

Welcome to the February 2007 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 8 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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_____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. RTL 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 reinforces the skills and concepts you teach.

_____How do you use the RTL Learning Triangle? Monthly Contest_____

IPTV's RTL service wants to hear from you! How do you use the RTL Learning Triangle? Send an email to Lisa Albers at lisa@iptv.org 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.

_____ABC's Theme Learning Triangle_____

Print versions in English and Spanish of this ABC's Theme Learning Triangle can be found at the following location: <http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm>

It is important for children to know the names of letters. A child's name is special to him/her. Use it to teach him/her letters. Start with the first letter in the name. "This letter is "R." It is the first letter in your name, "Rosa." Point out letters you see in signs, magazines, and newspapers to your child, such as Wal-Mart and Pepsi. Your child sees these words on a regular basis and can "read" them before he/she even knows all the letters in the words. Use these words to teach your child letters. "Wal-Mart starts with a 'w,' just like your name, Will."

READ IT

1. *Maisy's ABC* by Lucy Cousins—Children will flip as Maisy parades through the alphabet. With tabs to pull and flaps to lift, and bright, bold art, this book is an irresistible introduction to letters and letter sounds just right for very young children. (Infant-Preschool)
2. *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Jr, Bill Martin and John Archambault—In this lively alphabet rhyme, all the letters of the alphabet race each other up the coconut tree. Will there be enough room? Oh, no—Chicka Chicka Boom Boom! (Ages 4-8)

VIEW IT

TV

BETWEEN THE LIONS – Every episode features letters, letter families, and letter sounds.

* Every Monday-Friday at 2:30 p.m.

SESAME STREET – Every episode features a letter of the day.

(Notice how often the letter of the day appears on the screen while you hear its spoken sound. Then if the letter is related to a word that begins with that letter sound, and the word is also presented on the screen.)

* Every Monday-Friday at 9 a.m.

* Sundays at 8 a.m.

Online Games (Really great and fun for kids!)

* *Between the Lions: A.B. Cow* - Figure out which letter is missing from the alphabet in this online game.

<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/abcow.html>

* *Sesame Street: Letter of the Day - Feed Cookie Monster* cookies that start with certain letters.

<http://pbskids.org/sesame/letter/lettergame.html>

DO IT

1. Take a "letter walk." When you see a letter, name it for your child and point to it if possible. "That sign has an 'S' on it. Say the letter name with me: S." If your child is older and has been learning letter names, ask her what letter it is when you see it. You can also do this when you are in a store or when reading to your child.
2. *Name Puzzles* - Write your child's name on a piece of construction paper. Cut between each letter, so that each letter becomes its own piece of the puzzle. Store the puzzle in a small plastic bag or envelope. Have your child put the puzzle together, spelling her name. If your child needs more support with this activity, you can write her name on a piece of paper as a sample for her to look at as the puzzle is put together. You can also do this with names of other family members and close friends of the child.
3. *Letter Hunt* - As you read books to your child, ask if he sees any letters from his name in the book. After he shows you letters from his own name, ask if he recognizes any other letters of the alphabet.
4. Give your child different kinds of paper and things to write with (markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc.). Your child will have fun writing his name in a variety of creative ways. Encourage your child to write his name starting with a capital letter and continuing with lowercase letters.

_____Counting Theme Learning Triangle_____

Print versions in English and Spanish of this Counting Theme Learning Triangle can be found at the following location: <http://www.iptv.org/kids/growups/resources/downloads.cfm>

Once children have learned to count from 1 to 10 and beyond, it is important that they also learn to correctly name numbers. They need to be able to look at a "5" and correctly identify it as "5." Children will be able to name numbers before they can write them. Helping children recognize numbers in their environment and then providing opportunities for them to practice writing numbers will help them develop this skill.

READ IT

1. Over in the Meadow by Ezra Jack Keats—An old nursery poem introduces animals and their young and the numbers one through ten. (Infant-Preschool)
2. Counting Crocodiles by Judy Sierra—In this rhymed retelling of a traditional Asian tale, a clever monkey uses her ability to count to outwit the hungry crocodiles that stand between her and a banana tree on another island across the sea. (Infant-Preschool)
3. Every Buddy Counts (MathStart 1) by Stuart J. Murphy—A little girl goes through the day counting her "buddies" which include one hamster, two sisters, three kittens, etc. (Ages 4-8)

VIEW IT

SESAME STREET – Every episode features a "Number of the Day."

* Monday – Friday at 9 a.m. & Sunday at 8 a.m.

CYBERCHASE – An action-packed adventure cartoon series which engages kids in the fun and challenge of mathematics. (Target Ages: 6-11)

* Monday – Friday at 1:30 p.m.

DO IT

1. "Hide" cards around your home. You can use playing cards or index cards with one number printed on each. Ask your children to find a card with a 10 on it, etc. Or, ask him to find all the cards and then tell you the number name on each card. You can also ask him to find a certain number on your clock, telephone, calendar, newspaper ad or when you're in a store. "What number is this?" is a good question to ask!
2. Make a matching game to help your child recognize numbers. Write the numbers 1 to 10 on index cards (one number on each card). To make the matching cards, draw objects on the card to represent the numbers 1 through 10. You can draw simple objects like dots, stars, hearts, etc. You can also use stickers for these cards. Then mix up the picture cards and number cards. Lay them in rows on a table and have your child match the number card to the picture card. To make this activity more challenging, place the cards face down and have the child choose two cards at a time. If the cards match, the child keeps the cards, if not, they place them face down and the next player takes a turn.
3. Give your child paper and crayons or markers. Ask your child to choose a number from 1 to 10 and write that number on a piece of paper. Then, have your child draw a picture to represent that number. For example, if he chose the number 5 he might draw 5 dogs. You can work on this project for several days. When your child has chosen all the numbers from one to ten, staple the pages together to make a book.

Feelings Theme Learning Triangle

Print versions in English and Spanish of this Feelings Theme Learning Triangle can be found at the following location: <http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm>

When a child feels mad, sad or upset, he/she may act in ways you don't want him/her to. For example, a child may hit or bite another child or grown-up to get a toy. It is important for adults to teach the child that it is okay to feel a certain way but it is not okay to hit, bite, kick, etc. Reading books and watching children's TV programs that show children/characters handling their emotions can provide great examples for children. For instance, if a character was really mad and thought about kicking his friend, but instead chose to go outside and kick a ball, you could talk with the child about how this was a much better choice.

READ IT

1. Feet Are Not For Kicking by Elizabeth Verdick—"Look at those feet! Aren't they sweet?" Yes-when they're walking, standing, leaping, and landing. And when they're kicking balls or leaves. But not when they're kicking people! In simple words and charming full-color illustrations, this book helps little ones learn to use their feet for fun, not in anger or frustration. It also includes tips for parents and caregivers on how to help toddlers be sweet with their feet. (Ages 4-8)
2. Glad Monster, Sad Monster by Anne Miranda—Monsters of different colors explain what makes them feel glad, sad, loving, worried, silly, and angry. Fold-out masks encourage readers to talk about their feelings. (Infant-Preschool)

VIEW IT

CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG – Who me, Jealous? #124a

* Friday, February 16, 2007 at 7:30 a.m. AND Monday, February 19, 2007 at 4 p.m.

* Thursday, February 22, 2007 at 7:30 a.m. AND Friday, February 23, 2007 at 4 p.m.

Mrs. Diller is taking care of Susie, her sister's puppy, for the weekend. Does Mrs. Diller like the cute little puppy better than she likes Cleo? Cleo determines to 'outcute' the puppy and win back Mrs. Diller's affection. But she soon learns that Mrs. Diller thinks Cleo is perfect just the way she is.

BARNEY & FRIENDS – It's a Happy Day! #717

* Tuesday, February 27, 2007 at 10:30 a.m.

The kids are looking for something new and fun to do. Beth comes up with the idea of a new holiday called Happy Day. The kids make a wish and everyone works together to make that wish come true. For example, Whitney's wish was to play Three Little Kittens and BJ wants to go fishing. The gang also learn how you can tell if someone is happy or sad.

ARTHUR – My Club Rules/Stolen Bike # 129

* Tuesday, February 27, 2007 at 6:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

In "My Club Rules," the kids each create their own club, but find being a lone member isn't as fun as they thought. Francine pretends her bike is stolen in "Stolen Bike," when she's embarrassed about having a used bicycle.

DO IT

1. Talk with your child about different feelings: mad, sad, happy, etc. Have her to draw a picture or cut something out of a magazine that shows what she does when she feels that way. Talk about if it is a good choice or not. For example, if your child draws a picture of herself yelling when she is sad, ask her what other things she could do. Maybe she could ask an adult for a hug.
2. Sing the song, "If You're Happy and You Know It." Each time you sing a new verse, change the word, "happy" with another feeling. For example, "If you're angry and you know it, stomp your feet," or "If you're sad and you know it, bow your head," or "If you're excited and you know it say, 'hooray!'" Have the child help you think of the feeling words and the action that could go along with each feeling.

_____IPTV Kids Schedule for Spring 2007_____

A print version of the IPTV Kids Schedule for Spring 2007 in English and Spanish can be found at the following location: <http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/documents/Fall06KidsSchedule.pdf>

IPTV broadcasts 11 hours of non-violent, non-commercial, educational children's television programming each Monday through Friday. However, IPTV does NOT recommend that children spend all of their free time in front of the television. In fact, we encourage adults to place strict limits on the amount of time the children in their lives spend with the television or other screen media, such as computers and video games. This schedule is provided to assist children and adults as they plan their television viewing.

Monday—Friday

6:30 a.m.	Arthur
7:00 a.m.	Curious George
7:30 a.m.	Clifford the Big Red Dog
8:00 a.m.	Dragon Tales
8:30 a.m.	It's a Big Big World
9:00 a.m.	Sesame Street
10:00 a.m.	Caillou
10:30 a.m.	Barney & Friends
11:00 a.m.	Thomas & Friends
11:30 a.m.	Curious George
Noon	The Berenstain Bears
12:30 p.m.	The Big Comfy Couch
1:00 p.m.	Bob the Builder

1:30 p.m.	Cyberchase
2:00 p.m.	Reading Rainbow
2:30 p.m.	Between the Lions
3:00 p.m.	Postcards from Buster (Monday-Thursday) / Fetch! with Ruff Ruffman (Friday)
3:30 p.m.	Dragon Tales
4:00 p.m.	Clifford the Big Red Dog
4:30 p.m.	Arthur
5:00 p.m.	Curious George
Saturday	
6:30 a.m.	The Zula Patrol
7:00 a.m.	It's a Big Big World
7:30 a.m.	Clifford the Big Red Dog
Sunday	
8:00 a.m.	Sesame Street
9:00 a.m.	Bob the Builder
9:30 a.m.	Thomas & Friends
10:00 a.m.	Danger Rangers (ends Feb. 25) Design Squad (begins March 25)

_____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 "TV Schedule" button at the top left side of the page.
- * Click on the program 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 may also borrow a recording from a lending library, such as the media centers in Iowa's Area Education Agencies.

_____FREE Opportunities on the ICN_____

This spring, Iowa Public Television is offering a **FREE** series of eight (8) ICN events for libraries, child care programs and schools, recommended ages 3-7. The overall goal of series is to provide hands-on science activities to young children to help them understand the relevance to science in their lives and increase their interest in the environment. **Outreach funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.** The series runs from April 3 through April 25 and includes the following titles:

April 3 – Zoo Friends: Chicken's Aren't the Only Ones - Join educators from the Blank Park Zoo for this 'egg-cellent' learning experience! Students have an 'egg-citing' time learning about nature's perfect package the egg. An 'egg-traordinary' egg hunt and 'egg-amples' of various animals 'egg-cite' student imaginations. Live animals, from the Blank Park Zoo are on-hand for the session.

April 10 – To Be A Seed - Experience the awakening of life as students learn about seeds. The parts of a seed will be explored by dissecting a seed during the session. Students will learn what is needed to get a seed to grow and the basic parts of a plant.

April 11 – Reading with a Zookeeper - Join this interactive session with a zookeeper as he shares information about his career with students. Learn about the animals he cares for, the amount of food they eat, and the other various duties that have to be carried out at the zoo. Students will also learn about an animal's coloration and the reasons behind it.

April 17 – Start with Seeds - Seeds are everywhere! You can find them in the food you eat, on the ground under trees, and hidden in your favorite flowers. Janet Anderson and Linda Naeve from ISU Extension will share the Start with Seeds lesson.

April 19 – Sing a Song of Science - Are you looking for a fun way to teach your students about science? Music is a great way to make science fun. In this session Lewis Major, Polk County Naturalist, introduces students to some great educational songs about soil, bats, bugs, beaver, turtles, and more.

April 20 – It's a Big Big World Earth Day Celebration - Students will celebrate Earth Day by learning about what they can do to help the environment. We will read a story, do some hands-on activities, watch a short video clip and more in this fun-filled session.

April 23 – Reading with a Naturalist - A naturalist from the Warren County Conservation Board will read Dr. Seuss' The Lorax aloud to the students. Students explore the exciting world of environmental education and learn more about the naturalist and other related careers.

April 25 – Stories and More: Mapping Our Environment - Student will learn about their environment and how we use maps to find our way. Using the Ready to Learn Learning Triangle model, this event will feature stories, video, poems, songs and hands-on activities.

Check out the full event descriptions and register online:

* Go to the Iowa Distance Learning Database K-12 Calendar: http://www3.iptv.org/iowa_database/cal-default.cfm?&month=04-28-2007

* Click on the event title.

* Read description, then scroll to the bottom and click on the “Register here” button.

* Enter your zip code.

* Click on your school or choose another option (Library, Childcare provider, Homeschooler, or Other) if you are not affiliated with a school. (Where you are located and not where the ICN classroom is located). Fill out all the information on the form.

* Click the “Register Here!” button.

Hurry! There is a site limit of 12 for each session.

_____February Focus on Media Literacy_____

TV Smarts From the Start (Part 2) from PBS Parents Guide to Children and Media:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childrenandmedia/>

It is possible for TV viewing to contribute to the health of your household. But merely turning the set on — or even off — isn't enough. Just as with your child's diet and potty training, her TV viewing is something you have to work at. And there's no better time to establish healthy TV habits than when your child is young.

Kick-Start Active Viewing Early On

Remember that socializing comes first.

Talking, playing games, cuddling and other forms of socializing are one of the most important parts of your child's development. When possible fit these interactions into TV time. Even the simple act of sitting near one another while you view a video or program will contribute to a feeling of being together instead of reinforcing the notion that TV is a solitary experience. If you do not have time to watch TV with your child, look for alternatives for him, like playing with siblings or friends. Keep the TV set (or sets) in communal places in your home and out of individual bedrooms.

Know what to do when your child has a strong response to something on TV — and what the developmental roots of that response may be.

If your child is frightened, holding him or offering a favorite stuffed animal or blanket is likely to be more comforting than a rationalizing comment like, "There's no reason to be scared." If your child acts aggressively, imitating physical or make-believe violence, block access to shows and movies that depict characters behaving badly. If your child demands certain toys or foods that she's seen advertised, limiting commercial programming may reduce her insatiable desires. If your child becomes fixated on a single show or movie, requesting to see it repeatedly, keep in mind that he is likely figuring something out, which is not harmful. If your child becomes excited and wants to try something new that a character has done, give it a whirl, assuming it's safe and, ideally, imaginative.

_____Series Spotlight_____

DRAGON TALES airs Monday-Friday at 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

DRAGON TALES is an animated fantasy adventure series featuring 6-year-old Emmy, her 4-year-old brother, Mac, and the four young dragons they befriend in Dragon Land.

DRAGON TALES is designed for 3- to 6-year-olds with three primary goals that encourage young children to:

- pursue the challenging experiences that support their growth and development;
- recognize there are many ways to approach and learn from those challenging experiences; and
- understand that to try and not succeed fully is a natural and valuable part of learning.

Typical healthy, young children are enthusiastic and curious; they feel ready to take on the world, exactly the way families, teachers, and caregivers hope children will be on their first day of school. You can support and enhance children's natural love of learning by encouraging them to grapple with the difficult tasks and situations that come their way, just like the characters on DRAGON TALES.

Characters

The children:

Emmy is a six-year-old girl who has lots of energy and a thirst for adventure. She is brave, smart, and a natural leader. Bold and confident, Emmy goes after what she wants. She is also impulsive and has to learn to think before she acts.

Max is Emmy's four-year-old brother. He loves being silly. Because he is stubborn and often insists that he can do everything by himself, he can become easily frustrated. One of his challenges is learning to deal with these feelings.

Enrique is six years old and really smart. He is being raised by his dad and grandmother, and his roots are Colombian and Puerto Rican. His move to his new home next to Max and Emmy (his first in the U.S.) is just the latest in a series of moves in his young life, and all this dislocation has caused him to be a little wary of making new friends and having to cope with new situations. Because he is bilingual, he develops a special bond with Quetzal, the wise and comforting teacher in Dragon Land.

The dragons:

Cassie is compassionate, generous, and shy. She is very thoughtful and sensitive to the feelings of others. She and Emmy are best friends. One of Cassie's challenges is developing the confidence to speak up and tell others what's on her mind.

Ord is big, lovable, and not-so-brave. Everything about him is big, from his appetite to his fears. He and Max are best buddies. More than anything, he wants to learn to cope with his fears so he can join in on Dragon Land adventures.

Zak & Wheezie are a two-headed dragon. This brother and sister may share a body, but they are complete opposites. Zak is neat and orderly, a worrier and a pessimist. Wheezie is wild and free-spirited. Zak & Wheezie's challenge is to learn to work together and respect each other's feelings.

Quetzal is the teacher in Dragon Land's School in the Sky. He is a wise old dragon who supports and guides his young students to discover their own solutions to problems. He offers stability, comfort, and safety, and is there when obstacles are too big for the young characters to cope with on their own.

Be sure to visit the DRAGON TALES Web site at <http://pbskids.org/dragontales> for activities and resources for parents and care givers as well as fun games, stories, music, art and other activities for children.

Ideas for Watching DRAGON TALES with Your Child

- Ask the child(ren) what they think will happen next.
- Ask the child(ren) to tell you the name of their favorite character from the show and why that character is their favorite.
- Encourage the child(ren) to sing and dance along to the music.
- Try turning off the sound and see what the child(ren) can learn from the show without the audio cues.
- Try covering the TV screen and see what the child(ren) can learn from the show without visual cues.
- After watching, ask the child(ren) to tell you what they saw and heard during the program. How would they have solved a problem the characters encountered?
- Help the child(ren) pick out related books, and/or play a related game.

_____How do I find out what is on SESAME STREET and DRAGON TALES?_____

This month we featured DRAGON TALES in the Series Spotlight section of the RTL eNews, so we wanted to make sure you were aware of a feature on IPTV's Web site that makes it really easy to find what is going to be on DRAGON TALES (and SESAME STREET) each day of the month. From the following location:

<http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm> scroll down to the link that is called "Sesame Workshop's Monthly View & Do." From there select whether you would like the file in English or Spanish. These files are especially helpful in planning your month by giving you an idea of what is going to be on and when. The information gives a brief explanation of each show and a tip that will help you extend a child's learning after the show. The SESAME STREET page also lists the "Letter and Number of the Day" for each day in the month. Check it out and share it with your families and friends; you will be glad you did!

_____February Feature_____

Tips for Reading Aloud with Preschoolers from Reading is Fundamental:

http://www.rif.org/leer/barrio/leerpreescolares_english.msp

Read aloud so preschoolers can:

- * Continue to associate reading with warm, pleasant feelings; learn about words and language; and expand listening skills.
- * Pay attention to the language of books and begin to notice how it differs from spoken language.
- * Listen to the sounds in words and notice how some are the same and some are different.
- * Build their vocabularies with words they understand and can use.
- * Gain background knowledge about a variety of topics.
- * Talk about the characters, settings, and plot and relate them to their own lives.
- * Learn more about print concepts, such as, print is spoken words written down, the letters in words are written in a certain order, and written words are separated by spaces.

Choose books that preschoolers like:

- * Preschoolers feel good about their growing skills and accomplishments. As they learn new concepts and self-help skills, read stories about young children who have similar experiences.
- * Preschoolers have good memories. Read stories with simple plots children can retell in their own words (to themselves, a stuffed animal, or a friend) and pattern books with repetitive and predictable rhymes, phrases, and story lines that let children participate.
- * Preschoolers are building their listening skills and attention spans. Read longer picture books and begin chapter books that last for several sessions.
- * Preschoolers are curious. Read information books with facts, explanations, and new people, places, and things.

- * Preschoolers know a lot about their own world. Read books that let them use their knowledge to understand books that introduce new topics, facts, and ideas.
- * Preschoolers have vivid imaginations. Read folk tales and books with animal characters that think and talk like humans.
- * Preschoolers are learning about the sounds of letters and words. Read books with rhymes and alliteration.

Try these read-aloud tips:

- * Introduce the book: read the title, author, and illustrator; look at the cover; talk about what the book might be about; suggest things to look and listen for.
- * Run your finger under the text, while reading.
- * Answer questions related to the book; save other questions for later.
- * Talk about the story during and after a read-aloud session.
- * Use information and reference books to answer children's questions.
- * Ask children to look closely at the pictures to help them understand the story and make predictions about what might happen next.
- * Repeat interesting words and rhymes while reading a book and at a later time.
- * Pause and wait so children can say the word that ends a repetitive or predictable phrase.
- * Stop to ask thinking questions: "What might happen next? Where did he go? Why did she do that?"
- * Follow up on the story. Invite a child to talk; draw or paint; pretend to be one of the characters; and so on.

_____Resources for February_____

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

www.readingrockets.org/subscribe/

*MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS:

- * Reading Resolutions
- * Blog Blog Blogging Along!
- * Books of the Month: Old Friends for the New Year
- * Webcast 2004: Reading to Learn: ELLs in Grades 4-6
- * Lane Smith: An Exclusive New Video Interview

*RESEARCH AND NEWS

- * How Well Are States Educating Our Neediest Children?
- * New Reports from the What Works Clearinghouse
- * National Teacher of the Year Takes on a Failing School
- * High Quality Preschool Teaching Matters

* IDEAS FOR PARENTS

- * "Reading is Dumb"
- * They Gotta Write 'Em: Help with Thank You Notes
- * Have You Heard? Charlotte's Web is a Movie!
- * Looking for a Fun After-School Activity?

*IDEAS FOR EDUCATORS

- * Reader's Theater: A Reason to Read Aloud
- * Grant Opportunity: Drop Everything and Read Bookshelf Awards
- * Handy Online Calendar
- * Books for Africa, Books from Africa
- * Technology-Based Approaches for Reading Instruction
- * Ideas to Celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr.

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.)

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>

_____Child Development Tip of the Month_____

Valuing Emotions <http://www.pbs.org/parents/earlylearning/emotions.html>

Acknowledge and validate feelings.

When your child is filled with giggles or overwhelmed by tears, you have an opportunity to help her recognize the emotion. By responding with patience, empathy and understanding, you can encourage your kids to learn self control, build self-confidence, do better in school and get along with others. When you value emotions, you are teaching your kids that their feelings count.

Try a child's-eye view.

Look at the world from your child's perspective. Observe playtime for clues to what is making him anxious, scared, happy or proud. It's a big confusing world from a child's point of view and sometimes even simple things become frustrations when a child is hungry or tired and just doesn't feel good.

Listen and identify emotions.

Take the time to listen to your child and understand what she is feeling. Help her identify feelings with words she can use like "angry," "hurt" or "frustrated." By talking about emotions early and often, you teach your kids how to handle feelings at home, at school and for the rest of their lives. It takes years to learn to understand and react well to feelings — especially strong feelings and changing moods.

Later is better than not at all.

Life is busy and not every parenting moment is perfect. In fact, if you respond to your child most of the time, you're doing great. If there isn't time to deal with strong emotions in the moment, don't hesitate to come back later in the day and say something like, "I didn't feel very good about how I treated you this morning. You seemed upset and I didn't take the time to ask you what was wrong." If you recognize a child's feelings, he knows you care.

Provide emotional first aid.

You can reassure your kids in times of emotional crisis by telling them that you care for them no matter what they are feeling; that they are not alone; that you understand their feelings because you have felt that way too; and that it's okay to have the feelings they are having.

Help find solutions.

When the crisis has passed, encourage your child to suggest ideas for solutions to the problem that triggered the feelings.

_____Family Involvement Tip of the Month_____

Stand Up for Your Child

If you have concerns about your child's progress or school experience, speak up! You know your child better than anyone else. Here are some simple things you can do to be involved.

1. Develop a close working relationship with your child's teachers and principal. Stay in touch between report card periods.
2. Save important test results. Keep class work samples, homework examples, and other school communications that show how your child usually performs.

3. Ask for help! If you suspect a problem, talk with your child's teacher. If you still have concerns, talk with the principal, reading specialist, or special education teacher. You have the right to ask questions and to receive answers to the questions you ask. Also, do not hesitate to seek advice outside of the school system.

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