



the parents page supplement

Supplement 2: February 2009

This supplement is an extension of The Parents Page distributed in the HIPPY TIMES and offers important current information for parents with activities to further nurture parent/child interactions.

IN THE NEWS - Health Alert:

As many parents know, **obesity** is now a national concern. In fact, HIPPY USA has written several educational articles and parent alerts on this subject. There are many reasons for this increase in obesity which includes overeating high fat fast and snack foods, lack of exercise, and family patterns. The National Institute of Health published a report in "The Robert Wood Johnson News Digest" of December 2, 2008 which also says that a decrease in children's health is now connected to their increased and extended use of different forms of media (television, video games, films, music, computer and internet use). One of their studies found "that 3-year-olds who spent more than eight hours per week watching television were more likely to be obese by age 7 compared with peers who were exposed to less mass media." They recommend that lawmakers support media education efforts and public service advertising campaigns. These efforts must:

(1) support more family-friendly media, (2) offer more guidelines on marketing junk food to children and (3) offer more help for parents and pediatricians so that they take steps to limit their children's ongoing use of mass media. Do these health issues concern you? They probably do? As HIPPY parents you have the power to encourage good quality of life issues for your children. Think about what you can do to change eating habits in your home. How can you change your children's developing patterns in how they use television, video games, films, music, computer and the internet so that their health is and will be improved?

Education/ Child Developmental Tips:

Puzzles- Unlocking the Key

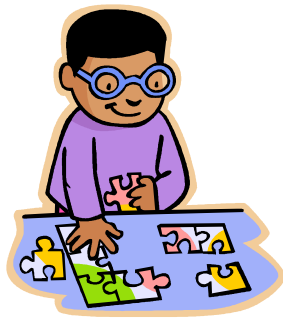
Does your child like to do puzzles? Some HIPPY activities have puzzles. You can buy puzzles, although making them is interesting and they are just as valuable. Puzzles are amazing educational tools. Children enjoy working on puzzles for a long time because they are fun. They will happily sit for a long while to complete the puzzle. This helps to increase your child's attention span and improves your child's ability to stick with a task. Children gain a great sense of accomplishment when they can successfully finish a puzzle. Because puzzles are self-correcting your child's self-confidence develops along with encouraging his/her problem solving skills. This new found confidence encourages children to take on new tasks and new challenges.

Your child's ability to problem solve and reason develop the more your child works with and finishes different puzzles. As your child figures out how to solve puzzles the areas of the brain used for reasoning and problem solving are stimulated. In addition to reasoning and problem solving doing puzzles also develops other important skills that will benefit your child in other learning areas. These include:

- ◆ Seeing similarities and difference –when matching puzzle pieces children need to be able to distinguish what shapes, and colors in the designs go together and which ones do not.
- ◆ Remembering- when solving puzzles your child needs to be able to remember the design and hold onto the image as she/he searches for matches.

Both of these skills carryover in reading and writing tasks.

Action: You can make puzzles by using pictures, store flyers, a sheet of newspaper or page from a magazine, photos, wrapping paper, etc. Glue the paper to cardboard for support and cut using different kinds of lines into as many pieces as appropriate for your child's age. Then have fun!



Parent Tip: Puzzles are not just for kids! Many adults enjoy doing all kinds of puzzles. These can be jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, anagrams or even mazes. Doing puzzles for many adults is a form of relaxation (and what adult would not enjoy relaxing). You and your child can each work on your own puzzles or as a family. Try it- you may like it!



Do you have an education related suggestion, topic for us to cover or question? Contact Merle G. Greene at HIPPY USA: mgreene@hippyusa.org or ask your coordinator to contact us.