



BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES

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Exploration: An Out-Of-School-Time-Alliance

The Exploration program has taken students on two field trips. March 20, 2009 we visited the Fish Hatchery in Enterprise and learned about what they do with the fish there. Students were able to tour the facility and feed the fish. Twenty students and Three parent volunteers had a great day at the fish hatchery. The latest trip was to Hidden Springs Farm in Lostine. A student said "This is the best one Yet!". Hidden Springs Farm has pigs, free range chickens (about 200), Milk cows, horses and the biggest hit a pair of Akbash dogs and their eleven puppies. Akbash Dogs are very large, white dogs that protect livestock, and what a hit they were! Linda Wafford was a wonderful hostess, and shared with the students all the things that happen on a working farm, like gathering and selling eggs, making butter, making cheese, a milking the cow and feeding her calf. Exploration will continue through May 15th! Come join us for some fun!

Parenting Class Schedule

Toddler Group	Every Monday	Enterprise
Parenting with Positive Discipline	May	Enterprise
Teen/Parent Workshop	May 17th	Enterprise

Thank you to the Rotary Club of Wallowa County

230 new Spring Columbia Sportswear Coats were provided to Wallowa County children through Rotary's "Coats for Kids" program.

Thanks again! Wallowa County Families

Communicating with Your Child

Talking and listening to your children can help create healthy relationships. Here are tips for communicating with your child:

Ben interested & attentive. A child can tell whether she has your interest and attention. Maintain eye contact. Get down on her level; don't stand and tower above her.

Encourage talking. Some children need an invitation to start talking. You might begin with, "Tell me about your day at school." Ask questions that will require more than yes or no answers.

Extend conversation. If a child says, "I like books," you can respond by using some of the same wording. "What are some of the books you like best?" Follow up with questions about characters in the books, etc.

Listen patiently. Hurrying children, or calling attention to the wrong use of a word while they are talking, is upsetting and confusing. Avoid cutting children off before they have finished speaking. Avoid correcting grammar or pronunciation. Correction can take place in a different context and you can model correct grammar in your own speech.

Reflect feelings. Sometimes reflecting a child's feelings encourages him to tell you what's on his mind. Saying, "You're really feeling sad today, aren't you?" is more likely to invite a child to share his feelings than asking, "What's wrong?"

Be an example. Parents who listen to their children with interest, attention and patience set a valuable example. The greatest audience children can have is an adult who is important to them and interested in them.

Reference Communicating with Young Children. Harrelson, Peggy. July 1996. Virginia Cooperative Education. 6 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/family/350-022/350-022.html>>.

October Parenting Pipeline: Communicating With Your Child. North Dakota State University Extension Service. 18 Nov. 2008 <http://www.ext.nodak.edu/extnews/pipeline/k-oct-w.htm>

Babies and Language

Babies learn language by hearing other people speak and by practicing those sounds. You can help your baby learn language:

Talk to your baby! This is the most important step you can take. Some parents feel silly talking to a baby who can't talk back. Your baby is listening to your speech and learning from it even before he can answer your questions.

Play language games with your baby. When she makes a sound, repeat it and add a new sound. Take turns talking with your baby. Sing to her. Recite nursery rhymes. Interacting with you is one of the best ways for a baby to experience language.

Read aloud to your baby. Even before he can understand the story, he hears the sounds. Sharing a book helps build a lifelong love of reading.

Don't use the TV as a substitute for you. Babies need interaction with real, live people to learn language. Canned TV sounds aren't the same.

Have your baby's hearing checked. Babies with hearing problems don't get the language experience they need. The earlier hearing problems are identified and corrected, the better.

Teach multiple languages early. If you want your child to speak more than one language, start early! Children growing up in bilingual homes often speak both languages fluently.

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Bales, D. (1998). *Building Baby's Brain: Learning Language*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia, College of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Routines for Rest

Routines are important for children. There are several things a parent/caregiver can do to establish a calming naptime/bedtime routine. Although each child and family situation is unique, the following ideas may be helpful.

Give children some transition time. Say, "it's naptime in 10 minutes" or "after I read you a story, it will be time to go to sleep." It may help to use a timer so children will know when time is up.

Set rules about number of stories, drinks of water, getting out of bed, etc.

Plan a wind-down activity. Read a story, turn down the lights, play quiet music, or just talk. TV, movies, roughhousing, or active games are not good choices prior to naptime or bedtime.

Provide children with security. Let her have her favorite stuffed animals, blankie, night light, flashlight by the bed, or the door open.

Talk about fears and anxieties. Do a "monster check" if that seems to be a concern.

Avoid activities that compete with resting or going to sleep. Have adults and older children observe similar quiet time. This will encourage the little ones to go to sleep.

Decide on a regular bedtime. Set bedtime 10 to 12 hours before the child needs to get up. If a child is getting up too early, he may be going to bed too soon. On the other hand, if a child is grumpy or drowsy, he may not be getting to bed early enough.

Reference

Donald, D. *Children and Sleep*. Iowa State University Extension. Retrieved Nov. 7, 2008 from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1529O.pdf>