

# Parenting News & Views



## STAY HEALTHY!

Your family can take steps to prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses such as the flu.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If you are not near water, use an alcohol-based (60-95%) hand cleaner.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away immediately after you use it.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others.
- If you get the flu, stay home from work, school, and social gatherings.
- Follow flu vaccination recommendations. Recommendations are available at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), or call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hotline at (800) CDC-INFO. The hotline is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Visit [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) with your child for information and activities on a healthy living, including everything from proper hand washing to exercise!

Sources: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)



## THE MUSIC CONNECTION

Every day, there are opportunities that we, as adults, often refer to as “teachable moments.” These are the moments when you can use something that happens in the day to coach or teach your child about a new skill or concept. These moments can often have a far greater impact than a detailed lesson plan in a child care or school setting because they come from you as the parent. They are opportunities to teach fundamental areas that are building blocks for future learning. Adults must look for and foster the connection between those building blocks for children.

Music is one example of a “connector” that has the broad ability to build fundamental skills and touch multiple domains or areas for learning. Enjoying music together can provide great quality time as a family. Listening to, playing, and even creating music has beneficial effects for all family members. It is relaxing, improves creativity, and develops concentration. Creating music also has benefits, such as improving coordination and developing patience, perseverance, and self-confidence. For young children, these are critical skills that will support greater success in many areas of life.

Research particularly points to a strong connection between music and mathematic skills. This includes a connection between everything from fundamental skills such as memorization, to more specific skills such as learning incremental numbers and time. We certainly know that even at a young age, children will quickly memorize and repeat their favorite song. But did you know that as they sing, dance, or move along to the beat, they are also developing a sense of rhythm, copying patterns, and counting? These are skills that form a basis for not only math, but some areas of science as well.

Parents can foster these developmental links by providing age-appropriate music and listening opportunities for children. These websites will allow you to stream live music for children, or download free music to save and play for your child:

- [www.kidspublicradio.org](http://www.kidspublicradio.org)
- [www.jitterbug.tv](http://www.jitterbug.tv)
- [www.freekidsmusic.com](http://www.freekidsmusic.com)

*continued on back*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Recipes . . . . .	2
Fun with Kids . . . . .	2
Just for Parents . . . . .	3

## RECIPE FOR FIRST AID

Parents and child care providers have a big responsibility to keep children safe and to care for them when they are injured or ill. You can be ready for any incident by preparing a basic first aid kit for your home. You can also support your child care provider's program by educating your child about safety, or occasionally providing extra supplies for their first aid kit.

These items are recommended for a basic **first aid kit**:

- Two pairs of non-Latex sterile gloves
- Sterile dressings
- Adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- Cleansing agent/soap and antibiotic towelettes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Burn ointment
- Eye wash solution
- Thermometer
- Prescription medications
- Prescribed medical supplies

Other things that may be good to have in your kit:

- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Non-prescription drugs (pain reliever, antacid, etc.)

Is your home ready for an emergency? In addition to a first aid kit, prepare some basic emergency supplies so that you are prepared for any emergency. Read the article just for parents on page 3 of this newsletter.

Source: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)



FUN WITH KIDS

## LET'S GET ACTIVE!

There are plenty of things that you can do together as a family to encourage physical play and activity. You don't necessarily have to step outside of the house to have a ton of fun!

### FOLLOW THE LEADER

Create a winding path! Unwind some toilet paper as you move through the house — under the kitchen table, over the couch, around the chair, up the stairs — choosing obstacles that will safely challenge everyone who follows. For extra fun, wrap the last of the paper around a small treat. (And, of course, make a game of gathering up all of the paper too.)

Toddlers may even learn a few new concepts (such as over, under, and around) in the process. Encourage recycling by later using the toilet paper for 3-D art projects.

### DUST OFF THE POOL NOODLE

That foam pool noodle that was put away from summertime can be dusted off for indoor activity!

- *Torchbearer*: Hold the noodle upright and place a beanbag on top. Challenge your child to move around the room without the flame going out — that is, without the beanbag falling off.
- *Over/Under*: Hold the noodle horizontally, then challenge your child to go over or under the noodle, moving as her favorite animal (creep like a cat!).
- *Jack Be Nimble*: Slowly sweep the length of the noodle back and forth across the ground and see if your child can jump over it when it comes her way.
- *Timber!*: Hold the noodle upright, with one end resting on the floor. Cry "Timber!" and let it fall, while your child scrambles to catch it before it hits the ground. (Nudge it in different directions to make it more of a challenge.)

### SOME OLD FAVORITES

Teach your child these old favorites, then create a variation with your own family rules!

- *H-O-R-S-E*: Use an over-the-door basketball hoop or a laundry basket; challenge each other with difficult shots.
- *Red Light Green Light*: Take turns being the leader as you dance, march, climb stairs, or do your household chores.
- *Freeze Dance*: Turn on some music and dance together, and then *freeze* when the music is paused!

Source: [www.familyfun.go.com](http://www.familyfun.go.com)

## IS YOUR HOME READY?

Is your home ready with everything you need to respond to an emergency? Get your whole family involved in preparing an emergency supply kit for your home. Below is a list of some basic items that every emergency supply kit should include. Plan a family scavenger hunt to collect all of the items! First, look around your home for any items you may already have. For the rest, head to the store together and make everyone responsible for finding certain items. Then organize your supplies, and mark your calendar to re-check your kit every year to update expired items. Consider having at least two kits: one at home and smaller portable kits in your workplace, vehicle, or other places you spend time.

Recommended items to include in a basic emergency supply kit:

- Water, one gallon of water per person, per day, for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Manual can opener
- Battery-powered radio and batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit (see the “Recipe for a First Aid Kit” on page 2)
- Whistle
- Dust masks
- Duct tape
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Local maps
- Cell phone with charger

Additional items to consider adding to an emergency supply kit:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important documents in a waterproof and/or fireproof, portable container (such as copies of insurance policies, identification, and bank account records)
- Cash or traveler’s checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Change of clothing including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and sturdy shoes
- Household chlorine bleach
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches
- Personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups and plates, plastic utensils, and paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children

You can also help to better prepare your children by exploring these websites for some fun information, planning, and even games and activities geared for kids:

- Preschool: [www.sesamestreet.org/ready](http://www.sesamestreet.org/ready)
- School-age: [www.ready.gov/kids/home.html](http://www.ready.gov/kids/home.html)



## AGENCY INFORMATION

For more than a century, Children's Home Society of California (CHS) has adapted to the changing needs of children and families. Since 1891, CHS has worked diligently to protect our community's children and strengthen their families through diverse programs and services.

The mission of CHS is to reach out to children and families at risk with a range of services to ensure every child the opportunity to develop within a safe, healthy, and secure environment.

To fulfill our mission, CHS provides a variety of services to children and families in California and nationwide, working to improve their quality of life by offering vital information, educational, and resource services, which include Community Education, Child Care and Development, and Family Resource Services. Along with helping children and their families, CHS is an expert resource for child care providers, other social service agencies, and government agencies at the local, state, and national level.

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*continued from page 1*

Music is also a great way to spend time with your child and direct the activities of the day. There are some amazing resources for teachers that provide fun activities to connect music with curriculum. As your child's most important teacher, these resources might provide you with some ideas for including music in your everyday life. Try these kid-friendly websites for some ideas:

- [www.songsforteaching.com](http://www.songsforteaching.com)
- [www.lessonplanspage.com/Music.htm](http://www.lessonplanspage.com/Music.htm)
- [www.kidsnumbers.com](http://www.kidsnumbers.com)

Learning to play a musical instrument also promotes learning in many areas of development, and is fulfilling as well. Children gain a sense of self-worth and accomplishment as they progress and become more skilled at playing a musical instrument. Expose them to different types of instruments to help them decide what they may like best.

Exposure to different types of music is important too. You may find they like music you may not typically listen to; this gives you an opportunity for a conversation centered on the different types of music. While picking up toys, put on music you can move to or sing a silly song together. In this simple activity together, music can give your child a sense of time, make a chore or task fun, and allow your child to be successful.

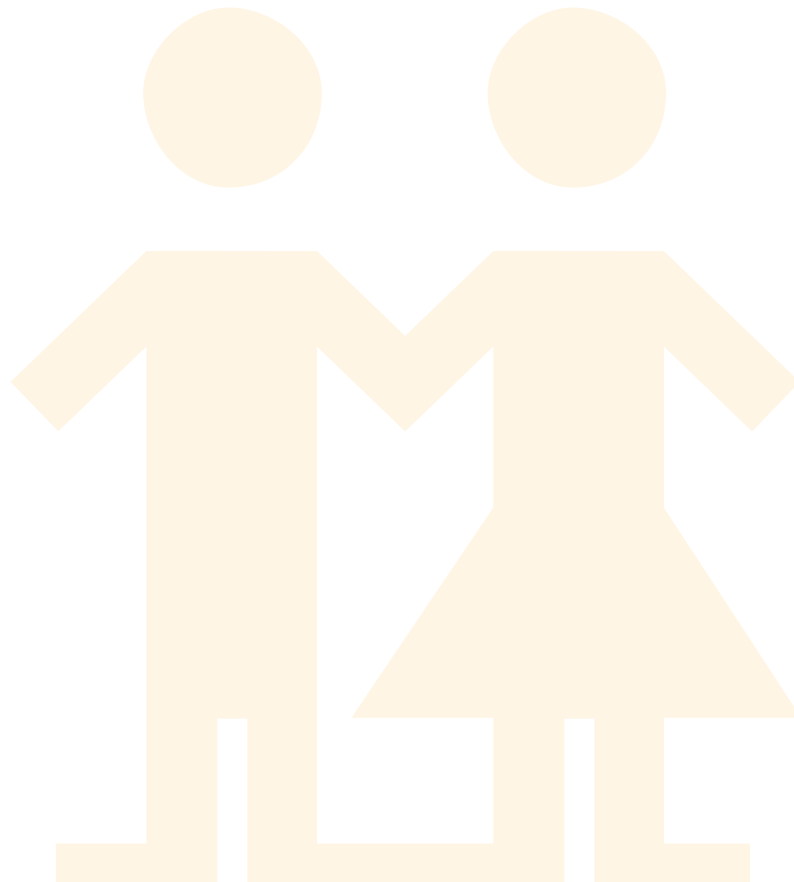
Music provides shared experiences and fosters growth in multiple developmental areas. Sharing music together develops a sense of connectedness between you and your child, develops cultural and artistic awareness, and introduces an element of fun into your daily interactions. Make music a part of your home environment!

Sources: [www.childcareexchange.com](http://www.childcareexchange.com); [www.paulborgese.com](http://www.paulborgese.com);

"Music Makes Math Meaningful" by R. J. Edelson & G. Johnson (Winter 2003/2004), *Childhood Education*



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