

Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

March 2017



Cottler Elementary School
Scot Graham, Principal

KID BITS

Practice fairness

Develop your youngster's sense of fair play with routines that encourage taking turns. To pick a board game, write family members' choices on separate slips of paper, shake in a paper bag, and draw one. Next time, draw another slip. Or assign each person a different day of the week to choose the bedtime story.

Make music together

Hold a family music night as an excuse to create a little noise together. You could play toy xylophones, tap oatmeal canisters with wooden spoons, or sing silly new words to favorite songs. You'll build memories while boosting your child's imagination and sense of rhythm.

Rub-a-dub

Bathing a doll or another washable toy is more than good clean fun. Soaping up a washcloth, rinsing out shampoo, and drying the doll will build skills your little one needs to bathe herself. Sneak in some bath-time safety, too. ("Check the water temperature to make sure it's not too hot before you put your doll in the tub.")

Worth quoting

"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known." *Carl Sagan*

Just for fun

Q: What two things can you never eat for breakfast?

A: Lunch and dinner.



Trying new things

Some children are fearless in the face of new experiences. Others, not so much. When your youngster seems hesitant to step out of his comfort zone, consider these tips.

Rehearse first

Role-play to give your child a stress-free way to prepare for something new. Perhaps he's shy about meeting the youngster who just moved in next door. Together, practice what to do and say. He could walk up to you and say, "Hi, my name is Andy. Do you want to play?" This will also help him get comfortable introducing himself to new classmates or other children in after-school activities.

Take small steps

Use a familiar experience your child enjoys as a stepping-stone to try a new one. For example, if the big playground slide seems too scary, he could try the small slide first. Next, an older sibling may offer to slide down the big one before



him. After that, you might stand by the bottom of the slide while he goes down on his own. Each small accomplishment will build his confidence.

Present choices

Your little one will be more inclined to embrace something different if he has options. Say you want him to try new vegetables or other foods. Tell him you're thinking of making either broccoli or kale with tonight's dinner—which would he prefer? Giving your youngster some control allows him to feel safe to make his own choices. ♥

Paint-palooza!

Painting without a brush stretches your little artist's creativity and strengthens her hand muscles. Offer tools like these.

● **Plastic spoon.** She could dab finger paints on paper and swirl with the back of the spoon or paint with the handle.

● **Cotton swabs.** Have her use swabs with watercolors to paint in coloring books.



● **Eye dropper.** Mix food coloring in water, and let your child decorate an empty shoebox or egg carton, one drip at a time.

● **Sponges.** Cut sponges into shapes. Your youngster can dip them into paint and stamp onto poster board.

● **Spray bottle.** Fill a spray bottle with water, and head outside together to "spray paint" pictures on the side of your house or on a fence or sidewalk. ♥