

Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

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KID BITS

Parent with confidence

What do you do well as a parent? Focus on the positives in your parenting life, perhaps a fun family tradition you started or the way you've gotten your youngster to try new foods. Having a good attitude about your parenting can influence your child's attitude in a positive way!

Shape match

Comparing shapes and sizes is an essential early math skill—and it's easy to practice with your youngster. On a piece of paper, trace around the bottoms of building blocks, cups, or containers. Then, ask her to match the objects to their outlines. Next, she could make tracings for you to match.

DID YOU KNOW?

Little ones often use their left and right hands until they discover a preference (typically between ages 4 and 6). Be sure to let your child decide which hand to use. For example, when you give him a pencil, hold it at the middle of his body so he can pick a hand to grasp it with.

Worth quoting

"Be silly, be honest, be kind." *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Just for fun

Q: What did the snail say when he found himself on the turtle's back?

A: Wheeeee!



Fort George Community Services Inc.

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I know how you feel

Youngsters are still learning to sort out their feelings, so they may not always understand what others are going through. Try these strategies to help your child become aware of his emotions and learn to feel and show empathy.

Looking in the mirror

Stand in front of a mirror together. Make a face that shows emotion, like an open mouth and widened eyes for surprised. Have your youngster identify your emotion. Then, it's his turn to make a face for you to name. He'll learn to "read" faces and link expressions with their emotions, which is a great way to understand how others are feeling.

Reading deeper

When you read a book with your child, take some time to discuss the pictures. Ask him questions about the characters, such as "Look at Anna's face. Do you think she's worried or excited?"



Talk about why the character might feel that way. ("Yes, she is probably excited because she learned to jump rope!")

Modeling empathy

You're one of the people your youngster depends on to empathize with him. Show him that you understand his emotions by validating what he feels. For example, you could say, "I understand you're mad because your favorite shorts are in the laundry. Let's find something else to wear while they get washed." ♥

Listen up

Can your child follow one-step directions? How about those with two or three steps? Here are tips for helping her become a better listener.

● **Cook.** While your youngster listens, read the first step in a recipe. ("In a small bowl, whisk together milk, eggs, and sugar.") Ask her to repeat what you said. Then, help her complete the task.

● **Be silly.** Build memory and concentration with three-step directions. Give your child three silly instructions to follow: "Spin three times, waddle like a duck to your bedroom, and pick out your favorite toy to play with." Now let her give you three silly directions! ♥

