

Kindergarten,



Here I Come!

Activities to do with your Preschooler









Welcome!

You and your child are preparing for kindergarten! This activity book, "Kindergarten, Here I Come" is filled with fun ideas that you can do together to get ready for kindergarten and beyond. These activities will help give your child the foundation for positive and happy future school experiences.

Every month contains four weeks of activities that use simple materials or ideas that you can do at home. Each one of the activities focuses on a readiness skill for your child's entry into kindergarten. You can do all or some of the experiences on each page and they can be done in any order, at any time.

The activities are linked to the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards. These Standards are being used in pre-kindergarten programs all over the State as a resource for developing classroom learning situations that will ensure your child's development in the skill areas necessary for future success. (Ask your child's pre-kindergarten teacher if she has a copy.)

The Early Learning Standards include:

-  Approaches to Learning Through Play (the way children learn)
-  Creative Thinking and Expression (visual arts, music and movement and dramatic play)
-  Language and Literacy Development (reading, writing, speaking and listening)
-  Mathematical Thinking and Expression (numbers, shapes, colors and space)
-  Social and Emotional Development (learning about self and how to get along with others)
-  Health, Wellness and Physical Development (health and safety; large and small muscles)
-  Scientific Thinking and Technology (exploring the world)
-  Social Studies Thinking (learning about people and the community)

You'll be able to tell what developmental area each activity is focusing on by the picture at the beginning. Compare it to the key at the bottom of the page so you know what skills you are helping your child learn.

Most importantly have fun! The time you and your child spend together, doing these activities or others, will help your youngster say with confidence, "Kindergarten, Here I Come!"

**This activity book is made possible
through the
support of...**



All About Me Book

You and your child can make your very own book! On each month, you'll find a special book that looks like this. It describes a page for your "All About Me" book. After you and child have made each page, keep them together in a special place. When you have reached the end of the "Kindergarten, Here

I Come Activity Book", you can bind your pages together to make a memory book to keep. What a perfect way to remember your child's year before kindergarten!

PS....Help your child find where the mouse is hiding on each of our "All About Me" page descriptions.





Early Learning

“Let us put our minds together and
see what life we can make for our children.”

– Sitting Bull



Choosing An Early Learning Site

Select an early learning program that best suits your family's needs. Make a careful choice by considering the location, hours of care, and services that are provided. Visit the facility and talk with the director and teachers. Find a location that feels right for you and your family. A high quality early learning program, no matter what type, should provide a safe and secure learning environment for your child.

Families can learn more about the options available in their community by contacting their local Child Care Information Services office (CCIS). Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies are the hub of child care information in your local area. They provide families with information on quality child care and personalized child care referrals to child care providers based on your specific needs or preferences. CCIS agencies also administer the Child Care Works subsidized child care program.

Families can also use the Provider Search at www.findchildcare.pa.gov.

The search will help you locate a child care provider that meets your needs and offer information on Early Learning programs. The Child Care Provider Search offers a portion of the wide spectrum of child care services offered by Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies.

Keystone STARS Child Care

Keystone STARS (Standards, Training/Professional Development, Assistance, Resources) provides families with a tool to gauge the quality of child care programs. The STARS program supports child care programs in the commitment to continuous quality improvement. Programs may enter Keystone STARS at the “Start with STARS” level and earn a STAR 1 through STAR 4 rating using research-based standards that measure four areas that make a difference in the quality of care your child receives:

1. The educated and well-trained staff.
2. The environment your child is in everyday.
3. Leadership and management.
4. Family and community partnerships.



PA Pre-K Counts

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts provides high quality pre-kindergarten services to three and four year olds in the Commonwealth. The program is free to families and has a focus on helping children who may be at risk of academic failure be successful both in school and in life. Children are served in full or half day pre-kindergarten classes that are held in school district classrooms, Head Start classrooms, Keystone STARS 3 or 4 child care programs, or licensed nursery schools. The program is administered by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning, Pennsylvania Department of Education and Human Services. The quality components of the program meet or exceed nearly every quality benchmark set by the National Institute for Early Education Research which include a highly qualified teaching staff, a curriculum that will help children grow academically and socially, a regular review of each child's progress, assistance for children and families transitioning to pre-kindergarten and on to kindergarten, and small class size. In addition, assessment of the quality of the program and the children's progress will ensure that all Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts programs are providing the high quality early education children deserve.



Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program

Pennsylvania provides additional state funding for Head Start agencies to offer Head Start services through the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program. Head Start is a Federal program for preschool children from low-income families. The Head Start program is operated by local non-profit organizations in almost every county in the country. Children who attend Head Start participate in a variety of educational activities. They also receive free medical and dental care, have healthy meals and snacks, and enjoy playing indoors and outdoors in a safe setting. Most children in Head Start are between the ages of 3 and 5 years old. Services are also available to infants and toddlers in selected sites.



SEPTEMBER

"The laughter of a child is the light of a house."

— African proverb



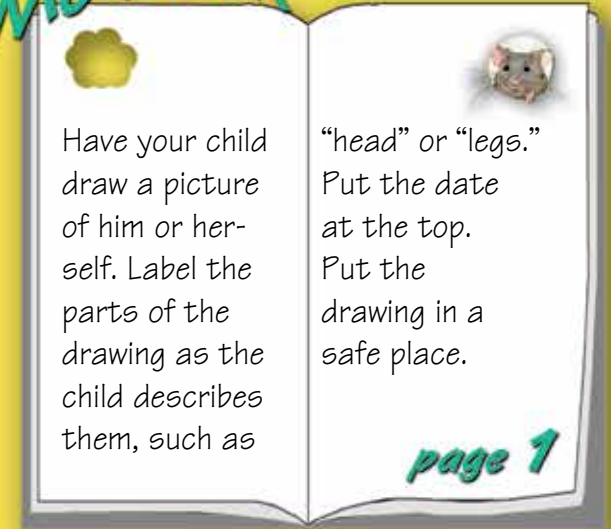
Learning At Home

Your home is your children's first learning environment. Develop their skills by using play, everyday items and daily household tasks.

- In the kitchen...children who help prepare dinner learn how to combine foods to make a final product, a science skill.
- In the bedroom...children who talk about their day before going to sleep build memory skills. Reading a book with your child is a wonderful addition to the bedtime routine.
- In the living room...children who talk with adults are learning vocabulary and other language skills.
- In the bathroom...children who practice pouring in the bathtub develop small muscles for writing.
- When doing laundry...children who count buttons or sort clothes by size, color or type are learning important math skills.
- In the hallway... children who count the steps as they walk upstairs are developing another important math skill.
- Outside... children who run, jump and climb are building their large muscles for coordination.



Me Book



Internet Resources

<http://bit.ly/29yZqW5>

Pennsylvania Department of
Human Services

www.dhs.pa.gov

Connect with the various programs
within the PA Department of Human
Services to get the answers you need.

A Week of Activities!

- ▲ Play shape and color hunt with your child. Ask your child to “find something in the house that is shaped like a circle.” Or, “find something that is blue.” Do the same thing with other shapes and colors.
- 📱 Use stuffed animals or dolls to act out things your family likes to do together.
- 😊 Look through magazines or catalogs with your child for pictures of children doing different things. Talk about each picture. “What is the child doing in this picture?”
- 🔍 Take your child to the grocery store. Look at apples and talk about the different colors, shapes and sizes. Use words like same and different.



A Week of Activities!

- 😊 Read a story to your child. Ask questions about the people or animals, where the story takes place or other details from the story.
- 🔍 Make a Magic Touch bag. Fill a zip loc bag with 5 tablespoons cornstarch, 1/2 cup vegetable oil, 1/2 cup water, and two drops each of green and blue food coloring. Seal the bag. Show your child how to touch and knead the bag to make the liquid move. Talk about how it feels and the colors inside.
- 🍏 Give your child scissors (child-size) and help him/her snip small pieces of paper.
- 🏠 Encourage your child to draw a picture of your family.



A Week of Activities!

- 📱 Help your child make a leaf rubbing. Place a leaf upside down under a piece of paper and rub different colored crayons over the top of the paper.
- 📖 Take your child to the library to get a library card for each of you. Visit often!
- 👤 Make a height chart with paper. Place paper against the wall or door and ask your child to stand with his/her back against the chart. Mark your child's height and date it. Try this again in three months and talk about the change.
- 🏠 Give your child old envelopes from the mail. Help your child to “write” letters and “mail” them by placing them in a special place.



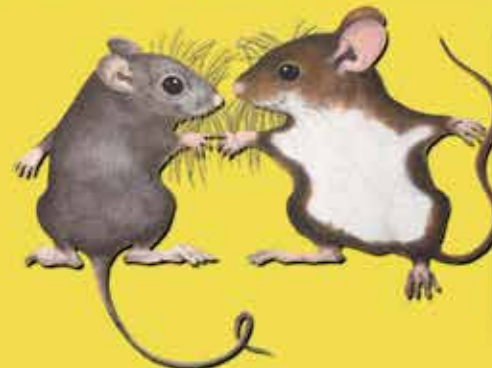
A Week of Activities!

- ▲ Sing simple counting songs and rhymes with your child. Fingers and toes make good counting tools!
- 📖 Encourage your child to “read” a book to you by using the pictures to tell the story.
- 👤 Give your child a mirror and ask him/her to describe his/her face. Ask “what color are your eyes and hair? What shape is your nose or cheeks?”
- 🍏 Play “Body Identification” with your child. Ask him/her to point to body parts like shoulder, knees, ankle, and elbow. Next, try “touch your to your ear or put your head on your chest, etc.”



Check these out!

Inside Mouse, Outside Mouse by Lindsay Barrett George*
Ten Minutes Till Bedtime by Peggy Rathman
Squashed in the Middle by Elizabeth Winthrop & Pat Cummings
Actual Size by Steve Jenkins
Mrs. McNosh and the Giant Squash by Sarah Weeks
Old MacDonald Had a Woodshop by Lisa Shulma



- 😊 Approaches to Learning Through Play
- 📱 Creative Thinking and Expression
- 📖 Language and Literacy Development
- ▲ Mathematical Thinking and Expression
- 👤 Social and Emotional Development
- 🍏 Health, Wellness and Physical Development
- 🔍 Scientific Thinking and Technology
- 🏠 Social Studies Thinking

OCTOBER

"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood."

– Fred Rogers



Safety

Children and adults should practice basic safety rules.

- Teach your child how to safely cross a street, to wear a helmet when riding a bike, what to do if a stranger approaches, and not to play with guns.
- Before your child plays on the playground, check to make sure the equipment is safe. Is it too high for your child? Are there sharp edges? Is there cushion material under it in case of a fall?
- Keep two or more working smoke detectors in your home. Replace the batteries every year. Cover all unused electric outlets in your home.
- Keep the following items out of the reach of children: matches, lighters, candles, cleaning supplies, chemicals and medicines.
- Follow state laws for the use of child car safety seats.
 - Post emergency phone numbers by your phone. (doctor, poison control center, hospital, fire, police)
 - Teach your child how to interact with family pets to prevent biting injuries.
 - Learn basic first aid in order to help your child in case of an emergency. Contact your local Red Cross for more information.
 - Children need protection from too much sun. When your child is outside, provide a hat, sun block and plenty of water to drink.
 - Keep stairs clear of objects like toys and decorations to prevent falling.



Me Book



Internet Resources

<http://bit.ly/25KhJQm>
www.kidshealth.org/en/parents/firstaid-safe/

Pennsylvania Department of Education
www.education.pa.gov

Parents can use this page to learn more about information and programs that are supported by the Department of Education.

A Week of Activities!

- 🏠 Get together with another child and his/her parents. Let the children tell each other about things their families like to do together.
- 📖 Collect the pictures that are familiar to your child from the fronts of cereal boxes or advertisements. Put them together in a book and ask your child to "read" to you.
- 👤 Begin to help your child learn about transitions. Give a warning or "heads up" about 5 minutes before he or she will need to stop playing. "In five minutes, we'll need to stop reading so we can start dinner."
- 📱 Encourage your child to make a collage with glue and paper, gluing leaves, twigs, acorns and other things you can find outside during fall.



A Week of Activities!

- ▲ Encourage your child to count items around your house. Count the stairs, the windows, etc.
- 📱 Create a prop box for dress up and pretend play. Fill it with old shoes, clothes, purses, jewelry, etc.
- 📖 Talk about favorites. What is your favorite food, color, toy or TV show? What are your child's favorites? Talk about the things you both like.
- 😊 Talk about safety with your child. Look around your house for things that could be dangerous and talk about them together.



A Week of Activities!

- 🔍 Play, "Who's My Baby?" Name an animal and ask your child to tell you the names of the baby. For example, dog...puppy; cat...kitten.
- ▲ Go to the library and check out books about numbers or counting.
- 🏠 Before you go shopping, give your child a piece of paper to "write" a "list" of things you are going to buy at the store. Ask your child to "read" it to you as you go through the store aisles.
- 🍏 Make Grocery Bag Balls. Take newspaper or brown grocery bags and crumple them into balls. Wrap tape around them. These balls can be used to kick, catch or throw.



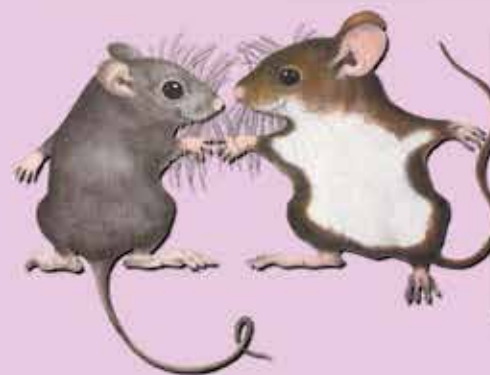
A Week of Activities!

- 🍏 During meal times allow your child to practice pouring from a lipped pitcher or serve him/herself from a serving dish using a spoon.
- 🔍 When your child takes a bath, place different toys in the water. Talk about whether the items sink or float. Make predictions about the items before you put them into the water. "I think the penny will float." See if you're right.
- 👤 Bring out baby pictures and current pictures of your child. Compare the pictures and talk about the differences and changes you see.
- 😊 Give your child materials to imitate you doing daily chores like cooking or cleaning. Talk about what you are doing.



Check these out!

One Smart Goose by Caroline Jayne Church
Apples and Pumpkins by Anne Rockwell
Mice and Beans by Pam Munoz Ryan
What's Opposite by Stephen Swinburne
Bark George by Jules Feiffer
Officer Buckle and Gloria by Peggy Rathman



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NOVEMBER

"The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

— Dr. Seuss



Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking

Important literacy skills are developed during the preschool years through children's experiences with familiar adults in familiar settings.

- Talk, talk and talk some more with your children describing surroundings, behaviors and objects.
- Say nursery rhymes together. Children who have been exposed to rhymes have greater success learning to read and understanding sounds.
- Look at books or read with your child at least 20 minutes every day.
- Before reading the words in a book, look at and talk about the pictures or illustrations. "This is a very colorful picture. There are bright green trees. What else do you see?" Ask your child to predict what the story might be about, based on the cover pictures.
- While reading a book together, connect the book to your child's personal experiences. "This book is about trains. We see trains when we walk to town. What do you remember about the trains we see?"
 - After reading a book, act out the story, sing a song or draw pictures related to the story.
 - Model good reading habits by reading magazines, books and other things for your own enjoyment!
 - Give your child crayons, pencils and paper to practice writing, creating books or letters.
 - Set limits on your child's TV/video/computer use.







Me Book



Internet Resources





www.rif.org
www.pbs.org/parents/
The PA Early Learning Keys to Quality (PA & Regional Keys)
www.pakeys.org
The PA Early Learning Keys to Quality, sponsored by the PA Departments of Education and Human Services; Office of Child Development and Early Learning, is a quality improvement system in which all early learning programs and professionals are encouraged and supported to improve child outcomes.

A Week of Activities!

-  Finger paint with your child. (see recipes on page 30) Be creative! Use your hands or your feet to paint!
-  Take a walk together to the playground. Before playing, show your child how to play safely on each piece of equipment.
-  Use objects to make patterns with your child. Lay out spoon, spoon, cup and ask your child to make the same pattern. Or try, black sock, white sock, black sock and see if your child can tell you what's next.
-  Practice dressing skills like zipping, buttoning and tying. Let your child pick his own clothes from choices. "Would you like to wear the red or the blue shirt today?" (Choosing clothes may help a child want to practice these skills).







A Week of Activities!

-  Write your child's name on a piece of paper. Have your child trace over it with his/her fingers. Remember to capitalize only the first letter.
-  Talk to your child about the things you will do today, the things you did yesterday and what you might do tomorrow.
-  Let your child scribble a design with crayons, markers or pencils. Have him/her fill in the empty spaces in the design with different colors or patterns.
-  Look through magazines to find people's faces. Talk about the expressions and emotions showing on their faces. "That person is frowning. He is probably sad."







A Week of Activities!

-  Talk about the sequence of events in your daily activities (meal time, bath time, bed time). See if your child can tell you which one comes first during the day. Which one comes last?
-  Use stuffed animals or dolls to retell a story you've read. Use a sock to make a puppet for story telling.
-  Take a walk outside. Investigate trees, leaves and other fall objects. Collect some in a bag and take home to use for other activities.
-  Encourage your child to "read" familiar names on products, buildings and businesses. Talk about them. "There's the truck that says US Mail."



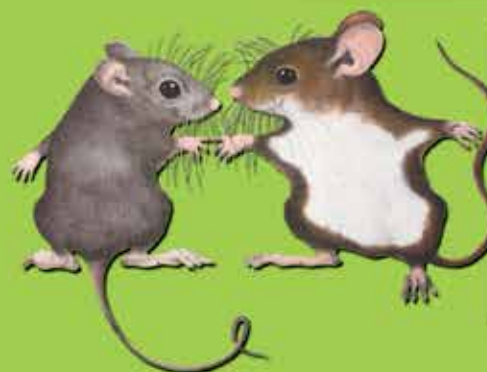
A Week of Activities!









-  During bath time use different sized plastic cups and containers to measure water. Talk about which cup holds more or less? Find out how many small cups are needed to fill a big cup.
-  Explore items in your house. Which ones are hard? Soft? Heavy? Light?
-  Ask your child to draw a picture and tell you a story about it. Write down the child's words at the bottom of the picture.
-  Play "Guess that Taste" game. Put different foods on different plates (peanut butter, lemon, cheese, pretzel). Cover your child's eyes. Help him/her select food to taste and ask, "which food do you think it is?"



Check these out!

- I Stink** by Katie and Jim McMullan
- The Relatives Came** by Cynthia Rylant
- Neighborhood Mother Goose** by Nina Crews
- Wild About Books** by Judy Sierra
- Max Found Two Sticks** by Brian Pinkney
- Megatooth** by Patrick O'Brien



-  Approaches to Learning Through Play
-  Creative Thinking and Expression
-  Language and Literacy Development
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-  Social Studies Thinking

DECEMBER

"The best thing to spend
on your children is your time."
– Louise Hart



Developing Positive Relationships

A positive relationship between parents and children will encourage children to feel good about themselves and gives them a healthy model for getting along with others.

- Look for all the positive things your child does and praise them. This helps children gain a positive self image and self esteem.
- Give your child choices where either answer is acceptable. "Which do you want to do first, brush your teeth or get dressed?"
- Give your child the chance to make decisions. This shows that you have confidence in your child's developing independence.
- When your child shows you his/her work, announce how proud you are.
 - Have a special play time with your child. During this time, let him/her decide what you will play together. Being "in charge" is a very positive feeling for children.
 - Be aware of your child's strengths and recognize them. "You are so good at throwing a ball. You will have strong muscles when you grow up."
 - Let your child know that you love him/her. Smiles, hugs, "I love you" and special notes all help a child feel special.
 - Say what you expect your child to do, not what you don't want him or her to do. For example, say "hold my hand when we cross the street" instead of "don't run across the street."



Me Book

Ask your child to draw or paint a picture of your family. Write down the names of the family

members next to each drawing. Label the page, "My Family". Date it and save!



page 4







Internet Resources

www.parenttoparent.org

Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania
1-888-727-2706





A network created by families for families of children and adults with special needs.

A Week of Activities!

-  Dance to different types of music with your child. Talk about the music, "is it fast or slow, soft or loud, high or low?"
-  Play "Run Away Powder!" Fill a pan with water and sprinkle baby powder on the top. Place a bar of soap in the center of the pan and watch the powder move away. Talk about what made the powder move.
-  Play "Obstacle Course." Allow your child to go over, under in, on and through different obstacles you make from furniture and other safe objects in your home.
-  Make a list with your child of things you might need for a special event. Think about why each item is needed and where you will find them.







A Week of Activities!

-  Help your child look through magazines and newspapers to find words that start with the first letter as his/her name. Use a crayon or pencil to mark the letter.
-  Play "Body Parts." Ask your child to point to body parts such as wrist, neck, waist, hips, knees and ankles.
-  Find books at the library that are about workers in the community. Talk about each worker's job and its importance.
-  Prepare a meal with your child. Show how to measure different ingredients using a measuring cup or spoon. Ask your child to help you "read" the recipe on the back of a box or in your cookbook.







A Week of Activities!

-  Make a special book area in your home where your child can go to read or look at books quietly. Use pillows, stuffed animals, blankets and a box or basket for the books.
-  Have your child design a card or gift for someone special. Provide markers, paper, crayons, scissors, etc.
-  Bake cookies for a family member or a neighbor. Let your child tell the special person how the cookies were made.
-  Talk about good health practices. Remind your child to wash hands after toileting and to use tissues to wipe noses. Talk about germs.



A Week of Activities!









-  Talk with your child about your family traditions. Talk about how you celebrate special occasions. Think about how your traditions are the same or different from other people you know.
-  Play "store" with your child. Use play money to pay for items. Talk about how much things cost.
-  Experiment with magnets. Give your child a refrigerator magnet and see where s/he can make it stick in the house. Talk about what all of those objects have in common.
-  Help your child save a little money to shop with. Go to the store together. Let him or her pick out an inexpensive item and pay for it.



Check these out!

The Gingerbread Boy by Richard Egielski
The Mitten by Jan Brett
Owl Moon by Jane Yolen
Cleversticks by Bernard Ashley
Jelly Beans for Sale by Bruce McMillan
Just the Two of Us by Michael Smith



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JANUARY

"All children are gifted. Some just open their present later than others."

– Unknown



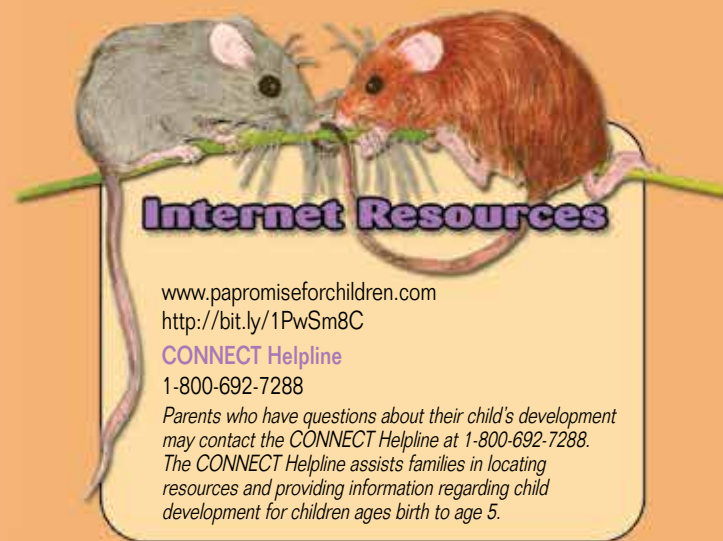
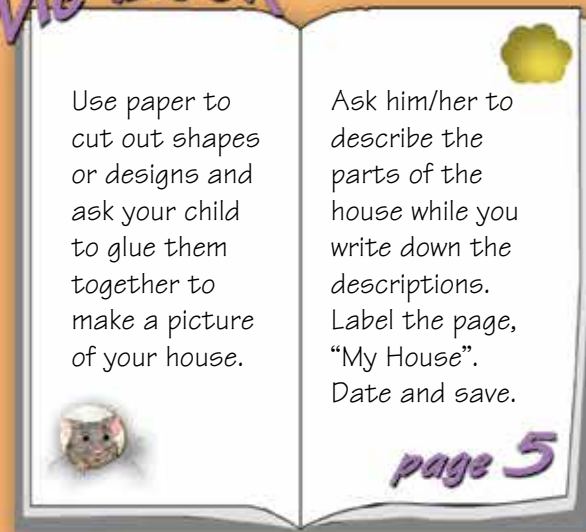
Getting Ready for Kindergarten (registration information)

Going to kindergarten is an important event for both children and parents. Having a child enter kindergarten prepared and ready to learn makes the transition much smoother for everyone.





- Contact your school district to find out which school your child will be attending in the fall. Ask about their registration procedures and dates.
- Gather the necessary paperwork: social security card, immunization records, birth certificate and physical exam.
- Complete the registration forms promptly and submit them to the appropriate school or administration office.
 - Get to know the school's expectations for a new kindergartner and for you as a kindergartner's parent!
 - Talk about school to get your child excited about his/her new adventure. Be positive. Parents are often worried or hesitant. Be careful not to let this show.
 - Give your child opportunities to make choices, follow directions, listen and follow rules.
 - Have your child practice dressing him/herself, using easy to button, zip and snap clothing.



Me Book







A Week of Activities!

-  Help your child find his/her own winter clothes by making an area where he can keep them all together. Put the child's mittens, hat, scarf, boots and coat there for him to find when it's time to go outside.
-  Together with your child, write down special events on a calendar. Look at it each week to talk about when they are happening. Use words like yesterday or tomorrow or next week.
-  Make a collage with unused items you find around the house such as a lid from a bottle, a popsicle stick, cotton balls, etc.
-  Look at pictures of your family doing different things. Together, describe what's happening in the pictures.







A Week of Activities!

-  Play "Object Hunt". Describe objects that are in your house. Ask your child to find each one after listening to the clues. "I am thinking about something that is round and bounces." (a ball)
-  Introduce your child to a new food this month. Talk about the kind of food – vegetable, meat, fruit – and how it helps keep you healthy.
-  Let your child paint with ice. Use food coloring to tint water in an ice tray and freeze. Give the child one cube to move around on paper while it melts and makes a design.
-  Bring in 3 snowballs from outside and put them in three separate bowls. Put one in the refrigerator, one in the freezer and one on the kitchen table. Watch what happens and talk about which one melts or freezes faster.







A Week of Activities!

-  Visit your local fire or police station. Let your child talk to a fire fighter or a police officer about the work s/he does.
-  Play "Flashlight Fun." Ask your child to find a specific item in the house using the flashlight. Ask your child "how did the light help you find the object?"
-  Help your child recognize his/her name in print. Make name cards and place them around your home in places where the child will see them often.
-  Play "Inside Catch". Cut off the bottom of a plastic gallon milk jug just below the handle to make a catcher "mitt". Show your child how to hold the handle to catch balls or bean bags that you throw.



A Week of Activities!

-  Give your child choices when you ask for help with chores. "Would you like to help fold socks, put them away or carry the clothes basket?"
-  Describe a job that someone could have in your community and ask your child to name it. "Who works in a fire station and rides on a truck with a long hose?"
-  Give your child a snack food with many colors such as cereal or fruit snacks. Help him/her to separate them into colors before eating. "Put all the red ones together, all the green ones together, etc."
-  Look at pictures in a new or unfamiliar book. Ask your child to think about or predict what might happen in the story. Read the story and compare your child's predictions to the actual story.



Check these out!

Knuffle Bunny by Mo Willem

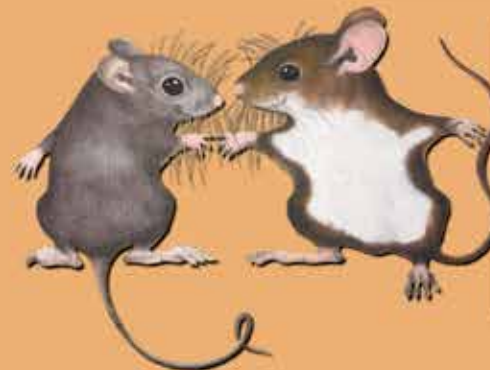
Cookie Time by Janet Wong









Yesterday I had the Blues by Jeron Ashford Frame

Surprising Sharks by Nicola Davies

And the Dish Ran Away With the Spoon by Janet Stevens

Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate



-  Approaches to Learning Through Play
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FEBRUARY

"A torn jacket is soon mended;
but hard words bruise the heart of a child."
— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Developing Problem Solving Skills

Children need to understand the consequences of their actions and how their actions can affect others.

- Model positive problem solving for your child. Use positive words in your household to resolve conflicts.
- Help your child use the IDEAL model of social problem solving:
 - I** = Identify the problem. Stop, calm down and think clearly about your reasons and feelings.
 - D** = Determine your choices. What can be done to solve the problem? "Let's think of ways you can both play with the blue truck. You could take turns, you could both fill it with sand, or someone could play with the red truck instead."
 - E** = Evaluate your choices. Think about the possible consequences. "It might be hard to wait for a turn, we could fill up the truck faster if we work together."
 - A** = Act on your best choice. "Let's use the red truck too."
 - L** = Learn from the results of your action. "We liked the red truck too and took turns with it." (from APA "Act Against Violence" www.actagainstv.org)
- Help your child learn that anger is a normal feeling, but it needs to be expressed in an appropriate way.
- Include your child in family discussions to help him or her cooperate with the decision.
- A child's behavior is influenced by TV, movies and video games. If a child sees violence, rude behavior and/or language, he or she is more likely to use those same behaviors. Monitor your child's TV, video or computer choices and talk together about what is being seen.

Me Book



Internet Resources

Pennsylvania Child Care Association (PACCA)

www.pacca.org

PACCA is a statewide, non-profit organization dedicated to facilitating the provision of quality early care and education to the children of Pennsylvania.



A Week of Activities!

- ▲ Count together during your daily routines. For example, count the chairs while you set the table or count how many socks you put into the washing machine.
- 🔍 Make a "Crazy Crayon Container." Fill a clear plastic bottle with water and add some crayon shavings. Secure the lid tightly. Have your child shake the bottle and move it in a circular motion. Watch and talk about how the shavings move.
- 📖 Show your child a picture or an object in your house. Ask him/her to tell you a funny make-believe story about it. You can begin by saying, "What if that spoon was a..."
- 👤 Play a game where you each take turns.



A Week of Activities!

- 🔍 Play with water! Give your child cups, basters, egg beaters, sponges and a strainer. Let him/her pour, squeeze and play!
- 😊 Make picture cards that show different emotions. Ask your child questions about what would make him/her feel like the faces in the pictures. "What makes you happy?"
- 📱 Help your child rip paper from old magazines or catalogs into different sized pieces. Show him/her how to glue them onto a paper to make a picture or design.
- 🍎 Play "Grocery Bag Moves!" Help your child step into a grocery bag that has handles. Ask him or her to move from one place to another while holding on to the handles of the bag.



A Week of Activities!

- 😊 Play a guessing game with your child when you are putting away groceries together. Show him/her an item and ask where it belongs. "Where do the crackers go?"
- 📖 Help your child learn letters by pointing out the letters in his/her name when you see them on books, signs, etc.
- ▲ Use different kinds of objects to measure things. Use your feet or hands to measure a room or furniture; use a pencil or a crayon to measure the size of a paper.
- 🏠 Talk together about where you live. Talk about whether you live in a house or an apartment. Give the address that includes the street, city and state.



A Week of Activities!

- 🍎 Play with play dough together. Show your child how to poke, pinch, squeeze and roll the dough to make shapes and objects. Talk about what you make.
- 📱 Listen to different kinds of music and talk about how they sound and how they make you feel. "This is really fast. It makes me want to jump."
- 🏠 When you are driving or riding on the bus, talk about the different kinds of vehicles you see. Watch for cars, trucks, bicycles, motorcycles. Ask, "How are they same or different? Are there vehicles that do a special jobs?"
- 👤 Give your child a choice about what to do today. Ask him/her to explain why that activity was chosen. "Would you like to read or play ball? Why did you choose that?"



Check these out!

Horses by Gail Gibbons
When Sophie Gets Angry by Molly Bang
Rap a Tap Tap by Leo and Diane Dillon
Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst



- 😊 Approaches to Learning Through Play
- 📱 Creative Thinking and Expression
- 📖 Language and Literacy Development
- ▲ Mathematical Thinking and Expression
- 👤 Social and Emotional Development
- 🍎 Health, Wellness and Physical Development
- 🔍 Scientific Thinking and Technology
- 🏠 Social Studies Thinking



MARCH

"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in."

— Rachel Carson



Sparkling Children's Imagination and Creativity

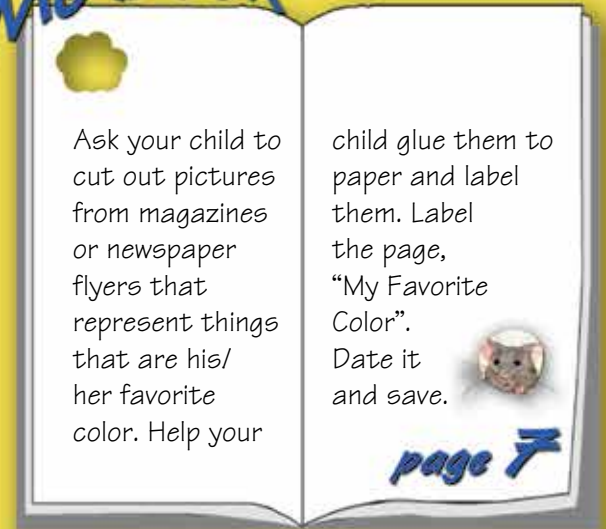
When children's imaginations are encouraged, they are more likely to be good problem solvers.

- Watch your child play and find out his/her interests. Use those interests to help your child learn new information.
- Children can be creative in many ways: through art, movement, music. Look for opportunities for your child to express himself.
- Children can use their imagination to create interesting stories that the family can write down and retell.
- Encourage your child to draw, paint or sculpt to express feelings or ideas. Drawing to music can be a very creative activity.
- Display your child's art work in your home. Show pride in your child's creativity and abilities.
- Children will be more creative with materials that don't have a single purpose. Help your child pretend that a box is a car or bus, or use a blanket over a table to make a fort or house.

- Give your child lots of plain paper for drawing or painting. When children create their own designs, they feel good about themselves and their abilities.
- Join in your child's play as he or she practices real situations or roles. Talk during play and ask questions, like, "Oh, you're a waitress. What are your specials today?"
- Have fun! Be silly and stretch your imagination. Children will follow a good example.



Me Book



Internet Resources

www.pbs.org/parents





Pennsylvania CHIP

www.chipcoverspakids.com

800-986-KIDS (5437)





Pennsylvania's CHIP program puts health coverage within reach for all uninsured kids and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance.

A Week of Activities!

-  Make bubbles! Mix together liquid dish soap and water. Put the mixture in a cup and show your child how you can blow into it with straws to make more bubbles. Dip in a slotted spoon or other objects and wave them around the room to make bubbles.
-  Clean and save eggshells. Break them into small pieces and give them to your child to glue onto paper.
-  Collect lids of different sizes from containers. Ask your child to put them in order from smallest to biggest.
-  Collect different kinds of things around the house that you and your child can use to build with. Use objects like pillows, shoe boxes, empty cereal boxes, cans, etc.







A Week of Activities!

-  Help your child make a list of "Things I Can Do Myself." Ask your child what special things s/he can do alone. Put them on a list and post it on the refrigerator.
-  Go to the library to check out books about life cycles. Look for books that show how caterpillars turn into butterflies or how tadpoles turn into frogs.
-  Ask your child to write a letter to a friend or relative. Take it to the post office to mail. Talk about the things and people that are inside a post office, such as the mail carriers, the stamps, the packages, etc.
-  Recite nursery rhymes together. Leave out the final rhyming words and encourage your child to fill in the blank. "Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall...Humpty Dumpty had a great _____ (fall)".







A Week of Activities!

-  Draw together on different types of paper, like newspaper, wrapping paper, sandpaper, or foil.
-  Sit on the steps outside your home. Close your eyes and listen. What sounds do you hear? Talk about the sounds and what they represent.
-  Play "Magic Carpet Ride." Ask your child to sit on the floor in the middle of a towel or blanket and hold on. Pull the towel across the floor. Next, see if your child can pull you or a heavy object around.
-  Sort laundry together. Sort by color, by types of items (all the shirts together) and by family member.



A Week of Activities!

-  Make number cards by putting the number 1-5 on pieces of paper. Ask your child to put the correct number of beans, stickers or other small objects on each card.
-  Encourage your child to order his/her own meal at a restaurant by saying, "tell the waiter or the clerk what drink or what sandwich you'd like."
-  Help your child draw straight, curvy, wavy or zigzag lines across a piece of paper. Give child-safe scissors for him or her to practice cutting.
-  At bedtime, use a flashlight to make shapes or letters on the ceiling. Ask your child to guess what you're making.



Check these out!

Abuela by Arthur Dorros

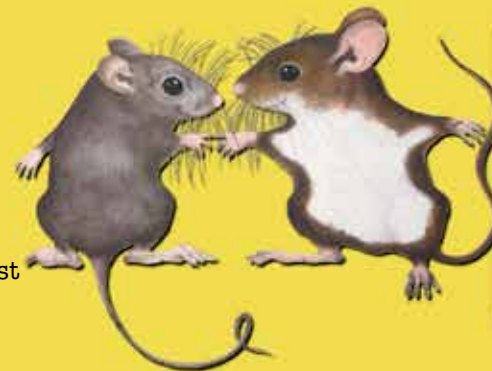
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff









The Painter by Peter Catalanato

Lottie's New Beach Towel by Petra Mathers

Turn Around, Upside Down Alphabet Book by Lisa Campbell Ernst

Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen



-  Approaches to Learning Through Play
-  Creative Thinking and Expression
-  Language and Literacy Development
-  Mathematical Thinking and Expression
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-  Social Studies Thinking



APRIL

“If we don’t stand up for children,
then we don’t stand up for much.”

– Marian Wright Edelman



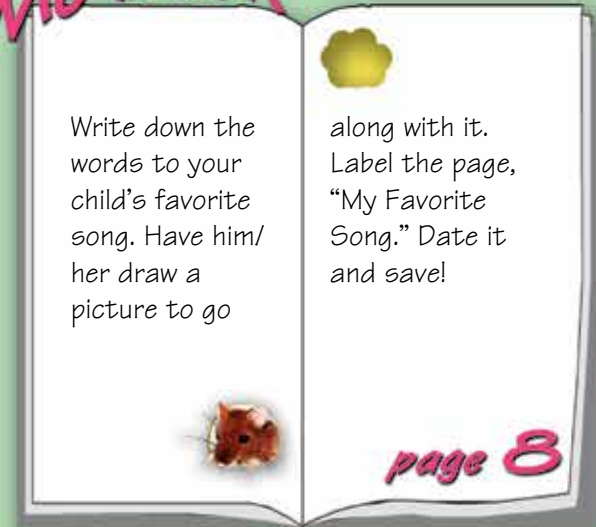
Health

There is nothing more important than a child’s health. Be aware of common childhood illnesses and preventive measures to keep children healthy.

- Keep your child’s immunizations up to date. Check with the doctor or state health clinic about what is needed. Your child’s immunizations will need to be current to enter kindergarten.
- Physical activity helps keep children healthy and maintain a healthy weight. Parents should make sure that their children are getting at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day. Remember that being active with your children is a great way to show them how important it is.
- Encourage your children to eat nutritious foods. Fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products and grains are important foods for your children. Try new foods together and work to “eat a rainbow of colors” every day. Sweets and fatty foods should be limited for all children.
- Take your child for a regular wellness check. Speak with the doctor about any concerns you may have about your child.
- While all children grow and change at their own rate, some children can experience delays in development. If you have concerns, contact your local Intermediate Unit. Or, call CONNECT Information Service, 800-692-7288.
- Children should brush their teeth regularly and receive a dental exam every 6 months. Parents can clean their child’s mouth until he or she is able to brush independently. Make sure your child is getting the appropriate fluoride supplements and set a good example by practicing good dental hygiene.
- Check with your child’s doctor about having your child tested for lead. This is especially important if you live in an older house or apartment.
- Don’t expose your child to tobacco smoke. Second hand smoke is not healthy for your child.



Me Book



Internet Resources

www.kidshealth.org

Child Care Works Network – Child Care Subsidies – Child Care Information Systems

1-877-4-PA-KIDS

Child Care Works is Pennsylvania’s plan for improving the quality and increasing the availability of safe, affordable child care for Pennsylvania’s working families.

Pennsylvania Head Start Association

www.paheadstart.org

The Pennsylvania Head Start Association works with Head Start grantees, families and the community to promote Head Start in Pennsylvania.

A Week of Activities!

- 🏠 Talk about different ways to get from one place to another (transportation) such as car, bike, airplane, taxi, walking, bus, etc.. Which ones would your family use to go to places that are near or far?
- 👤 Talk to your child about things that make him/her nervous, scared, excited, sad and happy. Tell your child things that make you feel those ways too.
- 🔍 Take a walk to look for flowers. Talk about the way they look or smell. How many colors do you see?
- 📖 Write a large letter of the alphabet on a piece of paper. Have your child trace the letter with glue and put small objects that begin with the letter on the glue. For example, cotton balls on the letter C or beans on the letter B.



A Week of Activities!

- 📱 Help your child make a musical instrument with items found around the house. Put rice or beans inside a plastic bottle to make a shaker or cut a hole in a shoe box lid and wrap rubber bands around the lid to make a guitar.
- 🍏 Encourage your child to use tongs or tweezers to pick up objects from one bowl and transfer them into another. Cotton balls or ice are good, safe objects for your child to use.
- ▲ Play "A Pocket Full of Change." Help your child begin to identify coins by sorting them according to size or color. Talk about how they are alike or different. Tell your child the names.
- 😊 Find a "secret" item and put it in a bag or box. Ask your child, "Can you guess what I've got in here?" Give clues, one at a time, until he or she has guessed correctly. Next, ask your child to find the surprise object and you guess from his/her clues.



A Week of Activities!

- 👤 Help your child pack away winter clothes and bring out lighter, cooler clothes. Make a place where your child can reach his/her own jacket or sweater.
- 🍏 Play "Puddle Jump". Put on rain gear on a rainy day and go outside to practice jumping over puddles. Or, play this inside by pretending that pillows are the puddles.
- 😊 Ask your child to help you plan for a family meal. Together, make a list of the things you need from the store. Let your child help you find the items at the store.
- 📖 Give your child two-step directions during the day. Use directions such as "Get your coat and go to the door." Or "Take off your clothes and get in the bath tub."



A Week of Activities!

- 🔍 How much did it rain? Leave a container or cup outside to measure the rainfall. Show your child how to use a ruler to see how much it rained.
- 🏠 What do parents do all day? Talk about the jobs that mommies and daddies do and why they are important.
- ▲ Play "Where Is It?" Ask your child where you find objects in your home. Use prepositions such as under, below, over, above, on, before, to describe locations. "Where is the tissue box?" (on the table)
- 📱 Encourage your child to paint with different objects from nature such as sticks, leaves or rocks.



Check these out!

This Rocket by Paul Collicut

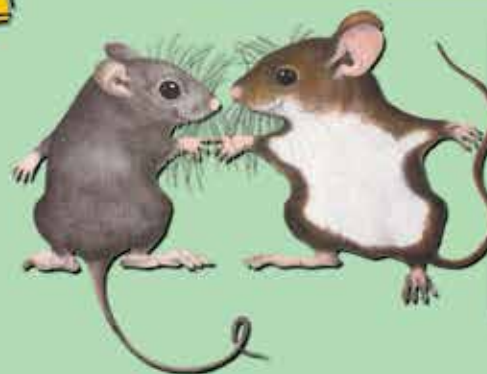
How Do Dinosaurs Get Well by Jane Yolen

Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkin

If You Decide to Go to the Moon by Faith McNulty

That New Animal by Emily Jenkins

How to Catch a Star by Oliver Jeffers



- 😊 Approaches to Learning Through Play
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- 🔍 Scientific Thinking and Technology
- 🏠 Social Studies Thinking



MAY

"The work can wait while you show the child the rainbow,
but the rainbow won't wait while you do the work"

– Unknown



Celebrate your child's difference!

Every child is special and learns in unique ways. Parents who value their children's differences and help them to develop their own interests and personalities build strong, creative thinkers. Discover your child's style!

- Learn how your child approaches new things. Some children love new experiences and participate right away. Others are more careful about situations and need time to watch or listen first. Either approach is okay.
- Recognize how your child behaves when his or her routine is changed. Does your child handle changes easily with flexibility or does a break in an everyday routine upset your child, making the day a difficult one? Be prepared for your child's reaction when a change occurs.
- Some children are more active than others. The child who loves to run and climb is developing just as successfully as the child who is more quiet and likes to read or draw.

- Recognize your child's learning style. One child may need to touch and explore objects to learn while another child may learn best by looking or listening.
- Does your child like a lot of activity or does he or she prefer quiet settings with soft lights and soft music? A quiet-loving child may have difficulty feeling comfortable in a loud, active setting.
- When you understand your child's temperament and style, you can create experiences that support his or her uniqueness. This helps prepare a child for kindergarten and future learning experiences.



Me Book



Ask your child to draw a picture about what he/she might like to do when he/she grows up. Talk together about your child's ideas and interests

including what kinds of tasks or responsibilities the job might require. Write down his/her description. Label the page, "When I Grow Up." Date it and save.

page 9



Internet Resources

PA Family Literacy Resources

www.pafamilyliteracyresources.weebly.com

Providing families with the most recent and useful Family Literacy resources.

A Week of Activities!

- 🏠 Take a walk down your street. Look at the traffic signs and talk about what they mean. Notice how they are the same or different. (For example, stop signs are red; parking signs are white). Count the signs on your street.
- 😊 Give your child three photos of him/herself at different ages. Together, put them in order from youngest to oldest.
- 📱 Take a walk around your community. Point out different kinds of artwork such as sculpture or graffiti. Talk about how they were made.
- 🍎 String noodles or "O" shaped cereal onto a shoe lace or string. Tie the ends together to make a necklace your child can wear.



A Week of Activities!

- 👤 Together, use words and pictures to make a list of things you do to be clean and healthy. For example, draw a bar of soap and write soap next to the picture.
- 📖 Talk to your child about how to care for books. Show how to turn the pages gently and, together, find a special place to keep books at your house.
- ▲ Share a food item with your child. For example, cut a piece of your toast in half to share. Talk about who has the bigger piece or who has less.
- 🔍 Make a balloon pump. Use an empty water or soda bottle. Put the lip of a balloon over the mouth of the bottle. Ask your child to squeeze the empty bottle and watch what happens!



A Week of Activities!

- 👤 Experience your five senses. How do things feel, sound, taste, smell or look?
- 🍎 Play "Red Light, Green Light." Explain that when you say "green light" children can move any way they like...hop, jump, skip, run, etc. But, when you say "red light", they must stop and wait for you to call "green light" again.
- 📱 Cut fruits and vegetables in half. Let your child dip them in paint and make fruit or vegetable prints on paper.
- 📖 Ask your child to tell you a story. Write down some of the words on a blank piece of paper. Give your child the paper and a crayon and ask him to illustrate it.



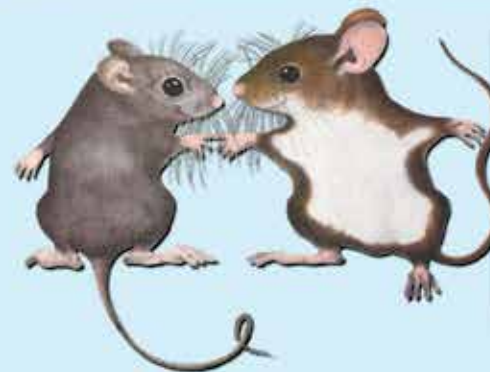
A Week of Activities!

- 🔍 What happens when you mix flour, salt and water together?
- 🏠 Talk about ways to move on land, sky or in the water. "How do birds or people move through the sky?" (in airplanes, birds fly) "How do we move in water?" (swim, boat)
- 😊 Make a pile of different clothing items such as a hat, pants, bathing suits, pajamas, coat, etc. Ask questions about which item would be needed to do certain things. For example, "what would you wear when you go to bed?"
- ▲ Play a guessing game together. Ask, "how many ice cubes will fit in this cup?" After your child guesses a number, find out by testing your prediction.



Check these out!

- Duck on a Bike** by David Shannon
- Red-Eyed Tree Frog** by Joy Cowley
- Arthur Babysits** by Marc Brown
- Detective Larue** by Mark Teague
- Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain** by Verna Aardema
- Under One Rock** by Anthony Fredericks



- 😊 Approaches to Learning Through Play
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- 📖 Language and Literacy Development
- ▲ Mathematical Thinking and Expression
- 👤 Social and Emotional Development
- 🍎 Health, Wellness and Physical Development
- 🔍 Scientific Thinking and Technology
- 🏠 Social Studies Thinking



JUNE

"It is easier to build strong children
than to repair broken men"

— Frederick Douglas



Healthy Eating Habits

**Help your child to eat well by starting each day
with a healthy breakfast.**

- Provide foods from each of the food groups. Include all the colors in the rainbow to help you make healthy choices.
- Children need to try new foods many times before they learn to like them. Introduce something new in small amounts so your child will be more willing to try it.
- Talk about the texture (rough, smooth, bumpy), color, smell (sweet, tart), and taste (salty, sweet, sour) of foods.
 - Have regularly scheduled meal times, eating together as a family whenever possible. Avoid eating in front of the TV or computer.
 - Avoid using food to punish or reward behavior.
 - Use the right portion sizes for your child. Your health provider can help you determine how much your child should eat at one sitting.
 - Try to plan healthy snacks. Younger children need to eat frequently, so snacks are part of their nutrition. Call your county Cooperative Extension office to get recipe ideas and nutrition information.



Me Book

Ask your child to tell you a make-believe or pretend story. Write the story at the bottom of the paper and have him/her

draw a picture about it. Talk together to make up a title; add it to the top of the page. Date it and save.

page 10



Internet Resources





www.choosemyplate.gov
www.foodsafety.gov

The Fred Rogers Company
www.fredrogers.org

The non-profit Fred Rogers Company continues advancing Fred Rogers' philosophy and values. Find parent and children's resources at the above website.







A Week of Activities!

-  Find an object around the house and ask your child to think of words that rhyme or sound the same. Nonsense words are acceptable too. Example: bed—head; oven—lovin
-  Pretend to be the teacher in an exercise class. Ask your child to run in place, bend, stretch, or hop. Then, let your child be the instructor who tells you what kinds of exercise to do.
-  Make a road map by using blocks and small toys to represent buildings and streets in your community. Ask your child to move small toy cars around the map while you talk about the different places.
-  Help your child plant bean or flower seeds in a small can or cup. Put the container in a sunny place. Water it with your child everyday. Watch what happens!



A Week of Activities!

-  Make stencils by cutting shapes out of plastic lids (such as a lid from a butter tub). Show your child how to lay the stencil on paper and use a marker, crayon or pencil to draw around the outside. When you lift it up, you've made the shape!
-  While outside, throw different kinds of balls into the air. Talk about which one goes higher, faster and further.
-  Create sound patterns using your hands or mouths. Ask your child to repeat them. (clap, clap, tap; finger snap, tongue click, finger snap)
-  Talk about your favorite things. Ask questions like, "what do you like to do when you're outside?" Talk about whether those activities can be done year-round or whether they change with the seasons.



Check these out!

Let's Try It Out in the Water by Seymour Simon

Gregory the Terrible Eater by Marjorie Sharmat





Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin

Do You Have a Hat? by Eileen Spinelli

Uno, Dos, Tres = One, Two, Three by Pat Mora





Five Little Monkeys Sitting in a Tree by Eileen Christelow

A Week of Activities!









-  Imitate sounds you hear in your neighborhood such as cars, fire trucks, birds or airplanes. Ask your child to guess what they are. Then ask your child to make a sound and you guess what it is.
-  Play a counting game. Ask your child to find specific amounts of different items you describe. For example, "find 3 pencils, find 5 pennies, etc."
-  Give your child various "throw away" items that are found in your house, such as toilet paper rolls, old mail, lids, etc. Ask him or her to arrange the items into a sculpture or to create a masterpiece. Encourage him to describe what s/he made.
-  Dance with your child using props such as musical instruments, scarves, ribbons, etc.



A Week of Activities!

-  Use sidewalk chalk together when you're outside to create a picture on the sidewalk or driveway.
-  Help your child write a letter to a family member or a friend. Together, address the envelope, put on a stamp and take it to the mailbox to mail.
-  Help your child get ready to play with a friend. Talk about the kinds of things they will do together.
-  Play the "Opposite Game." Say a word and see if your child can say the opposite. You say "walk;" your child says "run." You say "happy;" your child says "sad."



-  Approaches to Learning Through Play
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-  Social Studies Thinking



JULY

"There are only two lasting bequests we
can hope to give our children.
One is roots; the other, wings."
— Hodding Carter



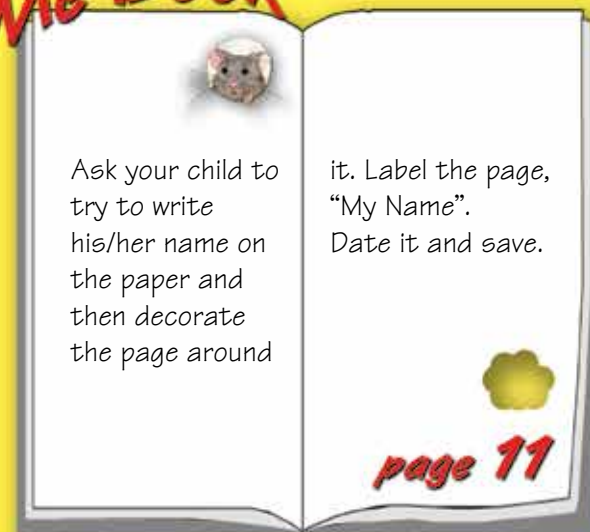
Saying Goodbye at the School Door

A little bit of preparation during the summer will make your child's first days of kindergarten comfortable ones.

- Leave your child for short periods of time with other adults. When you return, tell your child how proud you are that he/she stayed there without you. Talk about what they did and explain how this will be similar to kindergarten.
- Visit your child's school before school starts. Talk about things you see such as the playground or the size of the building. Tell your child how excited you'll be to hear about school each day when he or she comes home.
- Decide together, how you will say goodbye to each other. Create a ritual that you can do together everyday. It might include kisses, hugs or waves.
- Ask your child's teacher how children who miss their parents are comforted during the day. Talk with your child about how he or she can find comfort. Give your child a family picture that can be kept in the backpack or think of something special he or she can remember to tell you at the end of the day.
 - Read books to your child that talk about starting Kindergarten.
 - Take your child to Kindergarten Orientation, if offered. Some schools offer this opportunity to meet the teacher, see the classroom, and possibly experience a ride on the school bus.
 - Identify other children who will be in your child's kindergarten class and try to arrange for them to play together throughout the summer months.
 - Start a school routine. Practice going to bed early, waking up early and eating a healthy breakfast. Lay out clothes and pack the book bag the night before to avoid conflicts before school.



Me Book



Internet Resources

Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECLS)

www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org

A statewide project to improve children's health and safety by linking health professionals with the staff of early childhood programs.

A Week of Activities!

- ☺ Give your child household props to play “grocery store” or “doctor’s office.”
- 🏠 Invite one of your child’s friends to visit. Let them play “store” using play money and some safe items in your home such as cans of food or cereal boxes, books or magazines or videos.
- 👤 Help your child learn his/her phone number and address. Make the words into a song or poem so it is easier to learn.
- 🔍 Look for insects in your yard or playground. Use a clear container to make a bug house and put the insects inside, along with small pieces of grass and sticks. Talk about how the bugs look and what they might eat.



A Week of Activities!

- 📖 Sort toys and objects with your child by the beginning letter. Tell your child, “Let’s put all the things that start with ‘C’ together...car, candy, can.”
- ▲ Play “Toy Parade”. Line up different toys and ask your child to point to the one that is first or second. Point to the one that is last.
- 🧱 Make a sculpture with play dough and objects you find around the home. Put it somewhere safe to dry.
- 🍏 Play “Moving Questions.” Ask your child questions like, “How many ways can you balance yourself besides standing?” “How many different ways can you move your arms? Your head? Your legs?”



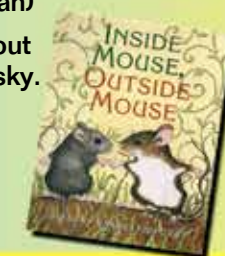
A Week of Activities!

- ▲ Make a puzzle with your child. Cut a picture (from a magazine or an old calendar or photograph) into 4-6 pieces. Together, put the pieces together.
- ☺ Take your child to the park. Encourage him/her to play on the slide or swings. Then, ask “what did you do first, what did you second?”
- 🏠 Go outside to look at the building or home in which you live. Ask your child to describe it. Is it an apartment or a house? What color and number is it? Does it have a front yard or stairs or a fence? How is it the same or different from the other homes or buildings on your street?
- 🎵 Choose one of your child’s favorite songs and sing it together. Then, change the ending to make it silly. Sing again.



A Week of Activities!

- 🍏 During your child’s doctor or dentist visit, talk about what these professionals do and explain why it’s important to have regular check-ups.
- 📖 Select a few of your child’s favorite books and put them in a bag. Ask your child to guess which book is in the bag by giving clues about the characters or the story. “I have a book in the bag that is about a cookie man. This cookie runs away.” (Gingerbread Man)
- 🔍 Go outside on a warm night. Look at the sky. Talk about things that are found in the daytime or the nighttime sky. (Sun, stars, moon, clouds, birds, airplanes, etc.)
- 👤 When your family is experiencing conflict or tempers flare, talk with your child about how you might solve these problems.



Check these out!

Hot City by Barbara Joose

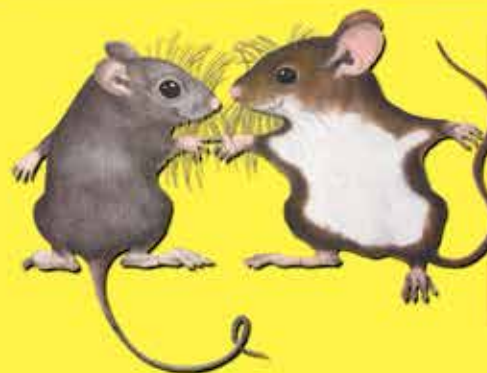
Pop! A Book About Bubbles by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Fire Truck by Peter Sis

Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes

Tacky the Penguin by Helen Lester

Owl Babies by Martin Waddell



- ☺ Approaches to Learning Through Play
- 🧱 Creative Thinking and Expression
- 📖 Language and Literacy Development
- ▲ Mathematical Thinking and Expression
- 👤 Social and Emotional Development
- 🍏 Health, Wellness and Physical Development
- 🔍 Scientific Thinking and Technology
- 🏠 Social Studies Thinking

AUGUST

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

Learning in Your Neighborhood

Help your child become familiar with the neighborhood in which you live. Learning can take place at the grocery store, at the park, at the police station or when visiting next door.

- Name letters and numbers you see during your daily travels in your neighborhood. M for McDonalds; the number 4 on a license plate.
- At the grocery store, talk about the colors and shapes of the fruits and vegetables.
- A trip to the local park or playground will build your child's muscles and develop social skills as they play with other children.
- On a walk, your child can learn about the street you live on by looking at street signs, house numbers or mailboxes.
- Visit your local fire station to help your child learn about fire safety.
- Children can learn new languages by visiting neighborhood people with different cultural backgrounds.
- Take your child to festivals, carnivals and fairs to provide an opportunity for new experiences.
- Children can learn about cultures, history, art, music or science at a local or nearby museum.

Me Book



Make a cover for your "Me Book". Ask your child to decorate two pieces of paper (one for the front and one for the back)

using different materials. Use a hole puncher and string or yarn to bind the pages together. Label the book, "All About Me."

page 12

Internet Resources

PA's Promise for Children
www.papromiseforchildren.com

Learn about resources in your community at the above website.



A Week of Activities!

- 🍎 As you do the laundry, make balls out of socks (by rolling them into each other) and have your child practice throwing them into the laundry basket.
- 😊 Talk about how your family's schedule might change when kindergarten starts. Discuss the things you will need to do to prepare for school in the morning and what will happen after school.
- 📖 Help your child practice writing his/her name on paper. Show him/her how it starts with a big letter (capital letter) and uses lower case (small letters) for the rest.
- 🖌️ Ask your child to imagine what kindergarten will be like. Then, ask your him/her to draw a picture.



A Week of Activities!

- 📖 Find a book at the library about going to school. Read it together and talk about kindergarten. Ask your child to re-tell it to you.
- 🖌️ Encourage your child to "paint" with water outside on pavements or brick, etc.
- ▲ Introduce your child to a variety of measurement tools such as a timer, a ruler, measuring cups, and thermometer. Talk about what each one measures or is used for. Practice using them.
- 🏠 Talk about things that your child likes to do now. Then ask what s/he might like to do in the future (next week, next year, when s/he grows up).



A Week of Activities!

- 🔍 Freeze two containers of water, one small and the other large. Next, place the frozen container outside. Together, make predictions about what will happen. "I think the small piece will melt by lunch and the large piece will melt by dinner."
- 👤 Make a family "work day" where everyone has chores to complete. Sing while you work or celebrate when everyone's finished.
- 🏠 Ask your child to imagine what kindergarten will be like. Walk to the school and look at the building as you both describe what you think a day might be like.
- ▲ Start a kindergarten "count down." Write 30, 29, 28, etc all the way to 1 on a piece of paper. Together, cross out one number each day to show how many days are left until school starts.

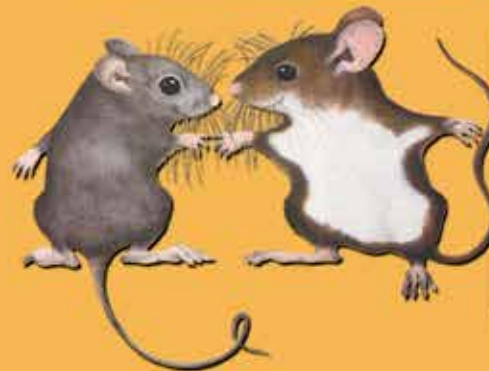
A Week of Activities!

- 👤 Tell your child how proud you are that he or she is going into kindergarten. Explain that it's okay to be nervous or scared. Talk about other new experiences you've had together. "Remember how you felt when you went to that new doctor?"
- 🍎 Ask your child to draw his or her new teacher a picture. Write down the child's description and name. Encourage your child to take the picture with him or her on the first day.
- 😊 Together, pick out the clothes your child will wear on the first day of school. Keep them in a special place, along with the book bag and other needed items you have gathered.
- 🔍 Make ramps by propping cardboard on objects of different heights. Roll balls and small cars down the ramps. Talk about which one goes faster and which one goes slower.



Check these out!

I Spy School Days by Walter Wick and Jean Marzollo
Biscuit by Alyssa Capucilli
Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey
A Story for Bear by Dennis Hasely
My Kindergarten by Rosemary Wells
Everybody Works by Shelley Rotner



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Health



Immunization

- Immunizations are required
- Parents need to check with the school district for a list of mandated immunizations



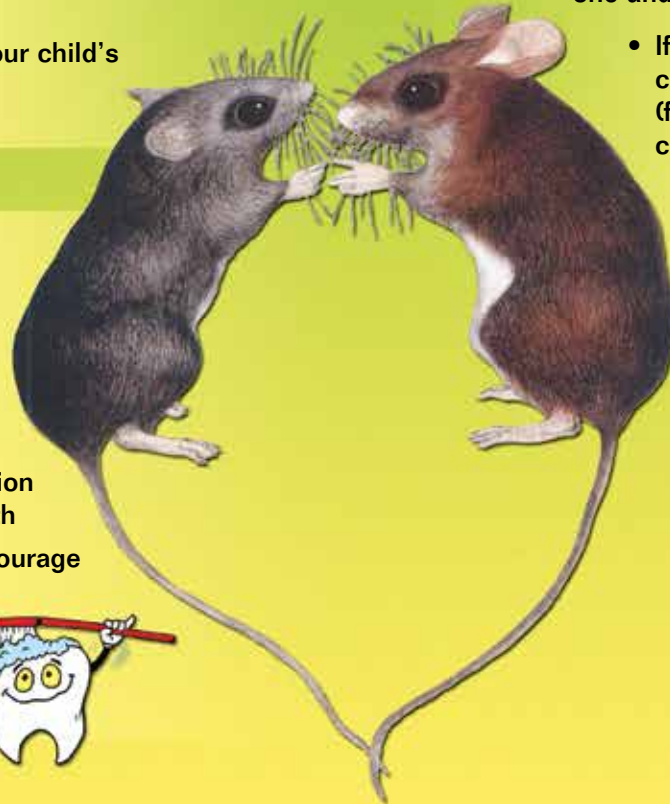
Visit the Doctor

- The law states that a child must have a physical examination before entering kindergarten
- Schedule a routine physical examination with your child's doctor
- The doctor will check your child's vision, hearing, physical development and immunizations.
- If you have concerns about your child's readiness, please discuss it with your physician



Dental Health

- All children of school age in the Commonwealth upon original entry into school need to be given a dental examination
- The Commonwealth encourages parents and guardians to have their child examined by the family dentist in lieu of a school dentist
- The family dentist reports the dental examination on a form approved by the Secretary of Health
- Teach your child how to brush teeth and encourage brushing after meals or at least twice a day.
- The American Dental Association recommends a yearly check up and professional cleaning and fluoride treatment



Eye Health

- Visual problems can and do affect the educational, social and emotional development of children. Early detection of vision problems assures the child of the opportunity of taking the best advantage of his/her educational opportunities
- The purpose of the school vision screening program is to identify students with visual impairment. Vision problems affect one in 20 preschool children
- The American Optometric Association recommends an eye examination by 6 months of age, at three years old, before grade one and every two years thereafter.
- If parents note conditions such as crossed eyes or cataracts, or if the child is considered to be at risk (family history of eyeglass wear before age 3, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, premature birth, or developmental delays), earlier or more frequent examinations may be necessary.



Watch That Weight

- Nutrition is recognized as a critical factor in the promotion of health and the prevention of disease
- Overweight and obesity in children represents one of the most challenging conditions to treat. Nutrition and physical activity play key roles affecting overweight and obesity in children.
- Be a good model and show your child how to eat the right kinds of foods. Try to include more fruits and vegetables in your daily diet. Encourage moderation of sweets and snack foods
 - Encourage fun physical activities
 - Encourage consumption of low fat food products



Getting Ready for Kindergarten!

Contact your local school district to find out the dates for kindergarten pre-registration. You will need the following items to register your child for public school:

- ✓ Birth Certificate
- ✓ Social Security Card
- ✓ Current immunization record
- ✓ Health history form completed by parent/guardian *(obtain from the school at time of registration)*
- ✓ Physical and dental exam performed by a health care professional
- ✓ Proof of residency such as a driver's license or a rental or mortgage agreement



Ask your child's teacher about "Color Me Healthy". It is a program that is used in preschools to help children learn how healthy eating and physical activity can be fun. For more information about food and nutrition, go to www.panen.org/keystone-kids-go/go-colorful.

Recipes for Fun!



Uncooked Play Dough

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 cup cold water | food coloring |
| 1 cup salt | 3 cups flour |
| 2 teaspoons vegetable oil | 2 tablespoons cornstarch |

Mix water, salt, oil and enough food coloring to make a bright color. Gradually add in flour and cornstarch until the mixture reaches the consistency of bread dough.



Flour Finger Paint

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 cup flour | 1 ¼ cups hot water |
| 2 tablespoons salt | saucepan |
| 1 ½ cups cold water | whisk or rotary beater |
| food coloring | |

Put flour and salt into a saucepan. Add cold water and beat with a whisk or rotary beater until smooth. Add hot water and boil until mixture is thick. Beat again until smooth. Keep in refrigerator and color as needed with food coloring.



Peanut Butter Play Dough

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 18 ounces peanut butter | cocoa or carob for |
| 6 tablespoons honey | chocolate flavor |
| nonfat dry milk or milk plus flour | bowl |
| edible treats for decoration | |

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix, adding enough dry milk or milk plus flour to reach the consistency of bread dough. Add cocoa or carob, if desired. Shape, decorate with edible treats and eat!



Homemade Face Paint

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Bowl | ½ teaspoon water |
| 1 teaspoon corn starch | food coloring |
| ½ teaspoon cold cream | small paintbrush or Q-tips |

In a bowl, stir together corn starch and cold cream until well-blended. Add water and stir. Add food coloring, one drop at a time until you get the color you desire. Paint designs with a small paintbrush or Q-tip. Store paint in a covered plastic container.



Homemade Paste

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| ½ cup flour | saucepan |
| cold water | flavoring and/or food coloring |

Add some cold water to the flour until it is as thick as cream. Simmer over low heat and stir for five minutes. Add a few drops of flavoring and/or food coloring. This recipe makes a wet, messy paste that takes a while to dry.



Cooked Play Dough

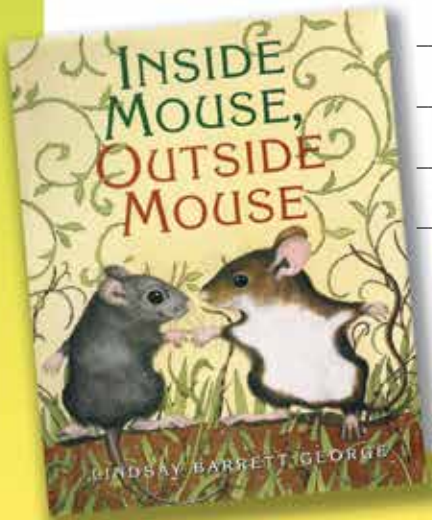
- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 cup water | food coloring |
| 1 cup flour | 2 teaspoons cream of tartar |
| ½ cup salt | 2 tablespoons vegetable oil |

Mix flour, salt and cream of tartar together and put into a small pot. Next, mix the food coloring and cooking oil into the 1 c water. Pour slowly into the flour mixture, stirring constantly, cooking over a low heat until the dough pulls away from the sides of the pot. Remove from heat. Knead until smooth. Store in a zip loc bag.



Books We Have Read

List the titles of the books you and your child have read this year. Mark your favorites with a star. Re-read them over and over to help your child learn important book handling and reading skills.



**Pennsylvania is especially grateful to
Lindsay Barrett George who produced
the artwork for this Activity Book**



My first memory of the power and magic of books still haunts me. When I was very young, I believed that animals pictured in books were alive in those books. A photograph of a “sea monster” in my parents’ copy of the Wonder Book of Knowledge looked so real that I wouldn’t walk in front of the book, for fear of being bitten. Oh, the power of make-believe.

I became a fine arts major in college and then moved to New York City. In all of my free time, I was in my studio making little handmade books, telling stories with only pictures, no words. Even so, it wasn’t until I moved to Pennsylvania, into a log cabin in the woods, that I realized I

had something to say to children in books, and I gave the field a serious try.

I love mysteries. As I start out to create each of my books, I feel as though I have a mystery to solve. Writing the story and designing the book is my way of finding the solution. There is magic for me in creating children’s books. I also love the “aha” moments, when ideas come together and pop. For me, that usually happens while driving the car, walking my dogs, or in the moments just before waking, in the very early morning. I often look for happy accidents or patterns.

Inside Mouse, Outside Mouse came out of a personal challenge: to see what I could do with my daughter’s third-grade homework assignment—writing about a mouse in one’s house. I had always liked mice and had several pictures of them on my studio wall. The concept of an outside mouse meeting an inside mouse was intriguing, and using the graphic idea of two lines meeting in the middle felt right. The fact that it took six years to work it out is still a bit of a shock. The word “revision” is my new middle name.

My next idea for a book? That is also part of the magic for me. Many years ago I asked my friend Vera B. Williams where her ideas came from, and Vera answered, “Ideas are like fairies. They’re in the air everywhere. They could be sitting on your shoulder. They could be sitting on your knee. They could be whispering into your ear. You simply have to hear them.” Here’s to keeping your ears open . . . and a pencil and paper nearby.

**“Fifty years from now it will not matter
what kind of car you drove, what kind of
house you lived in, how much you had in
your bank account or what your clothes
looked like. But the world may be a
little better place because you were
important in the life of a child.”**

—Anonymous



**Special thanks to the
participants of the
Kindergarten,
Here I Come!**

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KELLI THOMPSON
CRISTY YODERS**



**This Activity Book is made possible
through the support of...**

