

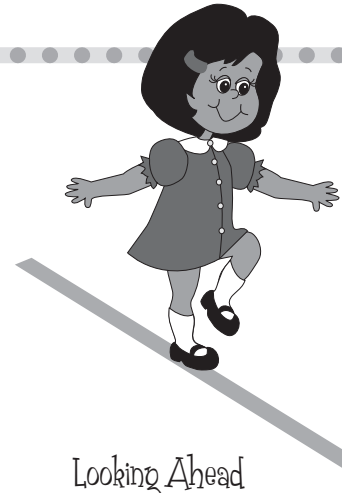
# Parents as Partners

## Did You Know?

You can optimize your child's brain development! When children are born, there is plenty of brain "hardware" ready to be wired. Your child's experiences will wire his brain and every experience counts right from birth. Your child's brain will be 80% wired by age three so make every minute count.

## Try It Out

- Be "fully present" with your child. Listen intently and respond sincerely. Your child needs your full attention.
- Read to your child. Talk to your child. Sing with your child. These activities build neural connections and skills for learning to read.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep. Toddlers need 10 to 12 hours of sleep each night.
- Make sure your toddler has room to move physically. Most of the brain wiring required for physical movement (dexterity, coordination, balance) takes place during the first five years of life.
- Make sure your child drinks plenty of water and gets plenty of oxygen. These fuel the neurotransmitters that carry information through the brain.



### Looking Ahead

Please Bring recycled socks and paper towel tubes to our classroom for next week's activities.

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# Parents as Partners

## Did You Know?

Mealtime is a great time to teach your child manners and appropriate behaviors. Most of your child's manners are learned from watching you and his caregivers.

## Try It Out

- Make it a point to have dinner together regularly. Set all technology aside (laptops, tablets, cell phones) and focus on modeling appropriate table manners.
- Carry on conversations about the events of the day for each family member.
- Encourage children to use good manners, take turns, and listen to others.
- Keep a set of conversation cards (attached) available and use one on occasion to spark unusual conversation. As your child gets older, let her help create the conversation starters.

Of all your favorite foods, which one would you find it most difficult to give up for the rest of your life?

What is your favorite song?

If all your clothes had to be the same color, which color would you choose?

# Conversation Starters

Directions: Cut the cards apart. Choose one card and read it aloud. Invite your child to answer the question to begin a dinnertime conversation.

Of all your favorite foods, which one would you find it most difficult to give up for the rest of your life?

In your opinion, which animal is the most beautiful?

If you had a tree house, what would you put in it?

If you could be like an animal, which one would it be?

What is your favorite song?

What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?

If all your clothes had to be the same color, which color would you choose?

Which animal do you think is the funniest looking? Why?

If we had a box as big as the washing machine, what could we make with it?

Do you like cold weather or hot weather the best? Why?

What is your favorite TV show? Why?

What do you think is a good name for a dog? Why?

# Parents as Partners

## Did You Know?

Toddlers are beginning to interact with their peers and will continue to have a greater interest in these interactions throughout their preschool and elementary years. As your child works and plays more with others, playing fair and taking turns becomes increasingly important. These skills are at the heart of children's self esteem, happiness, and achievement throughout life.



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## Try It Out

- Be a consistent example of turn-taking and fairness with others.
- Talk with your child about why you believe it is important to be fair and take turns. Give your child examples from your own life, as a child and as an adult.
- Acknowledge your child when she does her best to wait for a turn or when she is fair.
- Encourage your child to use assertive but nonthreatening words rather than physical force to claim her turn.
- Practice turn-taking at home. Let everyone take a turn at selecting a group activity (choosing a TV show or game, sharing jobs around the house).

# Parents as Partners

## Did You Know?

Humor boosts learning and memory while decreasing stress by lowering the stress hormone called *cortisol*. Children are joyful. They giggle, laugh, and chuckle throughout the day and are looking for adults to join them in their joy. Look for playful ways to interact with your child.

## Try It Out

- Sing silly songs. Make up silly songs about everything. Don't worry about rhyme or tune.
- Read funny books and rhymes.
- Redirect challenging behavior with humor. If your child doesn't want to put his shoes on, try humor. Toddlers laugh at mix-ups (using a banana as a telephone, wearing shoes on your ears, small clothing on big people, pointing to an eye and calling it a nose, calling someone by the wrong name).
- Join in playful moments. When your child is laughing, find out what's funny and laugh along.
- Bring toys to life by talking to them and pretending they hear and respond back.

