- one with enough money to cover at least three months of essential bills. Your emergency fund should be kept in a savings account, where you will have easy access to it. Investing your emergency fund is a no-no -- if your portfolio tanks right when you need a withdrawal, you risk locking in losses and falling short on the money, and you need.

5. Get your debt under control

Maybe you racked up pandemic-related debt this year. Alternatively, maybe the holidays did you in. No matter the reason for landing in debt, establish and stick to a solid payoff plan to emerge debt-free (or as close to it as possible) in the coming year. Figure out which debts cost you the most, and see if it is possible to lower the amount of interest, you are paying. Consolidating your debt via a balance transfer or personal loan could make it a lot easier -- and cheaper -- to pay off.

6. Map out your most pressing goals

Maybe you want to buy a house by the end of 2021. Or maybe your primary goal is to save enough to take your dream vacation after a year of being cooped up at home. Either way, put that goal in writing and figure out what it takes to get there. And use your budget to help you achieve it. If your mega-trip will cost \$3,000, that is \$250 a month you need to sock away in the course of 2021. Adding that as a line item in your budget will help you shift other expenses around to make that trip happen.

<https://www.fool.com/personal-finance/2020/12/21/6-ways-to-get-your-finances-in-shape-for-2021/>

Valentine's Day Heart Craft



Red paper (or another color of your choice)

White cardstock

Googly eyes

Black marker

Scissors

Glue

Heart craft punch (optional)

Hearts template

DIRECTIONS

1. To get started, get all your pieces ready. You can download and print template for the hearts or make your own.

We found it easier to use our heart craft punch for the smaller hearts as they were too small for preschoolers to cut out with her scissors. You could also use heart foam stickers.

One large heart

Four small hearts of equal size

Four strips of white paper (2 long for the legs and 2 short for the arms)

2. Once you have your pieces ready, fold the white strips of paper like an accordion. Glue the two legs to the bottom of the big heart and the two arms near the middle of the heart.

3. Glue small hearts on the ends of the arms and legs.

4. Create a face for your heart man. We glued two googly eyes and drew a mouth on the large heart to make a face for our heart man craft. If you don't have googly eyes, you could draw on eyes or make eyes from the white paper. <https://www.theresourcefulmama.com/valentines-day-heart-craft-for-kids/>



Announcements

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. Developing good oral health habits at an early age and visiting the dentist regularly helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums

National Children's Dental Health Month brings together dental health professionals, caregivers, parents, and teachers to give children the best start on oral health. From brushing and flossing to healthy snacks and routine dental visits, the month also includes Give Kids A Smile Day on February 6th.



Tips for Brushing

Don't skip - Making it habit requires sticking to the schedule. Even when there is a special occasion or if our child is tired, we need to reinforce the importance of brushing.

Make it fun - Songs that last 2 minutes will help. Reading to your child while they brush may help, too. Even a puppet brushing his teeth can be motivating.

Learn by example - Children emulate their parents. Brush with your children and they will want to be just like you.

Trial and error - Try different kinds of toothpaste until you find the one junior likes. Try using the smallest amount he will allow and working your way up to the recommended amount. Even a tiny amount is better than no toothpaste.

Don't give up - The pain of cavities and lifelong dental issues is more costly and damaging than the dealing with these few moments of nagging battles twice a day.

8 Things to Know about the U.S. COVID-19 Vaccination Program

The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority.

The U.S. vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. CDC has developed a new tool, **v-safe**, as an additional layer of safety monitoring to increase our ability to rapidly detect any safety issues with COVID-19 vaccines. V-safe is a new smartphone-based, after-vaccination health checker for people who receive COVID-19 vaccines.

COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you from getting COVID-19. Two doses are needed.

Depending on the specific vaccine you get, a second shot 3-4 weeks after your first shot is needed to get the most protection the vaccine has to offer against this serious disease.

CDC is making recommendations for who should be offered COVID-19 vaccine first when supplies are limited.

There is currently a limited supply

of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States, but supply will increase in the weeks and months to come.

Once vaccine is widely available, the plan is to have several thousand vaccination providers offering COVID-19 vaccines in doctors' offices, retail pharmacies, hospitals, and federally qualified health centers.

After COVID-19 vaccination, you may have some side effects. This is a normal sign that your body is building protection.

The side effects from COVID-19 vaccination may feel like flu and might even affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days.

Cost is not an obstacle to being vaccinated against COVID-19.

Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost.

The first COVID-19 vaccine is



being used under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Many other vaccines are still being developed and tested.

If more COVID-19 vaccines are authorized or approved by FDA, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will quickly hold public meetings to review all available data about each vaccine and make recommendations for their use in the United States.

COVID-19 vaccines are one of many important tools to help us stop this pandemic.

It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/8-things.html>

Strawberry Ice Pop:

You Will Need:

- 1 cup of strawberries, hulled and chopped
- 2 kiwi fruit, peeled and chopped
- 6 disposable plastic cups or popsicle mold
- 1 ½ cups orange juice
- 6 pop sticks

How To:

Place the sliced strawberries and kiwi fruits into each disposable cup or popsicle mold.

Pour the orange juice over the fruits and insert a pop stick into each mold or cup.

Freeze the ice pop stick for 4 hours or overnight.

To remove the ice pop from the cup or mold, run it under hot water. It can be one of the great and refreshing easy strawberry recipes for kids to make.

All these recipes are worthy of whipping up for your little strawberry-fan. Get cooking and tell us which one your kid loved the most. Leave a comment below. https://www.momjunction.com/articles/strawberry-recipes-for-your-kids_00388480/

Nutritional Benefits of the Strawberry

The tiny strawberry is packed with vitamin C, fiber, antioxidants, and more.

The heart-shaped silhouette of the strawberry is the first clue that this fruit is good for you. These potent little packages protect your heart, increase HDL (good) cholesterol, lower your blood pressure, and guard against cancer.

Packed with vitamins, fiber, and particularly high levels of antioxidants known as polyphenols, strawberries are a sodium-free, fat-free, cholesterol-free, low-calorie food. They are among the top 20 fruits in antioxidant capacity and are a good source of manganese and potassium. Just one serving -- about eight strawberries -- provides more vitamin C than an orange.



This member of the rose family is not really a fruit or a berry but the enlarged receptacle of the flower. Choose medium-sized berries that are firm, plump, and deep red; once picked, they do not ripen further. First cultivated in ancient Rome, strawberries are now the most popular berry fruit in the world. In provincial France, they were regarded as an aphrodisiac. These red gems may be good for your heart in many ways. <https://www.webmd.com/diet/features/nutritional-benefits-of-the-strawberry>

Food Safety Basics

To prevent infection, avoid feeding children:

- Raw or undercooked meat, poultry, fish or shellfish
- Uncooked sprouts
- Raw or undercooked eggs or foods that contain raw eggs
- Unpasteurized foods and beverages (such as raw milk and unpasteurized juices)
- Honey

Typical signs and symptoms of food poisoning include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps. They usually occur within hours or days of consuming a contaminated food or drink. But severe food poisoning can lead to bloody diarrhea, high fevers, dehydration and other complications.

Did You Know?

Foodborne illnesses afflict 800,000 children under the age of 10 every year, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Children under the age of five who contract a Salmonella infection are three times more likely to end up hospitalized, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. One in every seven kids under the age of 5 infected with a strain of E. coli known as E. coli O157 will end up in kidney failure. <https://www.consumernotice.org/products/child-safety/>

