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New Program Supporting Families

Martin/Pitt Partnership for Children, your local Smart Start agency, has a new program for families with young children, birth to five years of age. Parent Information Resource, the new program, will coordinate special events like KidsFest, kindergarten transition events and even create a newsletter just for

families with young children. We are working on content and would like your input. If there is something you would like to see us do, please contact our office! It is our hope that this

newsletter will provide helpful tips, important information and maybe even a laugh or two!



Our agency is excited to offer more programs for families with young children, that means you have another program that is an advocate on behalf of your family.

For more information or to contact us with your ideas, contact Melissa Adamson, Martin/Pitt Partnership for Children at 756-1567 or madamson@mppfc.org.

School Readiness

Are you one of the many parents getting your child ready for kindergarten? Martin/Pitt Partnership for Children has a school readiness kit for you and your child! This kit is free for any Martin or Pitt County rising kindergartener and is full of tips, activities, information and resources for preparing your child for kindergarten, and ultimately school success!

Here are titles of some of the information you will find in your free school readiness kit:

Ready, Set, Go: A Journey to Kindergarten Calendar

School Readiness-Starting Your Child Off Right

Daily Activity Calendar for Families with Young Children



Useful Resources for Families

Exceptional Children's Assistance Center
www.ecac-parentcenter.org

Parent Soup—Parents can share ideas and opinions with each other.
www.parentsoup.com

The National Parenting Center
www.tnpc.com

Parenting Me—A website from the child's point of view with lots of parenting tips
www.parentingme.com

Kids Health—Health information for parents
www.kidshealth.org

[Kindergarten: Ready or Not? A Parents Guide](#) by Sean A. Walmley and Bonnie Brown Walmsey

[How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk](#) by Adele Faber

[Parenting from the Inside Out](#) by Daniel Siegel and Mary Hartzell



Family Forum

Welcome to the wonderful world of parenthood! This section of Family Reflections is designated to answer questions about your family, your child, your community and ultimately your family! Chances are, that if you have a question, many others have the same question! Please submit questions to martinpitt@mppfc.org or mail them to 115 Eastbrook Drive, Greenville, NC 27858

Question: My child recently asked me where babies come from. How do I answer when I want to be honest, but I don't know what to say?

Answer: This is a common reaction. Many parents become uncomfortable by this question. It really depends on your child's age. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics talking about sex and sexuality gives you a chance to share your values and beliefs with your child. Sometimes the topic or the questions may seem embarrassing, but your child needs to know there is always a reliable, honest source she can turn to for answers—you.

Your child will learn many things about the world from friends, movies, television, music, the Internet and even advertisements. When it comes to something as important as sexuality, nothing can replace the influence of a parent. The best place for your child to learn about relationships, love, commitment and respect is from you. When your child feels loved and

respected by you, he is more likely to turn to you for answers and advice. Giving advice and teaching your child to make wise choices is one of your most important jobs as a parent.

By anticipating the sexual questions and behaviors that are typical for your pre-school child, you can prepare for them. This way you have an opportunity to carefully choose and practice your responses well in advance.

Here are just a few of the sexual issues that come up for the 4-year-old, along with possible responses made available by Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southwestern Oregon:

Q: How was I born?

A: That's a good question. What do you think about that?

Q: Did I come out of your stomach?

A: No. You grew in a special place inside me called the uterus. When you were ready to be born you came out through an opening between my legs called the vagina.

This can be a hard statement, but children are not thinking about making babies in the same context as adults. Using the proper names for sexual body parts encourages respect and a healthy attitude toward a child's body image. In addition, you are teaching them that you are "askable" and will be laying the foundation for future questions!

"Mommy, where do babies come from?"

*"Hmm.....
That's a good question."*

Teasing—Helping Children Cope

According to Prevent Child Abuse NC, most everyone is teased at one time or another. Teasing is a relatively common part of our relationships. Children do not have to be overweight, wear glasses, or suck their thumb to be a victim of teasing—teasing can be about anything.

When a child experiences teasing, it is important to see the problem from the child’s point of view. Listen attentively, do not overreact, which can cause the child to overact as well. Convey the message, “You can handle this.” Encourage the child to think of ways to deal with the teasing. Also, let your child know that we all experience teasing at some point in our lives.

Using Self-Talk—Encourage children to think about what they can do to themselves when they are in a teasing situation. A child could tell himself, “I can handle this.” A child might ask himself, “Is this tease true?” Often the answer is, “No.”

Incorporate Visualization—Many young children respond well to visualizing words “bouncing off” of

them. This image can be created by showing how rubber balls bounce off a person. The child may visualize a protective shield around her that helps the teases “bounce off.” This gives the child the message that she can refuse the put-downs.

Agreeing with the Tease—The teaser says, “You are a freckle-face.” The teased child responds, “You’re right. I have a lot of freckles on my face.” This shows the teaser that the child is not a victim.

Reframing the Tease—The child can try turning the teasing into a compliment. For example, a child teases about his glasses, calling him “four-eyes.” The child being teased could respond, “Thanks for noticing my glasses.” Another child may respond to a tease by saying, “That is a great put-down.”

Remind your child that although he or she is being teased, they are still the one with all the power and control. Always encourage children to talk with you after they have tried some of the teasing strategies.

Tell them that it takes practice to deflect teasing and that you want to continue helping them.

“Let your child know that we all have experience with teasing at some point in our lives.”

Promote Your Child’s Social-Emotional Development

Understanding the emotional world of young children can be an exciting and challenging task. The National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families (www.zerotothree.org) recommends that parents use the following practices to promote the healthy social-emotional development of their young children.

Responsive Care: Spending time with your child, observing his/her needs will provide insight into the youngster’s behavior and help teach the child how to trust.

Affection & Nurturing: Loving touches and encouraging words send a message to young children that they are special and valued.

Resolving Conflict, Understanding Feelings:

Sharing can become a difficult task as toddlers begin to develop self-awareness. They need assistance in understanding their emotions and considering the feelings of others. Talking to your child about characters in books and movies is a good way for parents to begin discussion about feelings and conflict resolution.

Parents should ask questions and seek the advice of other parents and early childhood professionals. To reach your local early childhood professional call, Marti Brown Infant/Toddler Specialist at 758-8885.

The quickest way to get a child’s attention is to sit down and look comfortable

—Lane Olinghouse



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Parent Opinion

Was this newsletter helpful?

What would you like to see in this newsletter designed with you in mind?

What are your biggest challenges as a parent?

Would you access a lending library with books, games, toys, copier, laminating, book binding and parenting videos?

Other comments? _____

Complete an online survey!
Visit our website www.mppfc.org and
click on "Parent Opinion"

Martin/Pitt Partnership for Children (MPPFC) is a non-profit organization that funds 14 programs focusing on three areas: early care and education, family support and health initiatives for children birth to five years of age. **MPPFC is the local Smart Start agency for Martin and Pitt Counties. Smart Start is available in every county and is North Carolina's nationally recognized and award winning early childhood initiative designed to ensure that young children enter school healthy and ready to succeed.**