

# Family Tips

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## August

### Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation about your amazing and unique child. Ask questions such as:

- *You are so special! Let me tell you why I think you are so special.*
- *What are some cool new things you can do now that you are getting older?*
- *You have a beautiful smile. How does it make you feel when you smile at people?*

Listen to what your child says and respond with encouragement and pride in your child's accomplishments. Tell your child that you love him every day.

### Learn About Print

#### Looking at Books

Teach your child about books.

- Teach your child to identify the front, back, top, and bottom of a book.
- Show your child how to hold a book correctly when reading.
- When sitting to read with your child, hold the book upside down and ask, "Am I ready to read this book?" When your child says, "No," ask your child to take the book and show you how to hold a book.
- Ask your child to show you how to carefully turn the pages of a book.
- Ask your child to tell what the author and illustrator does on a book.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### All About Me

- Give your child a piece of paper and ask her to draw a picture of herself. Encourage your child to make a happy face on the drawing.
- When your child completes the drawing, ask him to print his name and his age on the picture.
- Ask your child to tell you five things that she does well. These might include running fast, jumping high, riding a bike, or catching a ball.
- Encourage your child to perform for you the activities he does well.
- Continue to reinforce and encourage your child throughout this activity.

### Say the Following RHYMES with Your Child

#### Special Me

I'm glad I'm me.  
I'm special, look and see.  
My feet can run and dance and walk.  
My ears can hear. My mouth can talk.  
My hands and arms can stretch out wide.  
My face shows how I feel inside.

#### Dream Away

A dreaming child  
Looking up at the stars.  
Dreaming of things really afar.  
What do you see in that mind of yours?  
Just keep on dreaming,  
And someday you'll soar!



## **Special Events**

Friendship Day

National Smile Week

National Back to School Week

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## **Books to Check Out**

*Friends at School*, Rochelle Bunnett

*My Friend Bear*, Jez Alborough

*New Tricks I Can Do*, Robert Lopshire

*When I Grow Up*, Heidi Goenne



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## **Simple Science**

### ***Day and Night***

**Before you begin:** Draw a vertical line down the middle of a piece of paper. Across the top of the paper, write **Day** on one side of the line and **Night** on the other side.

- Talk about how the sun shines in the daytime and the moon shines at night.
- Ask, “What are some things people do during the day when the sun is shining?” Write down what your child says on the “Day” side of the paper.
- Ask, “What are some things people do at night when the moon is shining?” Write down what your child says on the “Night” side of the paper.

Discuss how people do very different things at night than they do during the day.

## **Meaningful Math**

### ***Counting Objects***

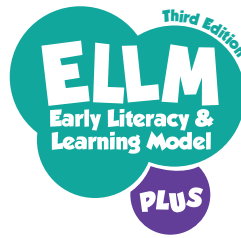
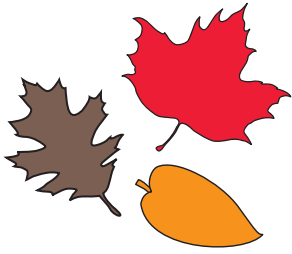
**Before you begin:** Gather some counting objects such as shells, coins, buttons, or blocks.

- Place five objects in a line on the table and ask your child to count the objects.
- Make sure your child touches each object, while counting the objects one by one.
- Give your child five pieces of note pad paper and ask her to write the numbers from one to five on the paper.
- Mix up the pieces of note pad paper and ask your child to place them in correct sequential order on the table.
- Continue the activity by increasing the number of objects to ten or more.
- Place the pieces of note pad paper face down and have your child select one piece. Have your child make a set of that number of objects. Continue until all pieces have been selected.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Talk with your child about **self-control**. *Self-control is the ability to make good choices about what you will do and how you will behave.* Explain that when playing a team sport like baseball, players need to use self-control to follow rules and make good choices. Talk about what could happen if players didn’t use self-control. Select a game to play with your child to practice self-control. After explaining the game’s rules, model and encourage self-control while playing.





# Family Tips

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# September

## Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child during a visit to the **library**. Ask questions such as:

- *What do you like best about the library? Why?*
- *What type of stories are your favorites? Why?*
- *Why should we check out books?*

**TIP:** Be sure to respond to your child's comments and try to talk about things of interest to your child.

## Learn About Print

### *When Reading to Your Child*

- Before reading a new book, show the front cover to your child and point to and say the title of the book.
- Explain that the title tells us the name of the book and sometimes it gives us clues as to what the story is going to be about.
- Ask your child to look at the picture on the cover of the book and ask, "*What do you think this story is going to be about?*"
- Ask your child to tell you about her/his favorite part of the book.

## See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

### *Letters in My Name*

- While sitting with your child, write your child's name on a piece of paper.
- Count each letter in your child's name. Then ask your child to count the letters.
- Point to the first letter. Say the name of the letter. Ask your child to repeat the letter name. Continue with the remaining letters.
- Have fun together writing the letters in your child's name. Show your child how to write them in the air with a finger, on the floor with a foot, and in the dirt with a stick.

## Say the Following RHYMES with Your Child

### **Books**

I like books,  
I really do —  
Books with stories,  
And pictures, too.  
Books of birds,  
And things that grow.  
Books of people,  
We should know.  
Books of animals,  
And places, too.  
I like books,  
I really do.

### **Letter Chase**

A-B-C-D-E-F-G,  
I'm chasing you around the tree.  
H-I-J-K-L-M-N,  
That was fun! Let's do it again.  
O-P-Q-R-S-T-U,  
You can do some chasing too!  
V-W-X, Y and Z,  
Run! Run! Run! You can't catch me!



## **Special Events**

Labor Day  
Grandparents Day  
First Day of Autumn  
Good Manners Month  
National Better Breakfast Month  
Library Card Sign-up Month

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## **Books to Check Out**

*Colors*, Justine Smith  
*Mouse Paint*, Ellen Stoll Walsh  
*Ten Black Dots*, Donald Crews  
*The Bag I'm Taking to Grandma's*, Shirley Neitze  
*Chester's Way*, Kevin Henkes



## **Simple Science**

### ***Alike and Different***

**Before you begin:** Gather a collection of items found in your home for your child to sort, such as different types of pasta, shells, leaves, colored blocks, or shoes.

- Say to your child, “*We can sort things into groups by how they are alike or different.*”
- Select two items that are *alike* and ask your child to help you find things about the two items that are alike. Together, find other items that are alike.
- Select two items that are *different* and say, “*What is different about these two things? How do you know they are different?*” Find other items that are different.

## **Meaningful Math**

### ***Counting at Home***

**Before you begin:** Take a walk in the neighborhood with your child and collect a few items such as leaves, bark, pebbles, and small sticks.

- At home, sit with your child and ask her to describe the items that were collected.
- Ask your child to hand you the collected items. Count the items one at a time as your child gives them to you.
- Say, “*I wonder how many leaves you collected? Let's count them.*” Encourage your child to count the leaves out loud, touching each leaf as it is counted.
- Continue counting the other items one at a time with your child.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Talk with your child about the importance of **caring**. *Caring means to feel concern about something or someone.* Talk about one of your child's friends. Ask, “*How does it make you feel to have friends?*” Encourage your child to think of three ways that friends show they care about each other. (For example, “*Friends smile and say hello, they share toys, and they help each other when they are sad.*”)





# Family Tips

## October

### Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about **healthy food**. While shopping together in a grocery store, ask questions such as:

- What food do you see that is healthy? How do you know it is healthy?
- What other healthy foods can you think of that are good for you to eat?
- What is your favorite vegetable to eat? What type of fruit do you like?

Encourage your child to select a fruit or vegetable to taste at home. Ask your child to help you prepare it for the family to eat at dinnertime.

### Learn About Print

#### Words Tell the Story

Help your child understand that printed words tell the story, not the pictures.

- Point to a label on a food container. Say the name of the food and ask your child to repeat the name. Say, “*The words on a label tell us about the food that is inside.*”
- Show your child a t-shirt that has writing on it. Say, “*The letters on this shirt are words that I can read.*” Read the writing on the shirt and talk about what it means.
- When dressing your child, ask your child to point to the words. Say the words and ask your child to repeat the words.
- When reading a book to your child, point to the words as you read. Say, “*These words tell the story. The pictures help us to see the story, but words tell the story.*”

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### Letters in My Name

**Before you begin:** Cut or tear out circles of paper, one circle for each letter in your child’s name. Write one of the letters in your child’s name on each circle.

- Put the circles down on a table and spell your child’s name. Point to each letter, say the letter name and sound. Ask your child to repeat the letter names.
- Point to the first letter in your child’s name. Say, “*What is the name of this letter? What sound does it make?*”
- Mix up the letters, pick up the first letter in your child’s name and ask your child to name the letter. Continue until all the letters have been used.

### Say the Following RHYMES with Your Child

#### Healthy Foods

Fruits and vegetables are good for me.  
I eat them every day.  
I want to grow up big and strong,  
So I eat what my parents say.

#### I Am a Pumpkin

I am a pumpkin big and round.  
Once upon a time I grew on the ground.  
But now I have a mouth, two eyes, and nose.  
What are they for, do you suppose?  
When I have a candle inside, shining bright,  
I’ll be a jack-o’-lantern on Halloween night!



## Special Events

Fire Prevention Week

Columbus Day

Halloween

Family Health Month

Communicate with your Kid Month

National Book Month

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## Books to Check Out

ABC, Eric Carle

*How Do you Know It's Fall*, Allan Fowler

*Look What I did With a Leaf!*, Morteza E. Sohi

*Arthur's Fire Drill*, Marc Brown



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## Simple Science

### Healthy Eating

- Talk with your child about the importance of eating a variety of healthy foods and drinking many glasses of water every day.
- Look in your kitchen and help your child find at least one item in each food group that she likes to eat or would like to taste.
- Encourage healthy habits by eating fruits and vegetables with your child every day.
- If possible, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) for healthy eating tips and information.

## Meaningful Math

### More Than and Less Than

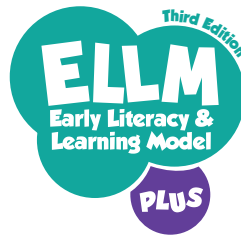
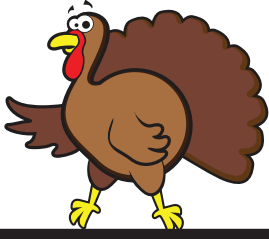
**Before you begin:** Gather eight small toys or stuffed animals from around your home.

- Start by dividing the eight toys into two uneven groups, such as five and three.
- Teach your child the term **more than**. Say, "*More than means a larger amount.*"
- Say, "*I wonder which group has more toys? Let's count how many toys are in each group.*" Help your child count the toys to find out which group has more.
- Teach your child the term **less than**. Say, "*Less than means a smaller amount.*"
- Say, "*Show me which group has less toys than the other.*"
- Ask, "*How do you know it has less?*" Encourage your child to count the toys to check which group has less.
- Divide the toys into other uneven groups, such as six and two, and repeat the activity.

## CHARACTER KIDS

Teach your child about **cooperation**. *Cooperation means to work together.* Say, "*Let's cooperate by playing a 'pretend' game together. We can look around the house and gather some clothes, scarves, hats, and jewelry. Who should we pretend to be and what can we do?*" Talk about how fun it is to cooperate and come up with new ways to play together.





# Family Tips

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# November

## Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about being **thankful**. Ask questions such as:

- *Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks.* What is something you are thankful for?
- How can you show others that you are thankful?

Explain that having a loving family is one thing to be thankful for on Thanksgiving. Talk about special ways that your family likes to celebrate with each other on Thanksgiving.

## Learn About Print

### Looking at Words

- When introducing a book, clearly point to each word in the title as you say it. Ask your child to point to and say each word with you.
- While reading with your child, occasionally point to the lines of text with your finger, moving from left to right as you read the sentences on the page.
- Ask your child to draw a picture of an animal he likes. Say, “*Tell me about your picture.*” Write down the words your child says and then read them out loud.

## See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

### Letters in the Alphabet

**Before you begin:** Gather a set of alphabet letters from a to z. (For example, letter flash cards, magnet letters, or letters you have written down on pieces of paper.)

- Print your child’s name on paper. Say the name of each letter.
- Scatter the letters on the floor.
- Pick up a letter and say the letter name. Ask your child to repeat the letter name.
- Help your child find the letters in her name. Say the name of each letter and ask your child to repeat each letter name.
- Say the sound of each letter and ask your child to repeat the sound.

## Say the Following RHYMES with Your Child

### Traffic Light Song

Red says stop.  
Green says go.  
Yellow says wait—  
You’d better go slow.  
When I reach a crossing place,  
To the left and right I turn my face.  
I walk, not run, across the street,  
I use my head to guide my feet.

### Falling Leaves

Leaves are falling all around,  
Red, yellow, orange, and brown.  
Twirling, swirling, to the ground,  
Look how many leaves I have found.



## Special Events

Veterans Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Child Safety Month

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## Books to Check Out

ABC, Dr. Seuss  
Friends At School, Rochelle Bunnett  
Corduroy, Don Freeman  
Turkey Trouble, Wendy Silvano



## Simple Science

### *Fabulous Fall*

- Ask, “How do you know it is fall?” (cooler weather, colorful leaves, falling leaves)
- Go outdoors and rake leaves with your child. Rake them into a pile. Run through the pile and jump in the pile of leaves.
- Take a walk and gather colorful leaves. Arrange the leaves on the table for a centerpiece.

## Meaningful Math

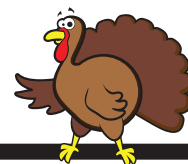
### *Addition and Subtraction*

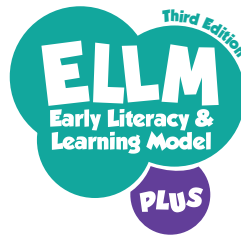
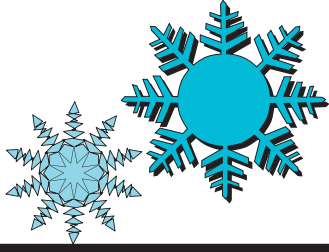
**Before you begin:** Get a plate and small snack items like Cheerios, Goldfish, raisins, etc.

- Say, “Today we are going to **add**. To add means to put things together.”
- Place two snacks on the plate. Next, give your child three snacks to hold. Say, “two snacks (point to the plate) plus three snacks (point to your child’s hand) equals five snacks.” Help your child put all five snacks together to count them. Play again using other amounts.
- Say, “Now we going to **subtract**. To subtract means to take things away.”
- Put five snacks on the plate. Say, “You have five snacks. Now take away three snacks and eat them! How many do you have left?” Help your child count the remaining two snacks. Say, “five snacks take away three snacks equals two snacks on the plate.” Play again.

## CHARACTER KIDS

Talk with your child about being **honest**. *Being honest means to tell the truth, even when it is difficult.* Make up a story to tell your child about why sometimes it is hard to tell the truth. Tell your child it is sometimes hard to tell the truth because you are afraid to get into trouble. Be sure to say that the right thing to do is to always be honest and tell the truth.





# Family Tips

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# December

## Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about **celebrations**. Ask questions such as:

- *What are some special times or events we like to celebrate in our family? (Birthdays, holidays, when someone learns to do something new, etc.)*
- *A party is a type of celebration. What kind of celebration do you enjoy most? Why?*

## Learn About Print

### *Predicting What the Story is About*

- Sit with your child with an unfamiliar book. Look at the picture on the cover of the book. Ask your child to describe the picture. Ask your child what she thinks the book will be about.
- Tell your child that the pictures on the cover of the book help us know what the story will be about.
- Take a picture walk by looking at the pictures in the rest of the book. Ask your child if her prediction was correct.

## See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

### *Making a Toy List*

**Before you begin:** Gather magazines or newspaper advertisements with toy pictures.

- Give your child magazines to look through. Help cut or tear out pictures of a few favorite toys. Arrange the pictures on a piece of paper.
- Ask your child to help you label each picture. Say, “*What is the name of this toy? That name starts with the \_\_ sound. The letter \_\_ makes this sound. This is how we spell the toy’s name.*” Say the letters out loud as you write down the toy’s name.
- After labeling all of the pictures, help your child point to each label and say the name of the toy. Encourage your child to try to read the toy list independently.

## Say the Following RHYMES with Your Child

### **What Will the Weather Be?**

Sometimes there’s sun.  
Sometimes there’s rain.  
Sometimes there’s sleet or snow.  
Sometimes there are clouds.  
Sometimes there’s thunder.  
Sometimes there’s wind that blows.

### **Star Light**

Star light, star bright,  
The first star I see tonight,  
I wish I may, I wish I might,  
Have the wish I wish tonight.



## **Special Events**

First Day of Hanukkah

First Day of Winter

Christmas Day

First Day of Kwanzaa

New Year's Eve

Safe Toys Month

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## **Books to Check Out**

*A Charlie Brown Christmas*, Lee Mendelson

*A Kwanzaa Celebration Pop-Up Book*, Nancy Williams

*Festival of Lights: The Story of Hanukkah*, Maida Silverman

*The Polar Express*, Chris Van Allsburg



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## **Simple Science**

### ***Weather***

- Talk with your child about how the weather changes throughout the year. When the weather changes, we call the changes *seasons*.
- There are four seasons in the year: summer, autumn, winter and spring.
- Review the following information with your child:
  - The rays of the sun make summer very hot.
  - The temperature begins to get cool in autumn and the leaves begin to change colors.
  - It is very cold in the winter. We wear coats and hats in the winter.
  - The days begin to get warmer in the spring. The flowers begin to bloom and the vegetables begin to grow.
- Ask your child to tell their favorite season and somethings that happen during this time.

## **Meaningful Math**

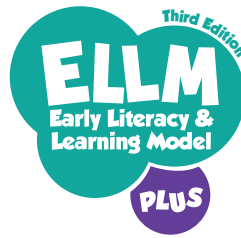
### ***Holiday Math***

- Help your child gather five holiday items from around your home. Place these items in a straight line on the floor and ask your child to count the items.
- Show your child which item is first, second, third, fourth, and fifth.
- Say, “*Show me which item is second? Which is last?*” Help your child, as needed.
- Mix up the five items and ask more questions about the order of the items.
- Next, count items with your child such as the number of cards you have received, the wrapped presents in your home, the ornaments on the tree, etc.
- Have your child ask you to identify the first, second, third, etc. items in each set.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Talk with your child about the importance of **kindness**. *Kindness means showing others that you care about them.* Help your child think about people who treat others with kindness. Ask, “*How does it make you feel when you spend time with someone who is kind to you?*” Encourage your child to think of something kind he or she can do for a family member. (For example, “*Help my dad take the dog for a walk, play a game with my sister, draw a nice picture for my mom.*”)





# Family Tips

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## January

### Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about making a **New Year's Day** resolution to use good manners. Remind your child that saying ***please*** and ***thank you*** is a way to use good manners. Ask questions such as:

- *When should you say the words please and thank you?*
- *How does it make you feel when people say these words to you? Why?*

Gather two stuffed animals. Pretend with your child that the stuffed animals are real. Have the stuffed animals say *please* and *thank you* to each other often as they play. Other good manner words you might want to use are *excuse me*, *you're welcome*, and *I'm sorry*.

### Learn About Print

#### Writing a Story

Provide your child with an opportunity to write a story.

- Talk with your child about the types of activities he likes to do in the winter time.
- Ask your child to draw a picture of her favorite winter activity.
- After the picture is drawn, ask your child to tell you about the picture.
- Encourage your child to write some words and phrases about the picture.
- Fill a basket with paper, markers, crayons, pencils, envelopes, and note cards. Ask your child to write messages and notes to family members.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### Words That Rhyme

Say, *"Listen carefully as I say two words. Some of the words will rhyme (sound alike at the middle and end) and some will not. Jump three times if the words rhyme. Shake your head 'no' if they don't rhyme."*

- **Rhyming Word Pairs:** bake - cake, ran - pan, ball - call, car - far, hot - pot
- **Non-Rhyming Word Pairs:** sun - man, boat - water, book - sit, bike - ball, dog - cat

### Say the Following SONGS with Your Child

#### Happy Birthday, Dr. King

*Tune: "Yankee Doodle"*

Dr. King was a man  
Who had a special dream.  
He dreamed of a world filled with love  
And peace and harmony.  
Happy birthday, Dr. King,  
Happy birthday to you.  
Happy birthday, Dr. King,  
We honor you today!

#### Families Are Special

*Tune: Are You Sleeping*

Families are special.  
Families are special.  
We each have one.  
We each have one.  
Tell them that you love them.  
Tell them that you love them.  
I love you.  
I love you.



## **Special Events**

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s  
Birthday Celebration

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## **Books to Check Out**

*Families*, Sarah L. Schuette  
*Here Are My Hands*, Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault  
*My Five Senses*, Alik  
*The Cat in the Hat*, Dr. Seuss



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## **Simple Science**

### ***Water and Ice***

***Before you begin:*** Gather a plastic container and a few small, plastic letters and number.

- Ask, “*What happens to water when it gets really cold?*” (Water changes to ice.)
- Fill a plastic container with water and have your child put some letters or number in the water.
- Place the container in the freezer for a day, letting your child check it often. Each time have your child tell you how the water has changed.
- Once frozen, encourage your child to play with the ice block and explore ways to remove the items trapped in the frozen water.
- Allow your child to put the ice block in a warm bath. Talk about what is happening as the ice melts and changes back to water. Ask, “*What will happen to the items?*”
- Ask your child to explain how the ice and the water are the same and different.

## **Meaningful Math**

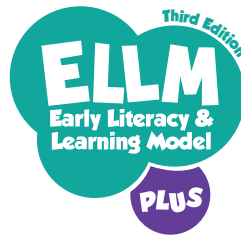
### ***Body Parts***

- Tell your child that you are going to review some body parts. Ask your child to touch each body part as you say it: head, neck, shoulders, arms, fingers, legs, knees, feet.
- Play the *Math Body Part* game with your child. Give the following directions:
  - Clap your hands twice.
  - Hold up 3 fingers.
  - Tap one foot 4 times.
  - Use your feet to jump 5 times.
  - Use one foot to hop 6 times.
  - Use your legs to take 7 giant steps around the room.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Teach your child about what it means to be a **leader**. *A leader is a person who takes charge and helps to guide others.* Talk about Martin Luther King, Jr. and explain that he was a great leader and a man of peace. In his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, he encouraged people to treat everyone with kindness and respect. Tell your child that everyone can make a difference in this world. Ask, “*What is something you would like to help change and make better?*” Encourage your child to be a leader in this effort.





# Family Tips

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## February

### Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about **taking good care of teeth and gums**. Ask questions such as:

- *What should we do to take good care of our teeth?* (brush)
- *Why do we need to brush our teeth every day? What happens if we don't brush?*
- *Which foods help us have healthy teeth?* (fruits, vegetables, dairy.)

At bedtime, ask your child, *Will you please show me how I should brush my teeth?* Encourage your child to brush, and drink lots of water every day.

### Learn About Print

#### Letters in Words

Help your child learn to identify the first and last letter of familiar words.

- Print your child's name on paper. Point to the first letter and say the letter name. Point to the last letter and say the letter name. Say, *"Now it's your turn. Point to and say the first letter in your name. Point to and say the last letter in your name."*
- Tell your child that letters make up words. Print your child's name on paper. As you print the letters, say the name of each letter. Ask your child to point to and say all of the letters in his name.
- Print the following words on paper: *teeth* and *valentine*. Say the words with your child and ask your child to point to and say the name of each letter. Tell your child that the letters made up two words: *teeth* and *valentine*.
- Have your child write the letters in each word.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### Positional Words

Play a game with your child to practice using positional words.

- Ask your child to select a small stuffed animal, such as a bear.
- Ask your child to follow directions like, *"Put the bear beside your knee. Raise the bear above your shoulder."* Continue playing using other positional words (next to, on top, inside, outside, below).
- Switch places with your child and follow her directions using positional words.

### Say the Following RHYME with Your Child

#### My Toothbrush

I have a little toothbrush,  
I hold it very tight.  
I brush my teeth each morning,  
And then again at night.  
I go brush, brush, brush,  
And rinse, rinse, rinse,  
And then when they're all clean,  
I will blow you a kiss.



## **Special Events**

Groundhog Day

Valentine's Day

President's Day

National African American History Month

Dental Health Month

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## **Books to Check Out**

*How Kids Grow*, Jean Mazollo

*I Love You With All My Heart*, Noris Kern

*Brush Your Teeth Please*, Leslie McGuire

*Strangers in the Woods*, Carl Sams and Jean Stoick



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## **Simple Science**

### ***Staying Warm in the Winter***

**Before you begin:** Gather a sweater and a coat for your child.

- Talk with your child about cold, winter temperatures. Ask, “*How do you dress to stay warm in the winter? How do you think animals stay warm when it is cold outside?*” Explain that some animals grow thick coats of fur in the wintertime and need to add thick layers of fat inside their bodies to keep warm.
- Demonstrate how layers protect people and animals from the cold. Have your child put on a sweater. Ask, “*Does your body feel warmer or colder now?*”
- Have your child put on a coat over the sweater and ask, “*How do you feel now that you have one more layer of warmth?*”
- Discuss how layers help to keep people and animals warm in cold temperatures.
- Ask your child to explain why we do not need sweaters or coats in the summer.

## **Meaningful Math**

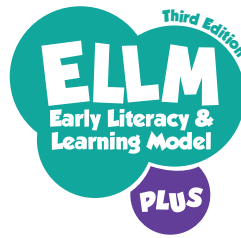
### ***Mealtime Math Ideas***

- Cut an apple in half. Count the pieces.
- When you have pizza, ask your child to count the pieces of pizza. Ask, “If we eat half of the pizza how many pieces will we eat?”
- Give your child a small bunch of grapes. Count the grapes as they are eaten. Count the grapes that are left after each grape is eaten.
- During lunch time, cut your child's sandwich in quarters. Ask your child to count the pieces.
- Give your child a snack of 4 crackers. Ask your child to count the crackers.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Talk with your child about **charity** and the importance of helping others. *Charity means to give help to others in need.* Explain that you can give help to people you know (like by comforting a friend who is upset) and people you don't know (like by giving away used clothes or toys to children who are needy). Help your child think of a way to show charity at school. For example, say, “*Do you know someone at school in need of a friend? Maybe you can help by trying to be a kind friend and playing with that child.*”





# Family Tips

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## March

### Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about **outdoor** activities. Ask questions such as:

- *What are some games and activities you can only do outdoors? Why do you need to be outdoors to do these things?*
- *What are some outdoor activities you like to do with your friends and/or family? Choose one of the activities your child described and do it.*

Talk with your child every day. Listen, praise and encourage your child daily.

### Learn About Print

#### Capital Letters

- Remind your child that capital letters are used at the beginning of names, places, and sentences.
- Ask your child to print his/her name and point to the capital letter at the beginning of the name.
- Print the name of the city you live in and ask your child to point to the capital letter at the beginning of the word.
- Write down the sentence, *Reading is fun*. Ask your child to point to the capital letter at the beginning of the sentence.
- When reading with your child, ask him/her to point to the capital letters in sentences. Have your child practice making capital letters by using her finger to write the letters in the air.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### Making a Spring Book

Before beginning this activity, fold a piece of paper in half to form a book.

- Write the word *Spring* on the cover of the book.
- Ask your child to draw spring pictures on each page of the book. The pictures might include flowers, a rainbow, and children playing outdoors.
- Help your child write a word or phrase about each picture.
- Ask your child to read his book to you.

### Say the Following RHYMES with Your Child

#### March Winds

March winds blow kites all around,  
Blows them right up off the ground.  
March means spring is almost here,  
Sounds of birds you soon will hear.

#### Leprechaun

I'm a little leprechaun all dressed in green.  
The tiniest man you've ever seen.  
If you ever catch me, so it's told,  
I will have to give you my pot of gold!



## Special Events

Dr. Seuss's Birthday

Easter

St. Patrick's Day

First Day of Spring

National Nutrition Month

National Read Across America Day

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## Books to Check Out

*Around the Neighborhood*, Katherine Mead

*Get Moving*, Kathy Feeney

*The Enormous Potato*, Aubrey Davis

*You Are What You Eat*, Sharon Gordon



## Simple Science

### Science Experiment – Wind

**Before you begin:** Gather items such as a paper cup, cotton ball, yarn, block, rock, leaf, or feather.

- Explain that you and your child are going to conduct a science experiment by blowing on objects to simulate the wind.
- Say, “We are going to pretend to be the wind. The wind blows air. Let’s try to use our mouths to blow air like the wind.” Practice blowing air with your child.
- Display the collected items. Ask, “Which of the objects will move by the wind you will make as you blow on them? Why do you think each one will or won’t move?”
- Conduct the experiment. Ask your child to blow on each item, one at a time.
- Group the items based on if they moved or not. Discuss any surprising results.

## Meaningful Math

### Helping with the Laundry

- Before washing, ask your child to help you sort the laundry by color.
- After washing, help your child fold the clothes and sort the socks.
- Encourage your child to group items together according to whom they belong.
- Ask your child to count the socks, the shirts and the pants. Practice counting by two’s and by five’s.
- Make two groups of socks and ask your child to count how many socks there are all together.

## CHARACTER KIDS

Teach your child about being **responsible**. *Being responsible means to be in charge of completing a task.* Explain some things parents are responsible for doing every day. Ask your child, “What things are you responsible for doing at school?” Talk about a job your child can be responsible for doing at home. (For example, making the bed, setting the table, cleaning up a room.) Praise your child’s efforts at learning to be responsible.





# Family Tips

## April

### Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about the **spring season**. Ask questions such as:

- *It is springtime now. What happens outdoors in nature in the spring? (For example, the days get longer and warmer, plants and flowers grow, and animals are born.)*
- *What are some special things we can do and see in the springtime?*

Take a nature walk with your child. Be “Spring Detectives” and look for evidence of spring. Collect and discuss spring items such as seeds, green leaves, and flowers.

### Learn About Print

#### Sentences

- Help your child learn about sentences. Show your child an interesting picture in a book. Ask your child to tell you about the picture.
- Write one of your child’s sentences on a piece of paper. Tell your child that the series of words you wrote is called a sentence.
- Show your child that the first word of the sentence begins with a capital letter. Explain that sentences end with a punctuation mark after the last word. (a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point).
- Look through a book together to find a few short sentences and talk about them with your child.
- Help your child identify where a sentence begins and where it ends.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### Recycle Our Trash

**Before you begin:** Gather a recycle box, or just an empty box, and decorating items.

- Talk with your child about our beautiful earth and ways we can take care of it.
- Say, “*One thing we can all do is recycle our trash.*” Think of other words for trash (garbage, waste, junk, litter). Explain that some trash does not have to be thrown away, instead it can be recycled. This means that the material the trash is made of can be treated and cleaned and then used again to make something else.
- Decorate a *Recycle Box* and use it to collect items that can be recycled.
- Make a poster to remind the family to recycle and post it near the recycle box. Draw and label recyclable items like soda cans, boxes, milk jugs, glass, and newspaper. (plastic, paper, aluminum, glass)
- Sing the **Recycle and Reuse** song with your child.

### Say the Following RHYMES with Your Child

#### The Big Round Sun

The big round sun in a springtime sky.  
 (make circle with arms)  
 Winked at a cloud that was passing by.  
 (wink eye)  
 The little cloud laughed as it scattered rain,  
 (flutter fingers downward)  
 Then out came the big round sun again.  
 (make circle with arms)

#### Recycle and Reuse

Recycle, reuse, recycle,  
 Recycle, reuse, recycle,  
 It’s so easy to do!  
 Cause your trash and my trash,  
 Make up way too much trash.  
 So we have to recycle, reuse, and recycle.



## **Special Events**

April Fool's Day  
National Library Week  
Earth Day  
Keep America Beautiful Month  
National Picnic Day  
National Poetry Month

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## **Books to Check Out**

*Don't Throw That Away!* Lara Bergen  
*I'm Respectful*, Sarah L. Schuette  
*The Earth Book*, Todd Parr  
*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, Eric Carle



## **Simple Science**

### ***Making a Bird Feeder***

**Before you begin:** Gather string or yarn and circle-shaped cereal, such as Cheerios.

- Spend some time sitting still outside watching birds with your child. Say, “*Let’s make a bird feeder so birds will come to our yard and we can watch them eat.*”
- Hand your child the string and Cheerios. As your child threads the cereal, help count each piece of cereal. Encourage your child to count and thread 20 pieces of cereal.
- Hang the string on a nearby tree branch and watch for birds with your child.
- Say, “Some birds have very small beaks like tweezers to gather food.” Ask your child to use tweezers to pick up the remaining cheerios.

## **Meaningful Math**

### ***Let’s Go Shopping!***

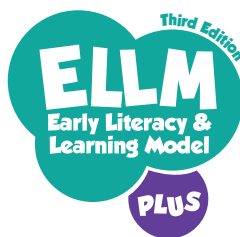
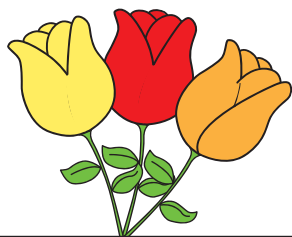
**Before you begin:** Collect food containers, grocery bags, paper, pencils, and coins.

- Encourage your child to use his/her imagination and create a **grocery store** using ten items found around your home, including clean, empty food containers.
- Tell your child that each item will cost one penny.
- Give your child some coins. Help your child sort out and count ten pennies to use.
- Encourage your child to write shopping lists and go shopping for a certain number of items. Help your child count the items and pay one penny for each item.
- Using the remaining coins have your child sort them by nickels, dime, quarters.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Talk with your child about the importance of showing **respect** for others. *Respect is a feeling you have toward someone you look up to.* Talk about people in your life whom you respect and explain how you show your respect. (Being polite, kind, helpful, obedient). Ask, “*Whom do you look up to and respect?*” Encourage your child to show respect for teachers. Ask, “*Why is it important to respect teachers? How can you show them your respect?*” Support your child in his/her efforts to treat others with respect.





# Family Tips

## May

### Take Time to Talk

Read unfamiliar story books with your child. Ask questions to engage him/her such as:

- Before reading, look at the picture on the cover and ask, “*What will this story be about?*”
- Begin reading the story.
- Stop at an exciting part and ask, “*What do you think will happen next? Why?*”
- Near the end of the book, ask, “*How do you think this book will end?*”
- After reading, ask, “*Who was the main character?*” “*What did the main character do?*”

### Learn About Print

#### Punctuation

Remind your child that a sentence is a series of words that begins with a capital letter and ends with punctuation. Draw a period (.), a question mark (?), and an exclamation point (!) on a piece of paper to show your child the three ways to end a sentence.

- Say, “*A period goes at the end of most sentences. Complete the sentence, ‘I am \_\_\_\_ years old.’ That sentence would end with a period.*”
- Say, “*A question mark goes at the end of a sentence that asks a question. Ask me, ‘How old are you?’ That sentence would need to end with a question mark.*”
- Say, “*An exclamation point goes at the end of a sentence that shows excitement. Complete the sentence, ‘I love \_\_\_\_!’ An exclamation point would end that sentence.*”
- Help your child draw a period, a question mark, and an exclamation point.
- Help your child create their own sentences that end with periods, questions marks, and exclamation marks.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### Counting Syllables

Provide your child with an opportunity to identify the number of syllables in words.

- Remind your child that syllables are the chunks of sounds that make up words.
- Say your child’s name and clap once for each syllable in the name.
- Ask your child to clap once for each syllable as you say your child’s name.
- Say, “*We are going to play a syllable game with animal names. I will call out an animal name. Then, I will say the word again and we will jump together and count how many syllables we hear. Tell me the number.*”
- Call out the words below.  
Fox – 1    Bear – 1    Lion – 2    Monkey – 2    Kangaroo – 3    Elephant – 3

### Say the Following SONGS with Your Child

#### My Phone Number

*Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*

What is my phone number? I’ll sing it for you.

\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ (child says phone number)

\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ (child says phone number)

\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ (child says phone number)

What is my phone number? I sang it for you.

#### Flowers

*Tune Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*

Flowers, flowers everywhere,

In the garden in my hair,

In the vase, at the store,

On the table, on the door.

What a lovely time of year,

Flowers blooming, they bring cheer.

Florida Institute of Education at the University of North Florida



## **Special Events**

National Turn-Of Screen Week

Teacher Appreciation Week

Mother's Day

Memorial Day

National Family Month

Physical Fitness Month

Bike Safety Month

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## **Books to Check Out**

*Deep Blue Sea*, Audrey Wood

*From the Garden*, Michael Dahl

*Growing Vegetable Soup*, Lois Ehlert

*The Surprise Garden*, Zoe Hall



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## **Simple Science**

### ***Sun and Shadows***

Talk with your child about the sun. Say, *"The sun warms everything on earth, including the land, air, and water. It is a special star we can see only in the daytime, not at night"*

- Explain that when we are outside in the sunshine, objects can block the sunlight and that will make a shadow for us to see. Go for a walk with your child and point out all the shadows you can find.
- On a sunny day, go outside with your child and look at your shadows. Move your hands and body in different ways and watch as your shadows change.
- Try making shadows on a wall inside your home using your hands and a flashlight or lamp. Point the light at a wall. Put your hands in front of the light and watch the shadow on the wall move as you move your hands.
- Ask your child to explain what happens to the light when shadows are made.

## **Meaningful Math**

### ***I Know My Phone Number***

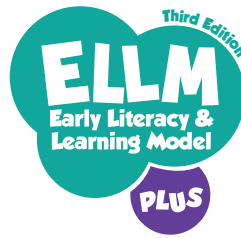
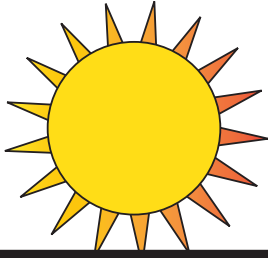
**Begin by saying,** *"To help keep you safe, I want you to know your phone number. I am going to help you learn your phone number this month."*

- With your child, write your phone number in large-sized numerals on a piece of paper.
- Ask the child to point to each numeral while saying the phone number out loud several times a day in the car, at the grocery store, and while waiting for dinner.
- Ask your child to clap once while saying each number.
- Help your child practice dialing his phone number on a telephone.
- Sing the *My Phone Number* song with your child.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Talk with your child about the importance of being **trustworthy**. *Bring trustworthy means doing what you know is right, even when no one tells you what to do.* Think of a recent example of when your child did the right thing without being told. Share it with your child and say, *"I am so proud of you for being trustworthy!"* Share your own stories of learning to become trustworthy as a child. Be on the lookout this month for opportunities to tell your child when he/she is acting in a way that is trustworthy.





# Family Tips

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## June

### Take Time to Talk

Have a conversation with your child about safety. Ask the following question:

- *Tell me how to stay safe and get help if there is an emergency.*

Discuss your child's answer and provide more information about fire safety - such as *Stop, Drop and Roll*. Tell your child that for many emergencies we need to ask others for help. Teach your child how to dial **9 1 1** when there is an emergency. Give your child time to practice dialing the number and stating her name, address, and phone number.

### Learn About Print

#### *Space Between Words*

Help your child notice spaces between words in sentences.

- Say, "*Spaces are put between words so we know where words begin and end.*"
- Let your child complete the sentence, "*I love to \_\_\_\_ in the summer!*" Write the sentence down and ask your child to point to each of the spaces between words.
- Help your child count the number of words in the sentence.
- Ask your child to copy the sentence on a piece of paper. Remind your child to leave a space between each word so that it will be easier to read.
- Have your child count the words.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### *Taking a Letter Walk*

- Help your child review letter names and the sounds they make by taking a *Letter Walk*.
- Go outside and ask your child to look around for any letters she can see. If driving, follow routes where your child will see signs and buildings that display letters and words. If walking, look for letters on car license plates and bumper stickers.
- When your child sees letters, ask, "*Tell me the name of a letter you see. What sound does that letter make? Do you see any other letters?*" As your child makes progress, ask your child to look for words.
- If possible, have your child write the letters he/she sees in a letter journal.

### Say the Following SONGS with Your Child

#### **Stop, Drop, and Roll**

*Tune: "The Farmer in the Dell"*

Stop, drop, and roll.

Stop, drop, and roll.

If your clothes catch on fire,  
You should stop, drop, and roll.

#### **Friends**

*Tune: Row, Row, Row your Boat*

Love, love, love your friends,

Different as they seem.

Playing, laughing, joking, helping,  
True friends are like a dream!



## **Special Events**

Flag Day  
Father's Day  
First Day of Summer  
National Safety Month  
National Zoo and Aquarium Month  
National Family Week  
National Fruits and Vegetables Month

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## **Books to Check Out**

*A Sunny Day*, Lola M. Schaefer  
*My Five Senses*, Alike  
*My Friends and I*, Lisa Jahn-Clough  
*We Belong Together*, Todd Parr



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## **Simple Science**

### ***What dissolves***

**Before you begin:** Gather three small plastic containers filled 3/4 with water and 1 tablespoon of flour, salt, and sugar.

- Tell your child he is going to perform an experiment. Say, "We are going to find out if flour, salt, and sugar dissolve in water."
- Tell your child dissolve means to melt.
- Ask your child to predict if the flour, salt, and sugar will dissolve in the water and why they think that.
- Perform the experiment by adding the flour to one other container of water and stir. Discuss with your child what happened and if his/her prediction was correct.
- Perform the same steps with salt and sugar.

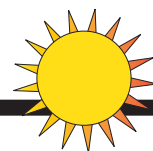
## **Meaningful Math**

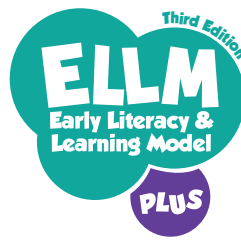
### ***Math is Fun***

- Write the numbers 1 to 10 on index cards.
- Place the cards on a table in random order. Ask your child to put the numbers in sequential order. Do this several times.
- Ask your child to count some household object:
  - count the spoons in the utensil drawer.
  - count the socks in the laundry.
  - count the books in a basket.
  - count the washcloths on the shelf.
  - make two groups using the objects your child counted. Have your child count how many items there are all together.

## **CHARACTER KIDS**

Talk with your child about the importance of **friendship**. *Friendship is what two people have when they like each other, help each other, and share with each other.* Ask your child to tell you about some special friends. Make a friendship card for a good friend. Ask your child to finish the statement, "I like being your friend because \_\_\_\_." Help write your child's words on the card and encourage your child to illustrate the message.





# Family Tips

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## July

### Take Time to Talk

The 4th of July is a time to celebrate living in the **United States of America**. Help your child think about this holiday by asking questions such as:

- *Tell me three things that are special about living in America?*
- *The 4th of July is America's birthday. How do you think we should celebrate it?*
- *What is your favorite thing to do on the 4th of July?*

The 4th of July is often celebrated with fireworks and parades. Talk with your child about what this holiday means to you. Plan to participate in a 4th of July family activity.

### Learn About Print

#### *Identifies Words, Phrases, and Sentences*

- Show your child a cereal box and ask him to “read” some of the words, phrases and sentences seen on the box. As the words are read, use a marker to draw a circle around the words.
- Cut out the front of a cereal box. Cut it in four to five smaller pieces to make a puzzle. Help your child put the puzzle together.
- Collect old magazines or advertisements from the mail and have your child circle words and draw lines through sentences. Tell your child that words make sentences.

### See and Hear: Letters, Sounds, and Words

#### *Alphabet Letters*

- Spread out many letters on the table. Ask your child to select one letter and tell you the letter name and the sound it makes.
- Ask your child to think of a word that begins with that letter sound.
- Ask your child to think of words that ends with the same letter sound.
- Continue to play by selecting at least five additional letters.

### Say the Following **RHYMES** with Your Child

#### **Our Flag**

As red as fire,  
As blue as the sky,  
As white as the snow,  
See our flag fly.  
Three pretty colors,  
Wave at the sky.  
Red, white and blue.

#### **Sun in the Sky**

The summer sun in the sky,  
Shining up so high  
Makes it warm for outside fun.  
To play and run and swim,  
To hike and fish and to play in the sun.



## Special Events

Independence Day

Parent's Day

National Picnic Month

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## Books to Check Out

*A Garden of Opposites*, Nancy Davis  
*Chrysanthemum*, Kevin Henkes  
*Have You Seen My Duckling?* Nancy Tafuri  
*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, Eric Carle



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## Simple Science

### *Will it Sink or Float?*

**Before you begin:** Near a tub of water, gather several items that will sink or float such as a pencil, block, coin, cork, marble, plastic lid, feather, spoon, and paper clip.

- Say, “Let’s do a science experiment to see if these things will sink or float.”
- Remind your child that heavy items usually sink, while lighter items tend to float.
- Show an item and ask, “Do you think this will sink or float? Why do you think that?”
- Have your child place each item in the water to see if it will sink or float. Make two groups of items, those that sink and those that float. Discuss your results.

## Meaningful Math

### *I Know My Home Address*

**Begin by saying,** “To help keep you safe, I want you to know your home address. I am going to help you learn your address this month.”

- Take your child outside your home and show him where your house or apartment numbers are written. Walk to your street sign and read the street name.
- Back inside, sit with your child and neatly write down your full mailing address.
- Explain each part as you show it to your child, pointing out your home or apartment number, your street, city, state, and zip code.
- Provide your child with an envelope and have them copy the address onto the envelope. Tell your child the address on the envelope tells the mail person where to deliver the mail.
- Say your address, a little at a time, and encourage your child to repeat after you.
- Do this activity daily until your child memorizes your mailing address.

## CHARACTER KIDS

Talk with your child about **citizenship**. *Citizenship means to be a member of a group or community.* Explain that people show good citizenship by acting in ways that are caring towards the others in the group. Say, “Our family is a group and you are a member of our family community. How do the members of our family show good citizenship?” Encourage your child to think of “Good Citizenship Awards” he/she can create and give to family members like *Most Helpful*, *Funniest Joke Teller*, or *Best Chef*.

