

# Early Learning Parents' Pages



## January 2019

- Having a baby in the New Year?
- What you can do to prevent the flu
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- Remember to celebrate literacy



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OFFICE OF  
**Early Learning**

LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.

## New Year, New Baby?

If your family welcomed a new baby in the new year, you may be experiencing many changes in your life. No matter how prepared you are, a new baby demands a lot of time, attention and love to meet his needs and nurture his development.

If this is your first child, you may need some assistance and information to get off to a great start. If you are a first-time mom, ask your doctor about ways to care for your health so you will be healthy to care for your new child. If you are a dad, find ways to support your wife or partner and make sure she has time to sleep and care for herself.

There are many resources for new parents available online, such as newsletters, videos, apps and health information. The [Office of Early Learning](#) has [resources for families](#) to support their child's growth and development as well as information on finding quality child care for your new baby. The Early Learning and Developmental Standards are on the website with information, activities and additional [resources for families](#). The *First Teacher* books (located



under the "Parents" tab in [Understanding Your Growing Child](#)) have information and activities you can use at home to support your child's learning and development.

You will need to become familiar with developmental milestones. Your pediatrician will ask you about your child's development during [well-child visits](#). Your child will reach milestones in how he plays, moves, communicates, learns, interacts with others and thinks. One of the first milestones you will see happens around 2 months of age when he begins smiling at you and other people. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers a list of milestones for parents to use to track their child's development starting with [milestones for age 2 months](#). [CDC's Milestone Tracker App](#) has videos and photos that illustrate the milestones. You can keep track of your child's milestones on the on the app; get



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## What you can do to prevent flu

During the holiday season, your family may have traveled to visit family or attended gatherings with family and friends. Your young child may have been exposed to cold or flu germs even if no one you visited appeared to be sick.

Flu germs spread through the air or by contact when someone touches surfaces on which an infected person has sneezed or touched. If a child plays with a toy that an infected child has been using or is in close contact with a friend who has the flu, she will be exposed to the virus.



It is difficult to tell the difference between the beginning stage of a cold and the flu. The CDC's website has a chart for parents to compare their child's symptoms to flu symptoms and cold symptoms, [Is it a cold or flu?](#) It is important to know if your child has the flu since children [under the age of 5 are more likely to have complications](#) and serious medical conditions caused by the flu virus, particularly children ages 2 and under.

If your child is older than 6 months, the best prevention for the flu is to have her and all other family members vaccinated every year. If [she is 6 months or younger](#), she is too young for the [flu vaccination](#), so all other family members need to get the flu vaccine to keep her safe.

Other flu prevention resources for families and child care providers are available from [HealthyChildren.org](#) and the CDC ([posters, factsheets, brochures, activity sheets](#) and [videos](#)). Get coloring books and activity books for your child to use to learn more about preventing the flu, [Ready Wrigley Prepares for Flu Season, Are You a Flu Fighter?](#)

## Don't forget to Celebrate Literacy

Jan, 28 through Feb. 1, is Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! [Check to see some of the activities.](#)

**"Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read."**

~ Marilyn Jager Adams

**"Reading ... a vacation for the mind."** ~ Dave Barry

**"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."**

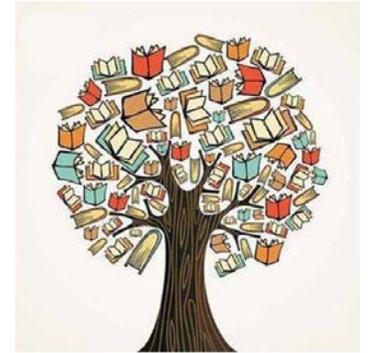
~ Groucho Marx

**"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."**

~ Dr. Seuss

**"Today a reader, tomorrow a leader."** ~ Margaret Fuller

Reading can seriously damage your ignorance.



**A book is a gift you can open again and again.**

—Garrison Keillor

**Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.** —Emilie Buchwald

**One of the greatest gifts adults can give—to their offspring and to their society—is to read to children.** —Carl Sagan

**Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift.** —Kate DiCamillo

**The greatest gift is a passion for reading.**

—Elizabeth Hardwick

**When I say to a parent, "Read to a child," I don't want it to sound like medicine. I want it to sound like chocolate.**

~ Mem Fox

**Books make great gifts because they have whole worlds inside of them."** ~ Neil Gaiman

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*“My child plays all day at school.”*

You may hear some parents complaining about the amount of time their child spends in play activities at school or child care. “When I was a child, we only played during recess for about 30 minutes a day!” some adults say. Many parents think they are paying for their child to sit and listen to the teacher’s words and that memorizing words and facts is the best way to learn.

Play at school is beginning to disappear in some schools and children are getting less time for “free play” in many schools, child care centers and family child care homes. Researchers, scientists and pediatricians tell parents and teachers that play is essential to a young child’s brain development. Play is more than recess. It is any activity allowing children to make choices, plan together, talk with each other and use skills they have learned to solve problems and have fun. Teachers should encourage young children to play all day long in the classroom as well as outside. The teacher’s role is to connect language, activities and ideas children are using to the standards teachers are required to teach.



Recess or outside play is one of the best ways for children to practice physical skills such as running, jumping and climbing in a safe environment.

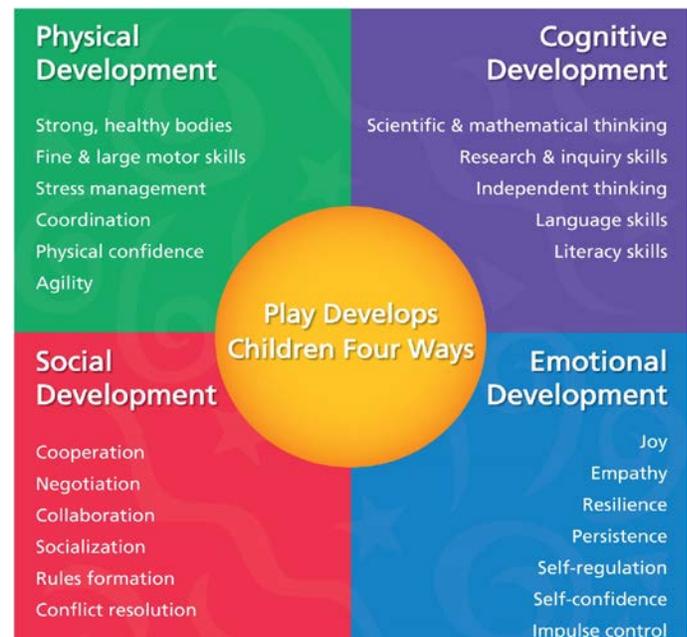
These skills help children develop strong muscles and coordination. Recess is a perfect time to practice social skills such as taking turns, sharing equipment, following rules and making new friends.

Play at school and at home supports a child’s development in four important areas: physical development, cognitive

## Playing to learn...



development, social development and emotional development. The chart from *The Strong National Museum of Play* shows the important skills children practice during play. If you compare the skills listed to [executive function skills](#) that children and adults need to be successful in school and at work, you will find that play prepares children for success in all stages of life.



Play at school from the Strong National Museum of Play



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## ...New Year, New Baby

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tips on ways to encourage your child's development; and learn what to do if you become **concerned about your child's development**.

As a newborn, your child is susceptible to viruses and childhood diseases. Health is probably one of your greatest concerns. Make sure he has all of his **immunizations** on time, **sleeps from 8 to 16 hours** a day (not all at one time), **sleeps on his back** with no loose bedding, blankets or toys in his crib, and **breastfeeds** or **drinks formula** every two to four hours. If your child is "fussy" or cries a lot, he may be sensitive to changes in light, temperature or sound. Every child is born with his own way of reacting to the world—**his temperament**. When you recognize your child's temperament, you can plan responses to certain situations or change his routine to make feeding, baths, naps and going for walks or out in public easier for both of you.

For additional resources on topics concerning the healthy growth and development of your child, visit **OEL's website**.

**"You can find magic wherever you look.  
Sit back and relax, all you need is a book."**

~ Dr. Seuss

**"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child."**

~ Dr. Seuss

**Beyond BookSmart**  
**EXECUTIVE FUNCTION DEVELOPMENT**  
When do skills typically emerge?

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
*Emerging Skills:*  
Learning to pay attention  
Learning to control behavior & impulses  
Shifting behavior to follow rules  
Following 2-3 step directions

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
*Emerging Skills:*  
Learning to think ahead to plan actions & to solve problems  
Managing & following a daily routine  
Modifying behavior in changing environments

**HIGH SCHOOL**  
*Emerging Skills:*  
Learning to think & behave flexibly  
Organizing & planning projects or activities with friends or classmates  
Adapting to changing rules  
Deepening self-awareness

**COLLEGE**  
*Emerging Skills:*  
Using Executive Function skills to be independent and productive  
Self-monitoring of productivity & performance  
Consistent impulse control across different environments

**ADULT**  
*Refining Skills:*  
Using Executive Function skills to balance work & personal life  
Effectively managing multiple schedules & projects  
Using strategies to set & achieve meaningful goals

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## Special dates in February

Feb. 1 Bubble Gum Day ♦ Feb. 2 Candlemas & Groundhog Day ♦ Feb. 3 Feed the Birds Day & Super Bowl Sunday ♦ Feb. 4 Thank a Mailman Day ♦ Feb. 5 Chinese New Year's ♦ Feb. 6 National Chopsticks Day ♦ Feb. 8 Boy Scout Day ♦ Feb. 9 National Pizza Day ♦ Feb. 10 Umbrella Day ♦ Feb. 11 Make a Friend Day, National Inventor's Day & White T-shirt Day ♦ Feb. 12 Abraham Lincoln's Birthday & Plum Pudding Day ♦ Feb. 14 Ferris Wheel Day & Valentine's Day ♦ Feb. 15 National Gum Drop Day & Susan B. Anthony Day ♦ Feb. 17 National Random Acts of Kindness Day ♦ Feb. 18 President's Day ♦ Feb. 19 National Chocolate Mint Day ♦ Feb. 20 Cherry Pie Day & Love Your Pet Day ♦ Feb. 22 George Washington's Birthday ♦ Feb. 24 National Tortilla Chip Day & Oscar Nght ♦ Feb. 26 Carnival Day ♦ Feb. 27 Polar Bear Day ♦ Feb. 28 National Tooth Fairy Day



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