

## **Strengthening Families Through Family Fun**

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# Strengthening Families Through Family Fun

(Two-hour lesson)

## Program Description

Busy schedules, increasing responsibilities, and changing family structure often make it difficult for families today to spend time together. However, spending time together is one way to strengthen families. This program is designed to help families learn more about the importance of spending time together and having fun. Participants will become familiar with games, activities, and ideas to help make every day a celebration.

## Program Objectives

1. Participants will explore why family fun is important.
2. Participants will learn how family fun can strengthen their family and build family resiliency.
3. Participants will learn new ways to play and spend time together.
4. Participants will plan and implement "family fun" time with their families.

## Intended Audience

Parents, children, grandparents, child care providers, babysitters.

## Materials Needed

1. Flip chart, markers, masking tape
2. Supplies/materials for selected activities
3. Handouts
4. Pencils
5. Extension publications: Strengthening Family Relationships (FCS-425), Listening (FCS-276-03)
6. Evaluation form and survey card (an evaluation form can be used at the end of the lesson. A follow-up survey card can be sent 5-6 weeks later.)

## Topics and Time Frame

Introduction / Ice Breaker.....	15 minutes
Research on Family Strengths.....	10 minutes
Challenges / Opportunities.....	15 minutes
Break.....	10 minutes
Group Discussion Questions and Handouts...	15 minutes
Family Fun Activities (small groups).....	30 minutes
Strategies for Planning Family Fun.....	15 minutes
Evaluation.....	10 minutes

### Introduction/Ice Breaker

Introduce yourself and give a brief overview of the lesson. Explain the icebreaker, "How Well Do You Know Your Child?" Have participants find a partner to share their answers to the ice breaker questions. Allow time for the pairs to switch, so each person gets to share. Call time.

Have participants introduce themselves to the group and share two things they know about their child.

### How Well Do You Know Your Child?

- What is your child's favorite sport?
- What is your child's favorite television show?
- What does your child like to do for fun?
- What is your child's favorite color?
- Who is your child's favorite author or what is his favorite book?
- What is your child's favorite food?

### Research On Family Strengths

Regardless of family structure, the family remains an effective unit in which to raise children. Even though families today must cope with many stressors, people who are linked to a family are healthier, both mentally and physically.

What makes a family strong? There is no single list of qualities that make a family strong. However, there are some common qualities that strong families possess and suggested ways to strengthen families. Things that support and strengthen one family may not have the same

affect on another. Families should take time to explore their needs and strengths. All families have the need to be nurtured and strengthened.

In the past two decades, researchers have identified the following family strengths that relate to strengthening family bonds:

**\*Note to Lesson Leader:** List family strengths on flip chart as they are identified. Ask group to identify other family strengths that might be added to the list.

1) Open Communication - Sharing beliefs and emotions with one another. Emphasis is on how family members exchange information and caring with each other. Communication is the key element of family relationships. Spend time talking about small, trivial things as well as the major issues.

2) Time Together - Strong families spend time with each other - quality time in large quantities. This gives members a sense of belonging. Time together may include: family meals, chores, special outings/activities, and/or routine activities.

3) Listening - Careful listening does not happen by accident. However, it is a skill that can be learned. Think about your family's listening habits and ways they can be improved.

4) Play and Humor - Humor is a way to relieve tension and bring members closer together.

5) Table Time Conversation - Make meal time pleasant by encouraging positive conversation. Add your own topics to the list of conversation starters. (See the Table Time Conversation Starters handout.)

6) Shared Leisure - Spending leisure time with the family. Spending work and play time together in positive ways, instead of settling for "leftover time."

7) Celebrating Family Traditions - Honoring holidays and important family milestones/experiences. Research from Ohio State University in which 100 females were surveyed showed:

- The more traditions a family observed, the more important traditions were reported to be to the family.
- 88% said it was important or very important to maintain traditions.
- 92% said traditions are important overall.
- Adapting the tradition to changing family situations and age of the children is important.
- The "tradition" could be a formal, once a year event, or a more frequent, informal event.

## Key Concepts

- Recognize qualities identified through research as family strengths.

- Recognize which of these qualities your family possesses.
- Identify ways to enhance your family's strengths.

## Challenges/Opportunities

Listed below are some statistics that point to the challenges faced by many families today. Post these on a flip chart or overhead projector so participants can reflect and discuss these statistics. Encourage participants to add to these lists.

**\*Note to Lesson Leader:** Leader may wish to add statistics specific to your county.

### Challenges

- More than 26% of US children live in single parent families.
- More than 12% of the population is elderly.
- Sixty-one percent of US children have both or their only parent in the labor force.
- Approximately 1/2 of all marriages end in divorce.
- Fewer jobs provide earnings sufficient to meet basic needs.
- Thirty-two million Americans have no health insurance.
- More than 100,000,000 children ages 5-14 care for themselves during non-school hours.

### Opportunities - Enjoy time together by:

- Using everyday situations/routines for family fun.
- Learning to relax and enjoy even simple things.
- Allowing/encouraging humor.
- Be thoughtful in our communication with family and others - think before speaking.
- Plan fun times to make family life more interesting/fun instead of using "left-over" time.
- Celebrate traditions and special occasions.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- 1) What are some routine/everyday situations which families could make fun?
- 2) What are some of the traditions and special occasions your family enjoys celebrating?
- 3) How can you schedule time to plan and implement family fun times?

## Family Fun Activities

**\*Note to Lesson Leader:** Review the family fun activities that are given with this lesson. Select a variety of activities for families to do together as part of the lesson. Time will be spent later in this session for families to begin planning family fun time. Have a copy of instructions available at each activity station, if instructions are necessary. Give a copy of the handouts to each participant later in the session.

## Strategies for Planning Family Fun

Give participants the Family Fun Activity Sheets you have selected and a calendar for the appropriate month(s). Allow time for them to begin listing/scheduling family fun activities. Encourage participants to have a meeting with family members to get everyone's ideas and input into the family fun plan. Remember to include time with each child individually, personal time and time with the entire family.

## Evaluation - Follow-up Survey

**\*Note to Lesson Leader:** On a postcard, print this Follow-Up Survey form and the Extension Center address. At the end of the lesson, review the Follow-Up Survey form with participants. Tell them the Follow-Up Survey Postcard will be mailed to them in about 6 weeks. Have each participant self-address an envelope so the Follow-Up Survey postcard can be mailed to them. They will need to put a postage stamp on the postcard and return.

Please complete this survey card and return to the Extension Center.

1) Have you spent more time together with your family? Yes No

2) Have you used an ideas from the lesson? Yes No

List ideas/activities

3) In what ways has your family benefitted from spending more time together?

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**Table Time Conversation**



- What is something funny that happened today?
- What is your favorite kind of car?
- What is your favorite TV show?
- Where would you like to go on vacation?
- What is one of your favorite hobbies?
- What is your favorite boy's name? What is your favorite girl's name?

**Ask why?**

These questions may lead into other open-ended questions to keep the conversation going. Asking why can also encourage family members to think about things in a new/different way.

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## Family Activities

## Fun with Play Dough

Play dough can provide hours of entertainment. The scented play dough smells wonderful. When making the cooked variety the dough will be extremely warm, therefore the non-cook variety may be easier for smaller children to make. Choose the one more suitable for your needs. Children love to use cookie cutters, and other baking equipment or anything that will make a design in the dough when playing.

### Scented Play Dough

1/2 cup salt

2 packages unsweetened drink mix

1 Tablespoon cooking oil

2 cups boiling water

2 1/2 cups flour

Boil 2 cups of water. Add salt, drink mix (based on the color desired for the finished dough), and oil. Stir to dissolve. Return to a boil, then remove from heat. Add flour and mix well. Pour out on a floured surface, a cookie sheet works great and helps make clean up easier. Knead until smooth and elastic. Store in a sealed plastic bag or container.

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### Non-cook Play Dough

2 cups flour

1 cup salt

3/4 cup water

2 Tablespoons cooking oil

food coloring (optional)

Mix the flour, salt, water, and oil with sturdy spoon (wooden works good) until well blended. Tint the dough with a few drops of food coloring, if desired. Store the play dough in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

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### **Edible Peanut Butter Play Dough**

1 part peanut butter

1 part non-fat dry milk

1 Tablespoon of honey per cup

powdered sugar, optional

Mix equal amounts of peanut butter and dry milk. Add honey. Knead and mix until a dough is formed. If the dough is sticky, roll in a thin layer of powdered sugar. Store in the refrigerator in a covered container.

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### **Cooked Play Dough**

1 cup flour

1/2 cup salt

1 cup water

1 Tablespoon vegetable oil

2 teaspoons cream of tartar

food coloring

Bring water, salt, food coloring and oil to a boil. Remove from heat. Add flour and cream of tartar. Stir with a large spoon to form a ball. Knead carefully dough will be hot. Allow to cool. Store in a plastic bag or covered bowl.

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### **Bubbles Galore**

2 Tablespoons of liquid dishwashing detergent

1 cup water

If possible make the bubbles several days before you are ready to use them. Mix ingredients together. Store in a covered container. Use a shallow container such as a cookie sheet to pour the mixture in when playing. Bubble wands can be made from almost any thing that has holes in it. Ex. plastic fly-swatters, soft drink six pack rings, combs, loop made from coat hangers, frozen juice cans, loops made from string.

To make a bunch of bubbles, take a 3 oz. plastic bathroom cup and poke a hole in the center of the bottom with a large nail. Make sure that you set the cup on a surface that the nail won't damage when pushing the nail through the cup. Cut a 4 x 4 inch square of cheesecloth. Secure the cheese cloth over the drinking end of the cup with a rubberband. Dip the cheesecloth into the bubble solution and blow through the hole in the bottom of the cup. See who can blow the longest mound of bubbles.

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### **Sidewalk Chalk**

Let your children take their art outside and decorate your walk or driveway. They will like having a large space to work. They can draw pictures, play hop scotch, tick-tack-toe or other games. They can also trace around their friends and draw in their features, (hair and clothes) or draw roads and highways for their toy cars and trucks to travel.

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### **Magic Paint**

Bucket of Water

Paint brush

Fill the bucket with water. Give your child a paint brush and show him how to paint the house, porch, sidewalk, or any other outside surface with water. When "freshly painted" the object will appear darker in color. As the area dries the paint disappears and the child can paint it again and again.

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### **Get To Know Your Town or Area**

Plan to make several trips this year to get to know your town/area better. Go to your Chamber of Commerce or Visitor's Bureau and gather brochures that feature regional areas of interest. They may also have discount coupons you can use at some of the attractions. List the day- outings to the places that your family would enjoy visiting:

Whenever you go some place special with your child, continue the excitement after you return home. Plan some follow up activities that reinforce something that was learned or find the answer to a question that was asked. Take advantage of every learning opportunity.

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### **Take A Walk**

Walks provide a great opportunity to spend time with your child while getting some exercise and fresh air. Ask your child about the things that you see, hear, smell, and feel in your environment. Talk about animals, plants, the weather, and seasons.

Take a nature walk at a local park, in your neighborhood or in your own backyard. Bring binoculars, a magnifying glass, a pad and pencil, and a bag for collecting leaves, rocks and other "treasures." You and your child can make collectors out of several different items. Use your imagination and create a collector appropriate for the items of your child's interest. Examples, plastic soft drink bottle, several ziplock bags with the tops threaded on a string to carry them, a plastic milk container with a hole cut out of the side - the handle can be put through the child's belt to free-up his hands, a yogurt container with yarn tied to the sides near the top - so it can be worn around the neck.

Young children enjoy making "binoculars" by taping two recycled toilet tissue tubes together side by side. The children can decorate their creation with markers, crayons or paint and then attach a piece of yarn to hang the "binoculars" around their neck.

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### **Wheel of Color**

Take a paper plate and divided it into sections like cutting a pie. Have the child color each section a different color with a marker or a crayon. Color the edge of a clothespin to correspond with each section. The child can match the colors by clipping the clothespin onto the plate at the appropriate spot.

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### **Visit a Farmer's Market or Produce Stand**

Shopping at a farmer's market or a produce stand can be real adventure. It is a chance for children to see and smell the season's best local fruits and vegetables. Here are some tips:

- Ask the children to find a vegetable or fruit that they have never tasted before and buy one for them to try.
- Find several different items that are all the same color, or the same shape. Do they smell the same? Do they taste the same?
- Plan meals around the fresh fruits and vegetables that are in season.
- Look for fresh herbs, edible flowers and small potted plants. Talk about ways these items can be used at home.

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### **Fun With Foods**

Cooking with children can be an enriching experience for the entire family. Find recipes that include choosing ingredients, measuring, chopping (use a plastic knife for small children), and mixing. Cooking reinforces the basic principles of reading, math, and science. Using every day experiences as teaching tools, reinforce the importance of developing good basic school skills. Although the mess might be a little greater, the rewards are many. Kids are also more likely to eat the foods that they have helped prepare. Remember to include your children in your family meal planning, preparation, and clean-up. With the whole family pitching in to help, you can make better use of your time and move on to other family fun activities.

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### **Cereal and Pasta Necklaces**

Kids love to string things. Help them make fun necklaces from items you have in your cabinet. To make the items easier to string, wrap the end of the string, yarn, embroidery floss, etc. with a small piece of tape. This prevents the end from fraying and makes it stiff. Fruit flavored or oat O's make delicious edible necklaces. Pasta of any shape that has a hole in it can be strung. To make the pasta more colorful, it can be dyed with food coloring. Put 2 tablespoons of water, 10 drops of food coloring and 1 cup of uncooked pasta in a resealable plastic bag. Seal the bag and shake until the pasta is the color you want. Pour out the excess liquid and spread the pasta out on paper towels to dry. What else can you find that could be put on a necklace?

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### **Make a Family Book**

Children of all ages love to hear stories about themselves and their family members. Spend some time with your children making a book about the people who are close to you. Talk with your children about their favorite memories. Today is a great place to start. Have everyone draw or write one thing that made today a special day. Make a cover for the book and write the family name on the front. For future pages, give your children a special place to put items that they want to include in their family book so things will not be lost between working sessions. You may want to include art work, clippings, programs from special events, brochures, an autograph page, a family tree, and photographs. What a wonderful way to preserve history.

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### **Catalog Activities**

All of the junk mail you receive does have a purpose. Use it as entertainment for your children. Save those catalogs, flyers, magazines, etc. for great activities with your kids.

*Magazine Scavenger Hunt* - Go on a magazine scavenger hunt. Give your children a list of things to hunt and several magazines, catalogs, etc. where they would be likely to find the items. See how long it takes to find them. Who finished first? Who found the most items? Who cut out the items the neatest? The rules are up to you and what is appropriate for the age of your children.

*My Favorite Things* - Have your children make a booklet and let them include pictures of their favorite things or activities. They can use a theme, find things all of the same color, things they would have liked as a baby, things that they would like when they grow-up, etc. Remember it is their book and they may choose something different than we would. This gives us a great opportunity to learn more about our children and an opportunity for them to learn to express themselves.

*Shopping Spree* - Give your children a figure of an amount of money. Ask them what they would spend it on if someone really gave them that much. Let them look through catalogs/flyers and choose what they would like to have. They have to look at the prices and keep a running total of what they have spent. This helps them make choices, set priorities and practice their math skills. You can ask them what they would buy if they could redecorate their room, buy gifts, etc. You might be surprised at what they choose!

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## 15 Best Supplies for a Rainy Day

1. A collection of egg cartons, cardboard tubes from paper towels or foil, pipe cleaners, cotton balls, margarine tubs, paper plates, clothes pins, modeling clay, popsicle sticks, food coloring, glitter and glue etc.
2. A cheap camera with a flash and film.
3. An inexpensive cassette recorder to sing into, tell stories or listen to a child's favorite music or tales.
4. An inexpensive calculator.
5. Do-it-yourself kits, such as easy-to-construct bird feeders, model boats, airplanes or cars, all available at hobby or variety stores.
6. Funny hats from a thrift shop.
7. A bag of exotic thrift-shop clothing for dress-up or your own, (don't forget shoes, hand-bags, hats and gloves).
8. A drawing pad, drawing pencils and a how-to-book on animation and drawing.

9. Some letter and number stencils.
10. A collection of washable felt-tip markers in a rainbow of colors and side walk chalk.
11. A collection of flashy junk jewelry.
12. A collection of stickers, store-bought or saved from mailings.
13. A collection of rubber stamps and ink pads plus paper to stamp on.
14. A variety of puzzles, games and outdoor equipment. i.e. jump ropes, frisbees, hoola hoops, roller blades, balls, water toys, etc.
15. A variety of children's books and magazines.

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## **Note to Lesson Leader:**

The three Activity Sheets on the following pages are formatted "Brochure-style". The top page of each is the brochure cover; the bottom page of each is the brochure content. You can have these Activity Sheets duplicated

front and back, and fold them in the middle to form the brochure.

You can use these Activity Sheets as discussion starters during class and/or as handouts for participants to keep.

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Family Activity #1



1) Make play dough with your child. Have fun playing and making different shapes.

2) Make "looking tubes" from cardboard tubes. Take your "looking tubes" on your next walk and use them to describe what you see.

3) Make a poster of seasonal safety tips with your child.

4) Share family history and photos with your child.

5) Watch an educational television show with your child and discuss it.

6) Pick up a library reading list appropriate for your child's age and help your child get a library card.

7) Count the number of steps it takes to walk to the corner with your child.

8) Remember to eat 5 fruit and vegetable servings each day. Make a collage of the fruits and vegetables your family eats this week.

9) Read with your child for at least 30 minutes today.

10) Read a newspaper article about the environment with your child.

11) Have your child look for bugs. How many different kinds of bugs can he or she find? Size? Color?

12) Have your child list all uses of math around the house.

13) Cut pieces of paper into shapes and paste them in a quilt pattern with your child.

14) Cook dinner with your child and show him or her the do's and don'ts of preparing food.

15) Help your child prepare a special fruit blender drink for breakfast or snack.

16) Help your child write a post card for a family member who is away at college, camp or living in a different town.

17) Make up a board game with your child.

18) Have your child tell you a favorite story.

19) Have your child put an ice cube outside. How long until it melts? Until it evaporates?

20) Look up events on the day your child was born.

21) Take your child on a field trip.

22) Make a gelatin treat with your child (like jigglers).

23) Make bubbles and a variety of bubble blowers with your child. Let him/her have fun playing outside with the bubbles.

24) Make finger puppets with your child. Cut the ends off the fingers of old gloves. Draw faces on the fingers with felt tip markers, and glue on yarn for hair.

25) Help your child find your town on a map.

26) Teach your child a new skill like setting the table.

27) Ask your child to watch for numbers in TV programs and commercials.

28) On trips, make a game of measuring distances and times.

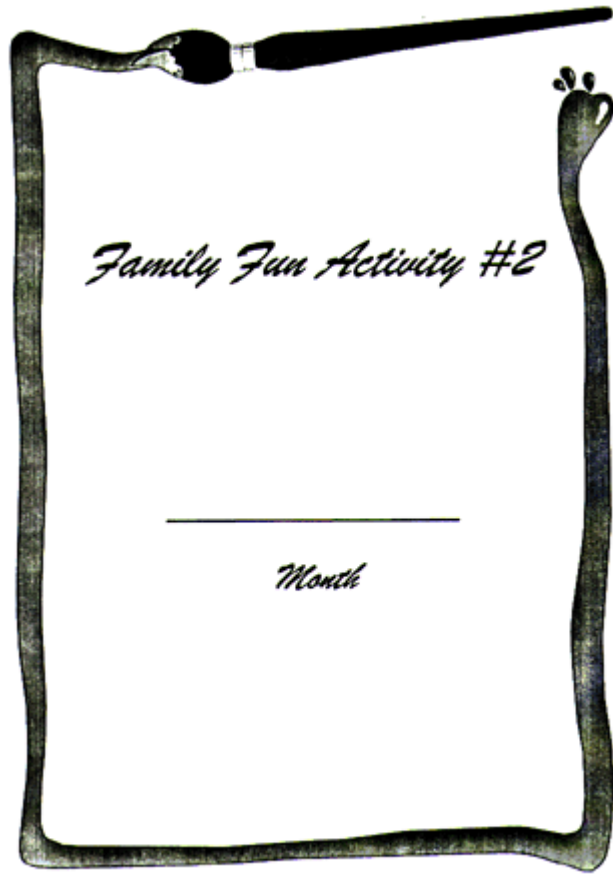
29) Have a box of art supplies handy for your child to use anytime. Post new artwork for the entire family to enjoy.

30) Begin putting together a scrapbook or family picture album.

31) Visit an elderly friend or family member with your child.

Adapted from: Summertime  
Funtime Activities U.S. Dept of  
Education Office of Educational  
Research and Improvement





*Family Fun Activity #2*

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*Month*

- 1) Encourage your child to check out 2 books this month from the library.
- 2) Write a list of your child's favorite animals. Talk about what makes each animal special.
- 3) Include your child in preparing a healthy meal.
- 4) Explain the origin of holidays, such as Independence Day.
- 5) Ask your child to write a thank you note or write a note to a relative or friend.
- 6) Make and enjoy a special ice cream treat.
- 7) Read *The Listening Walk* by Paul Showers with your child.
- 8) Ask your child to watch the moon and record changes in size and color.
- 9) Have your child decorate a shoe box to store treasures.
- 10) Talk to your child about fire safety. Discuss a fire escape route and have a mock fire drill.
- 11) Make a grocery list that fits within a budget with your child.
- 12) Learn a tongue twister with your child.
- 13) Go on a "listening walk" with your child.
- 14) Play the game Simon Says with your child.
- 15) Talk to your child about avoiding strangers.
- 16) Hide a treasure with your child and draw a map to find it.
- 17) Practice printing or handwriting with your child. Make a certificate for job well done.
- 18) Take a walk or bike ride with your child.
- 19) Discover when things were invented with your child. Make a timeline.
- 20) Gather a variety of

objects in a Feeling Bag.  
Let your child place his hand in the bag, tell how the object feels and tell what he thinks the object is. After guessing, he takes the object out and gets to see the object.

21) Let your child help make a sandwich for snack or lunch.

22) Have your child swap favorite books with a friend.

23) Tell a story. Ask your child to tell it back to you.

24) Ask your child to make a collage from things found around the house—ribbons, string, buttons, pebbles.

25) Show your child how and when to dial 911.

26) Take your child to the grocery store. Talk about prices and weights of food.

27) Talk with your child about your family history or family tree.

28) Sing a round: Row Your Boat; Are You Sleeping, etc.

29) Give away three hugs today.

30) Make a long paper clip chain. How many paper clips long is a sheet of paper? A favorite book? A doll or teddy bear? Your child?

Adapted from: Summertime  
Funtime Activities U.S.  
Department of Education, Office  
of Educational Research and  
Improvement.





*Family Fun Activity #3*

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*Month*

- 1) Ask your child to study town history from old newspapers.
- 2) Make finger-paints with soap flakes, water and food coloring with your child.
- 3) Work a puzzle together with your child.
- 4) Take the binoculars outside for a close-up look around your back yard. Talk with your child about how things look different seeing them through the binoculars.
- 5) Tell your child a story about looking both ways before crossing the road.
- 6) Ask your child to organize the coins in a coin jar.
- 7) Find and use a computer with your child.
- 8) Look for community service activities that can include your child.
- 9) Have your child read a story with a friend or sibling.
- 10) Keep track of the weather each day this month: S=sunshine, C=clouds, R=rain. Record the weather on a calendar.
- 11) Look at the stamps on the mail you receive. How are they alike? How are they different? When purchasing stamps, select a variety. Talk with your child about the different postage stamps.
- 12) Have your child talk with a person from another state or country.
- 13) Cut a snack, such as an apple or orange, into equal parts and talk about fractions with your child.
- 14) Turn off the TV for family reading time. Parents should read, too.
- 15) Compare history as presented on TV and in reference books with your child.
- 16) Have your child read your recipe to you.
- 17) What chores does your child do at home? Help him make a list of his chores for

today. Check off the chores as completed. Give stickers for a job well done.

18) Go to the library and read/look at a variety of magazines with your child. Select one magazine with your child and subscribe to it.

19) Take your child to the park or playground.

20) Have your child find 3 jobs in the classifieds that interest him or her and discuss them.

21) Ask your child what being responsible means to him or her.

22) Measure objects in a room with your child. Make a floor plan.

23) Read about your state bird and state flower with your child.

24) Talk about the special holidays in this month or season. Plan a new/different way to celebrate the holiday.

25) Play "I'm thinking of someone you know" ...Give

your child one clue at a time about a family member or friend until he/she guesses who it is, (Be sure to include pets, too).

26) Visit the library for a special children's program.

27) Help your child organize his or her own library.

28) Have your child be a pet detective and observe an animal.

29) String a macaroni necklace with your child. Have him or her count the pieces of macaroni.

30) Make a time capsule with your child and save it for a year or two.

Adapted from: Summertime  
Funtime Activities, U.S.  
Department of Education, Office of  
Educational Research and  
Improvement.



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## Family Reading List

Consult the children's librarian at your local library for additional recommended books for family reading and support materials -- i.e. wonder boxes, fun sacks and/or story bags.

Add your own favorites to this list.

**\*Note to Lesson Leader:** An additional list of children's books can be found in the Sesame Street PEP (SSPEP) Curriculum Handbook, "Suggested Children's Books for SSPEP Training."

Show a variety of books and support materials. Allow time for participants to view and get familiar with the materials.

### **Infant**

*Baby's Mother Goose*

published by Platt & Munk

*Eye Winker, Tom Tinker, Chin Chopper:*

*50 Musical Fingerplays* - by Tom Glazer

*The Me Book* - by John E. Johnson

*What is it?* - by Tanya Hoban

### **5 year olds**

*Bedtime for Frances* - by Russell Hoban

*Caps for Sale* - by Esphyr Slobodkina

*The Little Engine That Could*

by Watty Piper

*Mike Mulligan* - by Virginia Lee Burton

*Stone Soup* - by Marcia Brown

*The Story About Ping* - by Marjorie Flack

*Amazing Grace* - by Mary Hoffman

### **3-4 Years Old**

*Curious George* - by H.A. Rey

*The Snowy Day* - by Ezra Jack Keats

*The Listening Walk* - by Paul Showers

*I Like Me!* - by Nancy Carlson

### **6-7 Year Olds**

*Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* - by Judith Viorst

*The House at Pooh Corner* - by A.A. Milner

*Ramona the Pest* - by Beverly Cleary

*Where the Wild Things Are*

by Maurice Sendak

### **Toddler's**

*Goodnight Moon* - by Margaret Wise Brown

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* - by Eric Carle

*Where's My Baby?* - by H.A. Rey

### **10-12 Year Olds**

*Island of the Blue Dolphins* - by Scott O'Dell

*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

by Mildred Taylor

*Where's Spot?* - by Eric Hill

### 8-9 Year Olds

*Charlotte's Web* - by E.B. White

*Ramona Quimby, Age 8* - by Beverly Cleary

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## Planning Family Fun Activities

Make everyday a special time for you and your family by planning activities the family can do together. Get the family together now, to talk about things/activities each person wants included. Begin by completing the survey below to see which activities you and your family want to include. Then get started having *FUN* and making this year one of the best ever for your family. Remember to take plenty of pictures and write notes in your journal so these special memories can last forever.

### Things Our Family Likes To Do...

-

#### Games

List the games you like to play.

#### Activities

Check the activities you want to include -

\_\_\_\_\_ Ice Skating      \_\_\_\_\_ Reading Program      \_\_\_\_\_ Nature Walk

\_\_\_\_\_ Bowling      \_\_\_\_\_ Swimming      \_\_\_\_\_ Ball Games

\_\_\_\_\_ Reading      \_\_\_\_\_ Bicycling      \_\_\_\_\_ Others  
\_\_\_\_\_ Museums      \_\_\_\_\_ Picnicking      \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Public Library      \_\_\_\_\_ Hiking      \_\_\_\_\_

**List the places you want to visit:**

- 1) Museums \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) Parks (Local, State, National) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) Area Gardens \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) Galleries \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) Zoo \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) Beach \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7) Other Places \_\_\_\_\_
- Special Events / Holidays (list) Other Activities (list) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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## Resources

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**Books:**

Celebrate Today. John Kremer, Prima Publishing. Rockland, CA. 1995.

Instant Icebreakers. Sandy Christian, MSW and Nancy Loving Tubesing, Ed.D. Whole Person Associates Inc., Duluth, MN. 1997.

Kids Holiday Fun! Penny Warner, Meadowbrook Press, Deephaven, MN. 1994.

Special Times for Parents & Kids Together. Lisa Lyons Durkin, Warner Books, Inc., New York, NY 1987.

The Kids Nature Almanac. Alison Smith, Crown Trade Paperbacks, New York, NY. 1995.

365 Days of Baby Love. Sheila Ellison and Susan Fordinandi, Sourcebooks, Inc., Naperville, Il. 1996.

### **Curriculum Manuals:**

4-H After School Program/Curriculum Manual II

Sesame Street PEP Handbook

### **Magazines:**

Crayola Kids Family Time Fun Magazine

Family Fun Magazine

Parents Magazine

The Mailbox/The Idea Magazine for Teachers

Rand McNally Kids' U.S. Road Atlas

### **Newsletters:**

*Growing Together Newsletter for Parents of Preschool Children*, NC Cooperative Extension Service

### **Websites:**

[Family Fun Magazine online](http://www.familyfun.com) < www.familyfun.com >

[Hersheys Chocolate Activities](http://www.hersheys.com) <www.hersheys.com >

[Also search the web by topic](#)

# EVERYDAY

- Give your child a hug and say "I Love You".
- Praise your child.
- Talk with your child.
- Read and write with your child for at least 30 minutes everyday.
- With your child, make a dictionary of new words and add to it every day.  
Put new words on the refrigerator and change each day.
- Count with your child.
- Share news with your child.
- Listen to music with your child.



Source: Summertime Funtime Activities

U.S. Department of Education

Office of Educational Research and Improvement

## Love is Spelled T-I-M-E

For a child, love is spelled T-I-M-E.  
The precious gifts a child desires involve time.

Time to:

- ~ pause with me. . .when others are hurrying by
- ~ walk with me. . .when others find themselves running
- ~ talk with me. . .when others prefer shouting
- ~ listen to me. . .when others can find only frowns
- ~ play with me. . .when others prefer to be entertained
- ~ praise me. . .when others can find only fault
- ~ read with me. . .when others prefer television
- ~ learn from me. . .when others have forsaken curiosity
- ~ study with me. . .when others show little interest in schoolwork
- ~ forgive me. . .when others are expecting perfection
- ~ hug me. . .when others fail to sense the power of touch!



Source: Sedgwick County, Kansas

Kansas State University

Cooperative Extension Service

*If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again*

If I had my child to raise over again,  
I'd fingerprint more and point the finger less.  
I'd do less correcting and more connecting.  
I'd take my eyes off my watch  
and watch with my eyes.  
I would care to know less and know to care more.  
I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.  
I'd stop playing serious and seriously play.  
I'd run through more fields and gaze at more stars.  
I'd do more hugging and less tugging.  
I would be firm less often and affirm more.  
I'd build self-esteem first and the house later.  
I'd teach less about love or power  
And more about the power of love.



- Author Unknown -

Handout: Summer Ways To Love Children

## Summer Ways To Love Children

Be there!	Be there!
Smile.	SMILE!
Pitch tents in the backyard.	Hug often
Hug often.	Listen. Have tea parties.
Listen.	Talk together.
Be patient.	Go to kid's movies.
Have fun with the water: swim, fish or spray with a hose.	Eat too much popcorn and candy.
Eat lots of ice cream and snow cones!	Take field trips.
Finger paint.	Play in the sand.
Reward good behavior with words of encouragement.	Pray together.
Pat them on the back.	Make a campfire and roast marshmallows; tell stories.
Applaud accomplishments.	Share laughter
Make popsicles and pudding pops together and freeze	Say "YES" if possible.
Plant flowers and vegetables.	Make eye contact.
Pick berries and fruits.	Don't be afraid to say "NO" when necessary.
Take walks together.	Be there.
Collect leaves.	Smile.
Look at bugs.	Hug often.
Admire nature: rainbows, trees, clouds.	LISTEN!
Make wishes.	Appreciate them.
Feed and water the birds.	
Play catch on the lawn.	

Adapted from- Source: Charter Asheville, Asheville, NC

Made by: North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service

Cleveland County Center

130-I South Post Road

Shelby, NC 28152

## Handout: 20 Ways To Say "Very Good"

13-20

### 20 Ways To Say "Very Good"

I'm happy to see you working like that!

I knew you could do it.

You're a great help!

You figured that out fast.

I sure am happy you are my child

I'm proud of the way you worked today.

You can do it!

Good thinking!

I love you!

I appreciate your help.

That's quite an improvement.

You are learning fast.

You really make being a parent fun.

Terrific!

Keep up the hard work.

Now that's what I call a fine job!

You're doing the best you can!

You out did yourself today.

That gives me a happy feeling.

That's a friendly thing to do!



Adapted from: 100 Ways to Say "Very Good"

Source: Smith, C.A. (1990), I'm Positive: Growing up with Self-Esteem, Manhattan, Kansas: Kansas State University, Cooperative Extension Service.

## Handout, 60 Ways to Praise Child

### 60 Ways to Praise a Child

- Wow
- Way to Go
- Super
- You're Special
- Outstanding
- Excellent
- Great
- Good
- Neat
- You Make Me Laugh
- I Knew You Could Do It
- Bingo
- I'm Proud of You
- Fantastic
- Super Star
- You're the Greatest
- Nice Work
- Beautiful
- You're Catching On
- How Smart
- Fabulous
- Now You've Got It
- You're Incredible
- Bravo
- You're Fantastic
- I'm Impressed
- Well Done
- How Nice
- You're Precious
- Good Job
- You're A Treasure
- You're Beautiful
- Dynamite
- Looking Good
- Nothing Can Stop You Now
- Good For You
- Magnificent
- Hurray For You
- I Love You
- You're A Winner
- Terrific
- Remarkable
- Spectacular
- Beautiful Work
- Marvelous
- You're Spectacular
- Super Job
- Phenomenal
- Fantastic Job
- You're Important
- You're Sensational
- You Are Exciting
- What An Imagination
- What A Good Listener
- You're Important
- You Mean A Lot To Me
- You are Fun
- You Brighten My Day
- You Made My Day
- Hip Hip Hurray

P.S. Remember, A Smile is Worth 1000 Words!

Adapted from: 101 Ways to Praise a Child

Source: Charter Hospital of Winston-Salem