



April 2018

Play and Learn at Hunt Valley
11350 McCormick Road ~ EP 1, LL 1 ~ Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031
Phone: 410-785-7077 ~ Fax: 410-785-5768 ~ Email: HVDirector@playcenters.org
Visit us at www.playandlearnmaryland.org ~ Tax ID: 52-1259566



From the Director

Welcome to the amazing month of April! Flowers are blooming, the sun is shining, and the children are looking forward to spending lots of time outside. We have many awesome activities planned!

Monday, April 2nd, is International Reading Day. We will read books about children across the world.

Please mark your calendars for our re-scheduled Parent Meeting to be held on Wednesday, April 11th, at 5:30 p.m. We hope to see you there!

April is Pet Month! On Thursday, April 12th, the children are invited to bring in print-out pictures of their pets to show to their friends. On this day we will also be painting "pet rocks"!

The *Week of the Young Child* is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers, and their families. This year The Week of the Young Child will be held April 16th through 20th.

Earth Day is Sunday, April 22nd. We will celebrate on Monday, April 23rd, by planting seeds and sproutlings in our outdoor organic garden (weather permitting)! Watch for more information to come.

Please take a moment to look in your child's cubby bucket to begin switching out their extra set of clothes so the items will be appropriate for the upcoming season.

A letter will be sent home soon regarding sunscreen application and the type of sunscreen we are permitted to use on your child. As we begin to spend more time outdoors, it is important to us to protect your child as he/she is enjoying spring and summer weather.

Happy Spring!

Ms. Amy and Superstar Staff

IMPORTANT REMINDER — The center will be CLOSED on Friday, June 1st.



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Page 2 - Parents' Corner

ENCOURAGING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE BY CREATING A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

By Nina Gallegos, Certified Parenting Educator

Henry Ford once said, "If you think you can, you can. If you think you can't, you can't. Either way, you are right." This is so true and so worth passing on. So how can you as a parent create a "can-do, will-try" attitude in your children? You can start by encouraging positive thinking and by creating an environment that nurtures your children's beliefs in their abilities. Having that confidence enables them to take risks that will help them reach their potential.

Positive Self-Talk

In his book *Positive Self-Talk for Children*, Douglas Bloch writes about the importance of affirmations, positive thoughts or ideas that one consciously focuses on in order to produce a desired result. For example, if you teach your child to have an optimistic view of solving problems with such words as "I can handle life's challenges," then later when confronted with an obstacle, your child can tell himself, "I can find a solution. I can keep trying." As a result of his internal dialogue, he is more likely to persevere. In this way, a child's positive self-talk becomes a positive self-fulfilling prophecy.

Positive Time

To foster that "I-can" attitude in your children, spend time with them. As you observe the uniqueness that each of your children possesses, focus on their strengths rather than on their weaknesses. This favorable assessment helps them to see themselves as capable and supports them as they take chances that will develop their areas of competency. The following is a great exercise to do with children: Ask them to write a list that describes what they are good at doing or what innate qualities they possess, such as having an engaging smile or being good at dancing or reading. Place in several different locations throughout the house, such as on the refrigerator, on the bathroom mirror, or above their beds. After days of seeing the list, they may internalize the ideas and gradually adopt the "I-can" attitude.

Positive Tools

The principles of etiquette are passed on from one generation to the next with the knowledge that good manners and compassion are fundamental to building useful and satisfying lives. Research suggests that well-mannered individuals generally share similar characteristics and values, including: self-confidence, consideration for others, respect, common sense, tact, and flexibility. In addition, people your children encounter are more likely to respond favorably to a respectful approach.

Although peers, other adults, and the media will certainly exert considerable influence on your children as they mature, you are your child's first teacher and role model. The mechanics of good manners can be learned at any age, but the earlier in childhood the process begins, the more natural mannerly behavior becomes. Two of the best ways to teach respect and consideration are by modeling and by expecting such behavior from your children.

Manners provide a code of conduct, guiding your children's interactions with others. They help your children to think about how others may feel and how to make others comfortable in a given situation. Teaching proper etiquette not only produces polite children, but it also creates compassionate, thoughtful, and empathetic adults. Well-known American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Manners are the happy way of doing things." These "happy ways" are among the extraordinary gifts you can give to your children.

Positive Moods

Children are very sensitive to their parents' feelings and attitudes; they pick up when their parents are upset. Since bad moods are contagious, consider what you can do when you are feeling stressed. Some tried-and-true ideas include: taking a walk, reading an inspirational book, calling a friend, gardening, cuddling with a pet, helping a neighbor, starting a gratitude journal, listening to music, taking a bubble bath! While parents can't expect to always feel cheerful, they can use their difficult moments as opportunities to teach their children to: be effective problem solvers, deal with negative or difficult feelings in productive ways, and handle challenging situations proactively.

Positive Nutrition

Encouraging your children to eat healthfully will benefit them not only now, but also when they are adults. Filling your refrigerator with a variety of fruits and vegetables of many different colors provides your children with the opportunity to make healthful eating choices.

By giving their bodies proper nutrition, they will be able to feel their best and put their best foot forward in the world. By teaching them about portion control, you will also instruct them in self-control and how to delay gratification, two hallmarks of children who succeed in life.

Positive Design

Have you ever noticed titles of house and home magazines? Some examples are *House Beautiful*, *American Dream Homes*, *Beautiful Kitchens*, *Fine Gardening*, etc. They all have something in common: the use of "positive" words. Incorporating positive design into spaces to create an uplifting atmosphere is relatively easy.

Paint Color

The use of color in your home can play a key role in how you feel. For example, using soft colors such as browns, grays, and pastels can help to incorporate peace and tranquility. Conversely, brighter colors can provide energy and add a bit of fun. Matching the room colors to the mood you want to create in your home is the key to turning your house into a home that reflects your family's personality.

Words within Art

Sometimes you don't have to speak a word to send a positive message. Having a simple sign in your home can be a wonderful way to share the power of positive thinking and communicate a core family value. For example, our family dog is incredibly loved by our children. When I saw a piece of wood art that read "Think Pawsitive" with dog paws all over it, I knew it would be perfect for us. Displayed prominently in our foyer, it is a strong reminder to see the good in the world.

One little message on a sign can make a huge difference in your outlook on any given day and in your life in general.

Remember

Thinking positively, when practiced intentionally on a daily basis, can become a way of life. The benefits to your children's self-esteem, mood, and general enjoyment of life are endless. In closing, think about these wise words from author Karen Salmansohn: "True happiness isn't about the things you have; it's about the thoughts you have. That's why it's called positive thinking and not positive thing-ing."

For more information visit, <https://centerforparentingeducation.org/library-of-articles/focus-parents/encouraging-positive-attitude-creating-positive-environment>