

Pineapple

May 2019

Post

Edition 8

What's Happening This Month!

- 5/6 - 5/10 - Teacher Appreciation Week
- 5/24 - Pineapple Bowl 
- 5/9 - Mother's Day Plant Sale 
- 5/24 - Last Day of Creative Clubs 
- 5/10 - Tea with Mommy 
- 5/27 - Memorial Day (PCA CLOSED) 

The Scoop about your Inf. - Toddler

We all talk about our children in front of them. Who doesn't recount the day's events over dinner or compare kids' temperaments during playgroup? Since young children tend to be around us much of the time, it would be nearly impossible to save all our child-related chat for naptime or bedtime. Adults often assume that because toddlers aren't talking much, they're not taking in what we're saying. Wrong, say experts. Babies listen, and they understand more than you think. Toddlers can clearly understand complex conversation long before most parents think they can. Children start to recognize their names by around 4 1/2 months, so even a young baby may pay more attention if you mention their name in conversation, says Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Temple University. By as early as 14 months, children are masters at reading social cues: When we get angry, our voices get louder, our movements jerkier, and our breathing more rapid. By contrast, when we're happy, we tend to speak gently and softly and to move and breathe more slowly. In other words, no matter what you say, chances are your toddler gets the underlying message. It's especially important to keep a lid on negative things you say within a child's earshot. If toddlers constantly hear negative statements, they may carry it around for a long time and decode it when they're older. In fact, studies have shown that children can learn words or even entire phrases without understanding them and then piece the meaning together at a later date. So if a child often hears herself called a "hitter," she might take that label on as part of her identity once she learns what it means. So the question is, are we doing terrible damage by speaking about our children in front of them? Of course not, but it does pay to be cautious.

Moving and Shaking with the Twos

There are few things that are certain in life, but one thing you can always count on is that sometimes 2-yr-olds can be very moody. One minute they are brimming with smiles and in the blink of an eye the sky is falling. The majority of these ups and downs are a very normal part of growing up, and it's important not to mistake them for misbehavior, says Paula Levine, MD, a psychiatrist and founder of the Miami Counseling and Resource Center. To you, however, many of your child's perfectly normal mood swings are frustrating, not to mention noisy. So why are 2-yr-olds so moody, and why are they so explosive when their moods shift gears? Simply put, it is all purely developmental.

Reason #1: They can't communicate their wants and needs as well as they'd like to. For kids between the ages of 1 and 3, the world is enormous, fascinating, and ever changing. It sounds great, but when you consider that most toddlers are under 3 feet tall and have a 20-word vocabulary, you start to realize how frustrating their lives can be. Sometimes you're not going to be able to figure out what your child wants right away, so stay calm and realize that the situation isn't anyone's fault. Try to help them by picking up items they might possibly want and saying the name out loud. This will help build their vocabulary for better communication.

Reason #2: They have no concept of time.

"Delayed gratification" are two words no toddler on earth understands. Your child may know that he's thirsty, and may even tell you so. But when that juice box doesn't appear a nanosecond later, watch out. There's a big upside to this particular phenomenon. Having no concept of time means that many toddlers get sidetracked very easily. Use this to your advantage!

Reason #3: They have trouble controlling their emotions. A young child has had very little practice in managing his changing moods and emotions, so he's very easily swept away by strong feelings. Children at this age don't have the logic and reasoning skills to move beyond their outrage, so it is up to us to calmly move them through their feelings to achieve a more positive moment.

Reason #4: They want to control everything and call all the shots. This is a hard one to navigate, but we can help the situation by offering appropriate choices and allowing our little one to make a decision. This still helps them with feeling like they have an element of control but it is within the limits of what we feel is acceptable.

Thinking with the Threes

At one time or another, we have all gone to great lengths to protect our child from disappointment. However, avoiding a child's setback can be worse than helping them deal with it. In truth, disappointments are actually beneficial for kids. Learning to deal with setbacks help them develop key characteristics they'll need to succeed, such as coping skills, emotional resilience, creative thinking, and the ability to collaborate. Unfortunately, parents see failure as a source of pain for their child instead of an opportunity for them to say, "I can deal with this. I'm strong!" So, you might be asking yourself if you should resist the urge to interfere with potential situations that could be disappointing to your child? Well, there's no right answer. You need to determine how much struggling your child can bear. But there are everyday steps you can take to teach them how to cope when things don't work out exactly the way they want.

Be your child's guide, not his savior. You can't be there to soothe them every time they feel left out or fall short at a task, so prepare your child to manage setbacks.

Pare back the praise. Lavishing a child with compliments can do more harm than good. Kids who are overpraised become dependent on others for validation and may end up needing a constant flow of positive feedback to feel valued. In reality, you get confidence from overcoming adversity, not from being told how great you are all the time. This does not mean that children do not need to hear praise, it just means that it should be in moderation.

When should you step in to help? If failing would cause them tremendous humiliation, if your child is in danger, and if they are being bullied. Remember, life in general is full of disappointments, whether it is a canceled event or not getting chosen for the team or not getting offered the job you want. There is no way to avoid setbacks, but it is important that we work on giving our children the tools they need to manage and bounce back from them. That is what will help them be successful in life.

Mother's Day French Toast Casserole

INGREDIENTS - CASSEROLE: 10 to 12 ounces day-old (stale) French bread, cubed/8 large eggs/3 cups whole milk/2 tablespoons granulated white sugar/1 tablespoon vanilla extract/1/2 teaspoon salt/ **TOPPING:** 2 tablespoons cold butter, chopped into small pieces/3 tablespoons granulated white sugar/1 teaspoon ground cinnamon/warm maple syrup, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS: Spray a 9x13-inch pan (or similar casserole dish) with nonstick spray. Sprinkle the bread cubes in the prepared pan.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, sugar, vanilla and salt. Pour the egg mixture over the bread cubes. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing the plastic down against the bread cubes to submerge them in the egg mixture. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Remove the pan from the refrigerator 30 minutes prior to baking to let it warm up closer to room temperature. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Remove the plastic wrap and discard. Sprinkle the butter pieces evenly over the casserole. Combine the sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle that evenly over the top of the casserole.

Cover the pan with foil and bake for 45 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for an additional 15 minutes. You'll see the casserole puff up considerably- it will settle down once you remove it from the oven and it begins to cool. Serve warm slices with warm maple syrup