

Welcome to the February 2005 edition of Iowa Public Television's (IPTV) Ready To Learn (RTL) eNews. The purpose of this free monthly electronic newsletter is to keep families, educators, and child care providers informed of the great resources IPTV and our partners have to offer those who care for children ages birth to eight years of age. RTL is public television's response to a critical national education goal: All children will enter school Ready To Learn.

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_____February Feature_____

ENCOURAGING YOUNG CHILDREN TO BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

During the early years, children's physical skills develop at an amazing rate. They learn to roll over, sit up, walk, run, jump, and throw—to name a few. Young children need many opportunities to develop their large and small muscles which allow them to do these activities. The good news is that most children are excited about doing some sort of physical activity. They consider it play and not a chore as some adults do!

I. Why encourage children to be physically active?

Dr. Steve Sanders, in his article, "Physically Active for Life," (Online Reference #7) states several reasons why it is important:

CHILDREN WHO ARE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE ON A REGULAR BASIS ARE HEALTHIER. Physical activity helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints, controls weight, prevents or delays high blood pressure, and reduces feelings of depression and anxiety. Dr. Sanders writes that because our culture has changed in the last 40 years we now are a society that discourages physical activity. "Science and medical professionals now suggest that ours may be the first generation in history where parents outlive their children. The obesity rate for children in the 1960s was about 4%. Forty years later the rate is now almost 25% in children and estimated at over 50% in adults."

CHILDREN WHO DEVELOP PHYSICAL SKILLS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE AS ADULTS. Physical activity at a young age helps children develop the coordination and skills they need to do activities they see older children and adults doing such as dancing, swimming and playing sports. Physical activity is one of those "healthy habits" we can learn as children that hopefully will become a lifelong habit.

CHILDREN CAN DEVELOP COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL SKILLS THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. For example, they can count the number of times they are jumping or learn words like "over," "under," and "into" as

they climb through an obstacle course. Participating in physical activities can also give them chances to interact with others and have fun as a group.

II. How much time should be included in the daily schedule for physical activity?

Preschoolers need many opportunities for vigorous, noisy, physical play. The Preschool Activity Guidelines outlined by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education suggest preschoolers should have one hour of daily structured physical activity (this does not have to be all at one time), engage in unstructured physical activity whenever possible and should not be sedentary for more than one hour at a time (Online Reference #7). The "Healthy Kids Gang" curriculum, developed by Iowa Health System, recommends at least 30 minutes of exercise daily for children (Online Reference #5).

III. Where should these activities take place?

There needs to be safe spaces, both inside and outside, for children to engage in physical activities. Look at the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards for criteria describing quality indoor and outdoor equipment, materials and furnishings. In addition, the Iowa State University Extension Web site offers the following publications dealing with playground safety:

1. Ten steps towards a safer playground: www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/SP23F.pdf
2. Tips For Home Playground Safety: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1632.pdf>

IV. What are guidelines to follow when selecting specific physical activities?

"Physical Fun for Little Ones," a document prepared for the Iowa Department of Education by the Early Childhood Motor Activity Task Force, lists several (Online Reference #4):

- * When selecting specific activities to develop small and large muscles, keep in mind the age and stage of development of the children.
- * Avoid competitive games and activities where children can feel threatened or scared. Play games and do activities that promote cooperation and working together rather than competition. There should be no "team games" played at this age level.
- * Avoid games that eliminate children: "If the ball hits you, you are out." Everyone should have a chance to participate and not just observe.
- * Since the attention span of preschoolers is short, select games or activities with few rules. Keep instructions brief and to the point. Plan for several activities of short duration.
- * The activities should allow all children to have fun, increase their abilities, maintain a good self-concept, and interact as part of a group.

Check out the following online references regarding physical activity and young children

ONLINE REFERENCES

1. PBS TeacherSource: From the Start - www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2.htm

* For a list of activities, select "Preschool Health & Fitness" from the first drop-down box, then select "Fitness & Nutrition" from the second drop-down box.

* For additional articles on health, physical fitness, and detailed descriptions of how to teach specific skills, visit www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2/issues/issuearchive.shtm and scroll down the page till you get to the heading "Health & Fitness."

2. Sesame Workshop's Healthy Habits for Life - www.sesameworkshop.org/healthyhabits/

This Web site was developed to help young children and their caregivers establish healthy habits that can last a lifetime.

3. Iowa State University Extension - www.extension.iastate.edu

This Web site offers the following articles on preschool physical fitness that include age-appropriate activities:

* Growing Up Fit: Preschoolers in Motion -

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1359A.pdf>

* Growing Up Fit: Preschool Fitness Activities - www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1359B.pdf

4. Physical Fun for Little Ones - http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/cfcs/physical_fun.pdf

This is a 191 page document filled with physical activities for 3- to 5-year-olds compiled in 2001 by the Early Childhood Motor Activity Task Force from the Iowa Department of Education.

5. Healthy Kids Gang - www.healthykidsgang.org

This Web site provides information about the Healthy Kids Gang curriculum that was developed by Iowa Health System and the Iowa Department of Public Health.

6. "By Leaps and Bounds: Physical Development" from The Whole Child—For Early Care Providers Web site - www.pbs.org/wholechild/providers/dev.html

7. "Physically Active for Life" by Steve Saunders from the PBS TeacherSource: From the Start Web site - www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2/issues/703issue.shtm

OTHER REFERENCES

Iowa Department of Education. Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria. (2004). Des Moines: Iowa Department of Education.

Miller, Karen. "Ages and Stages: Developmental Descriptions and Activities, Birth Through Eight Years." West Palm Beach, FL: Telshare Publishing Co., Inc. 2001.

_____How do you use the RTL Learning Triangle?_____

IPTV's RTL service wants to hear from you! If you have an example of how you have used the RTL Learning Triangle please send an email to Lisa Albers at lisa@iptv.org along with a couple of paragraphs describing your triangle and how it worked for you and the children in your care. All emails received by the end of each month will be included in a drawing for 10 FREE children's books.

_____The Learning Triangle_____

Young children learn by doing—by interacting with people and objects around them. To learn, they need to experience things again and again. Ready To Learn uses the learning triangle to teach children skills and concepts by using PBS KIDS programs, books, and activities. Engage children in these theme-related activities in any order and at any time. Point out the connections between the segment they VIEW, the book they READ, and the activity they DO. The repetition and variety of media used reinforces the skills and concepts you teach.

_____Physical Activity Theme Learning Triangle_____

It is recommended that children have at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day. Often, they don't get this much. The good news is that most children like to exercise. They think of it as playing and not a chore—as some adults do! It is easy to fit opportunities to be active into your children's day. Ask them what they like to do outside and inside and include walking, hopping, jumping jacks, etc. into those activities. When children are watching a TV program or video encourage them to dance or move along with the characters in the show. Don't let them just sit in front of the screen. Encourage them to "Get up and go!"

READ IT

1. Taking a Walk/Caminando: A Book in Two Languages/Un Libro en Dos Lenguas by Rebecca Emberley—

Labeled illustrations and Spanish and English text introduce the things a child sees while on a walk. (This book is bilingual in English and Spanish) (Ages 4-8)

2. Jump, Frog, Jump! by Robert Kalan—A cumulative tale in which a frog tries to catch a fly without getting caught itself. (Infant - Preschool)

3. Balls (An Elmo's World Book)—Boing! Boing! Elmo is having a ball! Peek underneath the big flaps to find bouncy balls of different sizes and shapes. Then watch Elmo dunk a basketball—and himself! (Infant - Preschool)
4. Bungee Boo Dance (Boohbah) by Quinlan B. Lee—A padded board book that focuses on the movement and patterns of the Boohbah's world. (Infant - Preschool)

VIEW IT

BOOHBAH – Physical activity is part of every episode of Boohbah.

Every Monday - Friday at 11:30 a.m.

The Boohbahs begin their day with a “warm up,” doing a single movement that is easy to copy. After the visit to Storyworld, the Boohbahs put several movements together to create a dance. That is followed by real children experimenting with different kinds of movements in a special “Look What I Can Do!” segment. All the movements in the program were inspired by children, and children's physical activity experts have approved all of the exercises and dances that the Boohbahs and children perform on screen.

ARTHUR – Arthur Weighs In

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 7 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

When Arthur doesn't fit into his costume for the play, he's shocked to learn that he's gotten "husky-sized." Now he's serious about getting in shape. Will he turn to an all-protein diet? Eat only herbs and berries? Or will he try something really radical...exercise?!

DO IT

1. Organized sports may be too challenging for younger children, but consider these favorite games:
 - Hopscotch – Using chalk, draw a simple pattern of numbered squares on a sidewalk. Encourage children to hop from square to square in a variety of patterns. Let them make their own rules!
 - Simon Says - Tell the children to listen carefully and follow the directions you give. If you say "Simon says" first, they should do it. If you do not say "Simon says" first, they should not do it. Start the game with "Simon says, put your finger on your chin." Help any children who are having difficulty by pointing to your chin and putting your finger on it. Continue with commands that include up, down, and out. Once children are comfortable following one-step directions, give them two-step directions to follow. For example, ask them to stand on their right foot and hop in place. Tip for the grownup: Experienced players of "Simon Says" are often "out," or excluded from the game, when they make a mistake. Young children and English Language Learners should keep playing even when they make mistakes, so that they can improve through play.
2. Look at pictures of animals or insects and try to figure out ways to make your body look like theirs. Some ideas:
 - Butterfly Wings – Sit with your feet together. Now move your knees up and down, flapping them like butterfly wings.
 - Elephant Trunk – From a standing position, bend at the waist and drop your arms down in front of you. Now clasp them together to form an elephant's trunk. Swing slowly from side to side, as an elephant swings its trunk as it walks.
3. Have children cut pictures from magazines that show people and animals exercising. Paste the pictures on paper and make an "exercise" book. Talk about why it is important to exercise.

_____Love Theme Learning Triangle_____

When someone they love goes away, children may think that person won't ever come back. It helps children to have ways to think about the person who went away: a calendar to show when he or she will return, or a photograph to remind them of the person. Little by little, children learn that when the people close to them go away, they will come back. It can be upsetting for children to find that people who love each other can get very angry with each other. When family members quarrel, children may worry that they don't love each other any more. Grownups need to reassure children that getting angry at people doesn't mean that you stop loving them.

READ IT

1. Mama Do you Love Me? by Barbara Joosse—A child living in the Arctic learns that a mother's love is unconditional. (This book is also available in Spanish.) (Infant - Preschool)
2. I Love to Cuddle by Carl Norac—Lola the hamster is lonely when her parents go out, so she builds an island of soft, snuggly things to make herself feel better. (Infant - Preschool)

3. Counting Kisses: A Kiss & Read Book by Karen Katz—How many kisses does a tired baby need? Count and kiss along with this bedtime book. (Infant - Preschool)

VIEW IT

1. MISTER ROGERS NEIGHBORHOOD – Weekly Theme: Love

Monday -Friday, February 14-18, 2005 at 2:30 p.m.

Mister Rogers talks about the people and things we love and sings "There Are Many Ways to Say 'I Love You'." Through a trip to the aviary, a video of a stuffed bear factory, and visits with caring neighbors, children see many people's expression of love and caring -- for their work and for the people who are close to them.

2. CLIFFORD'S HEART-Y PARTY

Monday, February 14, 2005 at 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

This one-hour special is comprised of Valentine's Day-themed stories from CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG and CLIFFORD'S PUPPY DAYS.

3. CAILLOU – People I Love #205

Monday, February 14, 2005 at 8:30 a.m.

Each segment of this show explores a special person in Caillou's life.

4. CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG – Clifford's Big Heart #123b

Friday, February 25, 2005 at 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Clifford works hard to try to make the perfect Valentine for Emily to show her how much he loves her. In the end, he learns that it's his presence, not presents, that means the most to Emily Elizabeth.

DO IT

1. Have a conversation with children about love. Make a list of all the things they think of and talk about them. Have they ever been angry with someone they love? How did that make them feel? What made them angry? When they were finished being angry, did they still love that person? What are some things families and caregivers do to show their love for children? For instance: preparing meals, buying clothes, reading stories, setting limits, talking, giving hugs and/or kisses, saying "I love you," working to earn money.

2. Ask children to think of things they can do to show a grownup that they love them. Suggest things like: saying "I love you," cleaning up a room, talking about their feelings, drawing a picture, saying "please" and "thank you," helping prepare meals, hugging, singing a song.

3. Have children make something for someone they love.

4. Make a booklet of the different ways people show love by finding examples in pictures in old magazines or catalogs. Cut or tear out the pictures children find and paste them in their booklets. Encourage the children to draw their own pictures of people doing things that show love.

5. Discuss the phrase "broken heart." Explain to children that hearts don't really break, but that this phrase means that someone is sad or hurting inside about something. Ask them if they have ever known someone with a broken heart. Then help the children cut out half as many large heart shapes as you have children (2 shapes for 4 children). Make sure each heart is cut in half with a distinct pattern. Mark each half of each heart with the same letter or number. Pass out the heart pieces and let children move about matching their broken hearts. When the pieces fit together, the broken heart is mended and celebrated with a hug!

_____Program Schedule, Episode Descriptions and Record Rights for PBS Kids Programs_____

Finding Program Schedule and Episode Descriptions:

* Go to Web site: iptv.org

* Click on Educational Resources button at the top center of the page.

* Click on the Today link under the Educational TV Schedule heading on the left side of the page toward the middle.

* Click on the program you are interested in to find a description for today's episode of the program.

* To find future episode descriptions, click on a date in the left column to find the description of the episode that will be shown on that specific date. Reading them will help you identify episodes that correspond to your curricular themes. The listed dates are the next 28 air dates of the program you've selected. Upcoming TV schedules on www.iptv.org are updated by the 15th of each month for the following month.

Record only, one year tape and erase. No duplication allowed.

What does that mean?

Educators may record a program from the broadcast. The recording may then be used in an educational setting and retained as long as that program airs on IPTV. No copies may be made from the original recording.

If available, educators also may borrow a recording from a lending library, such as the media centers in Iowa's Area Education Agencies.

_____Resources for February_____

Sesame Workshop's View & Do Newsletter—This monthly publication gives episode descriptions and activity tips for SESAME STREET and DRAGON TALES. Use it to select episodes from these programs, or parts of episodes, that you want to use during the VIEW section of the RTL Learning Triangle or when you need ideas for activities.

* English: <http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/documents/ViewFeb05Engfinal.pdf>

* Spanish: <http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/documents/ViewFeb05Spafinal.pdf>

Reading Rockets Current Newsletter—This monthly newsletter provides information for families and educators about teaching kids to read and helping those who struggle.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/subscribe/newsletter.php>

This month's Reading Rockets Newsletter highlights:

* It Happened Over There: Empathy Through Children's Books

* New! An Exclusive Video Interview With David Shannon

* 2005 Newbery and Caldecott Winners to be Announced

* Read Across America Day is March 2

NEWS ABOUT READING

* Major Daily Newspaper Explains Phonemic Awareness

* Harvard Study Measures Effect of Parent Engagement on Student Outcomes

* \$56.58 Billion in Discretionary Funding for U.S. Department of Education

* Pre-Kindergarten for Four-Year-Olds is Now Free in Florida

IDEAS FOR PARENTS

* Is There Something I Could Buy That Would Help My Child Read Better?

* Elmo's World Rhyming Game

IDEAS FOR EDUCATORS

* Reader's Theater: Giving Students a Reason to Read Aloud

* Now Available – Beginning Decoding Skills Survey

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood—Fall Edition (November-January) of the Neighborhood News Newsletter—This quarterly newsletter helps families and care providers plan their viewing of MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD by providing schedules, descriptions, activities, book suggestions, and timely articles of interest to adults who work with children.

<http://www.fci.org/newsletter/>

Themes for February:

January 31-February 4 – Grandparents (Appreciating the people who came before us)

February 7-12 – Work (Work is one way parents show their children they love them)

February 14-18 – Love (There can be angry times even when we love someone)

February 21-25 – Go-Stop-Go (Working an impulse control)

February 28-March – You & I Together (Strengths and limitations; abilities and disabilities)

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood *Mad Feelings* Newsletter—A monthly newsletter dealing with anger management and challenging behaviors in young children, including articles, activities and tips.

<http://www.fci.org/madfeelings/default.asp>

PBS Parents Electronic Newsletter

Each week this electronic newsletter targets providers, caregivers, and parents bringing activities from favorite children's programs, events in your local community, and headlines from the PBS Parents Web site. To receive this FREE electronic newsletter, subscribe at the following Web site:
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/> (The link is towards the bottom of the page.)

_____Tip of the Month_____

Young children learn about the importance of physical activity and that it is fun from their parents and care providers. As role models, parents and care providers are encouraged to engage in physical activities with children—dance together, walk around the neighborhood, go on a treasure hunt, build snowpeople, or ride bikes. It is important for children to see the adults in their lives being physically active.

The PE Central Web site (www.pecentral.org) offers information on physical skill development, including activities and lesson plans to help preschool children improve specific skills:
www.pecentral.org/lessonideas/elementary/preschoolmenu.asp

_____Spring 2005 IPTV Kids Schedule_____

This schedule is provided to assist children, their families, and child care providers as they plan their TV viewing.

Monday—Friday

6:30 a.m. Postcards from Buster
7:00 a.m. Arthur
7:30 a.m. Clifford the Big Red Dog
8:00 a.m. Dragon Tales
8:30 a.m. Caillou
9:00 a.m. Sesame Street
10:00 a.m. Barney & Friends
10:30 a.m. The Berenstain Bears
11:00 a.m. The Big Comfy Couch
11:30 a.m. Boohbah
Noon Between the Lions
12:30 p.m. Reading Rainbow
1:00 p.m. Classroom TV
2:30 p.m. Mister Rogers' Neighborhood
3:00 p.m. Cyberchase
3:30 p.m. Maya & Miguel
4:00 p.m. Clifford the Big Red Dog
4:30 p.m. Arthur
5:00 p.m. Dragon Tales

Sunday

8:00 a.m. Bob the Builder
8:30 a.m. Angelina Ballerina
9:00 a.m. Dragon Tales
9:30 a.m. Thomas & Friends

_____Series Spotlight_____

READING RAINBOW airs Monday-Friday at 12:30 p.m.

READING RAINBOW, hosted by LeVar Burton, is a critically-acclaimed award-winning half-hour PBS series that turns children on to books and reading. The series targets 4-8 year olds, and is based on research that identifies these early years as the optimum time for children to learn to read, and to adopt positive reading habits, skills, and attitudes.

READING RAINBOW's dynamic, fast-paced, magazine-style format features on location adventures, colorful animation and hip music videos. Popular personalities, including Bill Cosby, Tyne Daly and Whoopi Goldberg, narrate the program's feature book, while captivating illustrations appear on-screen. "Kid-on-the-street" interviews allow real kids to sound off about issues, and in every episode kids the age of viewers recommend three additional books to read.

In July 1983 READING RAINBOW premiered as a summer television series with the intent to promote reading during non-school months. By 1990 the series moved to year around broadcast and, presently, each of the 139 episodes air about twice a year.

Over the years READING RAINBOW has expanded its scope of topics and issues while keeping the joy of reading at the center of its message. Some of these episodes explore science and math themes while others include social issues such as homelessness, the Vietnam Memorial, music of slavery, and youngsters talking about gangs and their community of Watts.

Professionally the series has been recognized with over 150 awards READING RAINBOW has garnered are 20 Emmys (seven for "Outstanding Children's Series"), a prestigious Peabody, eight CINE Golden Eagles, seven Parent's Choice Awards and three international Prix Jeunesse Awards. In a more personal way the series impact is acknowledged by the actions of children - as librarians and booksellers report that books featured on episodes receive enormous requests and quickly become "classics" in kids' personal libraries, and when young children often ask for books seen on READING RAINBOW by title and sometimes even by author.

READING RAINBOW and host LeVar Burton continue to link books to enjoyment and a wide range of exciting, on-location real-life settings, people and places. The series promotes reading as a way children can sample the world around them.

Visit READING RAINBOW online at <http://gpn.unl.edu/rainbow/default.asp> for activities and resources for parents and teachers, as well as fun games and kid-created stories for youngsters.

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