

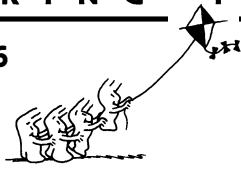
# Early Years

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START

March 2016

Lexington School District One

## KID BITS



### My own space

All siblings squabble occasionally. Keep the peace by setting aside a separate corner where each child can play by himself. Create a rule that siblings must leave each other alone when they are in their special places. That way, when they need a break from each other, they'll have somewhere to go.

### No littering

Show your youngster that she's old enough to start taking care of the earth. Let her tuck a small paper bag into her pocket when you take a walk or visit a playground. She'll have a portable trash can for her tissues and snack wrappers, and she'll get into the habit of putting litter where it belongs.

### Letter-tac-toe

Instead of Xs and Os, use different letters when you play tic-tac-toe with your child. He might mark his spots with As, and you mark yours with Gs, for instance. It's a fun opportunity for your little one to practice printing letters of the alphabet.

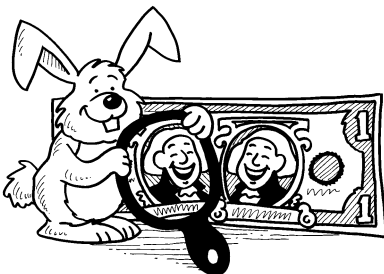
### Worth quoting

"Every moment is a fresh beginning."  
T. S. Eliot

### Just for fun

**Q:** What's the easiest way to double your money?

**A:** Put it in front of a mirror!



## Making good choices

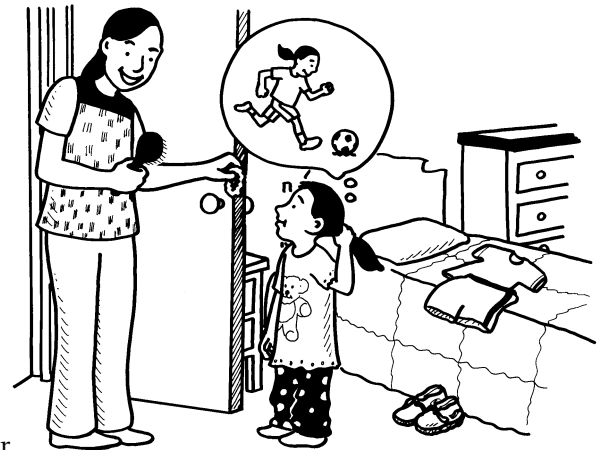
The more your youngster uses decision-making skills, the better she will get at thinking through different options. Let her practice with these tips.

### In everyday situations

Give your child some control over daily choices like how to wear her hair or which vegetable she'll have for dinner. Ask questions that might help her make the decisions. *Example:* "You have PE tomorrow, so would you rather wear your hair up in a ponytail or down?" Do this regularly, and she'll learn to ask herself questions—and make good decisions on her own.

### During playtime

Offer simple choices when the two of you play. Would your youngster rather play pick-up sticks or jacks? Does she want to build a fort in the living room or in the kitchen? Encourage her to share her reasoning. ("There's more



space in the living room, so I can make a bigger fort there.")

### At story time

Let your child step into a storybook character's shoes and make a decision from that person's perspective. She might pretend to be Cinderella's step-sister and decide to be kind. Have your child imagine the result of the different choice. ("If I treat Cinderella nicely, we can share the chores, and maybe my mother will help her go to the ball.")♥

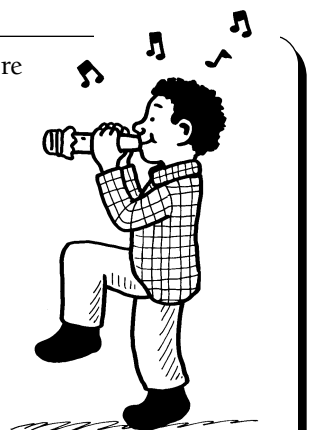
## Fun with kazooos

Making and playing a kazoo lets your youngster explore music and science. Here's how.

1. Have him decorate a cardboard tube with markers or paint.
2. Help him cover one end with a piece of waxed paper and secure it with a rubber band.
3. With a sharp pencil, poke a small hole in the side of the tube about 1 inch from the covered end.
4. Show him how to hum a tune into the open end, making sure his fingers don't cover the hole on the side.

How does your child think the kazoo produces sound?

*Answer:* When he hums, air in the tube moves around, causing the waxed paper to vibrate. This *amplifies* his humming, or makes it louder.♥



# Math is our friend

From counting pizzas to adding numbers, your child can have fun with early math skills. Try these activities.

**Pizza party.** Let your youngster invite a few action figure “guests” to a play-dough pizza party. He could count the guests and make a personal pizza for each one (3 pizzas for 3 guests, for example). *Idea:* Get two more guests, and have him *count on* (“4, 5”) to decide how many pizzas he needs now (5).



him to make the same number (5) another way using his fingers ( $2 + 3 = 5$  or  $5 + 0 = 5$ ).♥

**Number combinations.**

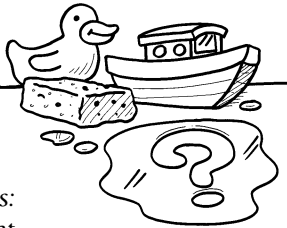
Use this activity to show your child there are different ways to add up to the same number. Hold up some fingers on each hand. Have your youngster count them and tell you the number sentence they make. For instance, if you show him 4 fingers on one hand and 1 finger on the other, he would say, “4 + 1 = 5.” Challenge

**ACTIVITY CORNER**

## Memory challenge

What’s missing from the water? This game gives your youngster’s memory a workout.

At bath time, ask her to pick four or five objects to put in the water. *Examples:* sponge, toy boat, plastic animals, washcloth. It doesn’t matter if they sink or float. Have your child close her eyes while you take one item away.



Ask her to tell you which item is missing. Give her hints if she needs them, such as, “It’s blue and it floats.”

*Variation:* Add bubbles to the water. Have your youngster put items in the bubbles and close her eyes. Take away one object, ask her to open her eyes, and show her the item you removed. Can she remember which objects are still under the bubbles?♥



**PARENT TO PARENT**

## Loyal to each other

My daughter Chloe doesn’t like anyone to know that she sucks her thumb at home. So she was embarrassed and upset when her twin sister, Isabella, told their classmates. It made me sad that Isabella was disloyal to her sister.

I explained to the girls that being loyal means sticking up for another person and not sharing private information. I asked them to think of other things they would want to keep private. Isabella said she wouldn’t want other people to know she’s afraid of monsters, and Chloe said potty accidents. I told them that in our family, we are loyal to each other, and that means we keep those kinds of things just between us.

Isabella apologized for embarrassing Chloe, and she promised to stick up for her sister if anyone teases her about sucking her thumb—or anything else.♥



**Q & A**

## Switching gears

**Q:** I love playing with my son, but when it’s time for us to stop, he gets upset. What should I do?

**A:** Little ones rarely want to change activities when they are doing something they enjoy. The trick is to ease your son from one activity to the next in a positive way.

Try alerting him when it’s almost time for you to stop playing. You could set a phone or

kitchen timer for five minutes and say, “I have to start dinner when the timer goes off, so we’ll have to finish our game by then.”

Another tip is to find a way that he can still spend time with you. For instance, if you need to cook, let him tear lettuce for the salad. Or if it’s time for him to go to bed, you could brush your teeth side by side before you tuck him in.♥



**OUR PURPOSE**

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote school readiness, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

Resources for Educators, a division of CCH Incorporated  
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630  
540-636-4280 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com  
www.rfeonline.com  
ISSN 1540-5567