



Building Blocks II

A newsletter for Acushnet, Berkley, Dartmouth, Dighton, Fairhaven, Freetown, Lakeville, New Bedford, Rehoboth, Seekonk, and Swansea families with children birth-age 8.

Learning at the Beach



Take advantage of long days in the sun: the beach is the perfect learning environment for your child!

To target language skills at the beach, let your child:

- * Describe the different sea life found in the ocean (crabs, fish, clams, etc.)
- * Bring along alphabet cookie cutters to mold letters of his name in the sand
- * Draw shapes on a beach ball. Throw the beach ball to your child. When your child catches it, he must tell you the name of the shape he is looking at

- * Collect rocks and shells and talk about the texture (rough, smooth, bumpy, etc.)

- * Build a sand castle and tell a story about his wonderful creation

- * Talk about the colors of the sand, water, sky, sun, clouds, rocks, etc.

To target math skills at the beach, let your child:

- * Bring along different size measuring cups as well as beach pails so that he can compare the amounts of sand each one holds



Collect and count shells to use for craft projects in the future.

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- * Collect shells or rocks and sort them by size, shape, and color
- * Count how many boats you see in the ocean
- * Count beach umbrellas (How many red/blue/striped umbrellas? etc.)

Source: Smooth Sailing into Kindergarten Calendar

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Special points of interest:

- ☺ Sunburn
- ☺ Lyme Disease
- ☺ Quit Smoking Now
- ☺ Try This at Home

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Set a Good Example

Children imitate what they see others do and say. When you exercise and eat nourishing food, children are more likely to follow your example. When you treat others with respect, your child will too. If you

share things, your child will learn to share as well. Children must learn to have an interest in others and understand how others feel. Parents are their children's most important teachers in helping them to develop

these skills.

Source: Smooth Sailing into Kindergarten Calendar



Parents are their children's most important teacher.

Choosing Good Books to Read Aloud

It can be overwhelming to see shelves loaded with books, and difficult to know which books are best suited to your child. A good book entertains, encourages discussion, sparks imagination, and provides information. When you choose good books, you provide fun-filled reading experiences that are also learning opportunities.

Try to select a variety of children's books that:

⇒ Introduce sounds of language

with repetitive, rhyming, or predictable text

⇒ Use engaging illustrations along with text

⇒ Contain content that relates to your child's experiences and interests



Choose books that provide fun-filled reading experiences and learning opportunities.

⇒ Go beyond your child's life experiences

⇒ Provide stories with problems and solutions

⇒ Reflect diversity in story characters, authors, and illustrators

⇒ Include a range of genres, such as fiction, nonfiction, folktales, rhymes, and songs

⇒ Represent well-known authors and illustrators as well as new authors and

illustrators

Source: [Help Me Get Ready to Read](#)

Sunburn: Treatment and Prevention

Children are especially at risk for sunburn, which they can get even on cooler, cloudy days. Even if your child does not burn, the effects of exposure build up over the years.

Try to keep your child out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Always apply sunscreen before going out, and reapply after a couple hours or if

your child spends time in the water. Dress your child in long-sleeved, lightweight cotton clothing and a wide-brim hat.

If your child's burn is red, warm, and painful, you can treat it yourself.

Apply cool compresses or bathe your child in cool water. Aloe Vera gel is very soothing for burns as well. If

your child is suffering from a more severe case with blistering, fever, chills, or headache, call your pediatrician.

Source: [healthychildren.org](#)

"Children are at risk for sunburn, even on cooler, cloudy days."

Lyme Disease

Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection spread to humans by the bites of deer ticks.

Deer ticks live in forests or grassy, wooded, marshy areas.

The first and most obvious symptom of Lyme disease is a rash. It may appear 3 - 30 days after the bite occurred.



Other symptoms may include headache, chills, fever, fatigue, swollen glands, or aches and pains.

Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics, and can be dangerous if left untreated.

Dress your child in a long-sleeved shirt and tuck his pants into his socks. Wear enclosed shoes and

light-colored clothing, so you can easily spot ticks. Use insect repellent, and avoid tall grass, small trees, and shrubs. Always check for ticks after coming indoors. If your child has a tick, grasp it with a tweezers as close to the skin as possible. Slowly pull the tick away from the skin. Clean the area with rubbing alcohol.

Source: [www.healthychildren.org](#)

Infant Activities

Wrap It Up: Wrap a ball of waxed paper in a scarf and tie it up. Let your baby reach for it, grasp it, squeeze and crinkle it.

Hello, Good-Bye: Make a tunnel from a large cardboard box by opening both ends. Place your baby at one end of the tunnel. You sit at the opposite end. Peek your face in the tunnel and say, "Hi!" Then lean away from the tunnel (so baby can't see you) and say, "Bye!" Does your baby try to communicate with

you by crawling to find you, or by making sounds to copy your "hi" and "bye"?

Name It: During diaper changes, take a moment to play "what's this?" Lift up her foot and say, "What's this? It's a foot. And



"What's this? It's a foot. And what are these? These are toes."

what are these? They are toes." Name belly, belly button, knee, legs, parts of the face, and more.

Source: www.zerotothree.org

Toddler Activities

Squeezing Fun: Fill a shallow pan with water and place it before your toddler along with an empty container and a sponge. Show your toddler how to fill the sponge with water and wring it out into the empty container. She will love moving the water back and forth! You can also use



Show your toddler how to fill the sponge with water and wring it out.

a turkey baster to experiment moving the water.

Firefighters to the Rescue: Use sidewalk chalk to draw marks on an outdoor wall. Give your toddler a spray bottle filled with water and set him to work "putting out the fire." The water will wash away the chalk

marks, leaving your child with the satisfaction of a job well done!

Target Toss: Lay a Hula Hoop on the ground. Encourage your toddler to stand at the edge of the hoop and drop or toss beanbags, foam balls, or other soft toys into it.

Source: [Toddler Games](#)

Preschool/School-Age Activities

Butterfly Drawing: Camp out near a flowerbed with crayons and paper at the ready. When a butterfly lands, try to draw it as best you can before it flies off. Your child will love rushing to get as many details as possible in such a short amount of time!

Flower Painting: Go on a walk with your child and collect flowers along the way. Once home, gather tempura paint,

brushes, and paper. Encourage your child to coat the flowers in paint, and then carefully press the painted side against the paper. Peel off the flower carefully, and



Use flowers for paintbrushes.

repeat with the other flowers. Talk about how the prints differ between flowers.

Birdsong: In a relaxed setting outdoors with your child, listen carefully to the birds. How many different birdsongs can you hear? Encourage your child to imitate the songs either by whistling or humming.

Source: [Born to be Wild](#)

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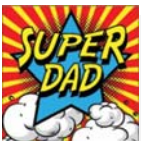


Laying the foundation for life long
learning.

Top 10 "Easy Summer Learning Tips" for Parents

1. Read. Read. Read.
2. Have fun with numbers.
3. Turn off the TV! Turn off the screens!
4. Make Art!
5. Experiment! Do Science!
6. Eat smart. Eat healthy.
7. Get outside. Take a hike. Play in the sun. Go for a bike ride or a run. Visit a park.
8. Go to a museum-again and again.
9. Read a poem.
10. Finally, go to sleep!

Source: National summer learning Association



How to be your
kid's hero
without the cape



Protect Your Child from Secondhand Smoke



Secondhand smoke comes from lit cigarettes and cigars. It also comes from smoke breathed out by smokers. When children breathe secondhand smoke, it is like they are smoking too. Secondhand smoke is made of thousands of chemicals that can stay in your body.

Smoking while pregnant can cause premature birth and low birth weight. Babies who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Babies and children who breathe secondhand smoke are more often sick with asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, and ear infections.

Smoking in another room pollutes all air in your home. No amount of smoke is safe. Even when you can't smell it, smoke can still harm your child. Opening a window, or using a fan or air fresheners/ purifiers will not protect children.

Take simple steps to protect your children from secondhand smoke.

- ◇ Ask people not to smoke around your children.

- ◇ Support family and friends who also want to stop smoking.
- ◇ Decide to have a smoke-free home and car.
- ◇ Get rid of all ash-trays in your home.
- ◇ Teach your children to stay away from smoke.



When children breathe secondhand smoke, it is like they are smoking too.

Make the decision to quit smoking. Get help from your doctor, friends, and family. Call this free quitline: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

Source: www.cdc.gov