

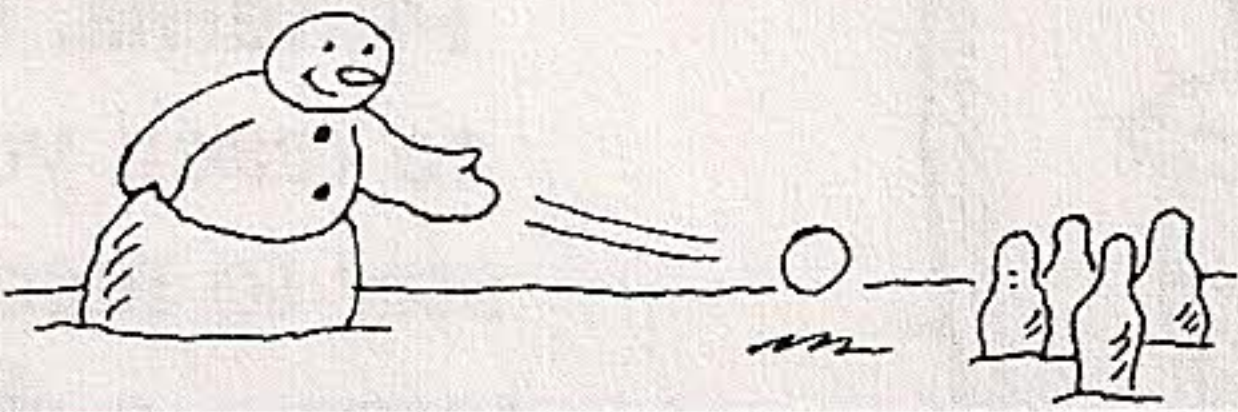
Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

December 2009

J. E. Cosgriff Memorial Catholic School
Mrs. Hunt, Principal

KID BITS



Growing up

Visiting friends, staying with sitters, or spending the night with relatives can make your child feel more independent. Visits like these will help her adjust to different people and places. And they show her that she can get along okay when she's away from you.

What's next?

Help improve your youngster's reading comprehension by having him predict story events. When you read aloud, stop and ask him what might happen next. He can look for clues in the pictures or think about how things would turn out in real life. Continue reading, and see if his prediction was accurate.

Take time to relax

Holiday stress can affect children as well as adults. Taking time for low-key fun will help everyone relax. Talk about activities that your family enjoys (going for walks, coloring), and plan to include them in your day. *Idea:* Consider setting aside a "free" day—you might spend the day at home in your pajamas.

Worth quoting

"It's okay to make mistakes. Mistakes are our teachers—they help us to learn." *John Bradshaw*

Just for fun

Timmy: Can I go back outside?

Mom: Yes. Here are your boots.

Timmy: Those aren't my boots—mine had snow on them!



Play with me

For little ones, play time is learning time. When you join your child for a quick game of cards or spend an afternoon making a racetrack together, you teach him valuable skills. Here are some ideas.

Make believe

Pretend play lets your youngster use his imagination and practice life skills. For example, the two of you might "fix" a table with toy tools, line up chairs and ride an imaginary train, or take turns serving food in a make-believe restaurant. Help your child learn to carry on conversations by asking him questions, such as "Where is our train going?" or "What do you want for lunch?"

Plan a project

Ask your youngster to make something with you. He can practice planning and decision making as you work together to paint a mural, design a block city, or build a snowman. Let him decide which colors to use, where roads should go, or how to decorate the snowman.



Enjoy friendly competition

Games teach your child to take turns, follow rules, and be a good sport—skills that help him get along with others. Together, play a game like dominoes, Memory, or Twister. Whether you win or lose, say, "Good game!" and encourage him to do the same.

Tip: Playing with your youngster can also prevent discipline problems. When you spend time together, he'll be less likely to misbehave later to get your attention. ♥

Writing basket

Motivate your youngster to write by keeping writing supplies handy in a basket or tote bag. Try these suggestions.

● **Notepads.** Put in pencils, a pad of sticky notes, and a notebook. Suggest that your child walk around the house and copy words from book titles or product labels onto the sticky notes. Have her put them on separate notebook pages and make up a sentence for each word ("I love pizza").

● **Stationery.** Cut lined paper into halves, and let your youngster decorate each sheet with stickers. Add stamped envelopes and colored pens, and help her write and mail letters. She can also use her stationery to write stories.

Tip: Ask your child to read her writing to you. ♥



