

Our current and past family newsletters are posted to our website. Check them out at <https://firststepscentralmn.org/for-families>

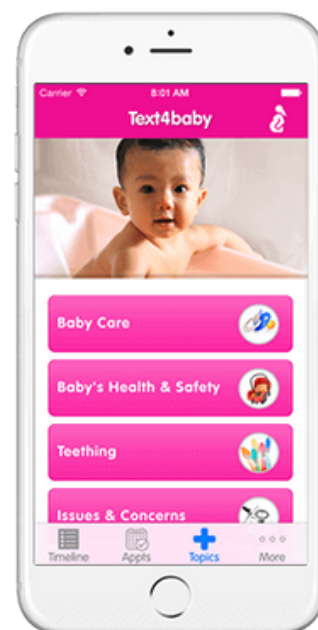
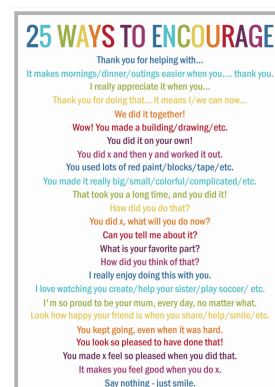


"Happiness isn't earned, it is free for the taking for each and every one of us. Look around you and notice the good that is already there."
Stacie Bloomfield

25 Ways to Encourage Your Children

Read more and download a free printable poster of 25 phrases at <https://tinyurl.com/yf4vr6fr> Poster is also available on page 4 of this newsletter. Here are some key points:

- Say thank you when you mean it--explain why you are grateful for your child's actions.
- Make an observation based on facts--just say what you see without emotions or judgment
- Extend and encourage--extend learning and encourage conversation by asking questions about what you see while also recognizing their efforts
- Put feelings into words--explain how something makes you feel, help your kids notice how their actions make others feel and acknowledge your children's own feelings
- Say nothing--we don't need to praise every little action, or fill every space with noise. It is enough to sit back and watch your children's delight in their own achievements.



Text BABY (or BEBE for Spanish) to 511411 receive free text messages three times per week, timed to their due date or their baby's birth date, through pregnancy and up until the baby's first birthday. Text4baby sends personalized messages directly to you, and the texts have information you can trust because they are developed by experts from all over the country. There is also an app that provides additional information about baby's development, pregnancy, childcare tips, and more. Learn more at: text4baby.org

Legal Protections for Pregnant and New Parents

Find more information at: <https://tinyurl.com/468a87t2>

Spanish brochure: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8zws3b>



Minnesota law requires employers to provide breastfeeding parents with reasonable break time to express milk and a private room or other location for milk expression, other than a bathroom or a toilet stall, with access to an electrical outlet and in close proximity to the employee's workspace.

Effective Jan. 1, 2022, workplace protections for expectant and new parents will be expanded. Changes include:

- Requiring nursing and lactating employees receive paid break time to express milk at work. The change does not require current unpaid break time such as a meal break to be converted to paid break time.
- Ensuring more employees have a right to request and receive needed pregnancy accommodations in the workplace, such as more frequent restroom, food and water breaks and limits to heavy lifting. This change will apply to employers with 15 or more employees.

Tax Day is April 18, 2022

Free tax return preparation through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) or AARP Tax-Aide is available for basic federal, state, and property tax refund returns. Help is generally available, if any of these apply:

- Age 60 or older
- Person with a disability
- Speak limited or no English
- Annual income less than \$58,000

For more information and to use the search tool to find sites go to: <https://tinyurl.com/yc74axup>



COVID-19 Vaccines: Pregnancy & Fertility

OB/GYNs, a nurse, a midwife and other health experts provide the latest information about the safety and importance of the COVID-19 vaccines for those who are currently or planning to be pregnant. They also debunk the myths about the COVID-19 vaccines affecting fertility or causing infertility.

Watch in English here:
<https://tinyurl.com/548tt6hy>



Watch in Spanish here:
<https://tinyurl.com/2p8sxvk3>



Have fun
and boost
your child's
learning!



Sign up to receive three text messages a week of fun facts, tips to increase your child's motor skills, improve language and health development.

English: Text TS to 70138
Spanish: Envié un mensaje de texto con el código TS ESP to 70138
Somali: U qor/text TS SOM 70138

@ThinkSmallEarlyLearning

@ThinkSmallIMN

#ThinkSmallTexts

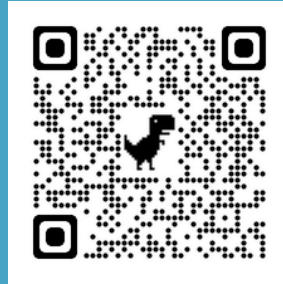


Crafts & Activities

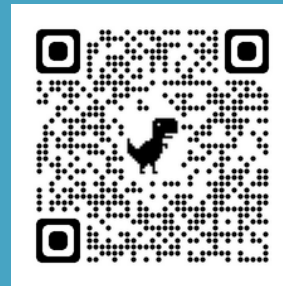
Jello Dig: <https://tinyurl.com/3nduyw7u>



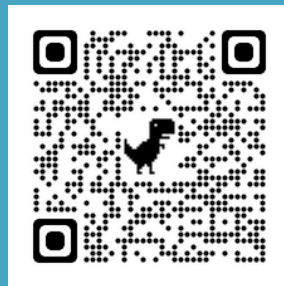
Wooden Block Match: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8e57yv>



Rubber Band Toy Grab: <https://tinyurl.com/4t463chz>

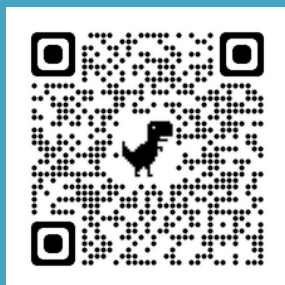


Cardboard Tube and Hair Bands: <https://tinyurl.com/2r89pxst>



Earth Day is Friday, April 22, 2022

No Mess Earth Day Painting in a Bag: <https://tinyurl.com/3mxvsck5>



Still Playing School

25 WAYS TO ENCOURAGE

Thank you for helping with...

It makes mornings/dinner/outings easier when you.... thank you.

I really appreciate it when you...

Thank you for doing that... it means I/we can now...

We did it together!

Wow! You made a building/drawing/etc.

You did it on your own!

You did x and then y and worked it out.

You used lots of red paint/blocks/tape/etc.

You made it really big/small/colorful/complicated/etc.

That took you a long time, and you did it!

How did you do that?

You did x, what will you do now?

Can you tell me about it?

What is your favorite part?

How did you think of that?

I really enjoy doing this with you.

I love watching you create/help your sister/play soccer/ etc.

I'm so proud to be your mum, every day, no matter what.

Look how happy your friend is when you share/help/smile/etc.

You kept going, even when it was hard.

You look so pleased to have done that!

You made x feel so pleased when you did that.

It makes you feel good when you do x.

Say nothing - just smile.



Circle of Security[®] PARENTING SERIES

At times all caregivers feel lost or without a clue about what our child might need from us. Imagine what it might feel like if you were able to make sense of what your child was really asking from you. The Circle of Security[®] Parenting™ program is based on decades of research about how secure caregiver-child relationships can be supported and strengthened.

Learning Objectives of the Class:

- Understand your child's emotional world by learning to read the emotional needs
- Support your child's ability to successfully manage emotions
- Enhance the development of your child's self esteem
- Honor your innate wisdom and desire for your child to be secure in their relationship with you

Presented by: Pam Walz

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Cost: Free to Participants thanks to:

United Way
of Central Minnesota



Choose from one of these two options:

Evening Option: Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7:30pm (total of 8 sessions)

Dates: March 29, April 5, 12, 19, 26, May 3, 10 and 17, 2022

Daytime Option: Wednesday afternoons from 12:00-1:00pm (total of 8 sessions)

Dates: March 30, April 6, 13, 20, 27, May 4, 11 and 18, 2022

Who should attend: Parents, caregivers, foster parents, and guardians
(minimum of 5 caregivers, maximum of 15 caregivers)

Attending every week is important and expected! Families who attend every session will receive a gift of their choice (\$30 value) at the end of the class.

For questions or to register, please contact Cathy at Ellison Center:

320-406-1600, extension 0

or email: office@ellisoncenter.org

Please indicate if you want the Evening or Daytime option when registering.

Ellison Center
A place for growth, development, and reflection

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