



FEBRUARY 2009



Family Time Work Time

A B A L A N C I N G A C T

Building Strong Families

Routines Can Help

Do you have trouble getting your child ready for child care in the morning? Is cleaning up toys a struggle every day? Maybe bedtime has become a time of day you'd rather avoid. If you have a young child, you might want to try having some routines to help make those times go smoother at your house. Young children often do better when they know what is coming next. Routines can help.

Here are ideas for busy mornings when you are trying to get the whole family off to work, child care, and/or school on time:

Try to have as many things ready as you can before you go to bed the night before. Have clothing selected and laid out, breakfast organized, lunches set to go, things to take for child care or school, etc. That way you can concentrate on your child's needs in the morning. Try to have the same good morning routine every day. Set your alarm clock early enough to allow time to get ready mornings. Wake up your child with a wake-up hug, eat breakfast together, brush teeth, get dressed, pick up the items you need to take with you, and off you all go! Do things in the same order each day.

When it's time to clean up or put away toys try some of the following suggestions:

For clean-up times, always give your child a warning before clean-up time by saying there are three more minutes to play, or the number of minutes that work for you. You might want to have a special song to sing or music to play during that time. You can make a game of it. Say things such as, "See if you can find three red blocks to put in the block box." "Find two books to put in the book basket." "I see a blue truck and a green car. Where do they go?" You can even turn it into an "I Spy" game to make clean-up even more fun.

It's time for bed and your child never wants the day to end. Here are some ideas to try:

Try things to calm your child down as bedtime approaches. Start with a soothing bath where your child can play in the water with some water toys. This should be followed by tooth brushing. Finally, a bedtime story is a nice way to end the day. Avoid loud music and lively television shows or video games at this time of day.



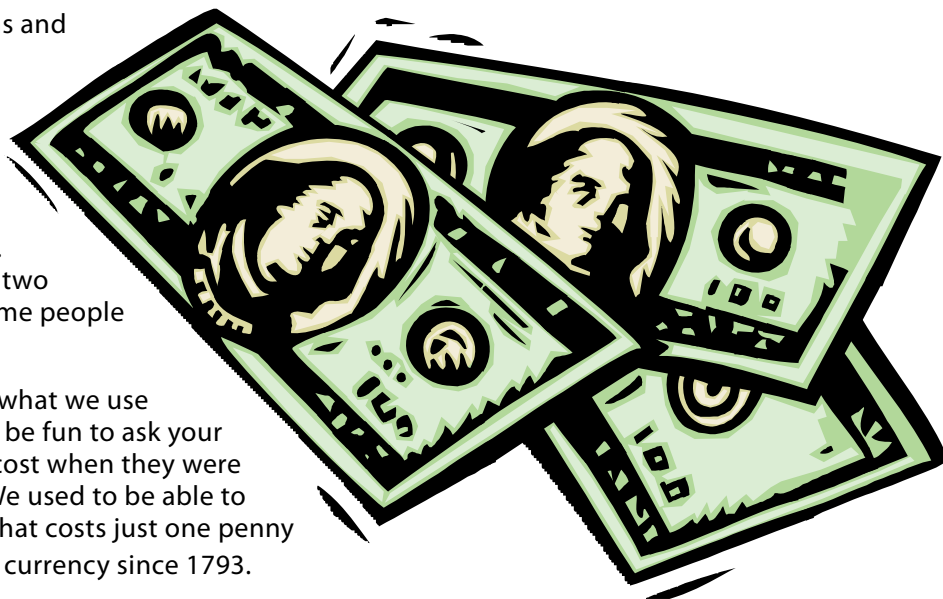
On the Money

There are some fun ways to teach your child about money. It can be a good lesson on what each coin and bill is worth. It can also be a history lesson about the U.S. presidents whose pictures are on the coins and paper currency.

Think about it. On pennies we find Abraham Lincoln. Thomas Jefferson is on the nickel. George Washington is on our quarters. The last several years all fifty states have each been represented on the back of quarters, one at a time. Look at a dollar bill and you will find George Washington's picture on it, with Lincoln on the five dollar bill, and Jefferson on the ten. Who is on the twenty, the fifty, and the one hundred dollar bills? Check them out with your child. There used to be paper currency for larger amounts, but they were discontinued in the 1960s.

Make a game for your child to look at coins and paper money to see who is on them. Then talk about the presidents and their place in our United States history. Go to the Internet or your public library to find out more money facts. Some things you might want to look up are wheat pennies, buffalo nickels, and silver dollars. Also, see what you can find out about the two dollar bill. Two dollar bills are rare, but some people have them.

Then finish your activity by talking about what we use money for and the cost of things. It might be fun to ask your child's grandparent what milk and bread cost when they were young and compare it to the cost today. We used to be able to buy "penny" candy, but there's not much that costs just one penny today! Pennies have been part of our U.S. currency since 1793.



New Pennies in 2009



There will be a new series of pennies in 2009 to celebrate Abraham Lincoln's birth 200 years ago and the 100th anniversary of the first Lincoln pennies. The new pennies will have pictures of four major aspects of Lincoln's life on the back side and will be coming out every three months.

The first series will depict Lincoln's birth and early childhood years in Kentucky from 1809 to 1816.

The second series will show the years he lived in Indiana from 1816 to 1830.

The third is on Lincoln's professional life in Illinois from 1830 until 1861.

The final one shows his presidency in Washington, D.C. from 1861 until 1865.

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