



Weekly Newsletter #2

This e-newsletter has been created to try and help you and your family navigate this time of uncertainty both personally and academically. We will provide up-to-date resources and local events in this weekly newsletter. It will be sent out every Monday morning to help families and students across the state of Illinois.

March 30, 2020

Easterseals Joliet



Tips to Encourage Health and Wellness During Social Distancing

STAY ACTIVE

Whether you're more comfortable exercising from home or going outdoors - stay active.
Meet daily recommended levels of physical activity -- 30 min for adults & 60 min for children

GOOD NUTRITION IS IMPORTANT

A healthy diet can help you reach and maintain a healthy weight, reduce risk of certain chronic diseases, certain types of cancer and diabetes, and promote overall health and wellbeing.
Share healthy recipes with everyone using common foods in your home

SOCIAL INTERACTION IS KEY

Engage socially, whether in-person (following CDC recommendations) or other communications.
Draw a picture or write a note and send to a local nursing home

SLEEP IS CRITICAL TO YOUR BODY'S IMMUNE SYSTEM

Getting 7-8 hours of sleep keeps your immune system healthy, and ready to fight off viruses.
Use this time to focus on developing a healthy sleep routine

TAKE THE TIME FOR MINDFULNESS & SELF-CARE

The COVID-19 outbreak is stressful.
Self-care looks different for everyone -- spend time outdoors, connect with family, or read a book

Issue #2: March 30th - April 3rd, 2020

Inside this Issue:

- **First Section: Community Resources**
 - **Free Grab and Go Lunches**

- **Food Pantries**
 - **Financial Resources**
- **Second Section: Educational Resources**
 - **Free WiFi**
 - **Supporting Executive Skill Development when Schooling from Home**
 - **Jumpstart Podcast**
 - **Virtual Museum Tours**
- **Third Section: Weekly Activity Schedules**
 - **Behavioral Health and Social Wellness**
 - **Developmental Therapy**
 - **Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy**
 - **Physical Therapy- Gross Motor Ideas**
 - **Speech Language Therapy**
 - **Feeding Therapy**
- **Contact Us**

Community Resources: Food

Free Grab-and-Go School District Lunches

[Joliet School District 86](#)

All four Joliet Junior High Schools will be providing curbside pickup services for any child under the age of 18.

On Monday, March 30, 2020:

- 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Pick-up locations are:

- Dirksen (Midland Avenue side parking lot-horseshoe, Door #18)
- Gompers (Briggs Street parking lot, Door #27)
- Hufford (Ingalls Avenue parking lot, Door #26)
- Washington (Richards Street parking lot, Door #24)

Children are encouraged to be in the car when picking up the meals.

Follow their twitter for updates and resources:

- [@JolietSD86](#) for English
- [@Joliet86Spanish](#) for Spanish

Contact your child's school district as many others are offering a similar service.

Food Pantries

[Warren Sharpe Community Center](#) holds a food pantry open to those in Will County at 454 S Joliet St, Joliet, IL 60436.

Open every Tuesday:

- 10:30 am - 2:00 pm
- Bring your ID or another document showing your address in Will County.

Each family may visit *once a month*. They will receive a ready made box of food.

New guidelines are in place to allow the pick up procedure to adhere to social distancing:

- The food pantry will be held in the rear of the building.
- All clients will line up in the rear of the building at least 6ft from the person in front of you.
- If possible only send one person from your family to retrieve your food.

Check their [Facebook page](#) for the most up to date information or call (815) 722-2727.

[MorningStar Mission](#)

Serving meals daily at their East Side Cafe located at 350 E. Washington St., Joliet, IL 60433.

Monday-Saturday:

- 7 a.m. - 8 a.m., 12 p.m. - 1 p.m., 5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Sunday:

- 7 a.m. - 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Call (815) 722-5780 for more information.

Financial Resources

Unemployment Benefits:

IDES Offices are closed to the public until further notice.

If you have any questions about Unemployment Insurance call IDES Customer Service Center at (800) 244-5631

Visit [IDES website](#) to review Illinois' new policy regarding lay offs and closures due to COVID-19 to see if you qualify.

To apply for unemployment benefits:

Visit www.ides.illinois.gov or call Tele-Serve at (312) 338-4337 Monday-Friday 5:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

United Way Worldwide's [COVID-19 Community Response and Recovery Fund](#):

This fund is intended to help families and people in need access critical information and services like food, shelter, and more.

You can dial 211 or follow the [link](#) to find your local number to speak with a trained professional about local assistance at any time, 24/7/365 and available in 180 languages.

Utilities and Housing:

- All evictions in the state of Illinois are halted.
- Illinois electric, natural gas, water and wastewater utilities will not disconnect any services during the corona virus public health emergency. All late payment fees on utilities are suspended until May 1st.

Educational Resources

Spectrum Free Broadband:

Spectrum is offering free internet to K-12 and college students.

They will offer free broadband and Wi-Fi access for 60 days to households with students who do not already have a Spectrum broadband subscription.

Installation fees will be waived for new student households.

- To enroll, call 1-844-488-8395.

Supporting Executive Skill Development When Schooling at Home

Hands On Approaches will be hosting a live interactive webinar that is free for parents.

It will be held on Wednesday, April 1st:

- 8:00 pm- 9:00 pm and it will be recorded for on demand viewing.
- You can access the sign up link [here](#).

Jump Start Podcast

Jumpstart is a prevention initiative of Easterseals, their podcast is for families with children aged prenatally to three years old. Each episode will offer information, resources, education, and ideas for how to interact with your little ones.

Their second episode discusses trauma, resilience and hope.

You can listen to "What is Trauma? featuring Timberlie Jahn" [here](#) and on Spotify by searching "The Jumpstart Podcast".

Virtual Museum Tours

[Google Arts & Culture](#) has teamed up with over 500 museums and galleries to offer virtual tours from around the world. Here is a [list of 12](#) of the most popular museums to get you started!



Weekly Activity Schedules

COVID-19 Daily Schedule

@thedenverhousewife

for kids

Before 9am	Wake Up	Wake up, eat breakst, make bed, get ready for the day
9-10am	Free Time	Watch TV, Ipad, Play Games, ect
10-11am	Outside Time	Take a walk, play in the yard or walk dog
11-12am	Creative Time	Art projects, Slime, Coloring, ect
12-12:30pm	Lunch	
12:30-1pm	Chores	Do appropriate chores
1-2pm	Quiet Time	Read, Puzzle, Nap, or color
2-4pm	Academic time	Educational Games, Math, Online education, Science Project, Writing
4-5pm	Outside or Play Time	Go outside to ride bikes or play in the house
5-6pm	Dinner	
6-9pm	Free time until bed	Free choice time. fam Movie Take showers/ready for bed

This next section includes a daily activity for Monday through Friday of this week. These schedules have been created by our talented and experienced team of therapists and social workers at Easterseals Joliet!

Behavioral Health & Social Wellness Activities

Last week we discussed creating a picture schedule to help structure your day. What is and what isn't working? Are you having a hard time even knowing where to begin??? You are not alone! It can be daunting to transition to visual thinking if we're not accustomed to it (imagine how some of our kiddos must feel trying to transition to our thinking!). Let's spend this week breaking down visual schedules into bite size pieces each day. You can even go straight to the **emphasized** sections to get your "to do" list for the day!

- Why a schedule? Most of us tend to function better when we use a schedule in some form or another and kids really are no different!
- Why a *visual* schedule? A visual picture schedule can benefit those with special needs because they often have difficulty with processing spoken language and staying focused. A visual schedule can also increase independence and as a result increase a child's self-esteem!

Monday- Spend about 10-15 minutes looking at the "do 2 learn" website.

It's just one of many FREE resources available. If you click the link below, you will be taken to "picture cards" and then you'll be able to choose from a variety of activities of daily living (ADLs) to choose from such as getting dressed, eating, brushing teeth, etc...

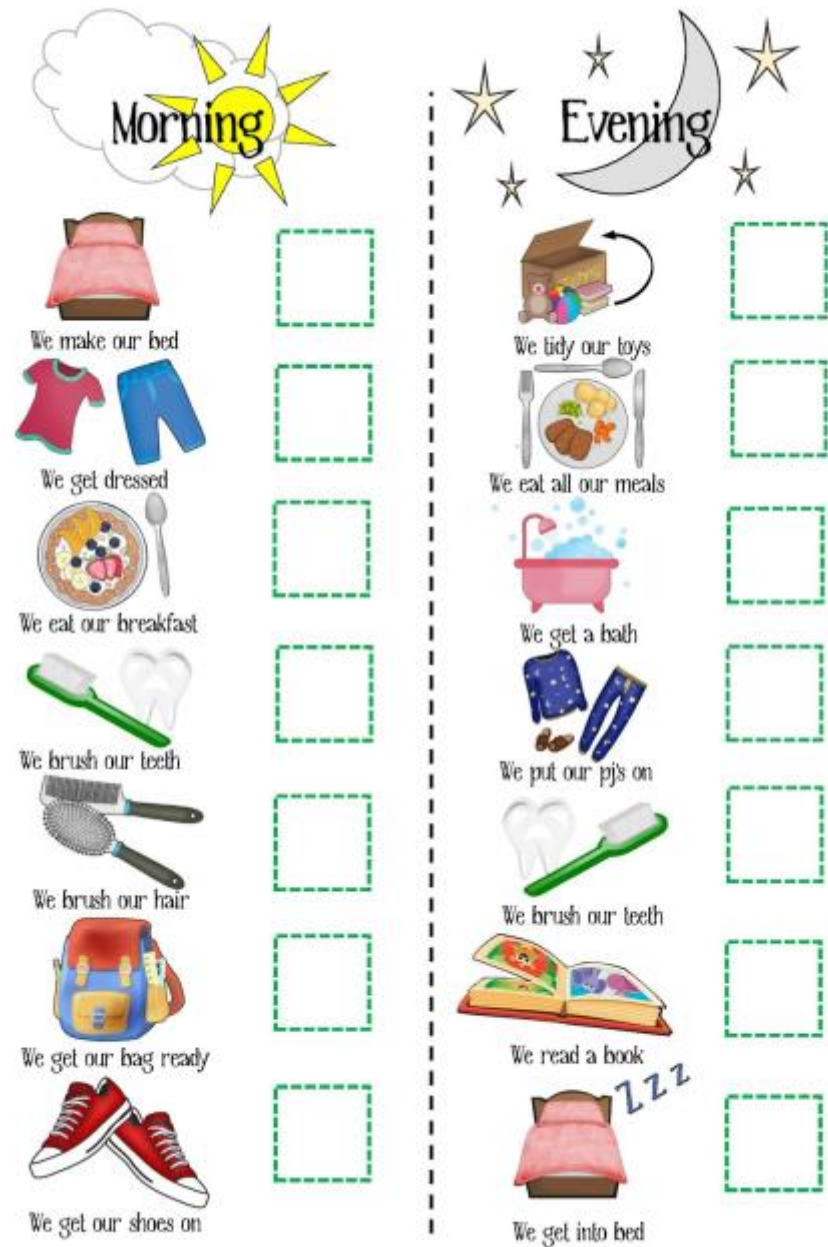
Click [here](#) to find FREE pictures to print for your schedule.

Tuesday- If you are new to making visual schedules, it can be difficult to know where to start. Choose just one of the **short videos (no more than 15 minutes in length)** below to watch and get some ideas of how real life families are doing this.

[Video #1](#)

[Video #2](#)

Wednesday- The past 2 days you've looked at some printables and videos of how to put this into practice. Today, **decide** what type of a schedule you want to begin with...a morning/evening routine can be a good place to start. Depending on your child's age and/or ability this will vary from family to family, but here's just one basic example. Why not **print this one** below and give it a try?! As each activity is completed, put a check mark in the box.



Thursday- Still not convinced about the value of a visual schedule? That's okay! :-) Another reason they can be helpful is that visual schedules reduce the "power struggle" over what needs to happen. It's not Mom or Dad telling their child what to do, rather it's the schedule!

Another resource is Teachers Pay Teachers (TPT). Spend just **10-15 minutes looking around this website**...there are many free to low cost schedules already made there for you to use...here's a [link](#) to just one (of many) and only costs \$3....

Here are some that are FREE from Twinkl.com:

[Visual Time Table #1](#)

[Visual Time Table #2](#)

Friday- Hopefully you are feeling a bit more encouraged and empowered to make your own visual schedule! Please remember this doesn't have to be perfect, it just needs to work for your family!

Last week we focused on mindfulness exercises for our kids. Let's remember to be mindful of our own internal state, too! If we are feeling anxious or overwhelmed it's likely going to transfer over and impact our child whether we realize it or not!

Be aware of how anxiety shows up in your body (butterflies in stomach, tightening of muscles, clenching your jaw, etc...). When you catch yourself doing this, STOP, take a deep breath and slowly let it out. Remember: just one day at a time...or just one hour at a time...or maybe even just a minute at a time! You are NOT alone!!!

"Schedule" mindfulness into your daily routine. What a great way to build in a break for both parent and child!

Take 10-15 minutes, turn on your favorite instrumental music, and do some breathing exercises with (and without your child). Keep it simple: breathe in deeply through your nose and then focus on slowly letting out the breath through your mouth, then repeat!

If you want/need ideas for relaxing music you can check out these videos:

[Video #1](#)

[Video #2](#)

Developmental Therapy

Scavenger hunts are a fun way for kids of all ages to use their imagination and problem solving skills! Working together teaches team work and turn taking.

Monday: Indoor Scavenger Hunt

- Find a puzzle piece.
- Find a block.
- Find a ball.
- Find candy.
- Find money.
- Find a pretzel.
- Find a sock.
- Find a Lego.

- Find a toothbrush.
- Find a pillow.

Tuesday: Rainbow Scavenger Hunt

- Find something red.
- Find something orange.
- Find something yellow.
- Find something green.
- Find something blue.
- Find something purple.
- Name a red fruit.
- Name an orange vegetable.
- Name a yellow vehicle.
- Name a green plant.
- Name a blue bird.
- Name a purple food.

Wednesday: Outdoor Scavenger Hunt

- Find something green.
- Find a bird.
- Find a flag.
- Find a butterfly.
- Find a flower.
- Find a dog.
- Find a rock.
- Find a bug.
- Find a tree.
- Find a leaf.

Thursday: Opposites Scavenger Hunt

- Find something soft.
- Find something bumpy.

- Find something round.
- Find something square.
- Find something loud.
- Find something quiet.
- Find something cold.
- Find something hot.
- Find something big.
- Find something small.

Friday: 5 Senses Scavenger Hunt

- Sight---Find something black, find something heart shaped, find something long, find 5 of the same things.
- Touch---Find something wet, find something warm, find something soft, find something smooth.
- Taste---Find something sweet, find something a pet could eat.
- Smell---Find something that smells nice, find something that smells stinky.
- Sound---Find an animal sound, find something loud, find something to make music with.

Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy

Below is a sample guide of how to structure this week with occupational and physical activities to promote creativity, strength, coordination, imagination, and functional play with resources accessible around the house. If you do not have materials or items listed, be creative and use items that you already have. Cleaned, recycled items are great for imagination and play too! Feel free to use our themed activities to promote some fun learning around the house.

This week's theme is Laundry Week:

Monday

Occupational Therapy (OT): Roll socks up to make sock balls (this will come in handy for our physical therapy activities this week!)

Physical Therapy (PT): Practice overhand throwing using rolled up socks into a laundry basket. Stack up rolls of toilet paper or paper towels and use them as a throwing target like a carnival game!

Tuesday

OT: Work on your child using fasteners, zipping pants and jacket zippers, and buttoning clothes.

PT: Practice underhand throws today; use rolled up socks and toss them into a laundry basket. Stack up rolls of toilet paper or paper towels and use them as a throwing target like you did yesterday.

Wednesday

OT: Have your child pour and measure laundry detergent and fabric softener.

PT: Push a laundry basket throughout the house (either walking or sliding on knees). Make the basket heavy by filling it with toys or canned goods, after the laundry is put away of course!

Thursday

OT: Use both hands together to fold clothes and towels.

PT: Similar to yesterday's activity, pull a laundry basket throughout the house (either walking or sliding on knees). Make the basket heavy by filling it with toys or canned goods.

Friday

OT: Use a sheet to make a parachute.

PT: Practicing squatting today, squat to pick up laundry off the floor and place it in a laundry basket, or straight into the washer or dryer. Count the socks as you put them in the wash, or practice labeling clothing colors, etc. as you do it!

Physical Therapy- Gross Motor Movement

Monday- Volley Balloony

Using a balloon or crumpled paper ball (you can use the sale flyers or junk mail) and have your kids help you crumple the paper into a ball shape. Add layers as needed. The larger the ball, the slower it will move in the air so make it big for younger kids. Use anything to help divide space into two "courts" (I have used chairs, a coffee table, a belt or scarf lying on the floor, pillows, etc). One person "serves" the ball or balloon and you try to hit the ball back and forth without it touching the ground. You can count how many times you can hit it back and forth before it falls or you can get competitive and try to "score" on each other. Remember if the balloon pops to pick up all the pieces and throw them out as they can be a choking hazard!!

Tuesday- Hide and Seek

For younger children you can cover your face with a blanket or move about the room and seek if they can "find" you (more like peek-a-boo). For older children they can play hide and seek in the house or outside or both. When you are able, try to encourage the game in a larger area or multiple rooms or on multiple levels of the home to allow for increased movement experiences. You can work on counting to higher numbers, counting or moving slowly, counting or moving fast, counting and seeking while pretending to be something other than a person (like a dog and bark for each count and crawl to seek and chase).

Wednesday- Songs with Movements

For younger kids you can sing the song and gently assist them with the hand movements. For older kiddos have them sit on the floor with their feet in front of their bodies. If needed, they can lean their

backs on the wall or against the couch. Have them complete the movements of the song using their feet rather than their hands.

Song examples include: itsy-bitsy spider, wheels on the bus, patty cake. For older kids they can use their feet to “draw” shapes in the air or make letters of the alphabet.

Thursday- Coloring

If adventurous and able to complete safely, consider having kids color in different positions like lying on their belly, tape the paper to the wall, door, art easel and color while standing up, tape the paper to the underside of a coffee table and lay on their backs and color, or go outside and use chalk to color.

Friday - Play red light/green light (or “stop” and “go”)

You need a space where there is a start, safe distance and then an end. The caller stands at the end and all players start at the start. The caller says “green light” for go and “red light” for stop. The players must stop when they hear red light. The first one to tag the caller becomes the new caller. For variations, caller can come up with new ways to move (crawl on hands and knees, jump with two feet, walk sideways or backwards, take small baby steps, take large giant steps, walk on tip toes, walk on heels, etc.)

Speech Language Therapy Ideas for Preschool/Kindergarten

Monday, March 30 – Activity: Mystery Bag

Find various common items from around the house and place them in a bag/box.

Example items (cup, bowl, spoon, marker, block, can, small toys, book, etc.)

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

This is a great activity for following directions! Ask your child to take things out of the bag, put them in the bag, give the item to you or a sibling. Once your child takes an item out you can ask them to put it on their head or on the table. You can also pick two items out of the bag and ask your child to get one of the items (“where’s the ball?”).

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Take turns with your child taking items out of the bag and saying what they are. If your child is unsure it is okay to label the object and put it back in the bag to see if they remember later. You can also ask your child what you do with the item or use the item in a silly way (brushing your hair with a fork) and see if the child can tell you what you are doing.

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

See if you can find items around your house that contain your child’s speech sound. You can also use a word that contains your child’s speech sound to repetitively talk about what you are doing (“I Got _” “I Caught _” “I Found” “I See _”).

Tuesday, March 31 – Activity: Puppet Show

Have your child make a puppet out of a paper bag, old sock, popsicle stick, etc.

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

While making your puppets see if your child can follow simple directions like “give me the marker/scissors/paper,” “draw two eye’s on your puppet.” Have the child act out different actions with your puppet “make your puppet talk/jump/fall down”.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Act out a play with your child and their puppet. Make it fun and model how we talk about play. The sillier we can be the better! Try to limit the number of questions you are asking and make it flow like a natural conversation.

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

Make working on your child’s speech sounds fun by having the child’s puppet say the words. You can make up silly words or have your child just practice individual sounds with you.

Wednesday, April 1 – Activity: Daily Routines

Today just focus on adding language into your daily routines! (Getting ready, cleaning up, taking a bath, during meals, etc.)

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

Today focus on following directions and prepositions (on, under, next to, up, down). Talk about what your child is doing (“put on your shirt,” “put toothpaste on the toothbrush,” “put your toys in the bin”). Make it silly and ask them if you should put their sock on their foot or on their hand.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Allow your child to tell you what they should do next. Give them choices during meals of what they would like to eat (“milk or juice”, “carrots or celery”, “sandwich or hot dog”). Meet the child where they are at. They may just be able to reach for an object, label it, or put words together to ask for “more juice.”

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

While getting ready look in the mirror with your child and practice making funny faces together. Stick out your tongue, go “pa pa pa” or “ha ha ha” to try and fog up the mirror. Take turns imitating silly words with your child!

Thursday, April 2 – Activity: Songs

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

Find songs that have actions or make up actions to common nursery rhymes (Head, shoulders, knees and toes, Itsy Bitsy Spider, Baby Shark). Sing and dance along with the song and encourage your child to come up with different actions to go along with the songs.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Encourage your child to sing along with the song. After a few repetitions pause at different times during the song and have the child finish the sentences (“The itsy bitsy _____,” “The wheels on the bus go _____”). You can also pause the song in different places and have your child request for more using words, signs, or by pointing to symbols.

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

Nursery Rhymes are great for encouraging repetition! You can exaggerate different sounds that your child is working on while singing. You can also work on sounds during requests (“**M**ore **M**usic,” “**G**o,” “**D**one,” “**N**ext,”).

Friday, April 3 – Activity: Cooking

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

Cooking is a great time to practice following simple directions (put in, mix, cut, smash, open)! Assist your child in safely helping you to prepare a meal. See if they can identify different ingredients when given the choice between 2.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Model talking about what you are doing while cooking. Label the different ingredients that may be new to your child and encourage your child to ask for “more,” “help,” to “open” using their words, signs, or pictures.

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

Try to make short repetitive songs that contain your child’s speech sounds (“**M**ix, **M**ix, **M**ix it up,” “**C**ut, **C**ut, **C**ut the veggies,” “**D**ump, **D**ump, **D**ump the sugar” “**P**our, **P**our, **P**our the water”).

Speech Language Therapy Ideas for Older Children

Monday, March 30 – Activity: Mystery Bag

Find various common items from around the house and place them in a bag/box.

Example items (mug, soap, plate, pencil, stamps, shoe, note card, envelope)

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

Ask your child if they can follow multiple step directions with the item (take the cup and put it on top of the block and book). You can make game “rules” such as “put back any item that you don’t use to eat,” “put back an item that is not smooth/hard/pink/bigger than a pencil,” “pick out two items, which one is bigger/smaller” etc.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Have your child pick out 2 or 3 items and try to make a sentence or story with them. Ask them questions about the story that they make up. If they are able to write you can ask them to write out their sentence or story.

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

See if you can find items around your house that contain your child’s speech sound. You can also use a word that contains your child’s speech sound to repetitively talk about what you are doing (“I Just got _” “I Took out _” “I Found” “I See _”).

Tuesday, March 31 – Activity: Charades/Taboo

You can print out pictures or words (if your child can read) or have your child choose a word to use.

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

See if your child can act out different actions or scenarios (“making a phone call” “taking a test” “buying groceries.” You can also describe a word to your child and see if they can guess what it is from your description. You can work on synonym/antonyms by saying “it is another word for ____” or “it is the opposite of ____”.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Take turns with your child describing a word, movie, person, or object. This is a great time to model descriptive terms (group, what it does, what it looks like, what it is made of, where you would find it).

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

Take turns acting out various words containing your child’s speech sounds. You can model correct production and encourage them to think of words that contain their speech sounds.

Wednesday, April 1 – Activity: Daily Routines

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

See if your child can follow multiple directions during their daily routines (“can you go get a pink shirt and bring it to your sister?”). Ask your child questions about their day and how they are feeling. Take the time to discuss why they may be feeling different emotions and brainstorm activities or different things they may be able to do to feel better.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Have your child help you plan out the day. Talk about what you will do first, next, then. Brainstorm ideas of things you can do while you are at home and what materials you might need to do them.

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

Make a game out of having your child find as many words in their day that contain their speech sound. Point out things you see around your house that might contain their sound as well.

Thursday, April 2 – Activity: Songs

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

Listen to your child’s favorite songs with them. Ask your child what they think the song is about. Ask them how the song makes them feel.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Make up silly songs with your child about different activities (going to the store, being stuck inside, making lunch). Songs are a great time to practice rhyming, speech intonation, and fluency.

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

Practice singing songs with your child or use songs as a reinforcer after practicing your child’s speech sound (practice your child’s speech sound 15 times and then take a break for a song/part of a song that your child picks).

Friday, April 3 – Activity: Cooking

Receptive Language or “Understanding”

Cooking is a great time to practice following multi step directions (“get the box of pasta, open it, and put it in the pot”). You can also read the recipe or have your child read the recipe and carry out the steps

while assisting them along the way. This is also a great time to talk about what the child thinks comes first, second, last and what ingredients they think that they will need.

Expressive Language or “Talking”

Have your child tell you or write out how to make their favorite meal. Encourage them to “coach” you through the steps as you cook. You can also have the child make up their own silly recipe with fake ingredients and steps (“Cut the dirty sock and mix it with the dog bone”).

Articulation or “Speech Sounds/Intelligibility”

Have your child practice their speech sound in between adding new ingredients to the meal. They can also practice their speech sound each time they have to stir, cut, add in a noodle, etc.

This Week’s General Feeding Recommendation for Picky Eaters:

Start talking about the foods that you eat as a family. The way foods smell, taste, feel, look, and even sound play a big role in how we experience eating. Although your child may not be ready to experience these things themselves you can talk about the foods that you are eating. You can talk about if the foods you are eating taste sweet or sour, crunchy or soft, chewy or melt in your mouth, and if you are going to take a big shark bite or small mouse bite of each item. Encourage your child to talk about the foods they are comfortable with as well and make connections (“Oh my food is crunchy too”).

Contact Us

Easter Seals Joliet Region

212 Barney Drive

Joliet, IL 60435

(815) 725-2194

Contact: Morgan Tokarski, Pediatric Family Navigator

mtokarski@joliet.easterseals.com

Visit us on the web at www.easterseals.com/joliet/

