

Parenting Counts

Reading, Learning, Living

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.”

why read
today

Dr. Seuss

Healthy Eating for the Whole Family

from: <http://kidshealth.org>

Kids will love these fun and creative ideas while they learn the alphabet at the same time!

Make an Alphabet Book – You can make your own alphabet book with construction paper and a hole puncher or stapler. Help your child make a page with each letter. You can have him write the letter or find the letter in an old magazine and cut it out. Cut out pictures from an old coloring book or magazine that has words that start with the letter on the page. Then glue the picture to that page. Complete your book by tying string through the holes or by stapling down the side.

Play the ABC game whenever you drive somewhere-- This is an easy and fun way to teach your child the alphabet. Whenever you drive anywhere play the ABC game. Have your child find the letter “A” on billboards, or license plates, or signs. Start with the letter “A” and then look for letter “B”, “C”, etc. Once you finish the alphabet you can play again.

Sing the Alphabet Song - Children love to sing and what better song to sing than the Alphabet Song. Start your day off with a song or two and be sure to include the ABC song.

Play the Alphabet Memory Game – You can make your own flashcards with card stock paper or construction paper. Have your child match the capital letter A to the lowercase letter a. Or you can start with letters that are all lowercase or all capital. Each time your child matches the letters have him tell you what letter it is.

Make Alphabet Cookies - Get alphabet cookie cutters or use frosting to write the letter on each cookie. Have your child tell you which letter she wants to eat!

Make an Alphabet Photo collage – Purchase a disposable camera for your child. Take a trip outside, to the park, zoo, etc. Spend your time looking for pictures of words that start with the letter A or B, or whichever letter you choose. When you get the photos developed let your child cut them out and glue them onto a collage. Have your child write or trace the letter for your photo collage onto construction paper and glue the photos around. Children love taking pictures and this is a lot of fun.

Another Alphabet Game - We have probably all played this game before. It is fun for kids and adults too. If your child is young you can just play a simple game. Start with the letter “A”. “A is for apple”, “B is for banana”, “C is for cat”, and continue on with all the letters. If your child is older you can

play the game with a theme. This way they are learning to sort animals or fruits and also practicing their alphabet.

Make an Alphabet finger painting - Use poster board or construction paper and make a finger painting with different letters. Have your child paint the capital letter and lowercase letter. Let him decorate it with whatever colors he likes.

Play the Alphabet Hide Away Game - Fill a bag with different objects that start with different letter sounds. For example, you could fill it with a car, a book, a pencil, etc. Show the child all the items in the bag. Then put all the items back in the bag. Have your child find the items by touching them only. Then see if he can find the book in your bag just by touching. This game is not only good for learning letters and sounds but also helps them with using their senses and tactile skills

funny bones



Which 3 letters of the alphabet make everything in the world move?

NRG (energy!)

What has four eyes but can't see?

Mississippi!

What did A and B get in the music store?

A CD!



There are so many different activities available for kids to participate in all across the greater Mankato area. However, many kids don't join in because either their families don't know what is available or the cost to participate keeps kids from getting involved.

Connecting Kids ensures every child has the same opportunity for getting involved in extra-curricular activities. Kids can get involved in the activity that interests them: from soccer to dance to music to arts to horse-riding, and everything in-between.

The goals of the Connecting Kids Program are to:

1. Educate parents and guardians of the opportunities in our community to get kids involved
2. Provide financial resources to the households that need them so that they can get their children involved in youth development programs.

To find out more about getting scholarship assistance to help cover the costs of a youth program or activity, or for more information on getting kids involved, please call Al Roehm, Connecting Kids Coordinator, at (507)387-5501 ext. 217.

kids in the kitchen

Summer Fruit Kabobs

For your next trip to the beach, pack these easy to make fruit kabobs into your cooler for something healthy to munch on. Who says that fast food can't be healthy or nutritious? Kids will love to make this easy fruit recipe!

- Assorted fruit pieces of your choice (choose from the following): watermelon, strawberries, pineapple, cantaloupe, honeydew
- deli turkey, cubed
- cheddar cheese, cubed
- bendable drinking straws
- wooden skewer

1. Cut fruit into bite-size pieces. Use a wooden skewer to make a hole through the center of each piece of food before layering them onto the straw.
2. Turn a drinking straw upside down and fold the bendable part of the straw around, creating a handle. Slide a piece of food onto the straw, pushing it to the bottom and onto the hooked part of the straw to secure the handle. Continue layering the meat, cheese and fruit until the straw is full.
3. Serve chilled alongside fruity cream cheese dip

From: <http://www.familycorner.com>

activity block

9 Backyard Games for Kids

<http://health.kaboose.com/active-kids/games.html>

Scavenger Hunt – Collect items that you can hide around the house or in the yard. Make a list of all of the items, then hide them and have the kids try to find them. This can be as easy or elaborate as you choose. Rather than encouraging competitiveness, have the children work together to find all the items.

Simon Says - An oldie but a goodie. If your child has a favorite character, substitute "Simon" with a character from the theme. Children should listen carefully and only do what "Simon" says.

Charades - Give a child the theme or group of animals then have them act out what the animal does. You and the kids can try to guess the name of the animal.

Freeze Tag - One child is chosen as being "it." The chosen child tags the other children by catching up to them and touching them. Once tagged, the child must remain frozen, standing with their legs wide apart, until another free child goes through their legs and unfreezes them. When all the children are frozen (except the one who was chosen as being "it") with no one to set them free the game is over and you can start again.

Bean Bag Toss - Make an easy Bean Bag Toss using a double layer of poster board glued together and a large box. Use the large box as a base, and attach the poster board to one side of it. Before attaching the poster board, paint a design on it, allowing for one or more holes. We never kept score, but the kids had a lot of fun throwing those bean bags. They're easy to make from fabric scraps if you sew. Get the kids to help