



Learning & Growing Together

An online newsletter for parents!

Volume 1, Issue 1

December 2008 - January 2009

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Ready to Succeed Launches Online Newsletter for Parents!

Since August of 2001, UC Cooperative Extension's **Ready to Succeed** Program has been educating parents of 0-5 year olds and those who work with them about early literacy development, school readiness, and brain development.

We've conducted hundreds of workshops for parents, child care providers, and teachers both locally and nationally; written numerous informational brochures; produced a wealth of information and resources on our web pages; created a newsletter for professionals working with young children; and organized many successful community events for families with young children.

Here is the first issue of our latest production for parents...

Learning & Growing Together an online newsletter for parents of children birth through age five!

With this newsletter, we want to provide you with fun, beneficial activities you can do with your child

and sound, research-based information that will help you make informed decisions about how best to help your child learn, grow, and develop.

We hope you enjoy this inaugural issue and welcome your feedback and comments. Is there something you want to learn more about, an interesting topic you want to suggest for a feature piece, or an idea for a hands-on activity? Feel free to drop us an email or give us a call!

Due to requirements from our funders, First 5 Placer County, we will need to collect demographic data from you in order to add you to our subscription list. This information is for our reporting purposes and will not be used in any other capacity. Except for your email address, no other personal identifying information is needed or required.

Thanks for reading!



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Winter books to read together!



Reading stories with your child is

one of the best ways of promoting her literacy development. Snuggle up with a good book right now! Here are some excellent choices for the season:

One Winter's Day
M. Christina Butler

It's Winter
Linda Glaser

Animals in Winter
Henrietta Bancroft

The First Day of Winter
Denise Fleming

Winter's Gift
Jane Monroe Donovan

Winter is the Warmest Season
Lauren Stringer

When Winter Comes
Nancy Van Laan

Snow Balls
Lois Ehlert

Winter
Nuria Roca

Winter Friends
Carl R. Sams

The Twelve Days of Winter
Deborah Lee Rose

Time to Sleep
Denise Fleming

Winter in White
Robert Sabuda

Sleep, Black Bear, Sleep
Jane Yolen



Poems and songs to learn together!

THE SNOWMAN

By: Paula R. Westeren

One day I made a snowman
So very tall and round
I worked to make him look just so
Of my work I was most proud
It got a little warm that day
And much to my dismay
My very handsome snowman
Slowly melted all away

MITTEN WEATHER

Author unknown

Thumbs in the thumb place,
Fingers all together.
This is the song
We sing in mitten weather.
It doesn't matter whether

They're made of wool or leather.
Thumbs in the thumb place,
Fingers all together.
This is the poem
We say in mitten weather.

WINTER

By: Paula R. Westeren

In winter time it's cold outside,
It's rainy and sometimes dreary.
We can't often go out to play
We'll stay where it is cheery.

SNOW IS FALLING

Sung to: *Frere Jacques*
By: Paula R. Westeren

Snow is falling, snow is falling
All around, all around

Soft and silent snowflakes
Soft and silent snowflakes
Not a sound, not a sound

SNOWFLAKES

Sung to: *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*

By: Paula R. Westeren

Some are big and some are small
It is nice to watch them fall.
Stay indoors
where it is warm.
Drink hot cocoa
while it storms.
Snowflakes big,
snowflakes small
Catch them,
catch them, catch them all!



Do children know they are thinking?

Listen closely to the words children use. As young as three years old they are using words like “think” and “know.” After age three children have an awareness of their ability to think of things, and an awareness of the different kinds of knowledge such as - knowing, pretending, and remembering.

Children need opportunities to reason and make their own decisions.

A way to help young children become better at representing thoughts is to provide them with tasks that draw attention to the process used to analyze things. When your child is performing tasks where things must be ordered or categorized, ask why he is making each decision on where to put things.

This is a way to enhance your child’s problem solving abilities. To expand their skills, children need activities where there are several possibilities on how to arrange things. Children need opportunities to reason and make their own decisions. Activities like putting away toys, sorting blocks, or organizing crayons into groups are opportunities to engage your child.

All children will not organize the same way. Some may sort by color, others by size, others by use

- there is no right or wrong answer. If you ask your child to explain, you might be fascinated to see how complex her processing can be.

Although surprisingly advanced, preschoolers’ grasp of the way thinking works is far from complete. For example, preschoolers

do not realize that the meaning of words like “know” or “remember” depend on people’s certainty about knowledge.

Children below age five often believe that if you get an answer right you must have “known” or “remembered” it, but if you get it wrong then you must have “guessed” or “forgot.”

Young children often believe that others know what they do. To illustrate this, show your child a crayon box and ask him what is in the box. Inevitably he’ll say, “crayons.” Open the box and show him that there are ribbons inside. Close the box again and ask your child, “What will your friend say is in the box?” He will say, “Ribbons.” Notice, the preschooler does not realize that their friend has no way of knowing that there are ribbons in the box and not crayons. Your

child thinks that if he knows there are ribbons in the box, others will know it too.

So the next time your preschooler insists she knows something incorrect is true, rather than arguing with her and becoming red in the face when you get a series of “yes huhs,” just reinforce what is correct.

For example, to the statement, “Bats are big birds,” you could say, “You’re right, a bat is *sort of* like a bird because they both have wings.” This “know-it-all” phase is usually over by the time they’re five years old.

Instead of saying, “I know,” children start saying, “I think.”

This represents another shift in your child’s ability to represent her own thoughts.



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Create an icy sun catcher!

After reading one of the suggested books about winter, try this frosty, fun way of using natural materials to create a project with your child. It will provide opportunities to talk with your child and enhance her observation skills while providing a beautiful outdoor display.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- shoe lace
- water
- 9" disposable pie tin
- natural materials such as leaves, pinecones, pine needles, twigs

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Take your child outside to hunt and gather the materials you
2. Return inside and assemble all the necessary materials.
3. Fold the shoelace in half and place the two ends across the center of the pie tin. This will create the hanger.
4. Arrange the natural materials you have gathering in the tin.
5. Carefully fill the tin with cold water.
6. Place the tin in your freezer or outside if your area's weather is cold enough to freeze.
7. After the sun catcher is frozen, remove it from the pie tin.
8. Hang your Icy Sun Catcher outside where it can be
9. observed from indoors.
9. Make some predictions about the changes you might see. There are no wrong answers here.
10. Talk about the changes you observe in your sun catcher over time. If it's placed in an area that doesn't get sun, does it melt more slowly? How long is it taking to melt?
11. Compare what is actually happening with your predictions.

