

The editor of First Steps Families is a mom that had a child in the First Steps program. Hopefully the information shared will provide you with helpful resources for your family. To conserve resources and to make sure you don't miss out on helpful information, please send your e-mail address to Connie Coovert at cccoov2@uky.edu to receive the newsletter electronically.

Connie



READING TO YOUR BABY

Have you ever wondered how reading to your baby, especially a newborn, could possibly be beneficial? Your little one can't really understand what is being read, nor can he or she talk yet, so how in the world could she benefit from your reading aloud long before she can talk?

Reading to babies and toddlers definitely promotes later communication skills, builds vocabulary and boosts memory, listening and attention skills. As you read to your baby he develops other important skills by looking at, pointing to and touching pictures. Babies hear different emotions in your voice as you read. Fine motor skills increase as they learn to turn pages in cardboard "chubby" books. Toddlers soon learn to "right" a picture if the book is turned upside down.



Reading to young children also promotes the closeness between parent and child and can be a special time to soothe a child into sleep.

Try to pick a certain time each day to read to your child and make it a routine. Don't worry about finishing an entire book or even reading word for word. Sometimes just making animal sounds or talking about the pictures on each page can be enough. For young babies pick vinyl or cardboard page books with one large simple picture per page. For toddlers you can add texture books with crinkly & shiny pages to touch and explore. For older toddlers pop-up books become fun.

Babies and toddlers enjoy books with real life pictures, as well as rhyming books and books with repetitive text.

Be sure to check with your local library since many offer story times just for babies and toddlers, geared to their attention span and developmental level. Have fun!

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Do you have a First Steps success story or an experience you would like to share? We would love to include your story in our newsletter. What you share will likely encourage other families in similar situations. For help in putting your story here, please contact Connie at cccoov2@uky.edu

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We are on the Web:
<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststeps.htm>

Quotable Quote

There's nothing that can help you understand your beliefs more than trying to explain them to an inquisitive child.

~Frank A. Clark



DIRT DIGGING FUN!



Grow plants! Planting is a wonderful way to generate toddler enthusiasm. When you serve orange or grapefruit slices for a snack, remove the seeds for planting. Citrus fruits, including lemons, make small, lovely plants with shiny, dark green leaves. Your toddler can spoon some dirt into a disposable drinking cup and drop the seeds into the mix. Water the plant every few days and soon two little leaves will sprout. These plants grow slowly, but they are precious to watch. Your child will learn that not only can he enjoy eating the fruit, he can make a plant grow from the fruit's seeds. How empowering for him! (Note: Flowers are lovely to adorn a home, but some plants have poisonous leaves. Be sure to keep only plants that are safe for children.)

FAMILY SCHOLARSHIPS



The 2011 Infant-Toddler Institute is designed to bring families, professionals, and paraprofessionals together to learn about quality services for infants and toddlers with and without special needs.

Scholarships are now available for families to attend this institute in Lexington, KY, August 9-11.

For pre-paid scholarships through the Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children, registration must be completed by June 3, 2011, and scholarships are on a "First Come, First Serve basis." Contact Laura Beard at (502) 875-1320 or write her at laura@kypartnership.net no later than May 25, 2011.

Scholarships are also available through the Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities, Consumer Involvement Fund. Families must pre-pay all fees and receive reimbursement up to \$350 after the institute. Deadline for application is August 1, 2011. Call (502) 564-7841 or (877) 367-5332 or email carol.tudor@ky.gov

For additional information on session descriptions, registration and scholarships please visit

www.kentuckypartnership.org/infanttoddler