

Parenting NEWS & VIEWS

EARLY LEARNING AND
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Let the Learning Begin!

What's Inside

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You hear an excited giggle and the slap of hands and knees as Sarah chases the soft ball you just rolled across the wooden floor. She stops just short of the ball and stretches one hand out towards it, rocking slightly on her other hand and knees as she shifts her balance. She grabs the ball, but when she tries to pull it towards her, it ends up rolling away. She giggles and crawls after it as quickly as she can. The ball rolls away two more times before Sarah tries something different.

This time when she gets to the ball, she rocks back and shifts herself to a sitting position. She reaches out, but the ball is too far away. She babbles, "buh, buh, buh" as she scoots herself closer and grabs the ball with both hands, pulling it towards her. She turns

and smiles at you as she says, "buh, buh, buh." She drops the ball and it rolls across the floor. When you say, "Oh no! Where's the ball?" she laughs and crawls after the ball. When she reaches the ball she moves back into a sitting position before grabbing the ball.

Sarah has demonstrated how infants and toddlers use play to connect with others, develop the muscles in their bodies, acquire communication skills, and understand those things that are a part of their world. While playing with the ball, Sarah was strengthening her muscles, coordination, balance, and awareness of space. She was practicing language by interacting with another person and identifying the ball as "buh."

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DROWNING PREVENTION

Drowning is preventable, but it is still the leading cause of injury-related deaths for children under the age of five. Drowning can occur wherever there is one inch of water and it only takes seconds. Adults can keep children safe around water by:

- Supervising children near water (tubs, fountains, swimming pools, or toilets).
- Avoiding distractions and staying close enough to assist immediately when children are swimming.
- If you have a pool, using a cover that locks and can hold the weight of an adult, or installing a locking safety fence, and always keeping a life ring near the pool.
- Keeping a phone near the pool to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.





Accepting Diversity

By providing children with a variety of cultural and anti-bias experiences when they are young, adults can help them develop healthy and positive attitudes about themselves and others. Children develop ideas about diversity by observing others, reading books, watching television, and listening to how others talk. There are many biases in society, such as the beliefs that only women can be homemakers, that only men can be mechanics, and that people with disabilities should be treated differently. The reality is that our world consists of many different people who are capable of amazing things.

You can help your child learn about himself, as well as develop empathy and tolerance for others. This will help your child form friendships and work well with others at school. Try some of the following ideas for promoting tolerance of our diverse culture.

- Visit the public library and ask the youth librarian to assist you in selecting books that have pictures and

stories about diverse cultures, genders, and abilities. You may even want to try books in other languages. When selecting a book, ask yourself: Who is the book about? What culture or gender is represented? What lifestyles are shown? Who are the heroes? How do the characters treat each other? What is the purpose of the story?

- The library will also have music CDs for children. Try "Multi-Cultural Children's Songs" by Ella Jenkins, "Globallulabies" by Freyda Epstein, or children's music by Putumayo. Check out the book, *Making Music* by John Langstaff and Ann Sayre Wiseman to learn how to make your own multicultural instruments with children.
- Allow your child to express how he sees himself and others through art. Choose paper, paint, and drawing materials that represent different skin tones.
- Visit restaurants that serve food from different cultures.
- Attend fairs or festivals in your community that share cultural food, art, games, or music.
- Always answer any questions your child has instead of shushing him, and encourage him to talk to you about his relationships with others.



RECIPE Vegetable Skillet Frittata

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup red pepper, chopped
- 1 1/2 cup broccoli florets, cut into small pieces
- 1/2 cup liquid egg whites
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat cheddar cheese

Directions

Preheat broiler and wrap the handle of a 10-inch nonstick skillet with aluminum foil. Add the olive oil, onion, pepper, and broccoli to the skillet and cook on medium heat. Cook for 5 minutes; stirring occasionally. Pour egg whites and beaten eggs over the vegetables. Continue cooking until the eggs are almost done. Top with cheese and transfer the skillet to the oven. Broil the frittata until the cheese is melted and the eggs are fully cooked. Remove the skillet from the oven and allow it to cool for a minute before serving. This recipe serves 4 people.

Source: Adapted from the website
<http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/veggie-frittata.html?ref=search>





What is Discipline?

How did you learn about behavior? Culture, knowledge, and experience shape our beliefs about appropriate behavior and discipline. Punishment is a short-term solution that is more about power than learning. It usually involves threats or harmful actions that result in feelings of humiliation and fear. Discipline is a long-term solution because it offers children the opportunity to learn how to manage their own behavior.

Establish a plan for discipline and share it with family members and friends. If everyone follows the same plan, your child will learn what to expect and how to behave. The first step of positive discipline is to behave and talk the way that you want your child to behave and talk. You are the most important person in your child's life, and she will want to imitate you!

Keep a consistent daily routine and tell your child about changes before they happen. "Today, we are going to the park, and then we will stop at the store." When you arrive at each place, discuss your expectations before you get out of the car. "At the park, I expect you to stay where I can see you so I can keep you safe." Develop reasonable expectations that are appropriate for your child's age and abilities. For example, most two year olds can use a sponge, so it is reasonable to expect that they clean up spilled milk with a damp sponge.

Consequences help children understand that actions and decisions have results. A natural consequence is a natural result of an action. For example, if a child smashes a toy, then the toy has to be thrown away. A logical consequence can be used when the natural consequence is not appropriate or is unsafe.

A logical consequence is guidance directly related to the action. For example, "Jenna, I saw you throw sand at Amy's eyes. That can hurt her and is not safe. You need to leave the sandbox."

Prevent negative behaviors by letting children spend time outside, moving and using up energy. Allow children to solve problems and make decisions for themselves when it is safe and appropriate. When negative behavior happens, investigate why and see what can be done differently. Notice positive behavior and acknowledge it. This helps children learn that there are positive ways to get your attention, and positive relationships support positive behavior! For more discipline resources, visit our website at www.chs-ca.org.

Source: "Positive Discipline: Appropriate Guidance for Your Child,"
Children's Home Society of California (2010).



She developed her cognitive skills by figuring out how to grab the ball without it rolling away and staying focused on her goal.

The following skills are related to how infants and toddlers approach learning: to cultivate the ability to focus on a task, to learn self-comforting skills, to develop curiosity and demonstrate an interest in learning, to begin managing their emotions and behavior, and to learn through imitation. Frequent interactions with an adult during play can help an infant slowly increase her attention span. The first time an adult reads a book to a baby, she will spend more time trying to look at the adult than the book. Gradually, her attention will focus on the book instead. As the adult reads and points to pictures, the infant becomes more engaged and is willing to read for a longer time. By the time she is a toddler, she will begin to sit and look at several different books on her own.

An infant cries to communicate a need. When a loving adult responds in a timely manner, the infant learns to rely on him. As she grows, the baby will learn that she can comfort herself by sucking on her pacifier, or holding her favorite

toy. This ability to comfort herself builds her resilience and independence. This is a valuable skill because children, who have a strong sense of resilience, or ability to bounce back, are more likely to work through obstacles in their lives. You can help build your child's resilience by teaching them about emotions. Label feelings when you see them, and help children deal with them in a positive way. For example, "I see you are crying. That tells me you feel sad. Will it help if I hug you?"

Infants are wonderful observers. As they grow, they begin to imitate the actions they see and speak the words they most often hear. When you sing songs, read books, or play with infants and toddlers, you provide them with opportunities to imitate you and to learn.

Source: California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework by the California Department of Education (Sacramento, 2012).

ABOUT CHS

For over 125 years, 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.

At CHS, we view a child not in isolation, but in the context of each family's health, stability, and resources. We believe that families are fundamentally strong and resilient. 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.

Therefore, 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, education and resource services, and child care assistance.

CHS also serves as an expert resource for childcare providers, other social service agencies, and government agencies at the local, state, and national level. To learn more about CHS and resources available to you, please visit our website at www.chs-ca.org.

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