



MAY 2010



Family Time Work Time

A BALANCING ACT

Building Strong Families

Think Before You Speak!

Did you know that how you say something affects how your child responds? It's always good to think before you speak. Listed below are some "do's" and don'ts."

- If you shout, "Be quiet!" when your child is being noisy it may not get your child's attention. Try whispering or speaking in a soft tone of voice instead. Your child will need to quiet down in order to hear what you are saying.
- Avoid threats such as, "If you don't behave we won't go outside." Children need to move and get exercise. They need to run off extra energy. Your child will behave better when you give her chances to run and play and be active every day.
- "Eat your lunch or no snack." Children are not always hungry at meal time. If that happens, just calmly say, "You must not be hungry now." Then end the meal. Children have small stomachs. If they skip a meal they really need a snack in an hour or two. Serve healthy foods for snacks. Remember, a hungry child will eat!
- Do you find yourself reminding your child to share? That does not come naturally to young children. They need to be at least three or four years old before they understand sharing. Show your child how to take turns. One way to teach taking turns is to roll a ball back and forth or play catch with your child.



- Be clear when telling your child to do something. Try to eliminate the word "don't." Say what you "do" want your child to do such as, "You need to roll the ball on the floor. You can throw it when we go outside to play."
- What does "be nice" mean? When you tell your child to be nice there is no specific meaning and that can be confusing for your child. Tell your child exactly what you want her to do, such as "Keep your hands away from your brother."
- How many times have you heard an adult say to a child, "You are bad!" All that does is make the child feel negative about himself. It does not teach him what you want him to do. You can say, "I don't like it when you hit someone. Hitting hurts." What you say should let your child know you don't like a certain behavior, but be sure to let him know you always love him.

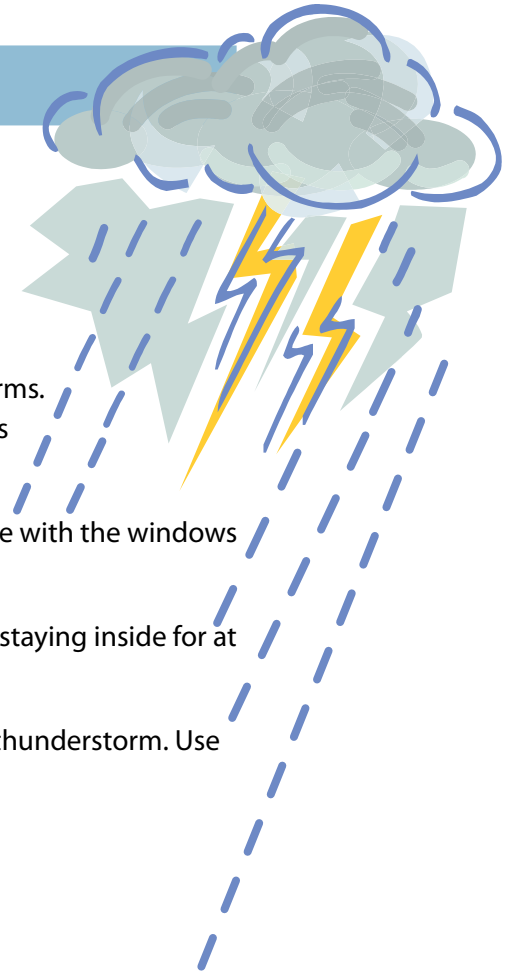
Child Care Tips for Parents

Be a partner with your child's child care provider. Work as a team. Everyone benefits when you communicate regularly and plan together ways to help your child. You know your child best. When your child's caregiver has a chance to get to know your child better he or she will be able to provide better care. This will be good for your child and you will feel good about leaving your child at child care while you are at work.

Keeping Safe During Thunderstorms

Here are some ways to keep safe when there is a thunderstorm:

- If the weather appears threatening, listen to your local news, check online, or turn on a NOAA weather radio to find out what the weather reports say.
- Look for signs of a storm such as dark skies, lots of wind, and lightening.
- Cancel or postpone outdoor events when there are warnings of thunderstorms. Be aware that people can be struck by lightening in a stormy area even if it is not raining at the time.
- If there is a severe thunderstorm warning, find shelter in a building or vehicle with the windows closed. Mobile homes are not a safe place to be if there are high winds.
- If you hear thunder, go indoors! The National Weather Service recommends staying inside for at least thirty minutes after thunder ends.
- Avoid electrical equipment, including computers and telephones, during a thunderstorm. Use battery powered radios.
- Shut windows and close outside doors. Stay away from windows.
- Do not take a bath, shower, or use water during an electrical storm.



Family Gardening

A good family project is planting a family garden. Your child can help with the planning and the planting. Plant some seeds or seedlings of favorite foods and your child can learn about how they grow. Keep it simple and start with just a few. If your gardening project goes well you can always add to it. If you do not have a yard for a garden plot, try a container garden. You can plant seeds or seedlings in large pots to put on a patio or porch.



Teach your child that plants need light, water, and good soil to grow. Keep safety in mind: use untreated seeds, check labels on potting soil bags for harmful chemicals, and find out if plants and seeds are poisonous. Contact the National Poison Control hotline at 800-222-1222 for information on poisonous plants and seeds.

Put your child in charge of one plant or a section of your garden. She can prepare the soil and the seeds for planting. Show her how to use the right amount of water. Enjoy growing things with your child.

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