



# HIPPIY

## homeroom

A Newsletter for the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters  
Parent Edition

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### Spring Cleaning

#### With Kids

1. Tackle one room at a time, leaving kids' rooms and play areas for last.
2. Let the kids help. Give them a rag to dust with or a dust buster for small areas.
3. Use only non-toxic cleaners if the kids are helping. Vinegar and water is a great cleanser.
4. Create a visual chore chart, so kids who are too young to read know what they can do to help.
5. Make cleaning up a game, have races, set a timer, etc. Have fun and be positive!



### Upcoming Events:

#### March

Annual Wye Mountain Daffodil Festival: Bigelow	1-31st
16th Annual Little Rock Marathon	2-4th
27th Annual Arkansas Flower and Garden Show Little Rock	2-4th
Arkansas State Spelling Bee, Central Baptist College Conway	10th
MHS Art Club Chocolate Roll Festival: Marshall	17th
Kids Campfire Cooking: Wynne	24th

For more events in your area: <http://www.arkansas.com/events/>

## National Nutrition Month

### Importance of Eating Together

According to research, when families eat together:

- ◆ Children are less likely to be overweight, choose unhealthy foods, and demonstrate disordered eating.
- ◆ Children and families are more likely to have better communication, stronger and healthier relationships.
- ◆ Children have better academic performance, get better grades in school and have better language skills.
- ◆ Children gain a better understanding of their family's culture and values.



### Smart Eating and Snacking for Kids

One of the most important changes parents can make to their kids' diets is to cut back on added sugars. These have been proven to lead to increased obesity and other related health problems. See the tips below to find simple tricks for eating healthier:

1. **Don't buy treats you don't want your kids to have.** If they aren't in the house, they can't ask for them.
2. **Drink smarter.** Offer only water, 100% juice, or fat-free or low-fat milk when kids are thirsty. There is no benefit to sodas; kids need neither the caffeine nor the sugar.
3. **Do not offer sweets as rewards.** Instead use hugs, non-food items such as stickers, and kind words to make kids feel special.

4. **Make fruit an everyday dessert.** Serve baked apples, pears, or fruit salad. Add chopped nuts to applesauce or serve frozen juice bars instead of high calorie desserts.
5. **Make food fun.** Create a smiley face with sliced bananas and raisins, make people out of different shaped fruits or pieces of low-fat cheese and crackers.
6. **Encourage your kids to invent new snacks.** Give them cereal, nuts, dried fruits, and have them make their own recipe.
7. **Read labels.** Always look for the number of grams of sugar in foods such as cereal and see if you can find a similar item with less added sugar.
8. **Lead by example.** Eat healthy snacks with your kids and they will follow along.

## Eating Healthy on a Budget



**1. Keep a grocery list.** Making multiple trips will cost you gas money and most likely you will buy items that weren't originally on your list.

**2. Buy generic or store brand items.** These items usually taste the same or better and cost less.

**3. Buy the fruits and vegetable that are in season.** While you can buy most fruits and vegetables year round, the ones that are in season usually cost less and this will encourage your family to try new healthy foods and recipes.

**4. Plan your meals.** Planning your meals

ahead of time can make sure you get the most of your out of your purchases and that you aren't wasting food or money.

**5. Avoid shopping when you or your children are hungry.** Extra purchases to eat on the ride home add up and may lead to buying unnecessary, unhealthy items.

**6. Go back to basics.** Pre-made foods like frozen dinners are pre-cut foods cost more. Make your own from scratch and you will end up with more food for your dollar and extra ingredients to use for future meals.

(Source: Sesamestreet.org, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, Choosemyplate.gov)



# Spring Activities



## Bugs/Insects

### Egg Carton Caterpillar

Use with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle

#### Materials:

- Cardboard egg carton
- Scissors
- Green paint (not water-color)
- Paint brush
- Pipecleaner
- Sharp pencil (adult use only)
- Wiggly eyes, cheerios or fruit loops
- Glue



#### Directions:

1. After reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* your preschooler will be excited to make one of his/her own.
2. Cut one long strip of cups (6 cups) from the egg carton.
3. Paint the cups green and let them dry.
4. Using a sharp pencil, poke two holes in the top of the first cup—ADULTS ONLY
5. Poke the pipe cleaner through the pencil holes to make antennas and bend inside the egg carton to secure in place. Curl the top of the pipe cleaner around a pencil to make them curly.
6. Glue the wiggly eyes onto the head (or 2 cheerios or 2 fruit loops)

### Paper Plate Bumblebee

Use with *Buzzy the Bumblebee* by Denise Brennan-Nelson.

#### Materials:

- Paper plate (white)
- Waxed paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Black paper
- Yellow paint and black paint or marker



#### Directions:

1. Paint the paper plate yellow and let dry.
2. With black paint or markers, make stripes.
3. Put on a face with paint or markers or wiggly eyes.
4. Cut two wings out of waxed paper (tear drop shapes or you can trace your child's feet)
5. Attach wings to bumble bee with scotch/clear tape.
6. Cut a triangle out of black paper and tape it to the back of the bee as a

stinger.

**Optional:** Attach a strip of poster board (from an old cereal box) under the plate long enough for the child's hand to slide into. This would turn your bumble bee into a puppet for your child to fly.

## Outdoor Activities

### Mud Bricks

Use with the books *Mud Puddle* by Robert Munsch or *Mud Tacos* by Mario Lopez and Marissa Lopez Wong

#### Materials:

- 1 ice cube tray
- 1 cup dirt or sand
- 2/3 cup water
- Measuring cups
- Bowl



#### Directions:

1. Let your child measure the correct amount of dirt into a measuring cup and have him/her pour it into the bowl.
2. Next, let your child measure out the correct amount of water into a measuring cup and pour it carefully into the bowl with the dirt.
3. Mix the dirt and water together using your fingers.
4. Once completely mixed, have your child divide the mud between each compartment in the ice cube tray. Have your child pack each section down with his/her thumb.
5. Either carefully turn the ice cube tray over to remove the bricks or allow them to dry a bit and then empty out the tray.
6. Encourage your child to use the bricks to make a building of his/her choosing (castle, house, pyramid, etc.).

### Seed Planting

Use with *A Seed Grows* by Pamela Hickman or *Jack's Garden* by Henry Cole or *Oh Say Can You Seed* by Bonnie Worth

#### Materials:

- Vegetable seeds
- Large plastic containers
- Potting mix with fertilizer

#### Directions:

1. Choose the type of vegetable your family wants to grow and will eat; this will save on your grocery bill.
2. Fill your large plastic container 3/4 full with potting mix. When putting seeds into the soil, leave enough space for seeds to grow. Beans, peas, and carrots can be planted close together; however, peppers, tomatoes, and eggplants

need more space.

3. Place the containers in a sunny windowsill or in a room that gets at least 6-8 hours of full sun per day. Water the soil occasionally and use caution not to over water. The soil should be moist but not soaking wet.
4. Once the seedlings are 4-6 weeks old, they can be moved outdoors, if the weather is warm enough. Make sure to do this gradually by placing them in a semi-shaded area outdoors for a few hours a day then bringing them back inside. After doing this for about a week, you can then place the plants outside in full sun permanently.

## Flower Fun

### Coffee Filter Flowers

Use with *Flower Garden* or *Sunflower House* by Eve Bunting

#### Materials:

- Coffee filter (white is best)
- Washable markers
- Squirt bottle or small glass of water
- Green pipe cleaner



#### Directions:

1. Flatten out the coffee filter on a plate.
2. Have your child scribble a design on the filter with washable markers.
3. Use a squirt bottle to spray the coffee filter 2-3 times. Squirt in the center of the filter and then sit and watch the water expand to cover the filter (4-5 minutes). If the water doesn't get to the edges, spray a bit more on.
4. Try not to over wet the filter. Let the filter dry.
5. Poke the end of the pipecleaner through the center of the coffee filter and roll into a ball so the coffee filter won't fall off the pipe cleaner.
6. Scrunch the coffee filter around the top of the pipecleaner. Cut a small piece of pipecleaner off of the bottom and wrap this piece around the scrunched up coffee filter, underneath to hold it in place.

(Sources: [dltk-holidays.com](http://dltk-holidays.com), [everythingpreschool.com](http://everythingpreschool.com), [ehow.com](http://ehow.com), [education.com](http://education.com), [dltk-teach.com](http://dltk-teach.com))