



Building Strong Families

Celebrate Each Other

At the beginning of a new year, people often take time to stop and think about their lives. They make New Year's resolutions to set goals for themselves for the upcoming year. This is also a good time for families to celebrate each other. Think about every member of your family and what you mean to each other.

Here are some ways for families to celebrate each other:

- Think about the special qualities of each person and what you like best about them. Talk about this with each other.
- Let your children know the things you like about them and why each one is special.
- Talk about special family times you have had in the past.
- Plan some activities to do in the upcoming year. Have your child take part in the planning.
- Look at old photos of special family times.
- Talk about favorite relatives and what you like to do together.
- Tell family stories of things you did when you were a kid.
- Tell your child the story of the day he or she was born.
- Set aside time each week for a special family activity.



Tips for Parents



Parents usually make rules for their children to follow. Here are some rules to help you be a good parent:

- Spend time with your child every day.
- Teach your child what you want him to do and how to do it. Remember that discipline means to teach.
- Be a good role model for your child.
- Talk with, and really listen to, your child.
- Make, and enforce, clear and fair rules for behavior.
- Know who your child's friends are. Get to know their parents.

Wash Those Germs Away!

More people have colds and the flu this time of year. To help prevent this in your family, make sure there's a lot of hand washing going on. Help your child learn the habit of washing hands often and remember to do it yourself. Wash those germs away to help keep your family healthy.

Here are the most important times to wash hands throughout the day:

- Before handling food
- Before eating or drinking something
- After bathroom and diapering routines
- After wiping noses
- After coughing or sneezing
- After handling or playing with pets
- After playing outdoors
- After cleaning projects around the house or yard.

Read for Success

Here is an easy way to prepare your child to succeed in life. Read, read, then read to her some more. Children who are read to every day learn to read sooner and do better in school. They learn to love books and are eager to learn new things. Times spent reading together are very special family moments.

Preschoolers often ask to have a favorite story read over and over again. This may seem boring to you, but your child learns so much from hearing a familiar story repeated. This leads to pretend reading. Your child will then begin to recognize letters and eventually begin to read on her own.

Take your child to the library. Find the children's section and see what is there. There may be puppets, puzzles, and other things for children to do. There may be story hours and other programs for children. Some libraries have cozy chairs and spots for reading books together. If your child has a special interest, ask the librarian to help you find some books about it. The public library is a great place for some reading fun!

Set a good example.
Children who see their parents reading learn that reading is important.



More from Better Kid Care

The Better Kid Care Web Site at www.betterkidcare.psu.edu has more information for parents. Look for other *Family Time-Work Time* issues, *Parents Count*, child care and activity tip sheets, snack ideas, choosing child care tips, school readiness information, and the monthly Better Kid Care E-Newsletter. To sign up for the E-Newsletter, send a request to BetterKidCareNews-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu.

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