

February School Psych Corner:

To start us off in February. Here's a cute and simple craft project you can do with your kids for Valentine's Day. They can give single flowers away to friends, or make a bouquet for a special person!



How To: Make Blooming Cupcake Liners

What You Need:

Cupcake liners (in assorted colors)
Pipe cleaners (in green)
Craft glue
Craft knife

1. Pile 5 to 6 cupcake liners on top of one another. Using a craft knife, poke a hole through the center of the stack.
2. Take one pipe cleaner and apply a dab of hot glue to one end. Then secure one liner to this glue. Set aside to dry.
3. Once the glue has dried, scrunch the liner closed to create the look of a flower bud.
4. Repeat Step 2 with the additional liners, sliding onto the same pipe cleaner, securing with glue, and scrunching together.
5. Wrap the pipe cleaner around the base of the bloom, and bend the pipe cleaner to create a leaf-shape.



Recently I read an article that talked about how young children who are from poor families hear fewer words spoken to them in their homes- as many as 30 million fewer words by the time they are 3, then children from richer families. As a result, these children often have struggles with reading and writing in school, and even show difficulty with understanding and following directions. But this is **FIXABLE!** By actively working to communicate with your children, you can help your child become a better learner, no matter what your financial situation!!

I've enclosed the article below for you to read, but thought it would be a great idea to share some **"Communication Ideas"** with you this month! These are just a few ideas to get you started.



First, here are some tips on how to communicate with your children:

- 1) Use open ended questions that encourage your child to talk to you. For ex: How was your day? Tell me what you liked doing best at the park? Open ended questions let kids know you're interested in what they have to say!
- 2) Listen attentively- repeat "you messages" back to your child. Listen to what your child says then repeat what they said back to them by using "you messages". For ex: "So, you liked the part of

the movie where the fish did a flip in the air". Your messages tell kids that what they say is important!

- 3) Use positive messages not negative message. For ex: "Walk please" instead of "Don't run!" Positive messages provide children with more concrete understanding of expectations without making them feel that they did something wrong.
- 4) Use "I messages" to talk about your feelings or emotions. For example, say, "I get angry when toys are left all over the floor, and I need you to pick them up now", rather than, "You made a mess and left your stuff on the floor".
- 5) Use reciprocal conversation. Reciprocal conversation is two-sided conversation, or a give and take conversation. It is talking with your child not at your child!
- 6) Make eye contact when talking to your child. Just as you feel someone is really listening and communicating with you when they look at you, your child will feel the same when you take the time to look at them while talking to them.
- 7) Keep directions, simple, short and consistent.
- 8) Allow children choices when applicable. Giving a child a choice of two appropriate actions teaches them to think about consequences of their actions and helps them learn how to make decisions.

Additionally, you can do the following activities with your child to encourage open communication.

- 1) Read books together. Encourage vocabulary development and a love for reading by reading with your child!
- 2) Have your child help with the grocery list. Make the list together, have them help you read the list in the store and then find the items on the shelf!
- 3) Have a family game night
- 4) Go on a family outing- such as a trip to the park or to a local museum. Ask your child about what they liked about their trip
- 5) Write a story about your family with your child.
- 6) Have regular family meetings with your children, to discuss how you all as a family can work together, get along better, etc... Do this when you are all calm. You may be surprised at the difference this makes!

Here's the article for you to read if you are interested!

Closing The 'Word Gap' Between Rich And Poor

By NPR Staff

December 29, 2013 5:09 AM



http://www.npr.org/2013/12/29/257922222/closing-the-word-gap-between-rich-and-poor?utm_medium=Email&utm_source=share&utm_campaign=