

CONNECTIONS

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Celebrate Library Lovers' Month by Sharing the Love of Books

You knew February is the month for valentines, but it's also the month for loving the library-that world of books that gives all of us the chance to read and learn about anything we choose. Perhaps your child has already begun to experience the library. Encourage his reading and set him on a lifelong path of loving books and the library.

For babies, parents can:

- ◆ Turn the pages slowly and talk about what you see as you point to the pictures. Repeat common, familiar picture names, and encourage your baby's interaction through your own voice tone.
- ◆ Use books with heavy cardboard or plastic pages. These are great for babies to look at by themselves.
- ◆ Choose books with simple, bold, colorful shapes and simple, single word text or rhyming text.

For toddlers aged 1 to 3 years old, it is important to keep sessions short as they enjoy moving now but it is important to develop a routine for reading. In addition, parents should keep these tips in mind:



- ◆ Talk about the book with your child. This helps them connect the story to something in real life.
- ◆ Visit the library often and take your child to the children's activities the library offers.

By preschool age children can sit to listen to an entire story and have some favorites that they can't hear often enough. Books can be used to

- ◆ help cope with developmental issues such as going to the dentist, making friends, sharing, etc... Families should:
 - ◆ Have a regular reading time every day.

- ◆ Continue to visit the library often.
- ◆ Choose picture books with lots of vocabulary and detailed illustration to read to your child.
- ◆ Give your child time and materials to color, draw, do puzzles and cut paper.
- ◆ Have your child dictate a narrative to you of their drawings then collect them into a book of their own.

Adapt from the Colorado Reading Readiness Project



The Jacobs Elementary School is sponsoring a Kindergarten Information Night on February 3rd at 7:00 p.m. for parents of next years kindergarten class.

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Published by Maggie Ollerhead & Joan F. MacDonald

Hull Early Childhood Advisory Council

Community Partnerships for Children

Be Mindful When You Are Speaking About Your Child

Parents are often careful about the words they say to their child. They don't want to hurt their child's self-image. But sometimes this goal is forgotten when talking with other adults. A parent might say to a kindergarten teacher, for example, "Liza isn't great at math," while Liza is sitting nearby. Ouch.

To avoid damaging your child's self-esteem:

Realize your child is listening - even when you think she isn't. Your kindergartener may not hear everything you say, but she picks up on a lot, even if she doesn't show it. She may also misinterpret what she hears because of her age.

Respect your child's feelings. It's unlikely that you would complain about a friend while she is standing right there. Nor should you gripe about your child in her presence.

Choose your words carefully. Imagine how your words could make your child feel - or how you'd feel if you heard someone say them about you. Put a positive spin on things: "Subtraction is difficult for Liza, but she never gives up. How can we make it easier for her?"

Let your child overhear you saying nice things about her. "Liza helped her sister pick up her room. She's such a caring sister."

From Parents Institute, Feb. 2009

From the CPC Coordinator's Desk.....

By Maggie Ollerhead - mollerhead@town.hull.ma.us

Is your child entering kindergarten in the fall? Do you have questions? If so, you are invited to Kindergarten 101 "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Kindergarten" on February 3rd at the Jacobs Elementary School.

Come and see what our quality full-day kindergarten program is about and meet our kindergarten teachers. This is an information night for anyone who has a child entering kindergarten in the fall. Staff will talk about our full-day program and answer your questions about our kindergarten. Call @ 781-925-4400 with questions.

Do You Have a Question About Pre-school or Kindergarten Readiness?

Q. My son turns five next month and will attend kindergarten in the fall. Between now and then, I'd like to help him become more responsible for himself and his surroundings. What would you suggest?

A. Your son's teachers will thank you for this! Kindergarten teachers are much more interested in seeing a responsible, well-adjusted child than a child who can already read and add. You can build responsibility if you:

Encourage your child to express his wants and needs politely. He will have to raise his hand and wait his turn.

Help him solve problems. If he spills his milk on the floor, ask him, "What do you think you should do about this?"

Think consequences rather than punishment. If he leaves his bike outside, it may get wet. It's his responsibility to dry it off if he wants to ride it.

Give him chores he can accomplish. He can put the napkins in the table, pull up the cover on his bed and pick up his own clothes and toys.

Work on personal care. A kindergarten child should be able to dress himself, with the exception of tying shoelaces. (Kindergarten teachers often work on this skill with the whole class.) Washing hands is critical.

Empathize. Your son may struggle with new or challenging tasks. Express confidence that he will be more successful with time and practice. *From Parents Institute, Feb. 2009*



Hull Early Childhood Advisory Council

Hull Family Network

Note from the HFN Coordinator:

Joan F. MacDonald, jmacdonald@town.hull.ma.us

A thanks to all the families who continue to advocate for the HFN program through the Governor's office and their legislators; to those who donate snacks and program supplies to the program and to those who have given me leads for potential grants. We are currently looking into the process of setting up a separate account for any fund raising or other grants that we receive, as we will need to have the money accounted for separately from our state grant. I am happy to say that as a town we are able to accept donations that are considered tax deductible, so we will not have to become a 501.3c non-profit. This will make it much easier as we look to continue to offer a variety of programs in these difficult fiscal times.

We have currently scheduled a storyteller for February vacation and a musician for the end of March during the switch from winter session to spring session. In addition, our open gym drop-in on Tuesday afternoons has been a hit with all who have come. It is a chance for you child to run around the gym, especially now, with the playgrounds all snow covered. Older siblings up through kindergarten age are welcome to join us.

February is Dental Health Month

The four front teeth—two upper and two lower—usually erupt first, beginning as early as six months after birth. Most children have a full set of primary teeth by the time they are 3 years old. Parents and other caregivers may not realize that primary teeth are susceptible to decay as soon as they appear in the mouth. You can help reduce the risk of tooth decay.



- ◆ Never allow your infant or toddler to fall asleep with a bottle containing milk, formula, fruit juices or sweetened liquid.
- ◆ Don't dip a pacifier in sugar or honey. If your infant or toddler needs a comforter between regular feedings or at bedtime, give the child a clean pacifier recommended by your dentist or pediatrician.
- ◆ Wipe your child's gums with a wet washcloth or clean gauze pad after each feeding. Begin brushing your child's teeth with a little water as soon as the first tooth appears.
- ◆ Supervise tooth brushing to make sure that children older than 2 years use only a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste and avoid swallowing it. Children should be taught to spit out remaining toothpaste and rinse with water after brushing.

From Early Childhood Parents Make the Difference February 2009



SafeLink Wireless: Free Cell phones for Income Eligible Customers

Lifeline Assistance is part of a program created by the federal government to provide free and discounted cell phone service to income eligible families. You must have a valid US Postal Address and only one person in your household may receive Lifeline Assistance. If you are participating in any of the following programs:

- ◆ Emergency Aid to Elderly, Disabled or Children
- ◆ SSI
- ◆ Low Income Energy Asst.
- ◆ Food Stamps
- ◆ Transitional Aid to Families with Children
- ◆ Fuel Assistance

You may apply online at www.safelinkwireless.com or by calling 1-800-977-3768 (press the # to speak with a representative). The application process takes approximately 8 weeks.



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Check our website for additional
events and information at
www.town.hull.ma.us
click on the Hull Schools link

This newsletter is a
collaboration of
Hull Family Network
&
Community Partnerships for
Children

Sponsored by grants from the Massachusetts
Department of Early Education and Care

What is the Hull Family Network?

The Hull Family Network supports all parents and caregivers who have children prenatal through age three. Our goal is to help parents create and maintain a healthy family environment as well as to promote family well being through parent education and community support.

Funded by the Mass. Dept. of Early Education and Care through a grant to the Hull Public Schools, the Hull Family Network provides playgroups, parent education workshops, parent support groups, family activities, and information on parenting and community resources. By providing family recreational activities and playgroups, we hope to help parents build connections that will extend beyond the HFN Center and be a support to them. By providing parent education workshops, support groups, and having an extensive parenting lending library, we hope to help parents enhance their child-rearing skills.

Our programs are free to all residents of the town of Hull who are pregnant or have children through the age of three. Most of our programs are offered at our center which is located at 180 Harborview Rd. We are open Monday-Thursday 8:30- 2:30, Tuesday until 7:30 pm, Friday until 11:00 am., and are always happy to meet a new family.

Animal Attraction

There's nothing tame about these fun and funky jungle-print wristbands.

CRAFT MATERIALS:

Cardboard tubes	Stapler
Black elastic	Tacky glue
Animal-print felt	Ribbon
Card stock	



Time needed: Under 1 Hour

1. Cut cardboard tubes into 2-inch lengths. Snip each so that it opens into a cuff shape.
2. Using a stapler, attach the ends of a 3 1/2-inch piece of 1/4-inch-wide black elastic as shown; make sure the staple points are facing outward.
3. Apply tacky glue to the outside of the cuff and cover the cuff and the elastic ends with a 2- by 6-inch strip of animal-print felt.
4. Let the glue dry, then trim the felt as needed.
4. Use a ribbon to tie on a note cut from card stock.

