

Bright Beginnings




A newsletter for families and educators of infants and preschool-age children with special needs

Social and Emotional Preparation for School

Children start school with different degrees of social and emotional maturity. These qualities take time and practice to learn. Give your child opportunities at home to begin to develop the following positive qualities.

- ✿ **Confidence:** Children must feel good about themselves and believe they can succeed. Confident children are more willing to attempt new tasks—and try again if they don't succeed the first time.
- ✿ **Independence:** Children must learn to do things for themselves.
- ✿ **Motivation:** Children must want to learn.
- ✿ **Curiosity:** Children are naturally curious and must remain so to get the most out of learning opportunities.
- ✿ **Persistence:** Children must learn to finish what they start.
- ✿ **Cooperation:** Children must be able to get along with others and learn to share and take turns.
- ✿ **Self-control:** Children must learn that there are good and bad ways to express anger. They must understand that some behaviors, such as hitting and biting, are not acceptable.
- ✿ **Empathy:** Children must have an interest in others and understand how others feel.

Here are some things that you can do to help your child develop these qualities.

- ✿ Show your child that you care about him and that you are dependable. Children who feel loved are more likely to be confident. Your child must believe that, no matter what, someone will look out for him. Give your baby or toddler plenty of attention, encouragement, hugs and lap time.
- ✿ Set a good example. Children imitate what they see others do and what they hear others say. When you exercise and eat nourishing food, your child is more likely to do so as well. When

you treat others with respect, your child probably will, too. If you share things with others, your child also will learn to be thoughtful of others' feelings.

- ✿ Provide opportunities for repetition. It takes practice for a child to crawl, pronounce new words or drink from a cup. Your child doesn't get bored when she repeats things. Instead, by repeating things until she learns them, your child builds the confidence she needs to try new things.
- ✿ Use appropriate discipline. All children need to have limits set for them. Children whose parents give them firm but loving discipline generally develop better social skills and do better in school than do children whose parents set too few or too many limits. Here are some ideas.
 - Direct your child's activities, but don't be too bossy.
 - Give reasons when you ask your child to do something. Say, for example, "Please move your truck from these stairs so no one falls over it"—not, "Move it because I said so."
 - Listen to your child to find out how he feels and whether he needs special support.
 - Show love and respect when you are angry with your child. Criticize your child's behavior but not the child. Say, for example, "I love you, but it's not okay for you to draw pictures on the walls. I get angry when you do that."
 - Help your child make choices and work out problems. You might ask your 4-year-old, for example, "What can we do to keep your brother from knocking over your blocks?"
 - Be positive and encouraging. Praise your child for a job well done. Smiles and encouragement go much further to shape good behavior than harsh punishment.

- Let your child do many things by herself. Young children need to be watched closely. However, they learn to be independent and to develop confidence by doing tasks such as dressing themselves and putting their toys away. It's important to let your child make choices, rather than deciding everything for her.
- Encourage your child to play with other children and to be with adults who are not family members. Preschoolers need social opportunities to learn to see the point of view of others. Young children are more likely to get along with teachers and classmates if they have had experiences with different adults and children.
- Show a positive attitude toward learning and toward school. Children come into this world with a powerful need to discover and to explore. If your child is to keep her curiosity, you need to encourage it. Showing enthusiasm for what your child does ("You've drawn a great picture!") helps to make her proud of her achievements.

Children also become excited about starting school when their parents show excitement about this big step. As your child gets ready to enter kindergarten, talk to him about school. Talk about the exciting things that he will do in kindergarten, such as making art projects, singing and playing games. Be enthusiastic as you describe all the important things that he will learn from his teacher—how to read, to count and how to measure and weigh things.

Source: U.S. Department of Education Office of Communications and Outreach *Helping Your Preschool Child* Washington, D.C., 2005.

Positive Behavior Supports for Young Children

The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) is a national resource center funded by the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau. CSEFEL disseminates research and evidence-based practices to early childhood programs across the country. The center is located at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. A number of states, including Iowa have partnered with Vanderbilt through the CSEFEL effort to promote the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5.

Family Resources

One way CSEFEL is providing quality information to the adults who teach and care for young children, is through their website at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>. Resources are organized for teachers, families and trainers/coaches.

If you are a family with young children or if you work with families who have young children, you should check out the materials posted here. Examples include guides on how to help young children identify and express feelings; strategies to teach children how to cooperate with requests; how to respond when young children bite; support for communication and relationship building skills; the value of routines in development; tips on how to handle aggression and other challenging behaviors. Scripted stories (social stories) for a variety of situations such as going to preschool, included in the teacher resources are useful for families as well. So, check out the site!

Childcare Provider Training

Another part of the project includes training childcare providers on Positive Behavioral Supports for young children. This training is coordinated by the Iowa Department of Education and provided by the AEAs, including AEA 267. Positive Behavioral Supports emphasize building positive relationships and creating supportive environments for young children while providing learning opportunities for the development of social and emotional well being. Classes include hands-on opportunities and focus on intentional teaching strategies. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Keva Hale at 800-392-6640 or Linda Gleissner at 319-273-7609.

Feeling stress from the 2008 disasters?

If you or your family were affected by the devastating 2008 storms in Iowa, you may be experiencing ongoing physical, emotional and financial stress. Some symptoms might be:

- Lack of ability to complete normal daily activities
- Increased sadness, tearfulness
- Lack of interest in hobbies
- Increased irritability, arguments, family conflict, domestic violence
- Clinging, nightmares, aggressive or regressive behaviors by your children
- Increased fatigue or exhaustion, illness
- Increased alcohol consumption or drug abuse



Sometimes symptoms don't show up until long after a stressful event. Ticket to Hope can help. It's a free program for qualified individuals that will help you regain a sense of control over your life.

To find out more about the Ticket to Hope program, call the Iowa Concern Hotline at 1-800-447-1985 or visit www.tickettohope.org.



Hawk-I Insurance Information

If your children have health insurance under the Hawk-I program, there are a few things you need to know.

If you move it is your responsibility to notify Hawk-I so that premium statements, renewal forms and other information get to you in time.

If your child gets other health insurance you need to notify Hawk-I within 10 working days. The federal law only allows Hawk-I to cover uninsured children. If you or your spouse get a job that includes medical insurance for your children, and you don't notify Hawk-I, you may have to pay back the money the state of Iowa has paid to the health and dental plan for your child's coverage. This could total over \$100.00 per month.

You must provide proof of identity and citizenship as of January 1, 2010 due to a change in federal law. Before your child's coverage can be renewed at their next renewal time, you must provide documentation of citizenship and proof of identity. You may do this prior to renewal time, if you would like.

For information on any of these topics, call Hawk-I Customer Service at 1-800-257-8563.

Information for this article provided by Hawk-I.

*"...To know even one life
has breathed easier
because you have lived:
This is to have succeeded."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Insect Bites & Allergies

Warm weather brings children outside. It also brings bee and wasp stings and mosquito bites. Stings hurt. It is normal for stings and mosquito bites to cause redness, swelling, or itching. Some people have allergic reactions to bug bites and stings. Allergic reactions are worse than a simple bite or sting.

A normal reaction to a bug bite or sting is pain or itching right away. You can get a red bump as big as a couple of inches as part of a normal reaction. They usually get worse for about two days and can last a whole week.

Dangerous allergic reactions can cause itching and swelling all over and can make it hard to breathe. However, sometimes children who are very scared and crying hard can find it hard to catch their breath, too. That does not mean they are having an allergic reaction. Milder allergic reactions can cause very big red bumps around the bite. These red bumps are usually bigger than 6 inches, and usually start 6-12 hours after the sting. They usually get better in 5-10 days.

Some stinging insects leave the stinger in the skin. If that occurs, take the stinger out as soon as you can. Some people try to flick them off, but the important thing is to get it out. Put an ice cube on the sting or bite. For a bad allergic reaction, you need to use epinephrine in addition to an anti-histamine. You can get this as an epinephrine autoinjector (EpiPen or Twinject). If your child needs to use the epinephrine, it is very important to take them to an emergency room, even if the epinephrine seems to be working. Sometimes the allergic reaction can start up again after the epinephrine wears off. Pain medicines like acetaminophen (common brand name is Tylenol) or ibuprofen may help.

People with severe sting allergies should always keep an epinephrine autoinjector with them from spring through fall. They should wear bright colored clothing outside during that time of the year and should avoid being around foods that attract stinging insects.

Joni Bosch, PhD, PRNP
CDD Family Nurse Practitioner

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UERS

USED EQUIPMENT REFERRAL SERVICE

From Iowa COMPASS, a program of the Center for Disabilities and Development



Do you know of adapted equipment not being used?

Do you need equipment but there's just no way to afford items from a vendor or store?



Then call Iowa **COMPASS** because **UERS** is a **FREE** service for buying and selling used adapted equipment.



It's as simple as a phone call to

800-779-2001

or log on to

www.iowacompass.org

and look for the UERS link

877-686-0032

(toll-free TTY)

Angel Food Ministries –

"A Food Ministry With A Servant's Heart"

Angel Food Ministries is a non-profit, non-denominational organization dedicated to providing grocery relief to communities throughout the United States.



Angel Food works through churches and community organizations in over 32 states. For further information, please take a few minutes to peruse our website www.angelfoodministries.com. New menus will be given each month.

To obtain a monthly flier or for further local information please contact Pastor Helen M. Seenster at 319-234-5928 or E-mail Angel Food Ministries at

hmsministries@mchsi.com. Marshalltown Angel Food Ministries contact person: Blair Benefield, First Baptist Church, 641-753-3528. We Accept Food Stamps (EBT).

Communication in the Special Education Process

Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and other school meetings are crucial parts of a child's educational program. A parent's responsibility extends beyond giving consent and accepting explanations. Asking questions, bringing up issues to discuss, gathering information, and clarifying points are all part of the parent's role.

Parents can bring someone else to the special education meetings. All participants are working together to benefit the child. The parent is a very important member of the team.

Effective communication is two-way, generating the understanding and support the professionals and the parents all need to make effective decisions about the child's educational program. To foster meaningful communication, parents can:

- Make sure the focus stays on the child.
- Be prepared. Know in advance the important points to discuss and questions to ask. Write them down and check them off as they are addressed.
- Listen. Listening will help you gather information about your child and help you understand other viewpoints.
- State your issues clearly. Communicate in an honest and direct manner.
- Ask questions. Asking questions can be an effective way of clarifying a point and keeping the line of communication open.
- Comments and questions should be directed to the person who can best address or answer them.
- Restate your concerns if you are not heard the first time.
- Be confident. A parent never has to feel guilty or embarrassed asking questions or assertively pursuing the appropriate services for the child. It is your role and your right.
- Work together. Remember that neither you nor the professionals have all the answers. Work together as a team to find solutions. Everyone

at the meeting has the same goal—to provide an appropriate educational program for the child.

The key to effective communication is preparation and willingness to be actively involved in planning the child's educational program.

Source: "Reprinted with permission from Pacer Center, Minneapolis, MN, (952) 838-9000. www.pacer.org. All rights reserved." Action Sheet: PHP-c82.

Classroom Activities

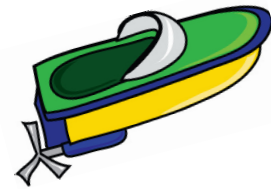


PARACHUTE PLAY

Equipment: Parachute or large flat bed sheet, teddy bear

Activity:

- Clouds: Lift arms straight up and hold arms fully extended until parachute flutters down. When the parachute touches the floor, lower hands, and repeat. The parachute can also be released as soon as arms are extended so that it floats up and away.
- Rain or Shine: Kneel around parachute. Go around the circle alternately designating each child as a holder or crawler. The teacher calls, rain or shine. On shine the holders hold the parachute on the floor while the crawlers crawl across the top to the opposite side. On rain the holders lift the parachute high while the crawlers crawl under to the opposite side. Repeat the game with the holders and crawlers changing positions.
- Foggy Day: Place a teddy bear under the parachute (cloud). Make the parachute billow in the center. One child is called to retrieve the teddy bear before the cloud lowers and the teddy bear is lost in the fog. Repeat until all have had a turn.



MOTOR BOATS*

Equipment: Old towel, sheet or plastic pieces large enough for a child to lay on, a large noncarpeted area.

Activity: Lying on his/her back, each child pretends to be a motor boat by propelling his/her self along the floor with feet only. The child holds the front corners of the sheet or towel so as not to slide off. Note that motor boats are fast and loud. Allow the children to rev up their noisy motors! However, sailboats are quiet and smooth. Can the children sense and express the difference between the two kinds of boats?

*Busy Bodies – Thematic Early Child movement Activities, Sewell & Trettin.



UMBRELLA BALL*

Equipment: Bean bag, sponge, yarn or other soft balls, umbrella

Activity: Set an open umbrella upside down to use for a target. The children toss the balls or bean bags into the umbrella from a marked distance. Count the number of objects in the umbrella. Play the game individually or with a friend.

*Nuttin' But Kids home page: <http://www.vbe.com/~gns/spring.html>, 1999



THE WINDY GAME

Equipment: Ping-Pong ball.

Activity: Talk about the wind. Then place a Ping-Pong ball in the center of the table. The children try to be as windy as they can in attempting to blow the ball off the opposite side of the table.

Source: "Physical Fun for Little Ones," Iowa Department of Education, February 2001.

“Mark-It Tips” for Young Writers

The motor skill required for writing began when your baby first grasped a rattle and continued to develop as she inspected dandelions between her thumb and forefinger. It takes lots of practice for fine motor control to develop. By the time your child was two, holding a marker with her whole hand was possible.

Throughout the preschool years, children need frequent opportunities to work with an assortment of writing materials. Because the child's control of the small hand muscles is not yet very refined, large blank surfaces for drawing are very important. Try to offer several choices of white and colored paper, construction paper, and cardboard.

The motor skill required for writing began when your baby first grasped a rattle...

Provide markers, minimarkers, crayons, pencils with erasers, colored pencils, paints, and chalk—as many choices as you can. Variety keeps children experimenting with different writing tools and combinations of paper.

Not all experiences need to be on paper, however. Chunky pieces of chalk for drawing on the sidewalk are great. Later, house-painting brushes dipped in a bucket of water will easily get the chalk off the sidewalk. Activities like these help your child learn to write.

Source: Used with permission from “Family-Friendly Communication for Early Childhood Programs,” Deborah Diffily and Kathy Morrison, editors.



Grief Support

A number of organizations provide support for families as they grieve the loss of a loved one. If you find yourself in need of assistance, contact one of the following organizations to find out what services are available.

Cedar Falls/Waterloo:

Cedar Valley Hospice
2101 Kimball Avenue
Waterloo
319-272-2002

Beacon of Hope Hospice
1318 Ravenwood Road
Waterloo
319-234-4673

Grundy Center:

Cedar Valley Hospice
310 East G Avenue
Grundy Center
319-824-3868

Marshalltown:

Iowa River Hospice
502 Plaza Heights Road
Marshalltown
641-753-7704

Compassionate Friends
Marshalltown Chapter
641-752-6983

Mason City/Clear Lake:

North Iowa Hospice
232 2nd Street SE
Mason City
800-297-4719

On-line support

Compassionate Friends
www.compassionatefriends.org

National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children
www.tlcinst.org

Center for Loss and Life Transition
www.centerforloss.com

Grief, Inc.
www.griefinc.com



Looking for Support? Support Groups

There are a number of support groups across Iowa and in AEA 267. Right now there are a number of active support groups in our areas focusing on the needs of children and young adults who have autism, Down Syndrome and other issues. Here are a few:

ADHD Support Group

Meets second Monday of the month during the school year at Upper Iowa University, 3563 University Avenue, Waterloo from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. For more information contact Barb at 319-266-2901 or wilk123abc@q.com.

Autism Spectrum Support Group

Meets the first Tuesday of each month, 6:00 p.m., AEA 267, 3706 Cedar Heights Drive, Cedar Falls, IA 50613. Individuals wanting further information or a personal parent contact should contact: Chris and Tyann Rouw 319-266-5876, or the Family-Educator Connection at 319-273-8265.

More information about local news and information may be seen at Chris and Tyann's website: <http://www.autismiowa.com>.

Autism Dietary Network Support Group

For more information call Amy Roberts at 319-233-8043.

Designer Genes – Down Syndrome Group

Parent Get Together – create new friendships with other parents in an informal setting. Meets the second Sunday of each month, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Held odd months (January, March, May, July, September, November) at the Waverly Health Center, 312 9th Street SW, Waverly. Parking in Orange Lot, enter door of Women's Center.

For more information email designergenes2005@yahoo.com or call 1-319-404-0396 or visit <http://www.firstgiving.com/desingergnest21>

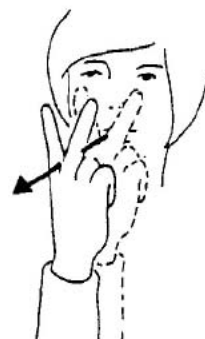
BEEHIVE

Here is a **beehive**, where are the **bees**?

Hiding **inside** where no one can **see**.

Look! They're alive! They're coming **outside**!

1 2 3 4 5 ...



beehive

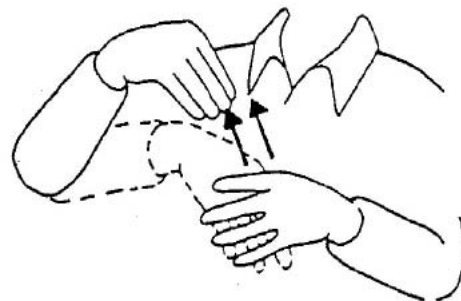
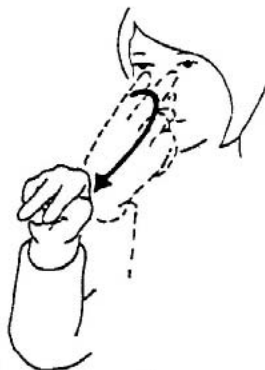
Place thumb and index finger of right F on right cheek. Move away into open B shape then brush right cheek lightly. Now outline shape of hive with open B shapes.

inside

C shape LH palm right. Place tips of RH in left C twice.

see

V shape RH palm in. Place tips at eyes then move forward.



bee

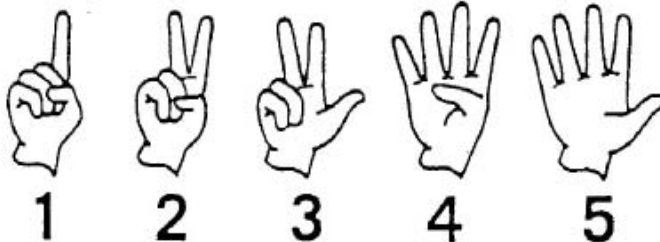
Place thumb and index finger of right F on right cheek. Move away into open B shape, then brush down cheek with right fingertips.

look

Point to eyes with tips of right V, then twist and point out.

outside

Cupped 5 shape LH palm right. Place fingers of RH against left palm and pull out, ending in flat O shape. Repeat motion.



Billie's Play Group

Kid friendly environment with planned activities for children with Down Syndrome, their siblings, and parents. Held on even months (February, April, June, August, October, December) at the YMCA, 669 S. Hackett Road, Waterloo. For more information, call 319-939-8065 or designergenes2005@yahoo.com.

Epilepsy Support Group

Waterloo, Cedar Falls area. Meets the second Thursday of every odd month, 6:30 p.m., Kimball Ridge Center, Conference Room 1, 2101 Kimball Avenue, Waterloo, IA., September 10, November 12. For more information contact: Karly Ashlock
Services Coordinator for Iowa Epilepsy Foundation North/Central Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska
1111 9th Street, Suite 275
Des Moines, IA 50314
Phone: 515-238-7660
Fax: 515-883-2292
Email: kashlock@efncil.org
www.epilepsyheartland.org
Not Another Moment Lost to Seizures

F.A.S.T. Families of Autism Standing Together

Autism and GFCF (Gluten-Casein Free Diet) Support Group that meets in the Independence area. For more information call Cory or Renae Kress at 319-334-3832.

Prader Willi Support Group

Parents interested in connecting with other parents contact: Edie Bogaczyk 515-987-0288 or email at dbogaczyk@msn.com

Calendar

April 2010

Thursday-Friday, April 1-2
Mental Illness and Autism Spectrum Disorders in Children
Sheraton West Des Moines
West Des Moines, Iowa

For more information or to register contact:
Spectrum Training Systems, Inc.
2024 Jonathon Drive
Appleton, WI 54914
Phone: (920) 749-0332
Fax: (920) 882-0736

Friday, April 16

Mental Illness in Children
Crown Plaza Minneapolis North
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

For more information visit:
<http://www.spectrumtrainingsystemsinc.com/Brooklyncenter.html>
or contact:
Spectrum Training Systems, Inc.
2024 Jonathon Drive
Appleton, WI 54914
Phone: (920) 749-0332
Fax: (920) 882-0736

Wednesday-Thursday-Friday-Saturday
April 21-22-23-24
The Council for Exceptional Children 2010 Convention & Expo
Gaylord Opryland Hotel & Convention Center
Nashville, Tennessee

For more information and to register:
By Mail:
CEC 2010 Convention & Expo
PO Box 79026
Baltimore, Maryland 21279-0026
By Phone:
Toll-free (within the U.S.)
1-888-232-7733
Locally (703) 620-3660
TTY 1-866-915-5000
By Fax: (703) 264-9494

May 2010

Thursday-Friday
May 13 & 14
The ARC of Iowa State Convention "Making a Difference in a Changing World"
The convention will focus on advocacy relative to persons with disabilities, families, providers, and educators. Some topics include:
Special education
Parental rights
Parent-school communication
Community inclusion

For more information contact:
Becky Schmitz 319-232-0437 ext. 443
Or email arccv@episervice.org

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
May 17-18-19
Tenth National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute
The William and Ida Friday Center
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

For more information contact:
Shelley deFosset at
dfosset@unc.edu.

June 2010

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
June 6-7-8-9
NAEYC National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development
Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel
Phoenix, Arizona

For more information visit:
www.naeyc.org or call
The National Association for
The Education of Young Children at
(202) 232-8777, (800) 424-2460

Remember to check the Disability Training Information calendar at www.disabilitytraining.org/ and the AEA 267 Professional Development web site at www.aea267.k12.ia.us/pd/ for information on more learning opportunities.



Think Spring!

The Family-Educator Connection

The AEA 267 Family-Educator Connection provides information and support for families and educators around disability-related issues. Whether you would like to talk about family adjustment issues with a new baby or newly diagnosed disability, home-school communication issues, questions relating to understanding a disability, or parenting strategies, we are happy to take your call. We have quite a library of resources available for loan and a number of highly qualified people to consult. If you have a question, we will do our best to help you find the answer. We are available by phone, mail, e-mail or by appointment, in-person.

Cedar Falls/ Waterloo Office

Deb Paton

3706 Cedar Heights Drive

Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Ph. 1-800-542-8375 or 1-319-273-8265

dpaton@aea267.k12.ia.us,

Clear Lake/Mason City Office

Sandy Kraschel

Mason City Airport Grounds

9184 B 265th Street

Clear Lake, Iowa 50428

Ph. 1-800-392-6640 or 1-641-357-6125

skraschel@aea267.k12.ia.us

Marshalltown Office

Andy Lawler

909 South 12th Street

Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

Ph. 1-800-735-1539 or 1-641-844-2469

alawler@aea267.k12.ia.us

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