

Ready to Succeed

An Early Literacy and School Readiness Newsletter for Professionals

The Language and Learning Connection

Language skills prepare a child for reading and writing, abilities fundamental to success at school and beyond. From infancy, parents and caregivers help children develop language skills. They do this by talking to their children, listening to them, teaching them to listen, helping them to know and enjoy stories, nursery rhymes, songs, finger plays, and word games.

Language development begins at birth. Although most infants will not say their first word until they are six to eight months old, they are listening and hearing all the time. The frequency of parent and caregiver interactions with children can have a positive impact on children's language development. The more children are exposed in positive ways to words, expressions, and verbal approval the more they will want to practice their verbal skills. Children who are inhibited in their oral speech by being talked at instead of with, or are too often corrected will limit themselves and their language growth.

Brain research supports early opportunities in oral and written language development. Brain connections in infants and the early years are stimulated by verbal interactions. Learning

Learning takes place when children receive rich, sensory stimulation.

takes place when children receive rich, sensory stimulation. Just as with other brain development, there are special windows of development of language in the first five years of life.

Oral language skills are an important skill for kindergarten. Kindergartners will be asked to participate in many activities that require them to use language and to solve problems. They will ask questions, share ideas, sing songs, and recite rhymes. They also will be required to listen to others. They will need to let others talk, listen to other children's contributions, and hear and follow instructions

from the teacher.

Beginning writing goes along with language acquisition and reading readiness. Kindergartners will be learning to use written language and to write both in uppercase and lowercase. Most schools use one of two handwriting styles...either traditional or modern (sometimes referred to as D'Nealian).

Beginning writing skills require small muscle coordination. Parents and caregivers can assist in this development by providing lots of writing materials such as crayons, pencils, markers, chalk, paper, and blackboards and lots of opportunities to use them.

The following are some ways to develop good language skills:

- Give children opportunities to play.
- Talk to children.
- Listen to children.
- Ask and answer questions.
- Read aloud everyday.
- Have reading and writing materials available.

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Inside this issue:

"Family Fun & Summer Reading"	2
A Word About Safety	2
Fall Ideas	3
Fall Recipe	3
Fall Books	3
Events and Workshops	4



This family enjoyed reading books outdoors at "Family Fun & Summer Reading" (see page 2)

"Family Fun & Summer Reading" Review



Thank you to everyone who attended our first annual "Family Fun & Summer Reading" event! We had a variety of craft activities and games with summer related-themes (camping, the beach, 4th of July, family vacations, picnics) for families to do together. Families were also able to read stories together in a tent set up outside, under a beach umbrella on beach towels, and on a picnic blanket. Each activity was based on a great children's book. In addition, parents received information about effective strategies for reading with their children, summer song lists, and nutrition information provided by Nutrition BEST. Parents comments were very appreciative and enthusiastic! They were happy to learn this would be an annual event.



A Word About Safety

Fall is an opportune time to talk to the children and families in your program about the importance of safety.

With a new school year beginning, many children are walking or riding their bikes to and from school. Remind parents to drive with care and caution around your facility and schools in your area. Talk to your children about the importance of riding bikes and playing in safe areas with adult supervision. Children (and parents) need to understand that drivers in "big" cars may not be able to see "small" children. Be on the lookout!

Here are some important Halloween safety rules you may wish to share with your families:

- Always use common-sense.

- Young children should always go trick-or-treating with an adult.
- Plan your entire route and make sure your family knows what it is.
- Make sure children are wearing flame-retardant costumes.
- Be sure masks do not obscure your child's vision.
- Be very cautious of strangers.
- Only visit houses of people you know.
- Never go inside a house. Stay outside to accept treats.
- Be sure to say thank you for your yummy treats!
- Only visit houses where the lights are on.
- Stay on sidewalks and driveways.

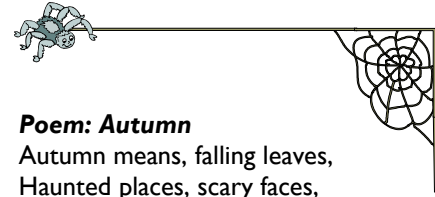
- Cross the streets at the corner and use crosswalks ~ hold hands.
- Take a cell phone with you in the event of an emergency.
- Carry a flashlight.
- Walk carefully and be aware of cars and other trick-or-treaters.

One way to have a safe time trick-or-treating is to look for community trick-or-treat events and activities. Many churches, hospitals, retirement facilities, and recreation departments offer this fun alternative to the neighborhood door-to-door. Children will still be able to "show-off" their costumes and receive treats and goodies!

Consider hosting your own event for families!



Fall Ideas



Song: *Have You Seen...?*

Sung to: "The Muffin Man"

By: 83/84 K Class - Nat'l Child Care

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

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

Have you seen the old black 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!

Finger Play: *Spider*

Have children sit in a circle.

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)

Poem: *Autumn*

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

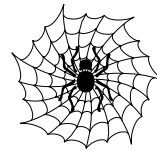
Song: *Leaves*

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.

Fall Recipe ~ Spider Sandwiches



INGREDIENTS:

24 slices wheat sandwich bread
1 1/2 cups of any sandwich spread, such
as peanut butter, tuna, soft
cheese
1 can cheese curls or pretzel sticks
24 raisins

UTENSILS:

Large round cookie cutter
Plain paper plates
Black permanent marker

DIRECTIONS:

1. Wash hands thoroughly.
2. Place bread slices on clean work surface. Cut a circle from each slice with the cookie cutter.
3. Divide the bread circles into 2 equal stacks.
4. Spread about 2 tablespoons of spread on all the bread circles in one pile.
5. Press 8 cheese curls or pretzel sticks in the sandwich spread half
6. Place remaining bread circles on top of spread coated circles.
7. Using a finger, poke 2 small indentations on top of each sandwich. Push 1 raisin into each indentation to make eyes.
8. Draw a spider web with the permanent marker on a paper plate. Place a spider sandwich on each plate for a spooky lunch.

Fall Books to Read with Children



Autumn

Nicola Baxter

The Candy Witch

Steven Kroll

Autumn Leaves

Ken Robbins

Happy Birthday, Little Witch

Deborah Hautzig

Autumn

Ruth Thomson

Corduroy's Halloween

Don Freeman

What's Colorful about Fall?

Mary Pat Finnegan

Fall Words

Jane Belk Moncure

Autumn Story

Jill Barklem

When Autumn Comes

Robert Maass

Why Do Leaves Change Color?

Betsy Maestro

Fall is Here! I Love It!

Elaine Good

Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree

Gail Gibbons

Clifford's First Autumn

Norman Bridwell

Autumn: An Alphabet Acrostic

Steven Schnur

Apples and Pumpkins

Anne Rockwell

Possum's Harvest Moon

Anne Hunter

Fall Leaves

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Serving Placer County
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◇ Community Events and Parent Workshop Calendar ◇

Community Events:

◇ "Outcome Faire 2002"

Sponsored by the Children and Families
Commission of Placer County
Resources for Parents and Activities for Children
Saturday, September 21st / 10:00 am ~ 2:00 pm
Placer Bldg / Gold Country Fairgrounds ~ Auburn

◇ "Health and Safety Faire"

Sponsored by PCOE Child Care Services
Activities for Children and Information for Adults
Friday, October 12th / 10:00 am ~ 12:00 pm
Loomis Community Park ~ Loomis

Parent Workshops:

◇ "Off to a Good Start" Series

The seven workshops for parents of 4 or 5 year olds
will be covered on consecutive Tuesday evenings.
September 10th ~ October 22nd
6:00 ~ 7:30 pm UCCE Office

◇ "Let's Read Together" Workshop

All the units in the series will be covered in one
Saturday session. Parents receive new copies of the
featured books!
September 28th
9:00 am ~ 12:30 pm UCCE Office

Sharon K. Junge
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