

11.2019.

Deo Credimus

# PARENT /CHILD HANDBOOK



## HAPPY DAYS KINDERGARDEN SCHOOL

57 Southfield Road Plumstead

Tel: +27(021) 797 8541

Fax: +27 (021) 762 0645

Established 1963

Email: [info@happydaysschool.co.za](mailto:info@happydaysschool.co.za)

### ADMISSION POLICY

#### LANGUAGE:

All Teaching and Learning conducted in English.

#### THE SCHOOL:

Happy Days is one of the most established Christian Educare and Grade R schools in the Southern Suburbs. The school has been in existence for more than 50 years and the Victorian Building built in 1928 has large grounds with lovely shady trees, sandpits and jungle gyms.

We take in children from all cultures and all walks of life and we consider ourselves a home away from home. We are also within easy walking distance from the Plumstead Station.

We are registered with the Department of Social Welfare, Health and WCED. Grade R Classes are CAPS Compliant, And Birth to 4 Years follow NELDS (National Early Learning Developmental Areas)

We cater for children from 3 months right up to Grade R and we have an aftercare for children ages 8-12 years.

On enrolment at our school parents receive complete copies of our philosophy and our policies governing the school. We offer extra Mural activities such as Pottery, Monkeynastics, Computer, Drum kit, Speech & Drama and Action Ball whereby a fee is charged payable directly to the provider.



|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>ATTACHMENTS:</i>                 |  |
| <i>COPY OF SIGNED ENROLMENT</i>     |  |
| <i>DAILY PROGRAM</i>                |  |
| <i>FEE STRUCTURE</i>                |  |
| <i>HEALTHY DIET FOR KIDS NOTICE</i> |  |
| <i>GENERAL INFORMATION</i>          |  |
| <i>WORKBOOK NOTICE</i>              |  |
| <i>YELLOW BOOKLET</i>               |  |
| <i>PARENTING TIPS</i>               |  |

### HISTORY

**Welcome** to Happy Days Kindergarden. Thank you for choosing our school. We have been servicing the community since 1963. It all started when a charming Victorian home was converted into a Nursery School.

Happy Days has grown in its Christian tradition and has continued to establish the best programmes and facilities over the past five decades.

Our programmes for the children are excellent and are designed to encourage and stimulate young minds, Enhancing their growth and developmental skills with Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills.

At inception the school only facilitated preschool children but today Caters for children from birth to after school care. Our staff are dedicated to the wellbeing and loving care of each child.

If you have any query whatsoever, or require any additional information concerning your child please feel free to contact the office and make an appointment with your class Teacher or Departmental Head at a mutually convenient time.

Secretary/Reception

Miss. Olivia Stark

Teacher /Parent Departmental Head

Mrs. Antoinette Paulis and Mrs. Candice Rhoda

Bursar/PA

Mrs. Felicia Swail

Principal

Mrs. Annette van Biljon .....

## HAPPY DAYS MISSION STATEMENT

### “Providing care and programming in a faith based community”

Happy Days is a Christian based child-centered day care that operates Monday to Friday from 730am to 530pm to provides friendly, nurturing and loving Care and offers a high quality program for Babies & Toddlers (0-2.5 years), Pre-school (2-5 years,) Grade R, and aftercare (6-14 years).

The heartbeat of our school is based on the biblical principle of Proverbs 22.6 “Bring up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Each child is a gift from God with special abilities and talents and we strive to provide the environment in which each child can develop to his or her fullest potential.

Upon enrollment at Happy Days Kindergarten we acknowledge, parents as the primary caregiver and we join in partnership with you in providing the best of care for your child through God’s love for him/her as revealed in Jesus Christ through the Bible.

Our focus is the formative years – 3 months to 7 years – with Literacy, Numeracy and the achievement of Life Skills. Our curriculum promotes the education of the whole child through all its developmental stages preparing them for formal schooling and ultimate Life readiness.

## PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

### Happy Days Kindergarten Programming and Daily Scheduling:

Happy Days provides quality child care, recognizing the uniqueness of the family unit and types of care needed. Each child is respected for their diverse personality, cultural background and developmental level.

All children are provided with a stimulating, safe, loving and nurturing environment with carefully designed programs to meet the needs and interests of each child. Happy Days recognizes that quality and successful early childhood development has a significant long term effect on a person through childhood, adolescence and adulthood.

The programming within our school reflects the need to be sensitive to achieve maximum growth and development during early childhood development. Programs challenge and motivate children through an appropriate balance of indoor and outdoor child-centered, hands on activities which provide Biblically based instruction, a variety of crafts, games and recreation activities, music, Literacy, Numeracy, Life Skills and nutritional and health related instruction.

Through these experiences, the program and instruction fosters the development of a positive self- image, provides guidance and support for the development of: respect for self and others, the need for assuming responsibility, and develops social skills.

5-6 YEARS – GRADE R - CAPS (Western Cape Education Department)  
0-4 YEARS - NELDS (National Early Learning Areas)

### Our philosophy centers on the basic rights of the child to:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ☺ <b>Be Happy</b>  | ☺ <b>Be Satisfied – With Healthy Food and Enough to Drink</b> |
| ☺ <b>Be cared for by a caring, responsible and motivated adult</b>                                       | ☺ <b>Have a place to play in a safe environment</b>           |
| ☺ <b>Be provided with stimulating materials needed for physical, intellectual and social development</b> | ☺ <b>Have access to friends</b>                               |

### DAYCARE PROGRAM: Herewith attached.

We offer a program for Toddlers, Preschoolers and Grade R. Each day we offer the children:

**CIRCLE TIME, ART PROJECTS, SONGS AND STORIES, LEARNING GAMES** and many other fun activities.

My program includes a fun monthly curriculum which focuses on the children having fun while learning. My monthly themes are broken down into weekly themes: such as Frog week, butterfly week or Spring day plus many other weekly themes. My weekly themes have activities, songs and games to help the children learn in a fun and positive way. My curriculum is designed to promote school readiness skills: to develop good manners, strength of character and social skills: and to foster creative play.

My program will also teach the children to identify and comprehend numbers 1-20 and the alphabet. They will learn pre-math’s skills including recognizing basic shapes, counting, sorting, sequencing and more by using our child-centered pre-school program. Through circle time, music, stories, games and daily activities children will build language skills that will help them when they begin reading.

### OUR GOAL:

We want your child to have a great day. We want them to feel safe and comfortable here. We will provide them with lots of love and attention along with lots of fun daily activities to help them learn and grow. We hope to teach each child to respect themselves and each other. We believe all children should have a safe and happy environment. We teach the children to respect themselves and their friends we don’t allow hitting, biting, yelling and name calling at any time. Children will be encouraged through positive guidance to be nice to their friends. The only disciplinary action staff will take, only when absolutely necessary will be the “time out” method. We try to provide a daily structured program with an emphasis on creative art. We also work on “getting ready for school” through the morning program. We have found that children seem more content if they know what to expect throughout the day, most children thrive on daily routines.

### DAILY ROUTINE:

We start our morning with breakfast.

**Weather Chart** - The children look out the window to see what the weather is. We then turn the arrow on the weather chart to the correct weather for the day. Then the children do the calendar. The leader for the day gets to put up that days number. We have a Velcro calendar with Velcro numbers that stick on. After the number is put up we sing the 7 days of the week song.

**Circle Time** - We gather all the children into a circle for circle time. We provide fun games or activities during circle time. One circle time activity we do during farm week is we put plastic farm animals into a packet and each child takes turns pulling out one animal and they say what animal it is and then they point to another child to have them make the correct animal sound. If they don’t know then they point to another child until someone knows. It is a cute little game and the child has fun learning which animals belong on the farm and what sounds they make.

**Songs** - We then sing songs to go along with that week’s theme. We try to do a few interactive songs each day. We do London Bridge, if you are happy and you know it clap your hands, Ring around the rosy, etc. We read a lot of fun books each day too. One of the books we read is centered round our weekly theme. Some of our stories are done on a felt board plus we use puppets and other props too to enhance the experience and engage the imagination of the children.

**Creative Activity** – We provide a monthly theme which is broken down into weekly themes. We do art projects every day to go along with our themes for the week to help them learn lots of fun things. For example the theme for the week is working on farm animals this week. For art project today we will color cows. Day 2 we will cut them out. Day 3 we will stick and paste. Day 4 we will collect some grass to glue onto the picture for the cows to eat. Day five we will finish off.

**Outside Free play** – We go outside everyday if weather is acceptable. Our Fenced in playgrounds allow children to play in their own age groups and are under constant supervision by staff. Our sandpits are treated regularly with coarse salt.

**Games** - We spend time with the kids doing puzzles, coloring and playing some of the fun games that we have purchased at the stores. We also play games where they will learn their numbers and letters. We also have a morning where we put scrap paper and scissor for the kids to rip or cut the paper. **Manipulative & Math’s** games include beads to string, lacing toys, wooden blocks, peg boards, nuts and bolts.

**Learning Letter** – To help children learn their letters, we play games, do work sheets, do art projects that focus on letters and we also do other activities that focuses on letters. We have alphabet charts for the kids.

**Blocks** - We have general toys like cars, trucks, Lego, doll houses, irons, cooking utensils etc. >>>

## POLICIES AND ADMISSIONS AGREEMENT

To ensure the smooth running of the school and the well-being of your children, please read the following policies. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

You must read, understand, and agree to abide by the school policies in order for your child (ren) to attend the school. Happy Days reserves the right to cancel this agreement at any time, if cancellation is in the best interest of the child (ren) and the school.

### ❖ Admissions

On admission to Happy Days the following forms and procedures will take place.

- Completed application form
- Record of your child's medical history
- Annual 10% fundraiser donation of 10% of monthly fee.

#### Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday 0700 - 600

**Arrivals** – Children are personally received from:

0700-0730 Early morning domestic staff in waiting room  
0730 Teachers arrive – children proceed to classroom

**Departures**

|                  |                 |             |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1230             | Collect between | 1220 - 1230 |
| 200              | Collect between | 130 - 200   |
| Full Day Closure |                 | 530 - 600   |

Please note

Children cannot be sent out to waiting vehicles

Children collected after 530pm will be in waiting room (opposite office)

Please close the gate behind you.

### Late Collection Policy

Late collection of children will result in parents paying a fine. Repeated late collection may result in defaulting parents being asked to remove their child. Parents sign a consent form that their children may be taken to a safe-house if no contact is made and half an hour has elapsed after closure.

### Fees

Fees are payable in full in advance by the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of each month irrespective of non- attendance. Failure to pay fees will result in your child being suspended until fees are paid in full. *Our Banking Details - Happy Days, Absa Bank, Branch Code 632005, Account 1098250537.*

- Family Discounts – 2 Children get a R60 discount. The 3<sup>rd</sup> child who is at the lowest fee attends **no charge**.
- Afterschool care full day fees are calculated to include all school holidays.
- Annual fee increases take place 1 October each year.
- Late payment of fees will result in a 10% interest charge. Our aim is not to charge interest but to receive fees in on time.

### Resignation

**One calendar month's written notice to leave** must be given to avoid unnecessary legal costs payable by you. If unable to do so the necessary fee in lieu must be paid.

### ❖ Annual School closure

This will take place around 15 December – 2/3 January (8-10 days) to accommodate staff going on annual leave.

Any day that falls between a public holiday before or after a weekend. We will advise you via notebooks.

### ❖ Dress Code

Upon arrival at school your child must be fully and appropriately clothed for the season. It is common for young children to have accidents, so please ensure that your child has a full change of clothes – socks, underwear, pants and a shirt. All clothing must be labeled with your child's name. The school accepts no responsibility for loss of clothing or other articles. All children must attend school with a bag.

#### **Babies & Crawlers:**

Nappies & Bibs A daily supply of 6 disposables (or)  
6 nappies which we will send home to be washed.  
3-4 Bibs for feeding times.

Clothing A clean spare set of clothes in bag.  
Bottle Feeds All bottle feeds and your babies choice of juice, made up for the day  
Other One of your baby's favorite blankets and a pillow. (This is a comforter)

#### **Toddlers 1-2 years:**

During potty training accidents are likely to occur, these are to be accepted and not fussed over. A clean set of spare clothing and undies must be sent each day.

**Preschool 3-6 years:** Parents are requested to send children dressed in clothes to play comfortably and that can be dirtied. The day's work may include play with paint, sand, mud and water. Smart clothes are not appropriate for these important tasks. Children of this age group want to be independent and parents need to ensure that clothes are of such a nature that children can easily put them on and take them off.

**After School Care:** A change of suitable play clothes. School uniforms will be folded by each child and placed in his/her school bag.

**Expensive Jewelry:** Please help-rings, earrings and expensive jewelry are not permitted. These could get lost during outdoor play.

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## ❖ Communication

Open communication between the staff and the families is essential for the smooth running of the school. Newsletters will be sent out and notices will be posted on the Parent board at the front door.

Please advise us of any changes in your family or schedule, however insignificant you think those changes might be. When you need to inform staff of holidays, alternate pickups, changes in scheduling etc., please submit a written copy of those changes to the office or teacher on duty.

Everything must be taken into consideration when caring for your child (ren). Ask questions, share concerns, express your needs, and tell us what you like about the school. In partnership, we will be able to provide a wonderful experience for your child (ren).

## ❖ Custody ,Access and Child Safety

Staff will not release your child to anyone unless you have phoned the office or provided a note to the teacher. For the safety of your children Arrangements must be made in advance.

## ❖ Disciplinary Policy – See General Information List supplied to all Parents

## ❖ Emergency Evacuation Plan

- At the sound of the fire alarm, all staff will follow the evacuation plan with their class registers into designated areas.
- Outside attendance will be taken.
- The Fire Department will be called
- If necessary parents will be called to pick up their children

## ❖ Extra Murals

- These are undertaken by independent private professionals at an extra fee paid directly to the operator concerned. We will allow children to participate during their free play periods. Brochures will be included in your enrolment package.

## ❖ Health and Safety of Children

Day to day medical problems is to be communicated via the message book and a verbal alert to the classroom staff about such details in the book. Only medication with its dosage details, signed by the parent will be administered to the child.

- Suspected abuse/Neglect

It is our legal responsibility to report any suspected abuse or neglect. In the event that we suspect abuse or neglect, it will be reported to Social Welfare and the Health Department. If your child has had an accident – no matter how insignificant it might seem, please inform the staff as soon as possible.

Under Child Care Licensing Regulations, the following policy is in effect:

If the staff believe or suspect that the parent or guardian picking up the child seems to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or if the adult does not seem able to provide safe care for the child;

- The staff will explain their concerns to the parent and offer to call a taxi.
- The staff will offer to call the emergency contact.

If the parent insists that the child leave with them, the staff will call the Ministry of Children and Family Development to inform them of the Situation.

- If the situation becomes dangerous, the staff will call the police and request assistance.
- We do a morning 10 minute health check
- We do a weekly head lice check.

## ❖ Insurance and Field Trips

Happy Days maintains, fire, theft and liability insurance. Staff vehicle that are used for transporting children will have a license.

You must provide your consent to Happy Days to take your child on suitable field trips. Your permission will be obtained when you initial the field trip consent section on your registration form. The school will give ample notice when field trips are going to occur.

## ❖ Inclusion Policy on children with Disabilities

Happy Days Nursery School is committed to supporting high quality, inclusive practices in early learning. When children are together as part of the group their development is enhanced and positive social attitudes are fostered.

Access:

- Children of all abilities are accepted into the program.
- The waiting list identifies children with additional support need to ensure supports are in place upon enrolment.
- Indoor and outdoor areas are arranged so all children can move freely and make choices based on their abilities and interests and needs.

Inclusive Environment:

- We arrange our classes so that all children can reach and use the material in them.
- We observe the children closely so we understand their needs, such as shortening planned activities when needed so that all children can be successful.

Meaningful Participation:

- The goals for children with additional support needs are carried out during Play experiences with peers.
- Opportunities are provided for children to play together so they develop relationships with others.
- Field trips are planned so that all children can attend and participate in the activities.
- Opportunities are provided for all children to participate in social free play and routines throughout the day.
- We believe that each child deserves an environment and experiences that promote growth in all areas of his or her development.

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## ❖ Nutrition - Menu

Daily nutrition at our school includes Breakfast, Lunch morning and afternoon refreshments. Our menu is based on a weekly menu-available on notice board outside the Administration Office. It is crucial that you indicate on your application form if your child has any allergies. No sweet or biscuits allowed except on Birthdays. Send a daily fruit. an apple a day keeps the Doctor away.  
Most parents want to send a snack box for their children and do. We are happy to allow this after sleep time, but this is not compulsory.

## ❖ Medication and illness

Children who are ill must remain at home. The parent or guardian shall call to inform the staff when a child will not be attending the school due to illness. If the child becomes sick at school, the staff will call the parent and request that they pick up the child.

If a child has been absent from school because of a contagious illness, the child must have a doctor's permission to return to the school. /when visiting your doctor, please ask for a written note stating when the child is no longer contagious and can return to school. Some examples of contagious illnesses include: pink eye, chicken pox, impetigo etc.

Please note: The Medical Health Office is the ultimate authority if there is a dispute about a child's suitability to return to the school. If you wish any medication to be given to your child, you must advise us via your child's notebook. We may only administer prescription medication or non-prescription medication that is accompanied by a doctor's note. Prescription medication will only be given in its original container.

Please note: You must give permission for the staff of Happy Days to obtain the necessary medical aid, including ambulance service, for your child in case of an accident or injury. There will be no exceptions.

## ❖ Personal requirements

All children will need personal requirements e.g. tissues, face cloth, soap, wet wipes and Personal stationery i.e. crayons etc., Workbooks and 1 ream photocopy paper (bear in mind the second fundraiser contribution is kept by you to cover this cost) This will remain the personal property of your child and at year end will be sent home. On enrollment at Happy Days a letter with requirements will be sent to parents.

## ❖ Photographs of your child

A professional photographer comes once a year to take individual portraits, at a reasonable cost. We will advise you closer to the times.

## ❖ Progress reports

Your child will receive biannual reports.

## ❖ PTA

During the first term of school we have our meetings. These usually last 2-3 hours during 6-9pm with a video show pertaining to your child's age.

## ❖ The Management

We have a fairly large school and for obvious reasons there needs to be structure. We have a Management committee which meets and is in contact with the Principal on a regular basis.

## ❖ Fun Events

We organize jumping castle and puppet shows for the children. There are also fun days like the school concert and grade R graduation. We also organize visits by public services bodies such as SAP's and Fire Brigade. The majority of main events for the year are communicated via message books.

## ❖ Separation Anxiety

The beginning of daycare is an exciting time in a child's life, but that excitement may also be accompanied by confusion and uncertainty. In order to foster feelings of confidence and security, and to ease the transition from home to daycare, we offer the following suggestions to parents:

In advance of the first day, discuss daycare in positive terms with your child. Affirm that daycare is safe and a fun place to learn and play.

- Explain to your child that the daycare staff is always available to help.
- Tell your child when you will be leaving and when you will be returning.
- Say goodbye in a positive and firm manner, and reassure your child that you will see him/her soon.

Tears are not uncommon. Be assured that they dry quickly once children begin to play and explore.

## ❖ Safety & Security

We are connected to ADT which provides a full burglar alarm back up by panic buttons carried by our staff. This is a silent alarm system should the need ever arise. We are also provided with a full ambulance and armed response.

## ❖ Students and Volunteers

From time to time our school may accept work experience students and volunteers to help with the program. All of these persons must have been cleared by a criminal record check and will always be supervised by permanent staff.

## ❖ Quarterly Fundraisers

In place of 3-4 fundraisers a year and appeals to bake cakes, cookies etc., we have opted for the following:  
A once off cost paid parents towards your child's workbooks and stationery payable end JANUARY of each year and  
A once off annual donation of 10% of monthly fee, payable MARCH of each year.

## ❖ Playground

Each section has its own playground, with appropriate equipment. The children are supervised at all times when they are outside

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## ❖ Staff

The school has a favourable teacher child ratio. Happy Days Kindergarten comprises of 36 staff members. All qualified in their field. Staff are constantly updating their curriculums.

### STAFF COMPLIMENT:

**Admin**                      **Principal**  
**Bursar and PA to Principal**  
**Secretary and Receptionist**

**Kitchen 1 Cook (Supervisor) 1 Assistant**  
**Grounds 1 Grounds man**

### **Teachers and Assistants**

Approximately 300 plus children can be accommodated in our school building referred to as sections. The school reserves the right to exceed the numbers below by one or two children, but without compromising the quality of care and attention given to the children

| SECTION   | CLASS                               | AGE                          | CHILDREN       | STAFF/SUPPORT STAFF         |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| ROAMING SENIOR DEPARTMENT HEADS   |                                     |                              |                |                             |
| BABY SECTION<br>(NELDS 0-4 YEARS)<br>National Early Learning<br>Developmental Areas | BABIES<br>CRAWLERS                  | 3-6 months<br>6-11 months    | 7<br>7         | 3                           |
| TODDLER SECTION<br>(NELDS 0-4 YEARS)  | YOUNGER GROUP<br>OLDER GROUP        | 12-18 months<br>12-18 months | 7<br>7         | 3                           |
| EDUCARE 1<br>(NELDS 0-4 YEARS)  | YOUNGER GROUP<br>OLDER GROUP        | 18-36 months<br>18-36 months | 22<br>22       | 2+1 Clean/Toilet<br>2       |
| PRESCHOOL<br>(NELDS 0-4 YEARS)  | 2/3 YOUNGER GRP<br>2/3 OLDER GROUP  | 2.5-3 years<br>3-3.5 years   | 22<br>22       | 1+Ass.<br>1+Ass.            |
|   | 3/4. YOUNGER GRP<br>3/4 OLDER GROUP | 3.5-4 years<br>4-4.5 years   | 22<br>22       | 1+Ass<br>1+Ass Clean/Toilet |
|   | 4/5 YOUNGER GRP<br>4/5 OLDER GROUP  | 4.5-5 years<br>5-5.5 years   | 25<br>25       | 1+Ass<br>1+Ass Clean/Toilet |
| GRADE 0 CAPS-WCED<br>GRADE R CAPS-WCED<br>Western Cape Education Dept.              | 5/6 YOUNGER GRP<br>5/6 OLDER GROUP  | 5.5-6 years<br>6-7 years     | 25-30<br>25-30 | 1+Ass<br>1+Ass Clean/Toilet |
| AFTERCARE   |                                     | 7-12 years                   | 30-40          | 2+ Ass >>>                  |

## INFANT PARENTING TIPS

### CARE FOR MY INFANTS PENIS

No special care is required. If uncircumcised, you do not need to pull back the foreskin or clean underneath it. The foreskin will begin to retract when your child is older and then he can begin cleaning it. You should never try and force the foreskin to retract, as this can cause pain and irritation.

You may occasionally notice whitish lumps of matter called smegma coming from underneath your child's foreskin. This is normal and is just the shedding of old skin cells that work their way out from under the foreskin.

Once your child's foreskin becomes easily retractable, then it is time for him to begin cleaning this area on a regular basis when he takes his bath or shower. He can clean his foreskin by gently pulling it back, rinsing the head of the penis and the foreskin with warm soapy water and then pulling the foreskin back over the head of the penis.

### WHAT IS SEPERATION ANXIETY

Separation anxiety is a normal part of development, in which your baby will cry when you leave the room. It normally is at its worst around ten to eighteen months, and then gradually resolves. Your child will become less fearful when you leave her as she learns to remain comforted in your absence and can anticipate that you will always return.

To accustom your child to your absence, practice situations at home where your child is left alone, for example, after she walks into another room. If she cries, call out to her to let her know that you are still around. She will gradually learn that she is still safe even when you are not present and that you always reappear.

To minimize crying during separations, do not make a big deal when you leave. Try and downplay leaving and have someone distract your child (with a game or favorite toy) after you say good-bye and Leave. She will cry as you leave, but should quickly stop and show interest in whoever is watching her once you are completely out of sight.

### WHAT IS STRANGER ANXIETY

Your baby will probably enjoy company, and will usually smile and play with people that she has never seen before. But by the time that she is eight or nine months old, she may become more scared of people she is not around every day as she develops "stranger anxiety". This is a normal stage of development and will lessen as your child becomes older and learns to be more trusting of others. Try and gradually introduce strangers and new people to your infant to minimize her anxiety and advise them not to make direct eye contact until your infant is more comfortable with them.

### STARTING BABY ON SOLID FOODS

It is recommended that you not start solids until your child is four to six months old. Breast milk or formula supplies all of your baby's nutritional needs for at least the first 4-6 months of life, so don't be in a rush to start baby foods. Starting solids too early can cause your baby to develop food allergies. Your baby's intestinal tract is not as fully developed during the first few months and introducing solids at this time can be too much to handle.

Another reason for not giving solid foods earlier than 4-6 months is unintentional overfeeding, since younger babies cannot offer you signals when they are full, such as turning away or showing disinterest.

A third reason for holding off on solids is your baby's inability to swallow solids correctly before 4-6 months of age and this can potentially cause choking. And contrary to popular myth, starting solids early will not help your child to sleep through the night.

### .WHEN CAN I START USING A PACIFIER

If breastfeeding, you should wait until your infant is one to two months old before starting to use a pacifier to prevent nipple confusion. Bottle feeding infants can start using a pacifier any time that they seem to need the self-comforting sucking behavior that a pacifier provides.

Once your infant is six months old, you should leave the pacifier in the crib so that she gradually loses interest in it and will be ready to give it up when she is about twelve months old.

### MOVE BABY INTO A CRIB

Most parents wait until their child is three to four months old and sleeping through most of the nights before moving her into a crib.

### MOVING HER INTO HER OWN ROOM

You can safely move your child into her own room once she is in a crib and sleeping through most of the night (6-8 hours)>>>>>

## TODDLER PARENTING TIPS

### TAKING MY CHILD'S TEMPERATURE

There are many acceptable ways to take your child's temperature, including using a rectal thermometer in younger children. To take a rectal temperature, first wash and rinse the thermometer and shake it until it is reading below 98 degrees F. Consider using a digital thermometer. Use a small amount of lubricant. Wait about 2 minutes and gently remove for infants under 3 months of age, a fever is considered to be a temperature over 100,4 F (call your doctor immediately. Be sure to clean the thermometer with alcohol after each use.

In older infants, you can use an axillary (armpit) thermometer or an optic digital thermometer that can be placed in your child's ear for taking a temperature. Oral thermometers are usually not used until your child is four to five years old.

### STOP MY TODDLER FOR BITING

Biting adults or other children is a common behavior in most toddlers and increases when a child is tired or frustrated. It is important to not overreact when it occurs instead treatment consists of teaching your child that it is not acceptable behavior. Some steps to take when your child bites include:

- Immediately look him in the eye and give him a loud and firm NO, you may also move him to another area for a time out. Let him know that it is never all right to bite another person, because it hurts.
- Supervise your child closely when he is with other children so that you can distract him or interrupt any behavior that may lead to biting.
- Supervise your child closely when he is with other children so that you can distract him or interrupt any behavior that may lead to biting.
- It is important to not overreact and never bite your child back. Biting him back or physical Punishment will just reinforce that it is okay to hurt others.
- Give him lots of praise when he controls himself and doesn't bite.

### .MY TODDLER IS AGGRESSIVE OR SHY

These can be normal personality variations. Some children can be very active, aggressively and always need to be in control. If your child has this type of personality and he is overly aggressive and even violent, then it is important to supervise him around other children and provide him with an outlet for his aggressive tendencies through physical activities. Treatment of this type of behavior problem consisting of setting firm limits and giving lots of praise when he isn't being aggressive and over time he will learn to control his impulses and will be less aggressive.

Being shy can also be a normal personality variation. It is best to not push your child. Instead let him

Slowly adjust to new people and new situations. He will gradually become more secure.

### MY TODDLER IS SELFISH AND POSSESSIVE

This is a normal part of development for your child. He may begin to play around other children, but it will be 'parallel play'. Children at this age are very self-centered and may play alongside each other, but it will be some time before they actually start playing together. Your child will probably not want to share his things and he may be very possessive, even getting to the point of getting angry and hitting if another child touches his things.

It is important to closely supervise children that are playing together at this age and reassure them that the other child will not keep his toys. Let him know that it is okay if the other child touches or looks at his things and that he will return them. Keep a few of his favorite items separate and not available for sharing so that he feels he has some control over things.

If this behavior problem does not improve as your child becomes more mature, then more treatment may be required to fix the problem.

### MY TODDLER WALKS ON HER TOES

Toe walking (equines gait) is usually normal, especially if your child is just beginning to learn to walk and is otherwise growing and developing normally.

However, toe walking can be a sign of a medical condition and can lead to problems with your child's gait, especially if it is persisting after she is three year old. If she developed toe walking at an older age, if the child can't stand flat, or has a limited range of motion.

Although often a habit, toe walking can be caused by neuromuscular disorders, such as cerebral palsy or muscular dystrophy, leg length discrepancies or developmental displasia of the hip, spinal cord abnormalities and tendo-Achilles contractures>>>>

## PRESCHOOL/GRADE R PARENTING TIPS

### PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR KINDERGARTEN

The skills that your child will need to be ready to start kindergarten include knowing the names of colors, identifying some letters, counting to ten, writing their first name, counting items, playing cooperatively with others, following two to three part commands, paying attention and concentrating, sitting for long periods of time, and fitting into the daily routine of the school day. Your child should also be able to listen to and understand simple stories, spend extended time away from parents, dress himself, verbally communicate his needs and wants, and be enthusiastic and curious about new activities.

Not all children are ready for school at the same time. If your child is very immature or shy, you can take some steps to help in preparing him for his first day of kindergarten, such as spending time with and playing with other children and allowing him to take something special to which he is attached with him to kindergarten, you can discuss the problem with his teacher and school to see if accommodations can be made and to discuss the pros and cons of retaining him for a year.

### SHE HAS AN IMAGINARY FRIEND

It is normal for preschool children to have imaginary friends. It is more common in first born or only children, especially if they have a creative imagination. An imaginary friend can provide companionship, allow her to be in charge of and control someone, and allow her to experience many of the good and bad things that she dreams about. If your child also is social and interacts with other children then there is little to worry about if she has one or more imaginary friends. This is also a private part of your child's life, so unless she asks you to take part in her fantasy life, you should respect her privacy and stay out of this fantasy world

### SHE IS STILL WETTING THE BED

While most children are potty trained by the time they are three to four years old, wetting the bed at night (nocturnal enuresis) is still a common problem for many six to eight year old children (affecting about 8% of eight year olds). It is more common in boys and in families in which one or both parents wet the bed as a child. Bedwetting may be caused by your child having a small bladder capacity (meaning it cannot hold as much urine as children who do not wet the bed), not being able to tell when his bladder is full, or during times of stress. Very rarely is bed wetting caused by a disease or physical problem. Bedwetting is defined as being **primary**, children who have never had dry nights, or **secondary**, children who are now wetting the bed, but who had previously been dry for 3-6 months.

### Treating Bedwetting

About fifteen percent of children who wet the bed will mature out of this problem every year, but until he does, here are some steps you can take to try and increase the number of dry nights he has.

**Reassure** your child that this is normal at this age and not his fault and understands that he is not doing it on purpose. Also, do not punish or blame your child for wetting the bed and make sure that other family members do not tease him about it.

**Avoid** letting your child drink large amounts of fluid two hours before bedtime

**Have** your child use the toilet just before going to bed. Protect the bed with a plastic cover between the sheets and mattress. Let your child help change the wet sheet.

**Consider** practicing an awakening routine, in which you wake your child to urinate two to three hours after he goes to bed, either at the parent's bedtime or after setting an alarm clock.

### Important Reminders

**Be patient.** This is a persistent and frustrating problem, but one that will usually resolve as your child gets older. Call your pediatrician if your child is also wetting himself during the day, complains of burning during urination, is losing weight, has blood in his urine, or if the problem is affecting your child's self-esteem.

### SHE LIES ABOUT THINGS

It is common for preschool children to lie. At this age, children do not yet always know the difference between reality and their rich fantasy life. Children may also lie to avoid being punished or because they are imitating adult behavior.

It is important to encourage your child to tell the truth and provide him with a good role model, by telling the truth yourself and not lying. Avoid punishing your child too severely when she does finally confess for any misdeeds, or she may avoid telling the truth next time

### STUTTERING

Many toddlers and preschool age children stutter as they are learning to talk, and although many parents worry about it, most of these children will grow out of stuttering and will have normal speech as they get older. Since most of these children don't stutter as adults, this normal stage of speech development is usually referred to as pseudostuttering or as a normal dysfluency.

As children learn to talk, they may repeat certain sounds, stumble on or mispronounce words, hesitate between words, substitute sounds for each other, and is unable to say some sounds. Children with a normal dysfluency usually have brief repetitions of some sounds and syllables or short words. The stuttering usually comes and goes and is most noticeable when your child is excited, stressed or overly tired, but the child usually doesn't notice or have any reaction to his behavior.

It is not usually known what causes some children to stutter, but it does seem to be genetic and run in some families, and a child is more likely to stutter if a parent also stutters. Stuttering can also occur in children who are under a lot of stress, for example, after starting a new daycare, moving, birth of a new sibling, etc. Stuttering is also more common in boys. Stuttering is usually not a concern, as long as it doesn't persist for more than two to three months or at least gradually improve during that time period. Until it does go away by itself, some steps you can take to help your child, include:

- Don't correct or interrupt him when he is talking, and ask others to not correct him either.
- Don't ask him to repeat himself or tell him to slow down.
- Don't make him practice saying certain words or sounds and
- Reading books.

## AFTERCARE PARENTING TIPS

### DEALING WITH BULLIES

Almost 10% of school age children are the victims of a bully. Bullying is most common by the second grade and then supposedly declines by the high school years. Bullying can be either physical or verbal, and can range from teasing to pushing and hitting.

Victims of bullies are usually stereotyped as being loners, passive, quiet, sensitive, anxious, with low self-esteem and they are often smaller and or weaker than other children of the same age and may come from an overprotective home. More importantly, they usually react to bullying by crying, acting out or withdrawing. Some victims may actually bring on the bullying attack by teasing or provoking a bully. Being the victim of a bully can lead to your child avoiding school, and developing fear and anxiety about going to school. It can also cause your child to feel insecure and have feelings of low self-worth and poor self-esteem and can ultimately lead to depression and/or violence, either against himself or against the bully.

Because victims of bullies often do not seek help or confide in anyone about the bullying, either because of shame or embarrassment or fear that it will be worse if the bully finds out, it is important to look for signs in your children. School avoidance behaviors especially chronic nonspecific complaints such as headaches or stomachaches, or they may have trouble sleeping. Also if your child seems afraid or anxious about going to school, has a change in his personality or his behavior, or a change in his grades, you should consider that he may be a victim of a bully at school, especially if he fits the stereotypes described above.

### TALK ABOUT SEX (Include the topic of HIV/AIDS)

You should carefully think about how you are going to begin talking about sex with your child, because he may ask you questions before you are ready. Once the questions do begin, you should provide explanations that are brief and to the point. If your school going child has not started to ask any questions, you may have to bring up the subject yourself. Use everyday situations to help bring up the subject, including a pregnancy or birth in a friend or family member, situations that come up in movies or on television, observation of a younger family members body parts or observation of sexual behavior in pets or animals.

The first questions will probably revolve around how boys and girls body parts are different or where babies come from. You should begin with brief and straightforward explanations to the questions that he is asking. Keep your child's age and maturity level in mind when providing answers and do not overwhelm him with too much information at once. You can always ask if your explanation was enough or if he has any more questions.

Topics that you will need to discuss as he gets older include detailed explanations on intercourse, child birth, erections, wet dreams, periods, masturbation, sexually transmitted diseases, sexuality education and birth control. Remember that your child will learn about these subjects and it is up to you if you want him to learn it from you, so that you make sure he is getting accurate information, or from other kids

### KEEP MY CHILD FROM USING DRUGS

It is very important to begin communicating with your child to help prevent them from picking up bad habits, including the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs (including the use of inhalants: especially aerosols and glue) Children whose parents talk to them regularly are at much less risk to experimenting with cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. Teach them how to avoid situations where drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes are present and to choose friends who also choose not to use these substances.

Emphasize to them that these substances can hurt them, can make them sick, can cause decrease lung function and problems playing sports, and that it is OK to say no. Also, do not let them attend parties that are unsupervised by adults and let your child know that they can communicate openly with you about these difficult subjects. Watch for the warning signs of drug use, including a sudden change in your child's behavior or personality, decrease performance in school, or changes in what friends they associate with. Most importantly, set a good example by not smoking or using drugs yourselves.

### LYING, STEALING OR CHEATING

Unfortunately, to most parents dismay, lying, stealing and cheating are part of every child's development. They are most common in preschool children, who still have a rich fantasy life and can't yet distinguish between right and wrong. This doesn't mean that you should allow or ignore this type of behavior, instead use these opportunities to begin to teach your child the difference between right and wrong

Your older child, especially once he is six to seven years old, will begin to have a good understanding of right and wrong. While he may lie to avoid punishment, steal because he impulsively wants something he doesn't have, or cheat to avoid losing, you should help him to understand why these behaviors are wrong. If they are isolated episodes, you have little to worry about and should remain calm. If these bad behaviors become more of a habit, then you may have a problem and may need to seek professional help to find out why it is happening. Be sure to set a good example, so that it will be easier for your child to learn right from wrong behaviors.



