



Preschool Hotline

Spring 2007



Communication Ideas for Children 0 – 6 Years of Age

NEW ARRIVALS!

Spring is here and soon the baby animals will be as well! Encouraging your child to make animal noises is great for their sound development while also being amusing and fun! Animal sounds can be found in many children's books. Some examples include: 'Animal Kisses: A Touch and Feel Book' by Barney Saltzberg, "Moo, Baa, La, La, La" by Sandra Boynton and 'I am a Bunny' by Ole Risom and Richard Scary.

Handprint Chick

Here is a great, simple baby animal craft for you and your child to create together:

Materials:

Yellow or white construction paper,
Scissors, Glue and Crayons

Instructions:

- Have your child copy a big circle, two small circles, a triangle, and two feet. (Keep in mind - all chicks are different and therefore some circles/shapes may be unique in their own way!)
 - Color and cut out the pieces
 - Glue the face pieces (triangle beak and small circle eyes) onto the head (big circle)
 - Glue the legs onto the body
- Now comes the fun part!
- Trace your child's hands onto another piece of paper
 - Cut out the hands
 - Glue the hands onto the body (thumbs up) to form wings.



Rhyme and Reading Rock!

When children learn songs with rhyme they are building the foundation for reading. Rhyming helps children hear how words are the same and different. Sing rhyming songs with your child this spring and see reading skills blossom later on! Here are two to try:

A BUNNY (A traditional finger play)

Once there was a bunny (*Make a fist, raise two fingers for ears*).

And a green, green cabbage head (*Make a fist with the other hand*).

"I think I'll have some breakfast," the little bunny said. (*Move bunny toward cabbage head*).
So he nibbled and he nibbled. (*Move fingers on the left hand*).

Then he turned around to say, "I think this is the time I should be hopping on my way!"
(*Make hopping movements with the left hand.*)

THREE LITTLE RABBITS

Three little rabbits (*Hold up three fingers*)

Looking at you,
One hopped away, and then there were two.
Chorus (see below)

Two little rabbits (*Hold up two fingers*).
Resting in the sun,
One hopped away, and there was one.
Chorus (see below)

One little rabbit
Left all alone,
He hopped away, and there were none.
(*Hand behind back.*)

CHORUS:

Hop, hop, hop, hop (*Clap on each hop*)
See how they run
Hop, hop, hop, hop
They think it is great fun!





Create a Story Book Together

Children of all ages love to hear stories and telling their own is a great way to encourage their language skills.

When children are young (2-3 years of age) their stories are often groups of items such as 'I like candy. I like toys. I like balls. etc.' As children get older (4-6 years of age), their stories begin to have order (first, next, last), characters, a problem/event as well as a solution.

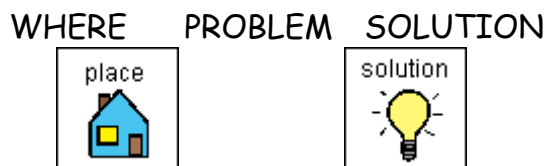
With just a few blank pages of paper and a set of crayons - anyone can let their imagination go wild!

For children aged 2-3 years, parents can help by providing a theme and having their child draw a picture of the item in the book.

Some ideas for themes may include : Red Things (or any other color), Cold (Hot) Things, Places I Go, or Animals at the Zoo.

For older children, parents can help the child by encouraging them to think of the order of the story, where it will happen, the characters, the problem/event and how the story will end. Parents can write each sentence onto a page of the book and the child can draw a picture to go with it.

The symbols below can be used to help your child make up their own story. You can cut out the symbols and glue one onto each page of the story to remember what needs to be included.



Example: Last night, I saw a big moose. It was running down the street and making funny noises. No one could catch him. This man came along and caught the moose in a big cage. He took the moose back to the forest.

Don't forget to read the book together when you are all finished!



Creative Play Skills

Being able to play for a longer time helps children develop their play skills. The age of the child often determines how long he/she can play in a group.

Getting Ready to Persist in Play

Playing next to or with a child will often keep a child in a play activity for a longer period of time. Get down on the floor with your child. Get your own set of play things or toys. Here are some more ideas that might help your child stay with a play activity:

- ◆ Plan a play activity with your child that involves not only dramatic play but also the use of your hands. Spring is a great time to play with things that have different textures such as sand, water, and playdoh. Some ideas are:
 - Washing babies
 - Feeding dolls with beans, playdoh
 - Building roads in sand and driving to the store
 - Cooking with playdoh
 - Making pizza with playdoh
 - Going to the carwash (driving, washing, drying)

To help your child stay with a play activity ask him/her to do **ONE MORE THING** before they leave. To make the play activity interesting think about withholding one of the play props (e.g. pizza pan for making pizza). This allows your child to ask for the missing toy and to interact with you more.

Toys for Playing

What if you don't have the toys needed to play?

- ◆ For young children use everyday household objects in the way that you normally would (e.g. a bucket with water).
- ◆ As your child gets older, introduce a new use for the object (e.g. hold on to the ladle of a spoon and use the spoon as a wash wand for washing the car). Using objects this way will introduce your child to pretend play.

Now you won't need any **NEW** play things as your child will invent new ways to use **OLD** toys. Pretending is not only fun but economical and environmentally friendly!

