



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Games & Activities

Warmer or colder?

Here's a fun game for kids and adults. It can be played indoors or outdoors and helps teach discrimination skills.

Select an item in the room (or outside) that will be "it." Tell your child to start moving around the room.

When the child gets close to the object, you say, "You're getting warmer," and vice-versa when the child moves away from the object—"You're getting colder."

Dramatize the game by exaggerating: "Now you're getting really warm, now you're hot!"

Eventually the child can narrow down the choices by asking, "Is this it?" until the object is identified.

Take a turn yourself with the child selecting the object. □

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Parenting

Cultivate more joy in your life

Parenting is just one part of being a person. Parents, too, need to find ways to free their spirit to appreciate all that life has to offer. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Develop a short memory.

Practice the fine art of developing a short memory when it comes to hurts, wounds and wrongs that have been inflicted on you. Doing so will help you let go of yesterday's pain and free you from the burden of anger and resentment. "Good to forgive; best to forget!" observed poet Robert Browning.

2. Look for the humor in daily events.

Joy is the feeling of smiling inside, so laugh a little more. Laughter lightens life and animates the spirit.

Billy Graham recommends it: "A keen sense of humor helps us to overlook the unbecoming, understand the unconventional, tolerate the unpleasant, overcome the unexpected, and outlast the unbearable."

3. Encourage someone who is discouraged.

Deliberately seek out someone who needs your words of encouragement and praise.

There is great wisdom in this statement made by Sir James

Barrie, author of *Peter Pan*: "Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves."

4. Make peace with your life.

"Take what is given and make it over your way," advised Robert Frost. "My aim in life has always been to hold my own with whatever is going on. Not against, with."

No one has a life that is trouble-free. A parent can fail us, a friend can betray us, a marriage partner may be a source of disappointment, and a child can rebel and engage in self-destructive behavior.

Let go of regrets. Embrace the joy of the present. Anticipate the beauty of the future.

5. Count your blessings.

Sure, there's a lot wrong in the world and sometimes in our lives. But there is a lot which is right and good as well.

Get out pencil and paper. Give yourself five minutes to write down as many blessings as you can recall. Add them up.

Keep the sheet around and review it from time to time. Make additions. It's bound to elevate your mood. □

Safe and healthy kids at any age

There's more to taking care of children's health than washing hands and brushing teeth. You can learn more in **Safe and Healthy Kids**, a free package of publications from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Citizen Information Center.

When children are little, they're especially vulnerable to choking. We're conditioned to think about watching for things like small parts on toys or pieces of popped balloons. But 60 percent of the childhood choking episodes treated in emergency rooms are related to food.

Children under four years old don't have a full set of teeth, so they can't chew foods like nuts,

hot dogs, or hard candies very well. To keep kids safe, monitor older children who might give food to younger children and put unsafe items out of reach.

And take time to learn the Heimlich maneuver, too, just in case. A refresher with helpful diagrams, as well as more tips to help you prevent children from choking is in **Safe and Healthy Kids**.

Children can pick up infections everywhere—even from turtles. Common as pets or animals in petting zoos, turtles frequently carry *salmonella*.

Since *salmonella* can be on turtles' skin and shells and in places where they've been (like tanks, bedding, floors or countertops),

you need to be careful when kids are around them. **Safe and Healthy Kids** shows you how to prevent salmonella infections and identify the symptoms in case a child does become infected.

There are three ways to order the **Safe and Healthy Kids** free package:

- Send your name and address to **Safe and Healthy Kids, Pueblo, Colorado 81009**.

- Visit www.pueblo.gsa.gov/rc/n85safeandhealthykids.htm to place your order online or to read or print this.

- Call toll-free 1 (888) 878-3256 weekdays 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time and ask for the **Safe and Healthy Kids** package. □

Problem solving is an important skill

A child needs to develop problem-solving skills. If she is constantly told what to do by her parents, she will continue to depend on someone else to give her the answers.

A child who is encouraged to think about possible solutions and pick those that might work develops a method for thinking about a problem. At times, she may need suggestions, but as long as these are given as suggestions and not orders, the child learns to take responsibility for the solutions she chooses.

If the problem is satisfactorily solved, the child can feel proud that she solved it. If the solution she chooses was not the best, but she is praised for trying, she will want to try again.

It is good practice to give even very young children exercises in making choices. For example, a two-year-old might be given a choice between the green shirt and the blue one. A four-year-old might choose between two restaurants.

Having a say in decisions can have an enormously positive influence on a child. □

Something New!

"Grandma Says" is a twice-monthly special message that includes general parenting tips, words of encouragement, and children's book reviews. To receive your free issues, go to: **www.GrowingChild.com/FreeGrandmaSays** and enter your e-mail address.

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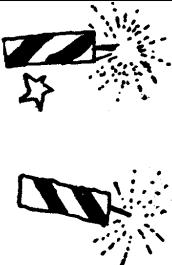

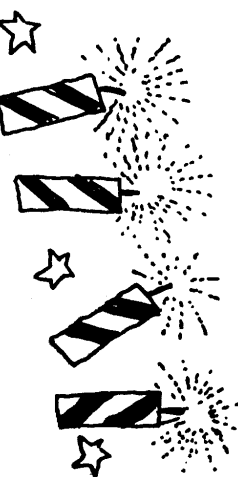







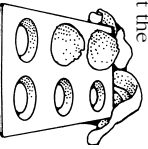

Growing Child also publishes: **Growing Child** (birth-six years), and **Growing Up** (grades K-12).

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Articles in **Growing Together** refer to both boys and girls. For simplicity, the pronouns "he" and "she" are used interchangeably unless otherwise noted.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>5</p> <p>Tell your fellow family members what you like about them.</p> 	<p>6</p> <p>Make some ice cubes out of fruit juice. Yumi!</p> 	<p>7</p> <p>Plan a home fire drill.</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>What's your favorite nursery rhyme? Practice saying it out loud.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Is there snow outside? If not, why not?</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>Read a new book today.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Go to the park. Look for squirrels and count the ones you see.</p>
<p>12</p> <p>Knock, knock Who's there? Amos. Amos who? A mosquito bit me!</p> 	<p>13</p> <p>What color is a polar bear? A frog? A parrot?</p>	<p>14</p> <p>What is a volunteer? What can you volunteer to do around the house to help out?</p> 	<p>15</p> <p>Play with some plastic cups at bath time.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Take a big piece of paper on Toddler's door for her to draw on.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Have a picnic in your own yard (or a nearby park).</p> 	<p>18</p> <p>Attend a free concert or activity in your town.</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Talk about what you will do tomorrow.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Remember to use sun screen when you go outside.</p> 	<p>21</p> <p>Make some lemonade and drink it outside.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Cut big letters out of a magazine or newspaper and spell children's names.</p> 	<p>23</p> <p>Walk barefoot (carefully) outside on some grass</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Make up your own activities this weekend. What will you do?</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Look for birds' nests in trees.</p> 
<p>26</p> <p>Help put the clean dishes away.</p> 	<p>27</p> <p>Make a tunnel out of big cardboard boxes.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>What is your favorite dessert?</p> 	<p>29</p> <p>Draw a picture of someone who lives at your house.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Make green Jello™ Talk about each step.</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Play "Follow the Leader."</p> 