



Helping Hands

Offering a helping hand to School Readiness Providers
A publication from Childcare Resource & Referral



7 Great Ways to Encourage Your Child's Writing

By Amanda Morin

If your child struggles with writing, it's important to find new and exciting ways to encourage her to write. Here are some creative strategies to try:

- Make an 'I Can Book'
- Make a journal jar
- Create a family scrapbook

For more information check out the article link below:

<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/7-great-ways-encourage-your-childs-writing>



Episcopal Children's Services

Volume 17 Issue 2

August 2022

Inside this issue:

A New View	2
Getting Geared Up For School	3
Fostering Relationships With School Age	4
Feeling Cool With Sensory Play	5
T.E.A.C.H	6
Professional Development	7
VPK Corner	7

ATTENTION HH READERS...

If you have a question, comment, or concern you would like addressed in an upcoming issue of *Helping Hands*, please send an e-mail to:

Blythe.Mauldin@ecs4kids.org

We will do our best to find the answer, post the comment, and address the concern.

Thanks!
Blythe Mauldin
Editor



A New View Jena Waters, Program Assessment Specialist

From the moment babies are born we are told by the experts that they should always sleep on their backs. But what about when infants are awake and alert? Adding some tummy time in during this part of their day will help them practice key skills that are important for crawling, and helps to strengthen their head, neck, and back muscles - which will lead to pulling up and standing in later months!

Did you know that tummy time can begin as soon as your baby is born? Simply placing them gently on their tummies and then on to your chest can be their first experience! Talk to them softly as they lie there for a few moments, observing if they respond to your voice by moving their heads towards your voice.

As your infant grows older you can move onto placing them on a soft blanket on the floor, adding a small rolled up blanket or use a baby neck pillow to lay your baby on top, so their chest is slightly lifted. This will allow them to use their arms to reach for objects you have placed in front of them or to see what you are holding up in front of them.

Here are a couple of activities for you to get started with introducing tummy time to your infant:

- Take a soft piece fabric, a silky scarf or ribbon, then gently sweep it over your baby's face as they lie on their tummy. They will be distracted and excited by the feel of it, and it can help keep their attention away from thinking about the new position they are in.
- Shaking a toy, a short distance from your infant's face, will hold their attention. Try using one that is colorful and makes a crinkling sound or rattles when you shake it. Now move the object slowly from side to side. Your baby will track it with their eyes and when they are older, with their necks too. They eventually will be able to grasp it with their hands as it passes by!

Please take notice that.....

Some babies will be perfectly happy with being on their tummies, some will not.

Being in this new position can feel strange for infants. they are building up their neck and muscle strength and this can be very strenuous workout!

Try starting off with a short amount of time at first, building up to several minutes a few times a day. If your baby becomes upset, simply pick them up soothe, and comfort them. Try again at another time. You want to keep it a positive experience right from the start.

PLEASE NOTE: Always supervise your baby during tummy time, NEVER leave them unattended at any time.

CLASS Connections:

Facilitation of Learning and Development- Infants active engagement

Language Modeling - Talk about what you are showing them and what they see.



Getting Geared Up For School Sherry Tindall, Education Specialist

Resource: CLASS Dimension Guide, Teachstone; <https://www.virtuallabschool.org/>

Everyone wants their classroom to be ready for the first day of the school year. But what is important and what can be eased into the process of beginning our new year? “Research tells us preschool-age children learn best in environments **where they can have secure relationships with caring and responsive adults**, where they feel safe and where they feel free to explore and learn”.

A well-arranged environment can help you meet preschool-age children's needs during play and routines. <https://www.virtuallabschool.org> With this in mind, how do we set up this environment. This type of environment aligns with CLASS in the areas of Teacher Sensitivity, Behavior Management, and Productivity. Let's get started on creating this utopia of learning!

Here's a couple of environmental things that are needed for a smooth start:

- A picture schedule that is useable by the children is most important, this should be created before school starts.
- An in/out chart. “I was at home and now I am at school.” This is a chart with the child picture that is moveable from one side of a board the at home to the other side, here at school.
- Clipboards to sign into centers.

These elements will provide the child with a sense of security. The picture schedule offers an introduction to time as they visually see the day go by. It gives them security of knowing what will come next. When one child has the responsibility of keeping the time on the picture schedule by moving a marker or clothespin from one picture of an activity to the next, they become a part of the class community. This knowledge of what comes next helps in behavior management in that it alleviates the unknown of what do I do next; and therefore, reduces inappropriate behavior due to anxiety. In addition, regard for student perspective is addressed by giving a child the responsibility of moving a marker along the pictures as the day goes by.

Second, an in/out chart allows the whole class to see who is here at school and who is absent. It streamlines your attendance process. Also, it will be a key component of an “I Love You Ritual,” that will reinforce the classroom community. “I Love You Rituals,” support Positive Climate in that the children learn to respect others and see others as valued members. Teacher sensitivity is addressed as the teacher provides the child with physical and verbal affection upon their return to the classroom.

Start the year off with this proactive behavior management tool. A sign-in clipboard for your centers. By using this the children take ownership of managing their movement from center to center. If a child sees a center is full, they can write their name on the board to show they are next to come into the center. If children cannot write their name, they can write their first initial or draw a symbol. This alleviates frustration on the child's part and helps you manage the classroom. These tools will ensure a smooth school environment. Now it's up to you create and relate by building a class community.

Resource: www.consciousdiscipline.com

Create an individual greeting for children in your classroom; conscious discipline has strategies and techniques to help with incorporating greetings into your daily routine in your classroom or afterschool program.

Follow the steps below:

Select a location where you will stand every morning (or afternoon) to greet the children. Send the verbal and nonverbal message, "Hello, I'm glad you're here today!" Props like the greeting apron give children a choice about how they would like to be greeted. For example, you might put images of a butterfly, a hand, a bear and fireworks on an apron. Ask children how they would like to be greeted and then share a playful greeting together. (Make up greetings to go with the images.)

Note: This greeting method could also be in chart form hanging up in a common space for children to access upon entrance into the program.



Resource: CLASS Dictionary

With the weather at the peak of the heat cool off inside with a sensory sorting activity. Place the child's favorite items in to a bin of sand, water, water beads or anything else you might have.

Encourage the child to sort the items and place them into groups based on size, shape, color etc. While the child is active in play, talk to the child about what he/she is feeling, what does the sand feel like? Where would you find a lot of sand? What is your favorite thing about going to the beach and playing in the sand? What color is the sand, water etc.

Asking questions during play helps spark thinking, creativity and increases interest while involved in a sensory activity.



T.E.A.C.H.

The T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program funded by the Florida Office of Early Learning provides scholarships for early childhood teachers and facility/family home directors to work toward earning a degree in early childhood education (Associate, Bachelor's, or Master's), an Infant-Toddler Certificate, Florida Staff Credential, Director Credential, National CDA Assessment, or credential renewals.

Your T.E.A.C.H. scholarship will cover the majority of the cost of tuition and books, a per semester student access stipend, a tiered bonus structure for degree-seeking scholars, and much more! Contact our office today at 877-FL TEACH (877-358-3224) to see how T.E.A.C.H. can work for you.

<https://teach-fl.org/>

T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships



DIVISION OF
Early Learning
LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.





Local Professional Development Opportunities (Training Calendar)

To register for one of our great training opportunities, please visit our website:

<https://www.ecs4kids.org/programs/regional-training-institute/>

Click on the registration link to see a list of available courses.

Click on a course and follow the directions for registration and payment.

The website provides a list of trainings and descriptions offered each quarter.

For CDA information and

questions, please contact

Danesha Davis, Professional

Development Coordinator

904-726-1500 ext.2299

(904) 536- 2119 (cell)

VPK Corner Sarah March, Contract Coordinator

Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy

VPK Programs are required to implement FAST using Star Early Literacy beginning with the 2022-2023 VPK Program Year. This Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring Program is the statewide, standardized program and is required by s. 1002.68, F.S., to be used to assess student achievement of the performance standards established in s. 1002.67(1)(a), F.S., in early literacy and mathematics. Directors, instructors, and staff members that will be implementing FAST need to complete training regarding the Renaissance system, Star Early Literacy test administration procedures and requirements and how to support staff and students prior to administration.

For detailed information and links to registration please visit, <https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/fast>

If you have questions related to FAST using Star Early Literacy training registration, please email VPK-FAST@oel.myflorida.com

Parental Choice Certificates

As a reminder, Parental Choice Certificates (PCC) should be completed on the last instructional day of each month, or within the first few days of the next month. Parents need to complete the Print, Sign and Date fields. Staff should not complete these fields for parents.

Contract Department

8649 Baypine Rd Suite 300 Bldg. 7 Jacksonville, FL 32256

Toll Free: 1-800-238-3463 * Fax: 904-726-1522

contracts@ecs4kids.org * www.ecs4kids.org



Warm Line 1-800-238-3463

Ext. 2281 (CNBB)

Ext. 2227 (PSJ)



Do you have a concern about the health, development, disability, or special needs of a child? If so, call the Warm Line. The purpose of the warm line is to provide advice to child care personnel concerning strategies, curriculum, and environmental adaptations that allow a child to derive maximum benefit from the child care experience.