

Caring for Kids



Ready for Group Time

The most successful group times begin with an activity that gets children into the right mood.

Group time activities should do two things:

- 1 Get the children moving around
- 2 Calm the children down at the end, so they are ready to pay attention.

Weather Walk is a movement game in which children walk as if they are outside in different weather conditions. A good time to try the Weather Walk game is just before circle time. Have the children try walking in these weather conditions:

- windy
- hurricane
- very hot
- drizzle
- walking in fall leaves
- puddles after a rain
- lightning storm
- icy
- sunny
- tornado
- very cold
- humid, very little breeze
- deep snow
- deep sand on a sunny day



End with a calm weather condition to relax the group. For more great ideas like this one ask your Cooperative Extension Agent to borrow the book "Follow Me Too" by Marianne Torbert and Lynne B. Schneider from the County Resource Library.

**telephone help line for
child care providers**

Do you have questions about caring for other people's children, such as...

- How do I get children to eat?
- Why won't children share?
- How do I stop a child from biting other children?
- What do I do when a parent doesn't pay in time?
- Where do I call to find out how to become a registered child care provider?

**You're not
alone . . .**

Telephone Help Line

**Call Toll Free
1-800-859-8340**



S N A C K S

Making Snacks Fun


Shake n' Make Butter

Baby food jars with tight lids (one for each child)

Whipping Cream

salt

bread, muffins or crackers



Fill each baby food jar about 1/4 full of whipping cream and shake for 10 seconds. Give a jar to each child and have them shake the jars for 10 minutes (adults can help), stopping now and then to see the changes taking place. A song or chant will help make the shaking rhythmic, for example, "Shake the jar, shake the jar, we are making butter". When the butter has formed, pour the leftover buttermilk into cups for the children to taste. Let the children taste the sweet butter and then add salt. Spread on bread, muffins, or crackers.

Yummy Bread Sticks




1 can refrigerator bread sticks


cinnamon and sugar

parmesan cheese

Italian seasoning



Cut each uncooked bread stick into 3 pieces. Place cinnamon and sugar mixture on a piece of wax paper, the parmesan cheese on a separate piece, and the Italian seasoning on another piece. Let the children roll the dough pieces in one of the spices or seasonings. Bake according to directions on can. Let the children sample each type of breadstick.



CAUTION: *Be aware that infants and young children can choke easily on some foods, such as seeds, nuts, popcorn, fruit seeds or pits, pieces of hot dogs or bacon, and some raw vegetables, such as carrots and celery. Using grated or finely chopped foods may reduce the risk of choking.*


Peanut Butter Ping Pong Balls

1-1/4 cup peanut butter

1/2 cup plus 2 T. honey

1-1/2 t. vanilla

7-1/2 cups crispy rice cereal



Mix ingredients in a bowl. Let the children roll into 1-inch balls. Refrigerate 1 hour, and eat! Serves 10.

Note: This is a great recipe for single portion cooking (let each child measure and mix their own ingredients).

Bagel Buddies

bagels, sliced in half

whipped cream cheese

carrot, sliced into thin rounds

small cherry tomatoes, sliced in half

sliced black olives

small bell pepper, thinly sliced


alfalfa sprouts

small cucumber, sliced into thin rounds

optional:

Grated carrots or beets

sunflower seeds



Arrange the vegetables in small bowls on a table. Spread cream cheese on bagel halves. Give each child a bagel half to decorate with a face to make a "bagel Buddy". To make multicultural bagel buddies, add food coloring to cream cheese.

***You're not Alone* Telephone Help Line**

Here is some information from a recent call to the *You're Not Alone* telephone help line.

Question: What can I do to build self-esteem in children?

Answer: Self-esteem is built on feelings of mastery, a genuine feeling of accomplishment. A simple way to begin this is to offer children toys that respond to their actions. We call them kid-powered toys. They include such things as rattles, blocks, baby gyms, tucks, dress-up dolls, musical instruments, toys that make sounds or move when the child pushes buttons. These toys are powered by kids actions or their imagination.

Playing with these types of toys helps children build their self-esteem.

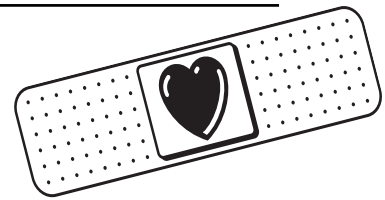


Another way to build feelings of

mastery is as soon as a child is old enough to indicate yes or no give that child choices whenever possible. You might say, "Do you want to eat your peas or potatoes first?" The practice of making choices is very important for the young child helping them to feel competent and capable.

Finally, state your rules in a positive way. Rather than saying "No, Don't stand on the chair", say to the child, "We stand on the floor." It helps children to learn what is expected of them and sets them up for success.

As a child care provider, you are definitely NOT alone as you work hard to handle this and other questions on a daily basis. While there are no quick and easy answers, providers have found it helpful to talk about their concerns. Keep the help line number by your phone. Do not hesitate to call 1-800-859-8340.



Portable First Aid

A belly bag or fanny pack makes a perfect portable first aid kit. Ideal for field trips and outdoor adventures, it keeps your hands free and is easily accessible. Include the following in your first aid kit:

Adhesive bandages in assorted sizes

sterile gauze pads

sterile stretchable bandages in rolls

bandage tape

antimicrobial cream

tweezers

hydrogen peroxide

tissues

cotton balls

change to use the phone

medical release information for each child

Talking with School-Age Children

One of the best ways to be good at talking with children is to learn to be a good listener. Good listeners are attentive to the child. They make eye contact and concentrate. Active listeners watch the body language as well as listening carefully to the words of the child. Don't forget to carefully watch how the child is feeling as well as what he or she is saying. It really helps to repeat in your own words what you think the child is saying and to describe any feelings you notice. "Karen, you're angry because Sue said some unkind things about you." Children can then let you know if you have heard them accurately. This form of listening is very respectful and nurturing and helps the child to develop his or her own ideas, thoughts and feelings.



Well, Excuse Me

Teaching manners involves more than "please" and "thank you." Manners are learned though a combination of discussions of the feelings of other people, imitating adults, and receiving gentle and private reminders when necessary. It also helps to catch children being good, and comment on how much you liked seeing them use their manners. Children learn manners best when you make it a pleasant experience.

Food Fishin'

Have the children cut out pictures of different foods. Be sure to include foods from all the food groups as well as some less nutritious foods such as cookies, candy and soda. Tape paper clips to the back of the pictures. Using a dowel stick, string, and a small magnet, make a fishing pole. Make a pond on the floor using a hoola hoop or tape circle. Let each child have a turn catching a "meal". Discuss the foods the children catch and where the foods are on the Food Guide Pyramid.



Hot Potato

Have the children sit in a circle and pass a potato around while you chant:

*Baked potato, mashed potato, sweet potato pie,
Hash browns, buttered yams, potatoes french fried
Potatoes big, potatoes small, they taste so good
Potatoes are a healthy and nutritious food!*

When the chant stops, the child holding the potato gets to sit in the middle of the circle. Continue until everyone has a chance to sit in the middle. You can also play this game with music, stopping the music so each child gets a turn to sit in the middle.

The Good Food Song

Sing to the tune of Old MacDonald Had a Farm

Vegetables are good for me,
EE I EE I O!

And so I eat them happily,
EE I EE I O!

With a carrot, carrot here (*children can take turn naming vegetables*)

And a carrot, carrot there
Here a carrot, there a carrot,
Everywhere a carrot carrot
Vegetables are good for me,
EE I EE I O!

You can sing this song using fruits, snacks, etc.

Feely Socks

Place sturdy foods (potatoes, broccoli, large pretzel sticks, rice or beans, etc.) inside clean socks. Ask the children to put their hands in the socks and identify the foods only by touch. Talk with them about how the foods feel. Are they smooth, bumpy, fuzzy? Are they round, irregular, long, large, or small?

Smelly boxes

Place strong smelling foods (garlic, onion, orange, tuna, etc.) inside opaque plastic containers (margarine containers work well) with lids. Make slits in the lids. Ask the children to identify the foods by smell alone.

Riddles

Children love guessing games. You can use riddles to communicate nutrition concepts or to help young children identify foods and where they come from. Below are a few examples. You can make up your own and also have the children make up some too. The samples below rhyme, but it is not necessary to make your riddles rhyme.

I come from a chicken,
I have a smooth shell,
crack me open and cook me,
I taste really swell! What am I?

I come from a cow,
I'm a white drink that is yummy,
I'm good for you,
and tasty in your tummy!
What am I?

I am sweet and sticky
but too much of me
makes you feel icky.
You need good food to help you grow
so after a little of me JUST SAY NO!

I am round and grow on a tree.
Sometimes you make juice out of me.
My color and name
are one and the same.
What am I?

Is it Corny?

Set out a variety of items that come from a corn plant or are made from a corn plant. Let the children touch and compare. For example, you might include cornstalks, ears of fresh corn, dried Indian corn, popcorn kernels, popped popcorn, canned corn, cornmeal, cornflakes and corn chips.

Apple Prints

Cut some apples in half vertically and some others in half horizontally. Show the children the hidden star inside the apples cut horizontally. Put small amounts of red tempera paint onto several sponges set in shallow containers. Let the children dab the apple halves on the sponges and the gently press the apples on pieces of construction paper to make prints.

Pizza Puzzles

Cut out three cardboard circles (approximately 12 inches in diameter, all the same size). Use felt-tip markers to decorate the circles to resemble pizzas. Cut one pizza in half, one pizza in fourths and one pizza in eights.

Place all the pieces in a pile and let the children take turns putting the pieces together in various ways to make three whole pizzas.

Hint: For younger children, put out the pieces for one pizza at a time.





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Please order only one unit at a time.

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TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

Get story tapes at the library. Have the child listen to the tape and look at the book while riding in the car. This keeps the child busy with something to do and makes behavior better in the car.

Submitted by Irene Arseniu of Lewistown, PA. Thank You, Irene.

Share your special tips on caring for children with other child care providers. Send your ideas to:

Caring for Kids Caregiver Tips
Room 5 Armsby Building
Penn State University
University Park, PA 16802

Contributors to this issue: Lyn Horning, *More Than Graham Crackers, Nutrition Education & Food Preparation with Young Children* Nancy Wanamaker, Kristin Hearn, Sherrill Richarz, Idaho-Washington AEYC; *Learning Through Cooking: A Cooking Program for Children Two to Ten*, Nancy J. Ferreira; *Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes*, Mollie Katzen and Ann Henderson; *Teaching Children about Food, A Teaching and Activity Guide*, Christine Berman, M.P.H., R.D. & Jacki Fromer; *Healthful Menus and Recipes for the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, Julie A. Haines, R.D., Madeleine Sigman-Grant, Ph.D., R.D., J. Lynne Brown, Ph.D., R.D.; *Theme-a-saurus*, Jean Warren

* Indicates that book can be borrowed from the County Cooperative Extension Resource Library

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This material is available in alternative media upon request.

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