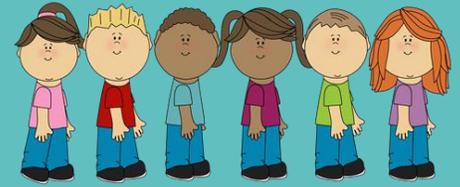


# Early Learning Parents' Pages

## April 2018



- Keep your child safe
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- The week of the young child
- Special day activities



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Apr. 16-20: The week of the young child

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OFFICE OF  
**Early Learning**

LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.

## Safety first!

People around the world promote Safe Kids Day to help educate families about protecting their children from preventable accidents.

Sure, kids will tumble and fall on their own, but there are actions you can take to minimize their injuries. This year, Safe Kids Day is Apr. 28. [Sign up](#) on the [Safe Kids website](#) to receive the latest safety tips and updates. There's a section [For Parents](#) with safety videos and tips and you can sign up for newsletters, read stories from families who share their personal experiences with safety and read blogs from safety experts.

tips for families from the website:

For [infants](#), make sure your baby sleeps on a firm mattress with a fitted sheet and without toys.

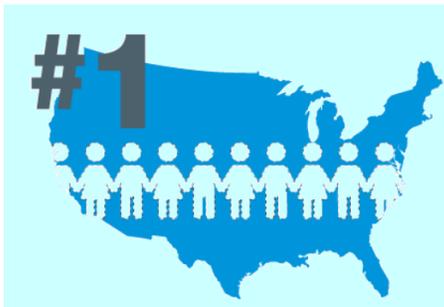
For [toddlers](#), keep cleaners and things such as liquid laundry packets out of reach and sight. If your child gets into any liquid laundry packets, call the Poison Help number: 1-800-222-1222.

Once your children take their first steps during ages [2-5](#), talk to them about how to be safe and aware when walking. Teach them never to run out into the street.

**PREVENTABLE INJURIES ARE THE #1 KILLER OF KIDS IN THE U.S.**

Ages [5-9](#) are some of the best ages for children and they will start exploring their neighborhoods and local parks. Whether your child is riding, skating or scooting, be sure they "Use their head and wear a helmet!" Make sure they know to look left, right and left again before crossing any streets.

Check out the health and safety tips on the Office of Early Learning's [Health and Safety Pinterest board](#).



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has tips on [child safety for families](#). You can find a [Color Me Safe](#) coloring book for your child on their website. As he colors the pages, talk to him about ways to stay safe at home, and in the car or on a bus.

Safe Kids Worldwide has [safety tips](#) for children from birth to teenage years. Here are a few of the safety

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## Playing in Parks and Playgrounds

Children learn best through play – especially outdoor play. Outdoor play provides opportunities for children to choose how and where they want to play, to use their imaginations and creative abilities, and to learn about nature. Children who spend time playing outdoors are more likely to engage in higher levels of social interaction and use cognitive skills such as decision-making, reasoning, empathy and physical activity. Children learn through experience by seeing, feeling, touching and hearing. Outdoor play provides space and material for children to inspire their own thoughts, wonders and creations.

You may have a yard or nearby outdoor play area where you can play with your child outdoors or there may be a park or playground where you take your child to play. Make up adventures or games with your child. Pretend the park is an island and you must find things to use for cooking or making a place to live. In her imagination, the playground could become a school where she is the teacher or a zoo where she is the zookeeper. Play a treasure hunt game where you each have a bag or bucket and look for treasures to place in them, such as rocks, pinecones, leaves and feathers. Ask your child to see how many different ways she can use her arms or legs on the equipment at the park, such as “You use your legs for climbing the slide or pushing yourself in a swing and you use your arms for holding on to the slide and the chains of the swing.”

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## Use special days in special ways for fun and learning...

In the March issue of *Parents' Pages*, you may have noticed that there was an April Calendar of Events listing many celebrations or designated days to recognize specific animals, foods, events or holidays. This calendar gives you a variety of fun topics to discuss or special activities to plan to do with your child.

The Week of the Young Child focuses on special activities to do each day for a week, but you may just give your child a banana for a snack on Apr. 18 and tell him it is [National Banana Day](#). April is [Celebrate Poetry Month](#), so you can read a poem or [nursery rhyme](#) to your child each day in April. On Apr. 28, discuss ways to keep safe with your child and ways to [keep frogs safe](#) by preserving the swamps and marshes in Florida for frogs.

If your child is old enough to talk, ask him to tell you how to make a [peanut butter and jelly sandwich](#) on Apr. 2 for Peanut Butter and Jelly Day. Follow his exact words in making the sandwich and watch his reaction as you make it. If he does not tell you to use a knife to get the peanut butter out of the jar or to spread the peanut butter with a knife, ask him how you should get the peanut butter out and get it on the bread. This will make him think about giving directions and following directions. Make these activities fun and invite other family members to join you.

On April 11, have your child think of [something special to do with his pet](#). If your family does not have a pet, visit an animal shelter and bring pet food or old blankets and towels to donate for the animals at the shelter.



[Cooking together is a fun way for your child to learn](#) about following directions and math skills as well. Chocolate Mousse Day, Blueberry Pie Day and Oatmeal Cookie Day are great days for cooking together. Bake a [blueberry pie](#) with your child. Use two refrigerated piecrusts and let him roll them out to flatten the crust (motor skills). He can measure four cups of blueberries (math skills) and a half-cup of sugar (math skills). He can help you set the oven for 400 degrees (math skills) and the timer for 30 minutes (math skills). Then talk with him about degrees and time (math skills) as ways to measure temperature and time.

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## The week of the young child

Every year, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) celebrates the [Week of the Young Child](#). The idea behind the special week (Apr. 16-20 this year) is to recognize and celebrate young children, their families, and their teachers or caregivers. Each day of the week emphasizes important aspects of a young child's healthy development.

**Music Monday** reminds us that [music plays an important role](#) in developing young children's math, language and literacy skills. To celebrate Music Monday, make up and record your own unique version of a song with your child. Write a [new song](#) together and share it on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or post it to Twitter using the hashtag #woyc18.

**Tasty Tuesday** celebrates [healthy eating and fitness](#). You can connect cooking or preparing snacks with your child to math, science and literacy skills. Measuring ingredients, counting the number of grapes or strawberries needed for snacks, or setting a timer and watching it count down the time it takes muffins to cook are all math-related activities you can do with your child at home. Create your own [healthy snacks](#) and share the recipes and photos of your creations on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or post to Twitter using the hashtag #woyc18.



**Work Together Wednesday** encourages young children to work together to solve problems or build something. Working with others and building with blocks, boxes, or other building materials will help

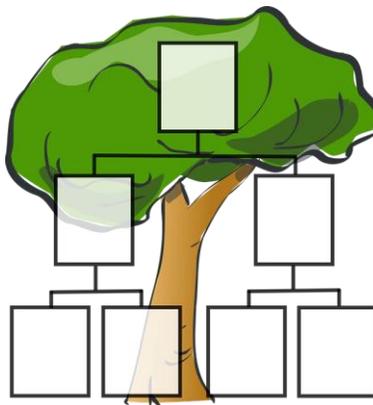


your child's development of social skills as well as math, science and literacy skills. Have your child build something with other children or with you and share pictures of the creation on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or Twitter using the #woyc18 hashtag.

**Artsy Thursday** is an opportunity for your child to use her imagination and create with her hands. Have crayons, paper, paint, markers and other art or craft supplies for her to use. Play music and have her draw the way the music makes her feel. Encourage her creativity and share photos of your child's creations on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or Twitter using the #woyc18 hashtag.



**Friday** is a day to share family stories and celebrate your own family. Your family members are your child's first teachers. Look at family pictures with your child and talk about the important things family members do for each other. Tell her about the day she was born and



how exciting it was for her family. Share pictures and stories about your family on [NAEYC's Facebook page](#) or post to Twitter using the hashtag #woyc18.

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## Playing in Parks and Playgrounds

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As a family, it is fun to visit local, state and national parks. Many of these have family discounts or are free and feature special activities for families. Apr. 21, 2018, is the first day of National Park Week. National parks have free entrance on that day as well as Jan. 15, Sept. 22 and Nov. 11. If you live near a national park, take advantage of the free entrance days to treat yourself and your child to fun, outdoor adventure. To find a National Park on line, visit <https://www.nps.gov/findapark/advanced-search.hi>



Children and Nature Network has free [family activity kits](#) available in different languages. These kits help families learn about the benefits of spending time with their children outdoors.

## ...special ways for special days

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All of the days on the calendar are reminders to have fun with your child as he is learning new skills or practicing skills he has already learned. While having a great time with you, he will realize that learning new things is exciting!

Use the list below to get a head start on special days in May. And don't forget Mother's Day!



## Special Dates in May

Military Appreciation Month ♦ May 1 Mother Goose Day & Poem on Your Pillow Day & World Asthma Day ♦ May 2 Baby Day & Two Different-Colored Shoes Day ♦ May 4 Firefighters' Day & International Tuba Day ♦ May 6 Lemonade Day ♦ May 8 No Socks Day ♦ May 10 Windmill Day ♦ May 11 Provider Appreciation Day & Public Gardens Day ♦ May 12 Train Day ♦ May 13 Mother's Day & Frog Jumping Day ♦ May 14 Chicken Dance Day ♦ May 15 Chocolate Chip Day ♦ May 16 Sea Monkey Day & Drawing Day ♦ May 18 Museum Day ♦ May 19 Learn To Swim Day & Plant a Lemon Tree Day ♦ May 20 Pick Strawberries Day ♦ May 23 Turtle Day ♦ May 24 Tiara Day & Brothers' Day ♦ May 25 Tap Dance Day ♦ May 26 Paper Airplane Day ♦ May 27 Sun Screen Day ♦ May 28 Hamburger Day ♦ May 29 Biscuit Day & Paper Clip Day ♦ May 30 Water a Flower Day ♦ Macaroon Day

HAPPY  
MOTHER'S  
Day!



Rodney J. MacKinnon  
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