



Learning & Growing Together

An online newsletter for parents!

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The Eyes Tell a Story in Autism

MIND Institute researchers have discovered an important clue to why children with autism spectrum disorders have trouble imitating others: They spend less time looking at the faces of people who are modeling new skills.

The researchers conducted their study using eye-tracking headgear and software to measure with precision the point at which a child is looking when learning a task. An actor demonstrated the task, and test subjects watched on a computer.

"We found that the children with autism focused on the demonstrator's action and looked at the demonstrator's face much less often than did typically developing children," said Giacomo Vivanti, a postdoctoral

researcher and the study's lead author.

"The typically developing children may be looking at the demonstrator's face to check for information on what to do or how

to respond appropriately, information that the children with autism are less inclined to seek.

"This is an important finding, because children with autism have difficulty learning from others. This might be one key to why that is so."

Imitation plays an important role in how children learn, as well as in how people interact socially, said MIND Institute researcher and senior study author Sally J. Rogers, who has been studying imitation impairment and autism for more than 20 years. "This is a trait we



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Camp Out with a Great Book!

Here are some fun camping books to help you make the most of your read aloud experiences with your child. Read, read, read; you're building a strong foundation for your child's later reading abilities!

S is for S'mores: A Camping Alphabet

Helen Foster James

Curious George Goes Camping

H.A. Rey

Bailey Goes Camping

Kevin Henkes

Camping Day

Patricia Lakin

When We Go Camping

Margriet Ruurs

A Camping Spree with Mr. Magee

Chris Van Dusen

Fred and Ted Go Camping

Peter Eastman

What Camping Can Teach Us

author unknown

Toasting Marshmallows:

Camping Poems

Kristine O'Connell George

Just Camping Out

Mercer Mayer

When I Go Camping with Grandma

Marion Dane Bauer

Maisy Goes Camping

Lucy Cousins

Tiny Goes Camping

Cari Meister



Songs to Learn Together!

SPLASH INTO SUMMER

Sung to: *The Ants Go Marching*

By: Paula R. Westernen

Summer's coming,
We'll have some fun
Hurrah, hurrah
Summer's coming,
We'll have some fun
Hurrah, hurrah

Summer's coming,
We'll have some fun
We'll splash in the pool before
we're done
And we'll all be happy that
summer is here again!

IT'S HOT

Sung to: *The Farmer in the Dell*

By: Paula R. Westernen

Boy it sure is hot
Boy it sure is hot
It's summer time, hot weather
time
Boy it sure is hot!

I'll get a cool, cool drink
I'll get a cool, cool drink
Water with ice, it sure is nice
I'll get a cool, cool drink!

Let's read a book in the shade
Let's read a book in the shade

It's my favorite thing on any
day
Let's read a book in the shade!

Singing songs with children is also a way to promote healthy brain development. Singing, listening to music, and doing rhythmic activities all help in making connections in the part of the brain that will later be used for math and science.



The Eyes Tell a Story in Autism *Continued*

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see as early as we can diagnose autism, and it's one of the traits that is present even in mildly impaired adults," she said.

Impaired imitation leads to additional impairments in sharing emotions, pretend play, pragmatic communication and understanding the emotional states of others. For years, scientists thought that children with autism and related disorders had trouble with learning through imitation



because they had poor motor skills or because they did not pay attention to the action being performed.

The new study rules out these hypotheses.

"We now understand more about

how this imitation deficit might be working and, after more study, we may actually be able to address it in a way that helps children with autism develop a

more natural set of behaviors," said Rogers, a UC Davis professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences.

The study appeared online in June and is scheduled to appear in print in November in the *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*.

Phyllis Brown is a senior public information officer for the UC Davis Health System.

Dateline UC Davis. October 17, 2008.

<http://www.dateline.ucdavis.edu/dldetail.lasso?id=10771&fu=101708>

Campfire Sandwiches

Children learn much from helping out in the kitchen. With this simple recipe, you can talk about shapes, halves, and wholes. Encourage your child to assist you! After reading one of the camping books suggested on page 2, try this healthy and delicious recipe for lunch or a fun snack!

WHAT YOU NEED:

Logs:

large whole wheat flour tortillas
peanut butter
bananas

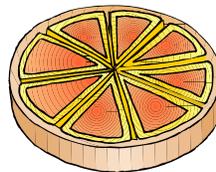
Fire:

red tortilla chips

oranges

Supplies:

plastic knives
paper plates
cups
napkins



WHAT YOU DO:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Spread the peanut butter on the tortillas.
3. Place a peeled banana in the middle of the tortilla.
4. Roll up the tortilla and place on a plate to represent the log.
5. Stick the red tortilla chips in the "log" to represent the

fire.

6. Cut the oranges into half inch slices.
7. Cut each slice into quarters so that each piece resembles a triangle.
8. Arrange the orange triangles in and around the "log" to also represent the fire.
9. Enjoy with a glass of milk, water, or 100% juice.

NOTE: You can easily substitute low fat cream cheese, chunk light tuna, or the filling of your choice.





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A Fond Farewell!

It's with mixed emotions that I announce that June will be my last month with the Ready to Succeed Program.

It has truly been my honor and privilege to serve the families and child care professionals, not only in Placer County, but world wide!

Having been with the program from the beginning, I'm proud of the awesome accomplishments that were achieved and the many wonderful relationships that were cultivated. I thank you all most humbly for allowing me to do a



job that has been my passion for all these years!

I hope our paths will cross again through my new position as Placer County's Library Literacy Specialist. If you know of an adult who can use help in improving his/her reading skills, please contact me at the Placer Adult Literacy Service! It's a free program!

Warmly, *Paula*

530 886-4530
pals@placerlibrary.org

One more song!

WE'RE GOING ON A PICNIC

By: Donna Getzinger
Sung to: *She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain*

Oh, we're going on a picnic,
Want to come?
Oh, we're going on a picnic,
Want to come?
Oh, we're going on a picnic,
And it's going to be terrific.
Oh, we're going on a picnic,
Want to come?

