



The United Way of Monongalia and Preston  
Counties is proud to introduce  
**Brain Under Construction Zone<sup>SM</sup>**

# Brain Under Construction Zone<sup>SM</sup>

## LESSON PLANS

1-12



# **Brain Under Construction Zone<sup>SM</sup>**

## **12 TIPS FOR RAISING A HEALTHY CHILD**

### **1. The First Years Last Forever**

Wiring a brain is like wiring a house – it works better if you start from the beginning.

### **2. Love and Affection Cannot Spoil a Baby**

Be warm, loving, and pay attention to your child's sounds, movements, and expressions.

### **3. Talk, Read, and Sing to Your Child**

You are your child's first teacher.

### **4. Have a Regular Schedule**

Children find comfort in the same routine every day.

### **5. Play is the Work of the Young Child**

Encourage safe exploration and play.

### **6. Pay Attention to Your Child**

Be aware of how, where, and with whom your child spends his time. Choose TV, radio, and internet carefully.

### **7. Take Care of Yourself**

You cannot take care of your child if *your* basic needs are not being met.

### **8. Discipline to Teach, Not Punish**

Use discipline as an opportunity to teach appropriate behavior. *Never* hit or shake a child.

### **9. Choose Quality Child Care and Stay Involved**

For local information on approved child care sites, call Child Care Resource & Referral.

### **10. Children Develop at Different Rates**

Celebrate each child.

### **11. Give Your Child a Childhood**

Children need unstructured time. More is not always better.

### **12. Children Need to Know They Matter**

Show your children that they are loved for who they are.



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## **What is: Brain Under Construction Zone<sup>SM</sup>?**

Brain Under Construction Zone<sup>SM</sup> is part of the United Way Success by 6<sup>®</sup> initiative which seeks to ensure that all children are ready physically, mentally, developmentally, emotionally, and socially to begin kindergarten.

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**Brain Under Construction Zone<sup>SM</sup> was created to:**

1. Increase family and caregiver awareness and understanding of the impact of the first five years of a child's life.
2. Maximize the future potential of each child by enabling early brain development.
3. Teach the *12 Tips for Raising a Healthy Child*.
4. Increase awareness of the importance of using every day activities as opportunities to teach.



**Where you can learn more and get involved**

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Family Resource Network



United Way  
of Monongalia & Preston Counties



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## **TIP # 1**

### **THE FIRST YEARS LAST FOREVER**

Wiring a brain is like wiring a house –  
it works better if you start from the beginning.

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## **TIP # 1: THE FIRST YEARS LAST FOREVER**

Wiring a brain is like wiring a house –  
it works better if you start from the beginning.

### What you should know

1. A baby is born with 50 trillion brain connections, but by age 3, a child has over 100 trillion connections.
2. A baby's brain is very fragile. NEVER, EVER SHAKE A BABY! Falls or shaking a baby can cause permanent brain damage.
3. Stimulate your baby's brain with shapes and colors. What your baby sees now will affect what she will learn for the rest of her life.
4. Choose to breastfeed your baby. Breast milk has been shown to provide the best mix of fat, protein, and nutrients for brain development.



### What you can do with your child

- ♥ Provide lots of love and affection
- ♥ **Sing** and talk with your child every day
- ♥ **Hold**, rock, massage, or dance with your baby
- ♥ **Read** and tell stories
- ♥ **Play** simple games like Peek-a-Boo and Pat-a-Cake

### Where you can learn more

- ✚ For more info about the dangers of shaking a baby: [www.dontshake.com](http://www.dontshake.com)
- ✚ For more info about breast feeding:
- ✚ **Born Learning**: helps parents and caregivers explore ways to turn everyday moments into fun learning. For more info: [www.bornlearning.org](http://www.bornlearning.org)



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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #1

1. Demonstrate Shaken Baby Syndrome with the Shaken Baby Simulator.
2. Display and discuss the Brain Scan poster.
3. Have a discussion about advice given to new Moms --- trust your own instincts; all advice is not necessarily good advice; find a support system; let family and friends help you with the baby
4. Discuss breastfeeding vs. bottle feeding
5. Find useful information at The Center for the Developing Child, at [www.developingchild.harvard.edu](http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu)
6. Discuss importance/impact of stimulating child...how different activities contribute to brain development

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #1 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. "From The Beginning"
2. "A Positive Beginning for Parents and Their Infants"
3. "The First Six Months"
4. "Breastfeeding Your Baby"
5. "For the Formula Feeding Mother"

### **BOOKS:**

1. Baby Minds – Brain Building Games, from Birth to Three,  
by Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn
  2. Baby's First Year, by Penny Preston
  3. Baby Play and Learn –106 Games for Birth to Three,  
by Penny Warner
  4. The Complete Book of Breastfeeding,  
by Marvin Eiger, M.D. and Sally Olds
  5. First Foods, by Dr. Miriam Stoppard
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## **TIP #2**

# **LOVE AND AFFECTION CANNOT SPOIL A BABY**

Crying means something.

Be warm and loving.

Pick up your baby to see what he needs.

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The United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties and the Monongalia County Family Resource Network are proud to introduce the **Brain Under Construction Zone<sup>SM</sup>**

## **TIP #2: LOVE AND AFFECTION CANNOT SPOIL A BABY**

Crying means something.  
Be warm, loving, and pick up your baby to see what he needs.

### **What you should know**

1. Babies cry for a reason! You cannot spoil your baby by meeting his needs.
2. Prompt attention to your baby's needs gives him confidence that his world is a safe and predictable place.
3. Touch is as important to your baby as eating and sleeping. When you hold, rock, and hug your baby, you send him a clear message, "You are loved!"
4. Simple touch can help your baby develop brain power, grow faster, and strengthen muscles.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Give lots of warm, physical love, and attention.
- ♥ When your baby cries, take him for a stroll outside, walk or rock him, or rub his tummy, feet, or back.
- ♥ Hold your baby next to your chest, right over your soothing heartbeat.

### **Where you can learn more**

- ✦ **American Academy of Pediatrics**: tips for parents about raising your child  
For more info: [www.kidshealth.org/parent/](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/)
- ✦ **Zero to Three**: provides resources for parents and educators on healthy development of children ages zero to three. For more info: [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)
- ✦ **Talaris Research Institute**: provides information to support parents and caregivers in raising socially and emotionally healthy children. For more info: [www.talaris.org](http://www.talaris.org)

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #2 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “The Happiest Baby On The Block”  
Part 1 and 2
2. “Calm Baby”

### **BOOKS:**

1. Touchpoints – Child Emotional and Behavioral Development,  
by Terry Brazelton, M.D.
2. Secrets of the Baby Whisperer, by Tracy Hogg

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #2

1. Discuss the statement “Love and Affection Cannot Spoil a Baby.” What does this mean to you? Do you agree with this statement? If not, why not? If so, why?
2. Ask parents to tell stories of how they handle their baby’s crying at night time. Do they “let them cry” or do they pick them up? What seems to work best?
3. Talk about positive things that parents can do when they feel frustrated while caring for their baby.
4. Discuss the importance of touch. Refer to these articles:  
<http://www.johnsonsbaby.com/article.do?id=9>  
[www.baby.com/jjpi/infant-massage/The-Importance-of-Touch.pdf](http://www.baby.com/jjpi/infant-massage/The-Importance-of-Touch.pdf)



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### **TIP # 3**

## **Talk, Read, and Sing to Your Child**

**You are your child's first teacher.**



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## **TIP # 3: Talk, Read, and Sing to Your Child**

You are your child's first teacher.

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### **What you should know**

1. Talk to your child about what you are doing, even if it's "baby talk." This is how she learns to talk, understand others, read, and write.
2. Reading to your baby helps her learn language. She will especially enjoy nursery rhymes and songs.
3. Music of all kinds helps your child later on with math and reasoning skills.
4. Hearing your voice is very important to your baby. It helps her feel secure.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Turn off the television and read everything to your child from books to newspapers.
- ♥ Sing with your child as you hold her close.
- ♥ Dance with your child.
- ♥ Take your child to the library and bring books home to read together.

### **Where you can learn more**

✚ For information on how to nurture your young child, [www.babytalk.org](http://www.babytalk.org)

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #3 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. Brainy Baby Videos -- nurture whole brain development:

<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/FEATURE%2FBrainy+Baby+Videos+Nurture+Whole+Brain+Development-a0111976481> --- FREE

### **BOOKS:**

1. Building the Reading Brain, by Pamela Ann Nevills and Patricia Wolfe (available at Amazon.com or book stores)
2. What to Read When: The Books and Stories to Read with Your Child--and All the Best Times to Read Them, by Pam Allyn (available at book stores)

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #3

1. Ask parents to think about how much they talk to their child. Do they talk to their baby, even though he or she cannot understand them? Discuss with them *why* talking to their baby or child is so important.
2. Talk about how important reading to your child is. Suggest some favorite books for them to read. Ask them what books they read to their child.
3. Discuss the importance of music as a teacher.
4. Ask parents to remember what songs they sang as children, and if they are singing these songs to their children.

5. Refer to these articles about the importance of music:

[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1812648/the\\_importance\\_of\\_music\\_in\\_early\\_childhood.html?cat=33](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1812648/the_importance_of_music_in_early_childhood.html?cat=33)

[http://www.familymagazingroup.com/enrichment/story\\_The+Importance+of+Music+for+Your+Pre-school+Child.html](http://www.familymagazingroup.com/enrichment/story_The+Importance+of+Music+for+Your+Pre-school+Child.html)

<http://www.childcareaware.org/en/subscriptions/dailyparent/volume.php?id=46>

6. Talk about how to use everyday activities as opportunities to teach.



**TIP # 4**  
**HAVE A REGULAR SCHEDULE**

Children find comfort in the same routine every day.

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## **TIP # 4: HAVE A REGULAR SCHEDULE**

Children find comfort in the same routine every day.

### **What you should know**

1. Young children need to know that there are some things that they can depend on happening *every day*.
2. Routines help your child feel secure, and they help prevent behavior problems that happen when a child doesn't know what to expect.
3. Placing babies on their backs when they go to sleep has been shown to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
4. Do not place blankets, pillows, quilted crib bumpers, or soft toys in your baby's crib.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Schedule a walk outside with your baby every day.
- ♥ Always make rest times a priority, for you and for your baby.
- ♥ Set a regular time for meals, naptime, and bedtime.
- ♥ Follow a regular bedtime routine for bath, stories, and lullabies.

### **Where you can learn more**

- ✦ **American Academy of Pediatrics**: "Guide to Your Child's Sleep," tips for parents on putting your child to bed. For more info: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)
- ✦ **American Academy of Pediatrics**: "Back to Sleep," tips on how to help prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). For more info: [www.sids.org](http://www.sids.org)

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #4 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “Raising Children in Troubled Times – Bedtimes”

### **BOOKS:**

1. Discipline for Life: Getting It Right With Children, by Madeline Swift, available at Amazon.com
2. Healthy Sleep Habits, Healthy Child, by Marc Weissbluth at Amazon.com

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #4

1. Ask how many parents have a regular schedule for their child. Help them develop one if they do not have one.
2. “Prepare for Good Days.”
3. Ask parents to share their bedtime routines with class members. Ask them to point out what works well and what does not work well.
4. Refer to these articles about sleep and having a regular schedule:  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)  
[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/57304/the\\_importance\\_of\\_a\\_regular\\_bedtime.html?cat=25](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/57304/the_importance_of_a_regular_bedtime.html?cat=25)



## **TIP # 5**

### **Play is the Work of the Young Child**

Encourage self exploration and play.

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## **TIP # 5: Play is the Work of the Young Child**

Encourage self exploration and play.

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### What you should know

1. Young children need to play! It helps them learn many things.
2. Holding, rocking, and introducing new environments each day are important for your infant's development.
3. A physically active lifestyle early in life helps infants and young children learn to move skillfully.
4. Becoming coordinated is a sign of brain development in your child.



### What you can do with your child

- ♥ Play ball, run, and jump with your child.
- ♥ Construct block towers or work puzzles together.
- ♥ Make up a story or a puppet show with your child.
- ♥ Play hide-and-seek together.

### Where you can learn more

- ✚ [West Virginia Motor Development Center](#): offers activity programs for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and elementary school-age children.

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #5 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. Where Do The Children Play, a documentary; available at [http://documentary-dvds.suite101.com/article.cfm/where\\_do\\_the\\_children\\_playdocumentary](http://documentary-dvds.suite101.com/article.cfm/where_do_the_children_playdocumentary)

### **BOOKS:**

1. Your Child at Play, 0-1 year old, by Marilyn Segal, PhD.
2. Kitchen Table Play and Learn, by Tara Copley
3. Children at Play: Clinical and Developmental Approaches to Meaning and Representation by Arietta Slade and Dennie Palmer Wolf (at Amazon.com)

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #5

1. Discuss the importance of physical activity for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.
2. Suggest types of physical activities that are appropriate for their child's age and encourage parents to help their children use their imagination as they play.
3. Ask parents to tell how they engage in physical activity with their children.
4. Ask parents to suggest places in their area where they can take their children to play and "have fun."
5. Refer to these articles about play and the young child:

[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1155396/the\\_importance\\_of\\_play\\_time\\_in\\_your.html?cat=25](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1155396/the_importance_of_play_time_in_your.html?cat=25)

[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/909953/the\\_importance\\_of\\_play\\_in\\_a\\_preschoolers.html?cat=4](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/909953/the_importance_of_play_in_a_preschoolers.html?cat=4)



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## **TIP # 6**

### **Pay Attention to Your Child**

Be aware of how, where, and with whom your child spends time.





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## **TIP # 6: Pay Attention to Your Child**

Be aware of how, where, and with whom your child spends time.

### **What you should know**

1. Children under the age of 2 should not watch *any* television!!
2. Bacteria in your baby or child's mouth often originate in the mother's mouth. Kissing your baby or blowing on your baby's food can transfer your germs/bacteria from your mouth to theirs.
3. A child's eyes should be examined shortly after birth, at six months, before entering school (age 3 or 4), and periodically throughout the years.
4. Food is the leading cause of choking in children. They should only eat and drink while seated.
5. Never put a baby to bed with a bottle containing milk (including breast milk), formula, fruit juice, or other sweetened liquids.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Play a game with your child instead of turning on the television.
- ♥ Sit with your child when she is on the computer.
- ♥ Stay with your child while she is eating, to help prevent choking.
- ♥ Play sports together with your child and always wear appropriate eye protection.

### **Where you can learn more**

- ✚ **TV FREE AMERICA:** a national nonprofit organization that encourages Americans to voluntarily reduce the amount of television that they watch in order to promote richer and more connected lives, families and communities. For more info: 1611 Connecticut Ave. NW Suite #3A; Washington, DC 20009, Phone: (202) 296-2787.
- ✚ **GetNetWise:** a comprehensive guide for parents about the internet and their child. For more info: [www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org). and [www.childrenspartnership.org](http://www.childrenspartnership.org)

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #6 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “Infant and Toddler Emergency First Aid – Vol. 1 and 2”
2. “Fire Safety for the Family”
3. “Are We There Yet – Traveling Safely With Your Children”

### **BOOKS:**

1. Video Games and Your Kids – How To Stay In Control,  
by Hilarie Cash, PhD and Kevin McDaniel, M.A.
2. Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder, by Richard Louv (available at book stores)
3. Into the Minds of Babes: How Screen Time Affects Children from Birth to Age Five, by Lisa Guernsey (available at book stores)

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### Lesson Suggestions for Tip #6

1. Review with the parents the “Safety Checklist for the Home”.
2. Discuss the importance of child safety and of paying attention to your child to keep him or her safe.
3. Talk about choking: how it can happen, what to do when it happens, and how to avoid choking. CPR anytime, 1-877-AHA-4CPR, [www.cpranytime.org](http://www.cpranytime.org).
4. Discuss poisons and how to be on the lookout for them. Give parents the poison control number: 1-800-222-1222.
5. Discuss water safety and gun safety. Refer to these web sites:  
National Rifle Association: [www.nrahq.org/safety](http://www.nrahq.org/safety)  
WV Dept of Natural Resources: [www.wvdnr.gov](http://www.wvdnr.gov)
6. Discuss lead poisoning.
7. Review car seat safety.  
Make sure that all children have legal and appropriately sized car seats.
8. Discuss how to keep your baby’s teeth healthy.
9. Discuss the importance of NO TELEVISION before the age of 2.  
Discuss the importance of limiting television after 2 years of age. Encourage parents to watch less television as a model for their children. Suggest alternatives for watching television. Refer to these web sites:  
[http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv\\_affects\\_child.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv_affects_child.html)  
<http://www.turnoffyourtv.com/turnoffweek/TV.turnoff.week.html>
10. Talk about computers and how they will impact your child’s life.  
Refer parents to these websites for a parent’s guide to the internet:  
[www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org) and [www.childrenspartnership.org](http://www.childrenspartnership.org)



## **TIP # 7**

### **Take Care of Yourself**

You cannot take care of your child if your basic needs are not also being met.

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## **TIP # 7: Take Care of Yourself**

You cannot take care of your child if your basic needs are not also being met.

### **What you should know**

1. Feeling depressed after having a baby is normal. It is not your fault.
2. Mood disorders after pregnancy are temporary and treatable.
3. Talking with friends and other mothers is important when recovering from postpartum depression or the “baby blues.”
4. Your emotional and mental health, after having a baby, are just as important as your physical health.



### **What you can do for yourself**

- ♥ Go for a walk, a bike ride, or just outdoors for some fresh air.
- ♥ Get a massage or go out to dinner.
- ♥ Practice breathing exercises for relaxation.
- ♥ Avoid drugs, exercise when you can, and take vitamins.
- ♥ Take a nap when your baby does.

### **Where you can learn more**

- ✚ Postpartum Depression Support group online: [www.ppdsupportpage.com](http://www.ppdsupportpage.com)
- ✚ March of Dimes: [www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com)
- ✚ Other websites with information about postpartum depression: [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov) and [www.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.nlm.nih.gov)

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #7 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. Smoke Free From Day One

### **BOOKS:**

1. Postpartum Depression Demystified: An Essential Guide for Understanding and Overcoming the Most Common Complication after Childbirth , by Joyce A. Venis RNC and Suzanne McCloskey (available at book stores)
2. Conquering Postpartum Depression: A Proven Plan For Recovery., by Ronald Rosenberg, Deborah Greening, and James Windell (available at book stores)

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #7

1. Ask parents to talk about what are some of the signals or signs for them that warn them that they need to “take care of themselves.” For example – crying constantly, feeling overwhelmed, unable to remember the last time they had a shower, scared to leave home.
2. Compose a list, with parents’ help, of some things they can do to “take care of themselves.” For example – take time to be alone, go for a walk, go to the mall, don’t rush, bring in a babysitter.
3. Discuss what Moms can do to try to avoid getting to “the breaking point.”
4. Suggest places where Moms can go in the area to get a break. Ask others for their ideas.
5. Discuss Post Partum Depression and how parents can get help. Look at the list of Resources in Your Community.



## **TIP # 8**

### **Discipline to Teach, Not Punish**

Use discipline as an opportunity to teach appropriate behavior.

**NEVER** hit or shake a child.

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## **TIP # 8: Discipline to Teach, Not Punish**

Use discipline as an opportunity to teach appropriate behavior.  
**NEVER** hit or shake a child.

### **What you should know**

1. Teaching children good behaviors helps them to learn how to solve problems without anger or hurt.
2. Children learn to respect their family members and friends when they are taught good behavior instead of being punished.
3. Children learn to control their feelings and actions when they see adults use self-control when teaching them about their behavior.
4. It is important to teach children to use their words rather than their hands to express how they are feeling.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Turn your child's attention to a different activity when he misbehaves.
- ♥ Always give more attention to good rather than bad behavior.
- ♥ Don't label your child as "bad" or "good." Instead, label the behavior.
- ♥ Set limits and stick to them.

### **Where you can learn more**

- ✚ **Talaris Research Institute:** provides information to support parents and caregivers in raising socially and emotionally healthy children. For more info: [www.talaris.org](http://www.talaris.org)
- ✚ Parenting tips for effective discipline:  
[http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/parenting\\_tips/discipline/index.html](http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/parenting_tips/discipline/index.html)
- ✚ Discipline strategies that work: <http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/cgi-bin/extlink.pl?l=http://www.aap.org/family/99disc.htm>

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #8 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “When The Chips Are Down—Strategies for Improving Children’s Behavior”
2. “Toddlers at Home -- Terrible 2’s”
3. “Raising Children in Troubled Times – Temper Tantrums”

### **BOOKS:**

1. Scream Free Parenting, by Hal Edward Runkel (also on CD)
2. Anger Habit in Parents, by Carl Semmelroth, PhD
3. The New Dare to Discipline, by James Dobson
4. Discipline That Lasts a Lifetime, by Dr. Ray Guarendi
5. Setting Limits – Strong Willed Children, by Robert McKenzie

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #8

1. Talk about why discipline should be used for teaching, not for punishing.
2. Discuss spanking and why a parent should *never* spank or hit their child.
3. Discuss what parents can do to minimize unacceptable behavior from their child.
4. Ask parents to talk about how they discipline their children. Give them advice about how to help their child learn control over his or her behavior choices.
5. Share information from these articles about discipline:  
<http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/discipline.html>  
<http://www.nncc.org/Parent/uc.disctod.html>



**TIP # 9**  
**Choose Child Care Carefully and Stay Involved**

Finding child care for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever make in your child's life.

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## **TIP # 9: Choose Child Care Carefully and Stay Involved**

Finding child care for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever make in your child's life.

### **What you should know**

1. Child Care Centers must be licensed by the state and monitored by the Department of Health and Human Resources.
2. Family Child Care homes can accept up to six children with one provider present and up to 12 children with two providers present.
3. *Never* make a decision on a child care facility based on just a phone call.
4. Have regular discussions with your child care provider.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ **Find** a child care environment where your child feels loved and safe.
- ♥ **Prepare** your child for child care by visiting the facility first with her.
- ♥ **Be** understanding when you say goodbye to your clinging child at a child care facility.
- ♥ **Talk** with your child about her day when you pick her up from child care.

✚ **Contact the Childcare Resource & Referral & Referral**

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #9 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “Who’s Minding the Children? Choosing Quality Daycare”

### **BOOKS:**

1. The Good Childcare Guide: The Complete Handbook on Nannies, Mother's Help, Au Pairs, Childminders, Day Nurseries, After School Care and Maternity Nurses, by Kate Goodhart (at book stores)
2. Keys to Choosing Child Care (Barron's Parenting Keys) by Stevanne Auerbach Ph.D. (available at book stores)

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #9

1. Ask how many parents use day care. Ask them to talk about how and why they chose their day care center.
2. Give parents a list of day care centers in this area and how they can contact them.
3. Talk about what to look for when choosing a day care center.
4. Discuss the importance of parents staying involved in their child's early care and education.
5. Refer to these articles about how to choose a day care center:

<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/children/parents/infants/030.html>

<http://www.thenewparentsguide.com/choosing-a-daycare-center.htm>



## **TIP # 10**

### **Children Develop at Different Rates**

Celebrate each child.

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## **TIP # 10: Children Develop at Different Rates**

Celebrate each child.

### **What you should know**

1. Developmental milestones are different for each child.
2. Your child may have trouble hearing if she often turns the same ear toward a sound she wants to hear.
3. Your child may have trouble seeing if she blinks more than usual or is irritable when doing close-up work.
4. Dizziness, headaches, or nausea following close-up work could be signs of poor vision in your child.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Make the well-being of your child your greatest concern.
- ♥ Check your child's hearing by watching if she turns her face to the source of sounds.
- ♥ Check your child's vision by placing small objects on the floor and see if she can find them.
- ♥ Celebrate with your child when she learns how to do anything new.

### **Where you can learn more**

- ✦ For information about how babies develop and what to expect: [http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/how\\_babies\\_develop\\_what\\_to\\_expect.html](http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/how_babies_develop_what_to_expect.html)
- ✦ Principles of child development: <http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/family/350-053/350-053.html>
- ✦ Helping your child build self-esteem: <http://health.yahoo.com/parenting-behavior/growth-and-development-helping-your-child-build-self-esteem/healthwise--tk1326.html>

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #10 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “Toddlers at Home – First Steps”

### **BOOKS:**

1. Touchpoints – Child Emotional and Behavioral Development,  
by Terry Brazelton, M.D.

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #10

1. Talk about the fact that children develop at different rates.
2. Review with parents the developmental milestones.
3. Give parents an opportunity to take the developmental quiz, which is included with this lesson. Discuss the answers together.
4. Discuss the warning signs to be aware of when monitoring your child's development.
5. Point out the resources in our community.
6. Refer to this article about early child development:  
<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/famsci/fs632w.htm>



## **TIP # 11**

### **Give Your Child a Childhood**

**Children need unstructured time.  
More is not always better.**

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## **TIP # 11: Give Your Child a Childhood**

Children need unstructured time. More is not always better.

### **What you should know**

1. When children are free to play, they are free to learn and to grow.
2. Organized activities should be limited to one weekly for your child.
3. Academic instruction should be balanced with an adequate amount of play.
4. Time flies! Don't rush your child's early years.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Take a picnic to the park and play on the swings.
- ♥ Go to the library and read books together.
- ♥ Play dress up and create a play with your child.
- ♥ Go out in your yard and collect bugs.
- ♥ Teach your baby nursery rhymes.

### **Where you can learn more**

- ✚ Let Children Be Children: <http://www.4children.org/>
- ✚ [\*\*West Virginia Motor Development Center\*\*](#): offers activity programs for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and elementary school-age children.

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## Recommended Resources for Tip #11 Lesson

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “Emotion Coaching”

### **BOOKS:**

1. The Practical Guide to Weekend Parenting: 101 Ways to Bond with Your Children While Having Fun, by Doug Hewitt (at book stores)

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #11

1. Discuss the importance of “giving your child a childhood.”
2. Ask parents to reminisce about their favorite childhood memories and then to think about whether or not they are giving their child the opportunities for similar memory-making.
3. Talk to parents about how they spend holidays, vacations, and birthdays with their children. What do they do to make these times special for their children?
4. Share ideas about activities that parents can do to “give their child a childhood.”
5. Refer to these articles about letting children be children:

<http://www.post-gazette.com/lifestyle/20021003childsplay3.asp>

<http://www.aap.org/pressroom/play-public.htm>



## **TIP # 12**

### **Children Need to Know They Matter**

Show your children that they are loved  
for who they are.

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## **TIP # 12: Children Need to Know They Matter**

Show your children that they are loved for who they are.

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### **What you should know**

1. When you give your child your attention, she feels secure and loved.
2. Family time should always make your child feel appreciated, listened to, and loved. Do not talk about problems with your child.
3. *Fathers* help their child become independent by letting their child out of sight for longer periods of time.
4. Establishing a bond with grandparents who have lots of time to play and read to your child benefits your child's brain development.



### **What you can do with your child**

- ♥ Try to have lunch with your child at day care or school.
- ♥ Make the best of time spent in the car. Sing or tell stories with your child.
- ♥ *Fathers* – change diapers, give your baby a bath, take part in doctors' visits.
- ♥ *Grandparents* - write a letter and send pictures of yourself to your grandchildren.

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## **Recommended Resources for Tip #12 Lesson**

### **VIDEOS:**

1. “For Dads Only”
2. “Raising Children in Troubled Times – Togetherness”

### **BOOKS:**

1. The Fathers Book: Being a Good Dad in the 21st Century (Family Matters) by David Cohen (available at book stores)
2. The Single Father: A Dad's Guide to Parenting Without a Partner (New Father Series) by Armin A. Brott (available at book stores)

### **SPEAKERS:**

1. Invite grandparents to the class to talk about their role and experiences as grandparents

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## Lesson Suggestions for Tip #12

1. Talk about why it is so important for children to know that they matter.
2. Discuss the importance of family time and ask parents to share how they make family time in their homes.
3. Talk about the importance of Dads in a child's life. Ask parents to tell stories of their relationships with their own Dads. Talk about how the Dads in the class spend time with their children.
4. Discuss how parents can work together effectively when they do not live together. Ask parents to give examples.
5. Discuss the benefits of bonding with and spending time with grandparents. Ask parents to share stories of their child's relationship with their grandparents.
6. Refer to this article about the importance of loving children for who they are:

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/html/ec/ec1319-e/>