

Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

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Fort George Community Services, Inc.
Carolyn L. Wiggins, Executive Director

KID BITS

Watch closely

Boost your child's concentration with this fast-paced game. Line up three colored plastic cups upside down, and put a coin under one. Have him watch the cup with the coin as you quickly rearrange the cups for 10 seconds. Then, ask him to tap the cup the coin is under. Was he right? Switch roles, and see if he can stump you.

Getting enough sleep

A good night's sleep prepares your youngster's body and brain for a new day. It may be tempting to let her stay up late or sleep in on weekends and during school breaks, but try your best to keep a consistent schedule. This will help her get the 10–13 hours of sleep she needs each night.

Thanksgiving helper

Involve your child in your Thanksgiving plans. If you're hosting guests, he could hang up coats or refill water glasses. Or if you visit relatives, he might pick out a game to take and share with his cousins. He'll feel proud to contribute, and he'll learn to be a good host or guest.

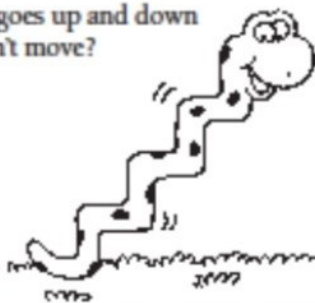
Worth quoting

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have." *Maya Angelou*

Just for fun

Q: What goes up and down but doesn't move?

A: Stairs.



Ready to read

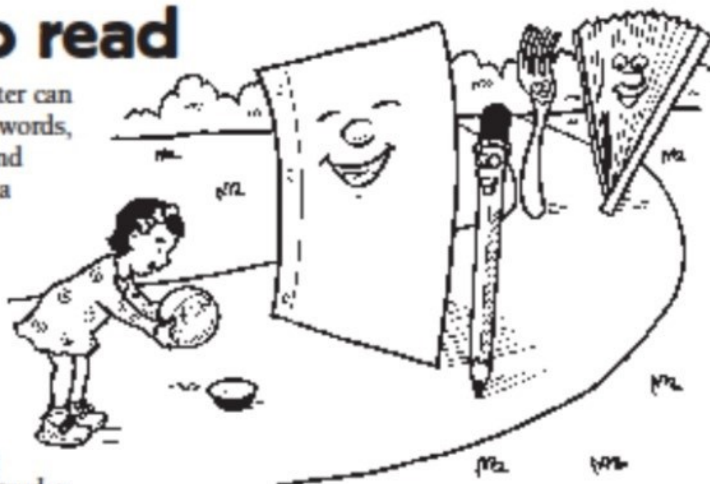
Before your youngster can identify letters or read words, playing with sounds and syllables in words lays a strong foundation for reading. Try these ideas.

Match beginning sounds

Gather pairs of small household objects with beginning sounds that match. *Examples:* ball and bowl, pencil and paper, fork and fan. Mix them all up—can she put each item with its partner? Now have her collect objects for you to pair up. Each time, she'll work on hearing beginning sounds in words.

Spy the rhymes

Play this version of "I Spy," and your youngster will practice hearing rhymes. You might say, "I spy something green that rhymes with *beef*" (*leaf*) or "I spy something on the table that rhymes with *boy*" (*toy*). She could point to or bring you the correct item. Then, let her come up with "I Spy" rhymes for you.



Jump for syllables

Help your child hear individual syllables in words. Think of a familiar word with multiple syllables (*tomato*, *helicopter*). Say the word slowly while she does a different movement for each syllable. Since *tomato* has three syllables, she might hop for *to-*, spin around for *-ma-*, and stomp for *-to*. What four movements will she do for *he-li-cop-ter*?♥

Keep going!

A child with grit knows how to work through challenges and handle setbacks. Use these suggestions to promote a stick-with-it attitude in your youngster:

- Encourage him to use positive phrases like "I can try" or "Can you help?" instead of saying "I can't" or "I don't know how." This shift in thinking will make a big difference! *Tip:* Remember to model positive language when you talk to him. ("I know you can do it!")
- Do a new activity together, such as making your own play dough or bubble solution. It might take a few attempts to get the recipe just right, but you'll show your child that continuing to try leads to learning—and fun.♥

