

Ready to Succeed

An Early Literacy and School Readiness Newsletter for Professionals

Self-Regulation: Searching Intentional Practices - Part 2

September / October
2008

Volume 7, Issue 5

The following is Part 2 of *Self regulation: Searching intentional practice. Part 1 can be found in the July-August Ready to Succeed Newsletter.*

The stages of infancy through early childhood have proven to be critical in developing self regulation. Although most children acquire self regulation through positive early experiences, experts suggest that self regulation is a skill that needs guidance or to be taught. With these concepts in mind, how can we use intentional practices to support self regulation?

Children need adults who understand child development

Adults who know general milestones and abilities in child development will have

accurate expectations of what children can do. When the development of each child is supported, tasks and skills in self regulation are more manageable. This support also reduces incidents that may cause stress, which in turn allows for successful experiences.

It is advantageous to plan ahead in guiding certain developmental skills that are not yet present for children. For example, knowing an infant cannot yet talk, you can plan ahead to respond to her needs by being attentive, knowing other signs she may communicate with, and modeling language. Find resources to refresh your knowledge of child development and general milestones of young children. It will

help you know what is expected and help you plan experiences to support ongoing development. As complex developmental skills increase, so will children's skills in managing self regulation.

Intentional practice:

For preschool-age children, try games where control and listening are needed, such as red light/green light. For toddlers and younger preschoolers it is helpful to teach games, songs, and finger plays that use self control, such as making voices loud then soft, adding motions to a song in place of the words, or moving to different tempos of music.

Children need supportive environments

Research has shown that early positive attachments support self



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Ready to Succeed aims to assist everyone involved with the development of young children to value and embrace their role in fostering early literacy and school readiness.

Self-regulation, part 2 *continued*

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regulation. In addition to positive attachments with adults, young children need to feel comfortable, engaged, and loved in their environment. Positive environments require adults who are thoughtful in planning the environment to support self regulation.

In looking at the environment, provide experiences and materials that are inspiring and appropriately challenging. Allow for adequate freedom of exploring so children can experience problem solving and self choice. Mix in balance and structure of routine, which supports predictability and provides reassurance for young children.

The child's view of the environment should be, "I belong here." Consider posting photographs of families and having pictures and materials that interest the child or that the child has helped create.

Take a look at:

Light, color, sound, walls, room arrangement, furniture, temperature

Provide:

Quiet spaces, private spaces, personal spaces, spaces pleasing to look at, space for physical



movement, sensory motor spaces (sand/water), mirrored spaces, and spaces that encourage collaborating

And remember:

Consider children's personalities, home life, and family/culture when developing environments

Intentional practice: Anticipate transitions or situations that may add a challenge for children and plan ways to help. For example, Sue has a difficult time transitioning inside from outside play time. Give time for Sue to know the change is coming. Try interacting with her before the change occurs. Prompt Sue to think about what she will do when she gets back inside and possibly offer a job, such as carrying the jump ropes inside.

Children need practice in self awareness

When children learn about their own self awareness, they can then begin to understand how to use self control, reflection, and planning. They also can begin to understand the awareness of others.

The discovery of self awareness is strongly connected to self regulation. Infants begin to learn about self awareness when their needs are met. Young children are learning about self awareness when they start to learn about controlling their body. Older children learn more about self awareness by interacting with and watching the actions of others.

Intentional practice: Provide practice in self awareness:

- Ask children open-ended questions that encourage them to reflect and process their ideas
- For very young children, provide words for experiences, feelings
- Allow children to plan and add input to activities and projects
- Provide problem-solving strategies to children
- Offer choices instead of demands
- Practice role playing
- Provide activities for practicing physical control: stop and go games, listening games
- Provide activities for partnering
- Provide journal materials
- Read related stories

Embracing your role in understanding the development of self regulation not only benefits children's future school readiness and success, but also plays a key role in their overall achievements and to their quality of living. The influences you support in self regulation can make a positive difference each day.



Source: *Better Kid Care*, November 2007, Penn State Cooperative Extension

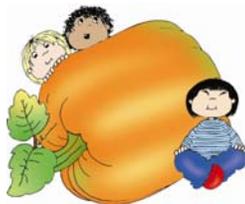
Songs and Poems for the Season

HAVE YOU SEEN?

Sung to: *The Muffin Man*

By: unknown

Have you seen
the pumpkin
man, the
pumpkin man,
the pumpkin
man?



Have you seen
the pumpkin man,
Who lives in the pumpkin patch?

Have you seen the old black witch,
the old, old witch, the old, old
witch?

Have you seen the old, old witch,
Who lives in the haunted house?

Have you seen the scary ghost, the
scary ghost, the scary ghost?

Have you seen the scary ghost
Who lives in the old ghost town?

Have you seen the big black bat,
the big black bat, the big black?

Have you seen the big black bat
Who lives in the cold dark cave?

Yes, we have. We've seen these
things, seen these things, seen
these things.

Yes we have, we've seen these
things,

We saw them on Halloween!

LEAVES

Sung to: *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*

By: Jean Warren

All join hands and circle round
While we watch the leaves fall
down.

See them twirling to the ground

See them whirling all around.

See them skipping here and there
See them flipping in the air.

Autumn leaves so peacefully

Falling, falling from the tree.

AUTUMN

Author unknown

Autumn means, falling leaves,
Haunted places, scary faces,
Window soaping, chimney smoking,
Colder weather, nuts to gather.
Summer's gone:, we're movin' on!

SPIDER

Author unknown

Spider crawling on the wall
(fingers moving upward)

Tiny body, legs and all!
(show "tiny")

Now I see the web you've spun
(draw circle, both
hands)

Was it work, or was it
fun?

(wipe brow)



Pumpkin Patch Muffins

These moist, wholesome, and
yummy pumpkin muffins will help
keep you moving all day long!

Have the
children
help with
measuring
the



ingredients, stirring the mixtures,
and spooning the batter.

WHAT YOU NEED:

1 cup canned pumpkin
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup applesauce
2 eggs
3/4 cup low fat milk
2 cups all purpose flour

1 cup wheat flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 tsp salt (optional)
mixing bowls
spoons
muffin tin
paper muffin tin liners

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°.
2. In a large mixing bowl, mix the pumpkin, brown sugar, applesauce, eggs.
3. Add the milk to the mixture.
4. In a separate bowl, sift the flour with the baking powder and salt.
5. Add the dry ingredients to the pumpkin mixture and stir until

just combined.

6. Spoon the batter into the muffin tin.
7. Bake for 20 minutes.
8. Enjoy warm with a glass of low fat milk or 100% fruit juice.

Yield: 10-12 muffins

PUMPKIN LORE:

Here are some interesting facts to share with the children...

- The word squash ~ which is what a pumpkin is ~ gets its name from the Algonquian word for squash, askuta, which means "sister."
- While corn and beans are a

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Fall Into a Good Book!

APPLES

Featured Title:

Autumn is for Apples

by Michelle Knudsen

When the weather turns cool and crisp, a family visits an apple orchard and savors the crunchy sweetness of freshly picked apples.

Tucker's Apple Dandy Day

Susan Winget

The Apple Bird

Brian Wildsmith

Ten Red Apples

Virginia Miller

Apples, Apples!

Kathleen

Once Upon a Golden Apple

Jean Little and Maggie De Vries

Ten Red Apples

Pat Hutchins

Ten Apples Up on Top

Dr. Seuss

Apples, Apples!

Salina Yoon

A Apple Pie

Gennady Spirin

The Mouse and the Apple

Stephen J. Butler



ANGER

Featured Title:

When I Feel Angry

by Cornelia Maude Spelman

It's hard to be a bunny. Sometimes a bunny feels angry--especially if someone is teasing or if Mom is paying more attention to the new baby in the family. But there are things a bunny can do to keep anger from taking over--exercise, rest, cry, or even ask for help.

Hands Are Not for Hitting

Martine Agassi, Ph.D.

The Hating Book

Charlotte Zolotow

I'm Furious

Elizabeth Crary

I'm Mad

Elizabeth Crary

I'm So Angry I Could Scream

Laura Fox

I Was So Mad

Mercer Mayer

Let's Talk About Feeling Angry

Joy Berry

Martha's Bad Day

Miranda Hopgood

Monster Mary, Mischief Maker

Kazuko Taniguchi

Spinky Sulks

William Steig

When Sophie Gets Angry Really,

Really Angry

Molly Garrett Bang

Won't Somebody Play With Me?

Steven Kellogg

HARVEST

Featured Title:

Possum's Harvest Moon

by Anne Hunter

One autumn evening, Possum looks up and sees the biggest, brightest harvest moon ever. He decides to have one last party before the long winter and invites all of his friends. But the mice, raccoon, crickets, and frogs are all busy getting ready for winter, and it looks as if no one will come.

Harvest

DK Publishing

Tops and Bottoms

Janet Stevens

Harvest Time

Mercer Mayer

Autumn

Nicola Baxter

Autumn Leaves

Ken Robbins

Fall Harvest

Gail Saunders Smith

Autumn Story

Jill Barklem

When Autumn Comes

Robert Maass

Clifford's First Autumn

Norman Bridwell

Picking Apples and Pumpkins

Amy and Richard Hutchings

A Harvest of Color

Melanie Eclare

Harvest Time

Michael Scott

Reading Books with Toddlers and Twos

Learning to love books is an important part of a child's early literacy development and should begin very early in life.



The research draws this conclusion: young children's social and emotional development, language and

cognitive skills are enhanced when caring adults interact with them with stories and pictures in books.

This interaction helps children understand the way print appears on a page, how the pictures are related to the words, how books provide ways of sharing and expressing feelings, and how stories happen in sequence with a beginning, middle, and end.

Here are some additional things to keep in mind when reading books to little ones:

- Anticipate reading with pleasure! "In a minute when we finish putting things away, we'll read a book together!"
- Set the stage...get cozy!
- "Talk" rather than read the book at first. Comment on the pictures on each page.
- Show your own interest. How you read can help the children listen more carefully and support a sense of wonder and fascination.
- Don't rush! Take time to look at the pictures and respond to comments and children's natural inquisitiveness about the book.
- Invite participation. "What is the elephant holding?" "Tell me the color of the balloon."
- Involve the children in telling the story. When children are

familiar with the book, let them tell you what will happen next.

- Connect the event's to children's lives. "Remember when we had a spider in the room?"
- Encourage children to "read" books to you.
- Make the story fit. Elaborate, eliminate, or otherwise change your reading of the story if it improves it for the children.
- Point out when you have reached the end of the story by saying something like, "And that's the end of the story."
- Ask questions when you have finished...ask about their favorite part...did they enjoy it...and do they want to read it again!

Source: *Story S-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-r-s for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos*; Raines, Miller, Curry-Rood, Gryphon House, 2002.

Clap Your Hands Activities

Clap Your Hands by Lorinda Bryan Cauley is an excellent book to read with the children for structured active play or days when you can't go outside.

This is a story about a bunch of happy children and animals in costume playing merrily while dancing and acting out various movements. The rhyming text and fun actions make it a great book to read with younger children. The following activities will work with children of all ages. And since little ones love to imitate older children, it works well with mixed ages.

Encourage the children to act out

the story as you read it. You may need to go slowly so that the children have time to complete the movements. Each time you read the story the children will improve their skills for each movement. This not only helps with physical development, but listening skills as well!

Play a "follow the leader" type of game where the children take turns acting out a fun movement or making a funny sound. Younger children may need some suggestions. Have all the other children copy the

movement or sound. Be sure each child gets a turn to be the "leader." This activity gives each child a sense of power that everyone is copying what she is doing.



After the children are familiar with the story and the movements, play some upbeat instrumental music and have them dance while you read the story.

They can also act out the various movements. Have fun!

Toddlers love demonstrating their new skills and they also love being active and silly!



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 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
 11477 E Avenue (Building 306, DeWitt Center)
 Auburn, CA 95603



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Phone: 530 889-7350
 Fax: 530 889-7397
 Web: <http://ceplacer.ucdavis.edu>
 Email: ceplacer@ucdavis.edu

Funding for this newsletter provided in part by:



Pumpkin Lore *continued*

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pumpkin's pals (they're often referred to as the three sisters) beware...a pumpkin's worst enemy is the potato. Be sure to plant these far apart in your garden.

- Pumpkin seeds date back as far as 7000 BC! That's about nine thousand years ago! They have been found in caves in northeastern Mexico.
- When the very first pumpkin vines sprouted in the fields, the Apache Indians sent a small boy out to collect juniper berries in the forest. Upon his return, they blindfolded the boy and guided him to the pumpkin patch.

There, he was told to toss the berries up toward the sky. Wherever the berries landed, the Apaches hoped a giant pumpkin would grow!

- Scarecrows have been around for some 2,500 years! Ancient Greeks carved scarecrows out of wood and gave them ugly, twisted-looking faces. European farmers made witchlike scarecrows, and Japanese scarecrows from long ago held a bow and arrow!



Sharon K. Junge
 Nutrition, Family, & Consumer Sciences Advisor

Paula R. Westeren
 Program Representative II