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30 Months

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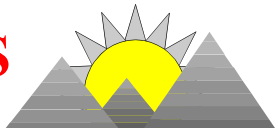
GREAT BEGINNINGS

A Series for Parents of Young Children



30 MONTHS

Child Care Centers Require Immunizations

If you are considering enrolling your child in a child care center, her immunizations must be up-to-date. You will need an immunization record that lists the dates of each immunization your child received.

The law says that child care centers must make sure all children enrolled have their immunizations. The child care center staff must see your record so that they can complete official records for their files.

The immunizations required by child care centers are the same ones every child needs for protection. For children who are 18 months of age or older, the required immunizations are:

DPT: 1 dose
(DPT=diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus)

Polio: 1 dose

MMR: 1 dose
(MMR=measles, mumps, and rubella)

Hib: 1 dose
unless she has never received it previously
(Hib=Hib meningitis)

For younger children, fewer immunizations are needed. For example a 12-month old child needs 3 DPT and 2 polio doses, while a 15-month old child need 3 DPT, 2 polio, and 1 MMR doses. If your child is younger than a year, ask the staff of the child care center to tell you what immunizations are needed.

The Hib immunization is now recommended for all children 18 months of age and older who attend a child care center. It protects against spinal meningitis. Ask your doctor or clinic about the Hib meningitis vaccine.

Choosing a Preschool

Preschools differ. Here are a few questions to consider if you are choosing a preschool:

Are you invited to observe in the classroom? Spending 1 or 2 hours in a class will show you what the school has to offer.

Are the caregivers willing to answer your questions? Would they talk to you on a regular basis about your child's progress? Once your child has enrolled, will you be welcome to visit and observe at any time? You and your child's caregivers need to work together as a team to help your child grow.

Do teachers seem to enjoy and respect the children? Is there hugging, holding and warmth between the teachers and the children? Do teachers talk with and listen to the children? Are there enough adults to provide good supervision and attention? Children's relationships with caregivers are important.
Do the children seem happily involved in activities? Are there enough play materials for all the children?

How long would a child have to wait a turn? Children can become angry and unhappy if they have to wait too long for a chance to play with toys.

Is there a balance of quiet and active play? Is there a balance of indoor and outdoor play? Children need variety in their daily lives.

Does indoor play include music, art, water, dress-up, housekeeping, science, block building, books, and puzzles? Does it also include toys for imaginative play such as trucks, cars and dolls? Are the rooms clean, safe, and attractive? Children need to have lots of different opportunities to learn.

Is there a safe outdoor area with enough equipment, like ladders, barrels, low slides, riding toys, and swings to encourage activity and muscle development? Is there protection from the sun?

Are meals provided by the preschool? Do you approve of the food they serve?

You will not be happy about your child's preschool unless you feel that your child is in a safe, healthy, nurturing place. The extra time it takes to find the right kind of care for your child will pay off in your own peace of mind and in your child's development.

Research in Brief: Guidance Styles and Child Behavior

How can parents help their children grow to be cooperative and well behaved? Dr. Diana Baumrind's studies show that children who are most compliant and cooperative have parents who are warm and loving with their children, have firm rules, communicate clearly what is expected of the child, and demand reasonably high levels of behavior. She found this kind of guidance and discipline more effective than guidance that is too bossy and rigid, or too passive and weak.

Games for Growing

Drawing Around Things

Purpose of the Game: To let your child practice using small hand muscles and to help him understand more about the shapes of things.

How to Play:

- Sit in a comfortable place and give your child a plastic cup to draw around.
- Have him trace the edge of the cup with his finger. Then give him a pencil or crayon to use for drawing around the cup. Talk about the circle he drew. Help him find some other things with simple shapes to trace. He can trace around his hand or yours. He'll enjoy this. You're helping him use his hands and make pictures of objects so he'll learn more about the ways they are different.

Follow Me

Purpose of the Game: To encourage your child's imagination and physical development.

How to Play: This is a follow-the-leader game to play indoors or outdoors. Show your little one funny ways you can move and encourage her to imitate, following after you. Run fast, walk slow, gallop like a horse, shuffle like an elephant, flap like a duck. Take turns leading. Use your imagination and encourage her imagination as you both think of more and more different and funny ways to move around.

Bread Dough Creations

Your 2 year old has learned to roll, pinch, poke, and mash bits of play dough with you, so why not make some creative snacks together? Use this recipe:

2 cups flour
3 tablespoons oil
1/2 cup water
1/2 teaspoon salt

Measure the flour and salt into a large bowl. Add the oil and rub it in until the mixture resembles coarse oatmeal. Add the water and blend it with your fingers. Add more water if necessary to make a dough you can gather into a ball. Knead the dough for 10 minutes.

Your toddler will enjoy punching and rolling the dough. Divide the dough into small balls and let your child create.

Show her how to flatten it, cut holes with a table knife (help her so she doesn't cut herself), pinch up peaks, and stretch the dough.

When she's all done, you can place her creations on a cookie sheet, and bake them in a 350ºF oven for 10 minutes. When they're cool, enjoy showing off the creations and eating them!

Problem Solving Starts Early

One of the most valuable skills we have as adults is the ability to solve problems. Through training and experience we have learned what is best to do when there is trouble, how to avoid problems, or how to fix something that needs to be fixed. Some people go through life solving problems well. Others go through life solving them poorly.

Very young children are learning how to solve problems and developing their very own style of problem solving. Whether they learn to solve problems well or not so well depends largely on the help and encouragement they get as toddlers.

Every day, toddlers face problems and have a chance to practice solving them. For example, suppose Jimmy and Julie are building block houses, but neither has enough blocks to finish.

Mother could suggest how they can solve this problem but it is better if she helps them learn to figure out how to solve the problem themselves. To do this, she can describe what she sees.

She can say that they both want to finish their houses and neither has enough blocks. Then she can ask them for ideas on how they might solve the problem.

In doing this, she does two important things. She shows them that she expects them to be able to solve problems and she gives them a chance to practice doing so. At first, she might need to help them come up with ideas. Later, they'll be able to do more problem solving on their own.

Be Good o Yourself: Communicating to Lower Stress

Sometimes angry feelings and stress are caused by the way people talk to each other. You can reduce your stress by changing the way you say things. It doesn't mean you should hold things inside, but simply that you should say them in a different way.

Things we say to others often have the word "you" in them. For example, you might say, "You're always telling me how to care for my child!" If you give the same message with "I" in it, the other person might not get so irritated. You could say, "I feel like a child myself when someone tells me what to do."

Try turning "you" messages into "I" messages. This may make your conversations less stressful.

Appreciation & Thanks to the Original Authors

This newsletter has been adapted from **Parent Express**, by Dr. Dorothea Cudaback, Cooperative Extension, University of California, and her colleagues throughout the national Cooperative Extension System.

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