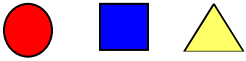


May 2009

May 2009 PEAK Caring for Kids Newsletter



## What is the PEAK Caring for Kids Outreach?

PEAK, the school readiness initiative of Pottstown School District, is a partnership with community child care, Head Start and preschool programs to improve quality and increase the readiness of children entering kindergarten. PEAK works with community programs and agencies on community outreach, family engagement, quality improvement, health/wellness and kindergarten transition.

In the spring of 2009, PEAK is beginning a new outreach to the regulation-exempt and family child care providers in Pottstown.

The outreach will involve:

- Monthly Resource Packets (this is our second packet)
- Professional Development and Networking
- Lending Theme Boxes
- Home Safety Checks
- Free Children's Books

### Dates to Remember

**May 20, 2009:** Literacy Fun and Ready for School

**August 13, 2009:** Squish and Squash—Science Fun and Networking

**November 12, 2009—**Holiday Treats on a Budget

Thank you for signing up to be a part of the Caring for Kids outreach. Remember to register for the professional development session on May 20 at the YWCA Tri-County Area on 315 King Street. Each participant will receive a Giant gift card. Call Mary Rieck at 610-970-6655 to register. PEAK professional development meets the new state training requirements for Relative/Neighbor providers



### Contact Information:

**Mary Rieck**  
PEAK Coordinator  
610-970-6655

**Whitney Tyng**  
Family Specialist  
610-326-1610

**Kathy Perry**  
Health Specialist  
610-718-8642

**Emily Baddeley**  
Pre-K Coach  
610-718-8635

**Jeff Sparagana, Ed.D.**  
Director of Education/  
Human Resources  
[www.peakonline.org](http://www.peakonline.org)

## SPRINGTIME ACTIVITIES

### Rain Poem

Rain on the green grass,  
Rain on the trees,  
Rain on the rooftops,  
But not on me.

*(Have the children name three things on which it rains, for example, sidewalk, kitten and window. Repeat the poem, inserting these three things.)*

Rain on the sidewalk,  
Rain on the kitten,  
Rain on the window,  
But not on me.

### Memory Game

Use the enclosed cards for a springtime memory game. Cut apart one set of cards and play memory with your children.

**Remember to complete three activities and return the enclosed post-card.**



Look for the activities marked with the blue check mark and receive a children's book. **Get a new book each month!**

# SONGS, POEMS AND FINGERPLAYS

Finger-plays, songs and rhymes are great ways to develop language in young children. Try these!



## The Beehive

Here is the beehive.  
Where are the bees?  
Hidden away where nobody sees.  
Watch as they come out of their hive—  
One, two, three, four, five!  
They're alive!  
BZZZZ!



## Five Little Ducks

*(Use the enclosed cards with the song)*

Five little ducks  
Went out to play.  
Over the hill and far away.  
Mama Duck called with a  
Quack-quack-quack,  
Four little ducks came swimming back.

Four little ducks  
Went out to play.  
Over the hills and far away.  
Mama Duck called with a  
Quack-quack-quack,

Three little ducks came swimming back.  
Three little ducks...  
Two little ducks...

One little duck  
Went out to play  
Over the hill and far away,  
Papa Duck called with a  
Quack-quack-quack,  
Five little ducks  
Came swimming back!



## DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS



Learning to listen and to hear the sounds of language is the first step in literacy development. Try some of these ideas to help the children in your care develop the ability to listen.

### Listening Walk

Encourage the children to brainstorm a list of sounds they might hear on a listening walk. Place the list on a clipboard. Take the children on a walk. Instruct them to be very quiet and to concentrate on using their ears more than their eyes. Place a check next to the sounds on the list as the children report hearing them.

### Sound Canisters

Fill film canisters or potato chip cans with small items that will make a distinct sound, such as paper clips, jingle bells, buttons, pennies or small stones. Make two canisters for each sound-producing item. Glue lids on securely. Encourage the children to shake the canisters and match the pairs that sound the same.

### Follow the Sound

Have the children close their eyes.

Ring a bell and ask the children to walk toward the sound.

### Clapping Names

Invite the children to clap the syllables in their names. Ask them to listen closely as a child says his name. Repeat the child's name slowly making sure to emphasize each syllable. Say the name again and clap on each syllable in the name as you say it. Have the children say the name and clap the syllables with you. Encourage the children to clap the syllables in the days of the weeks, months of the year, seasons and so on, as appropriate.

### Following Directions

Help the children develop listening skills by giving them simple directions to follow. Start with one-step directions such as these: "Touch your ear; Touch your elbow; Take one step forward." then gradually move on to two-step directions: "Touch your nose and then your knee; Take one step forward and one step backward." When children have had lots of practice, let them try following 3 step directions

such as these: "Sit down, put your hands on your knees and wiggle your toes; Take one step forward, one step backward and clap your hands."

### Sound/Word Identification

Read a nursery rhyme or story. Then tell the children you are going to re-read the story and you want them to raise their hands each time they hear a predetermined target word or sound. Example: Read the nursery rhyme "Hickory Dickory Dock" and have children raise their hands each time you say the word "clock".



**Remember to return your post card for a free children's book and to register for the May 20 professional development session. All participants will receive a Giant gift card.**

**Call Mary Rieck at 610-970-6655**

# JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF FUN AND LEARNING

PEAK is holding the first professional development and networking meeting for Pottstown Family Child Care and Regulation-Exempt providers.

**What: Literacy Fun and Ready for School Activities**

**When: May 20, 2009**

**Time: 6:00-7:30**

**Place: YWCA Tri-County Area**

**315 King Street, Pottstown**

Learn easy activities for increasing literacy development in young children and receive resources for school readiness.

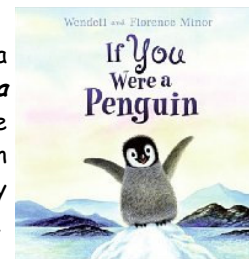
- Dinner served
- Free resources
- Gift cards for participants

Call Mary Rieck to register at 610-970-6655.

## One Book Campaign

Did you receive a copy of this year's featured book for the One Book Campaign?

If you did not receive a copy of *If You Were a Penguin* for all of the preschool children in your care, call Mary Rieck at 610-970-6655.



## MATH IDEAS

### Matching Colors

Materials:

At a home supply store, select a variety of paint samples, two of each color. Select paint cards that have one color and measure around 2 1/2 inches square.

Directions

Use the color cards to play Memory by placing the cards color-side-down on a table and then taking turns looking for matches.

You can also use the cards for matching by dividing the cards into two piles so that both piles have one of each card. Then one person puts down a card and the other person puts down his or her match.

### Junk Boxes

Collect things to place into "junk" boxes. Select items that children will enjoy exploring, such as keys, empty spools, buttons, nuts and bolts of all sizes, corks, bottle lids and other interesting items.

Encourage the children to explore the materials. Talk with them as they handle the various items. Help them develop language to describe the items.

You can have the children practice grouping and counting items that are alike.

Remember to keep small items out of reach of toddlers.

## CREATIVE CORNER

### Homemade Playdough

1/2 cup salt  
1 cup flour  
1 teaspoon cream of tartar  
1 tablespoon oil  
1 cup water  
Food color

Combine ingredients in saucepan. Heat gently, stirring all the time. When dough has good consistency, take it off the heat and allow to cool.

### Scented Playdough

Add 1 teaspoon of scented extract (peppermint, vanilla, lemon) to a basic playdough recipe.

### Goop

Cook 2 cups of salt and 1/2 cup of water for 4 to 5 minutes on low heat. Remove from heat. Add 1 cup of cornstarch and 1/2 cup of water. Return to heat. Stir until mixture thickens. Allow mixture to cool before using. Store in a plastic, zipper-closure bag or a covered container.

### Humpty-Dumpty Collages

Save shells from boiled eggs. Break the shells into small pieces. Cut out egg shapes from drawing paper. Have the children paint glue on the egg-shaped paper and sprinkle crushed eggshells on the glued area.

# Community Resource Spotlight

## Parents as Teachers

The Pottstown Family Center is currently accepting referrals for their Parents as Teachers program. Parents as Teachers supports and assists parents in understanding their child's development and encourages age-appropriate activities to promote healthy growth in language, cognition, motor and social-emotional skills. Best of all, it's **FREE!** Please contact Nancy Trahey (610-326-1610) for more information.

## TCN FirstCall 610-705-3301

### Where to Turn for Help

If you have questions about health and human services or needs in the Pottstown area, contact FirstCall. Callers are provided information and referred to community agencies that provide services, benefits and answers they need. The call is **FREE** and **CONFIDENTIAL**.

## May Resource Packet

The May Caring for Kids Resource Packet includes:

- Newsletter
- 5 Little Ducks Cards
- Memory Game Cards
- Teaching Our Youngest

Need more information or resources? Call PEAK at 610-970-6655 or visit the PEAK web site at [www.peakonline.org](http://www.peakonline.org)

## Recipe of the Month



### Crazy, Curly Broccoli Bake

- 1 1/2 cups whole wheat corkscrew pasta, dry
- 3 cups broccoli, frozen, chopped
- 1 10.5 ounce can low-fat cream of broccoli soup, condensed
- 1/2 cup skim milk
- 1 tablespoons plain bread crumbs
- 1/4 teaspoon salt-free seasoning blend



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cook pasta according to package directions. Place frozen broccoli in large microwave safe and oven proof dish and cook for 2 minutes on HIGH. Coarsely chop cooked broccoli. Mix soup with skim milk, and add to chopped broccoli. Add cooked pasta and mix. Top with bread crumbs and seasoning blend. Bake in oven for 10-15 minutes until heated through.

### PEAK Caring for Kids Outreach Collaborating Partners

- Pottstown School District
- Montgomery County Child Care Information Services
- Montgomery County Child Care Consortium
- Penn State Extension
- Pottstown Family Center
- Pottstown Public Library
- Pottstown Rotary Club
- United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania
- YWCA Family Literacy Center
- Pottstown Fire Chief



**Remember to return the enclosed postcard for a free children's book!**

*PEAK Caring for Kids Connections:  
Creating a professional learning community for the regulation-exempt and family child providers in Pottstown to share ideas, improve instructional practices and implement best practices in the delivery of quality early learning experiences*

