

April 2009

PEAK Home Child Care  
Newsletter



## What is the PEAK Home Child Care 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 first packet)
- Professional Development and Networking
- Lending Theme Boxes
- Home Safety Checks
- Free Children's Books

We hope that you will participate as we all work together to make sure that all of Pottstown's children are successful in kindergarten.

**Do you want to be a part of the PEAK Outreach? You will receive monthly resources, have opportunities to participate in professional development and networking. Call Mary Rieck at 610-970-6655 to sign-up. FREE!**

## Complete Three Activities Receive a Free Children's Book

Do you want to receive a free high quality children's book?

Complete three activities in this newsletter and return the enclosed postcard. Look for the activities with the blue check mark.

After completing the activities, answer the questions on the postcard and return to the PEAK Coordinator. A book for the children in your care will be mailed to you within a week.

Look for the activities marked with the blue check mark and receive a children's book.



Get a new book each month!



### Dates to Remember

**April 19, 2009:** Month of the Young Child Community Event

**May 21, 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



### Contact Information:

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

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

**Kathy Perry**  
Health Specialist  
610-

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

[www.peakonline.org](http://www.peakonline.org)

# April Focus: Language and Literacy for Young Children

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



## Growing Seeds

Seeds are buried deep, deep, deep.  
(crouch down)  
In the ground they sleep, sleep, sleep.  
(Pretend to sleep)  
Yellow sun shines bright, bright, bright.  
(Circle arms overhead)  
Raindrops fall so light, light, light.  
(Flutter flingers downward)  
Gentle breezes blow, blow, blow.  
(Sweep arms from side to side)  
Little plants begin to grow.  
(Rise slowly)



## Five Pretty Flowers

Five pretty flowers,  
Standing in a row.  
(Spread fingers)  
Each with its head.  
Hanging so low.  
(Let hand go limp)  
I sprinkled them with water  
As gentle as the rain.  
(Wiggle fingers over "wilted flowers")  
One, two, three, four, five—  
Up they popped again!  
(Lift fingers and spread apart)



## Five Little Bluebirds

(Cut five bluebird shapes out of felt. As you recite the poem below, place the bird shapes on a flannel board.)

Five little bluebirds waiting for spring—  
The first little bluebird began to sing.  
The second little bluebird flapped its wings.  
The third little bluebird said, "Tweet, tweet, tweet,"  
The fourth little bluebird sang so sweet,  
The fifth little bluebird said,  
"It's a beautiful day."  
Then all five bluebirds flew away.



## Make a Puppet for Language Development



### Puppets from Recyclables

The materials for making puppets are all around you. You and the children can create wonderful one-of-a-kind puppets with recyclable materials. Don't be afraid to try different things. Before you know it, your imagination will take over. You and the children will be creating your own designs.

#### General Supplies

- Popsicle sticks
- Cereal boxes
- Boxes—oatmeal and bandage
- Ping pong balls
- Felt and fabric scraps
- Paper towel and toilet paper tubes
- Gloves and mittens
- Big and little socks
- Magazines and newspaper
- Junk mail
- Egg cartons
- Sponges
- Ribbon and yarn
- Cardboard

### Ideas for Puppet Hair

Try these ideas:

- Fur fabric
- Pot scrubbers
- Fringe or tassels
- Yarn
- Pipe cleaners

### Photo Puppet

Ask parents to bring in full length pictures of their child and other family members. Cut out the pictures, cover them with clear self-stick paper, and glue a popsicle stick on the back of each.

These puppets are great for children who are missing Mom and Dad. Act out the story of the child getting up, eating breakfast, coming to child care and saying, "good-bye." Then act out the story of play at child care and the parent returning to pick up the child.

### Sock Puppets

Collect socks that have lost their partners. Set out recycled materials for children to decorate their sock puppets.

### Use Puppets to Teach Social Skills

- Act out the positive things that children do

Act out a time when a child shares with a friend or act out a problem between two children when they used words, instead of hitting to solve a problem.

- Act out problems in getting along with other children

Use the puppets to act out something that has happened that day. If two children were fighting over playing with a truck, act it out. Ask the children to tell you what the puppets might have said or done differently.

- Test out new ways of doing things

You could show the puppets trying things in a new way. Two puppets with a sharing problem might trade some toys. Take the ideas of the children and have the puppets say and do what they suggest.



# 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 21, 2009

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

**Place:**

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.



## Celebrate the Month of the Young Child



### Community-Wide Event

Join us on at the Pottstown YMCA on April 19 for an afternoon of fun activities as we celebrate the Month of the Young Child. Activities include a moon bounce, petting zoo, Reading Screwball, and family activities. Free snacks and resources for everyone.

**When:** April 19, 2009

**Time:** 2:00-4:00

**Place:** Pottstown YMCA

724 North Adams Street

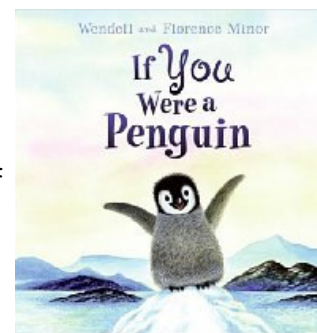
Pottstown

Come join the fun!

### 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.



## Quick Behavior Tips

### Change the Setting:

Put dangerous items, breakables, and valuables out of the reach of infants and toddlers. For preschoolers, have places to play that are safe and worry free.

### Provide Interesting Playthings

Playthings prevent boredom and misbehavior. They need not be expensive or store bought.

### Give Warning Time:

Tell children 5 to 10 minutes ahead of time that you want to change their activity >et them get ready to go to something new.

### Make Clear Rules:

The fewer rules you make the better. They should be reasonable. They should be enforced consistently.

# Community Resource Spotlight

---

## April Resource Packet

The April Home Child Care Resource Packet includes:

- Newsletter
- Copy of *Up, Down and Around*
- Puppet Pattern
- Ladybug Finger-Play
- School Readiness DVD

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

---



### PEAK Home Child Care Outreach Collaborating Partners

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



***PEAK Home Child Care 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*