



April 2018

Play and Learn at Odenton
1417 Odenton Road ~ Odenton, Maryland 21113
Phone: 410-305-0117 ~ Fax: 410-305-0166 ~ Email: ODDirector@playcenters.org
Visit us at www.playandlearnmaryland.org ~ Tax ID: 52-1259566



From the Director

We are so excited to hop into spring and enjoy the warm weather that is headed our way!

Spring pictures by Lifetouch are scheduled for Tuesday, April 3rd. They will begin at 8:00 a.m., so please bring your child in the clothes you would like them in for pictures or let your child's teacher know outfit will be used for photos. We are super excited to see all the smiling faces!

It is that time of year again for Parent/Teacher Conferences. The Infant, Toddler, and Two's Conferences will be held beginning April 9th - 13th. The Preschool Conferences will take place April 23rd - 27th. Sign-up sheets will be posted in your child's classroom.

We are happy to announce that we will be hosting a Parent Meeting on Thursday, April 12th, at 5:30 p.m. We hope to see you there!

On Monday, April 16th, at 10:00 a.m., we will welcome a special visitor to the center who will speak with the children about dental care. Please watch for a permission slip for this event.

The Week of the Young Child will be celebrated this year on April 16th through 20th. This annual event is sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and celebrates early learning, young children, their teachers, and their families. During this week we will enjoy SPIRIT WEEK to have some fun! Please see the April Parent Calendar for information on daily themes and how you can dress up for the activity of the day.

Reminder - As we get into spring and summer, please check with your child's teacher to verify if we have sufficient sunscreen on hand for your child, if we need a replacement container, or if we need updates to your child's Sunscreen Permission Slip.

Happy Spring!

Ms. Maja and Superstar Staff

IMPORTANT REMINDER — The center will be CLOSED on Friday, May 18th.



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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>