



# Parents as Partners

## Did You Know?

Social skills are declining in American children. Researchers believe that this is because many children spend more time with technology than engaged in human interactions. In fact, the only activity that outranks the number of hours viewing television is sleep.

Children develop and refine social skills by interacting with family members and friends. Social and emotional intelligence begins to wire at birth. Children need plenty of face-to-face interactions with others in order for these intelligences to wire to their optimum levels.

## Try It Out

Eating dinner together is a great time to develop social skills and strengthen connections. While there is normally plenty to talk about at dinner, try making a set of "conversation cards" to stimulate novel conversation. Questions on your cards may include:

- Which animal do you think is the funniest looking? Which animal is the most beautiful?
- What color would you like to paint your room? Why?
- If you had a tree house, what would you put in it?
- If you could be any age, which age would you choose? Why?

## Looking Ahead

Please bring old toothbrushes that you are willing to donate to our classroom for next week's activities.



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## Did You Know?

Vocabulary is one of the most accurate predictors of reading success. Children who are surrounded by adults who verbally interact with them will have a vocabulary that is 185 words larger than 18-month-old peers who have not been exposed to verbal interactions. The more vocabulary children possess, the greater their ability to comprehend text.

## Try It Out

Children are learning about doctors, nurses, and dentists this week. Talk with your child about how these people keep us healthy. For example, while brushing your child's teeth, talk about how the dentist helps make sure our teeth are healthy and makes sure we have a nice smile. Say: "Look at your face. What a nice smile you have!"



## Looking Ahead

Children will be learning about police officers and firefighters next week. Begin calling attention to these individuals when you see them in the neighborhood or community and use vocabulary associated with these professions, such as *protect*, *help*, *community*, and *friends*. If you know someone in either of these professions, please let us know. We would love to have them visit our classroom next week to tell children about their job.

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## Did You Know?

Your child is at the perfect age to learn how to handle a book. Children have mastered eating finger food now and can pick up the small items without much trouble. Since they are beginning to understand rules and limits, now is the time to begin setting boundaries with books.

## Try It Out

Make it a habit to read to your child nightly and always include book etiquette. Here are some ideas:

- Select books that have a character your toddler will grow to love as it shows up over and over again, such as Franklin the Turtle series by Paulette Bourgeois or Sandra Boynton board books.
- Teach your child how to hold a book with the cover positioned correctly.
- Help your child turn the pages one at a time.
- Make sure your child understands that books are fragile. We treat them gently and we always put them back in their special place when we are finished.
- Provide a special place to store your books.



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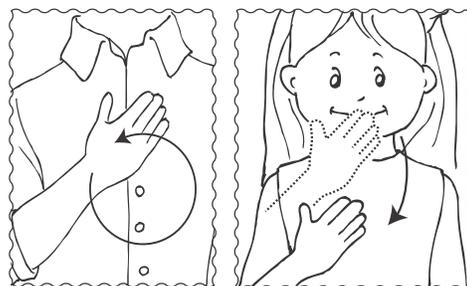
## Did You Know?

Social skills are not innate. They have to be intentionally taught. Children learn to say *please* and *thank you* by listening to us and hearing our reminders. They learn how to listen when someone is talking and not interrupt by the same means. Language and social skills are best learned by example.

## Try It Out

- Encourage your child to smile, say "hi," and strike up conversations with other children. Give her words and phrases to use like, "What's your name?" or "Where do you live?"
- Be a good role model. Be friendly when mixing with others. Say "please" and "thank you" when appropriate. Smile.
- Role-play good table manners. Encourage your child to say "May I be excused?" and "May I have more, please?"

We are learning some words in American Sign Language in our classroom. Practice using the signs for *please* and *thank you*.



please

thank you