



Positive Parenting News

Winter 2016

Vol. 1 Issue 8

Focus: Making the First 5 Years Count

The Early Years

The first five years of life lay the foundation for a child’s long-term well-being and overall success. Everything she or he sees, touches, tastes, smells or hears shapes the brain for thinking, feeling, moving and learning. Babies and young children grow, learn and develop rapidly when they receive attention, love and affection, encouragement and mental stimulation, as well as nutritious meals and good health care.

The Importance of Play

Encouraging children to play and explore helps them learn and develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. This helps children get ready for school. Children learn how to behave (socially and emotionally) by imitating the behavior of those closest to them, so exposure to good role models is important.

Appreciating Individual Pace

All children grow and develop in similar patterns, but each child develops at his or her own pace. Every child has his or her own interests, temperament, style of social interaction and approach to learning.

Milestones and Concerns

Understanding the stages of child development helps parents know what to expect and how to best support the child as he or she grows and develops. Your pediatrician can provide you with information about ages and stages, will conduct regular developmental screenings, and can be a great resource if you have concerns about your child’s development or want tips to foster your child’s development.

Early Childhood Resources

- *Easter Seals* www.easterseals.com/mtffc/ offers an online screening tool to guide and track your child’s growth and development during the first five years.
- *PBS* www.pbs.org/parents/child-development offers a Child Development Tracker for insights on stages of growth with activities to promote child development.
- *Zero to Three* www.zerotothree.org provides information on early development and well being, early learning and development
- *Infant & Toddler Connections of VA* 1-800-234-1448 Early intervention supports and services for families of children from birth through age two who are not developing as expected or who have a condition that can delay normal development.
- *Early Childhood Special Education*– if you suspect your preschool child has a disability and may require special education services, contact your local school to make a referral.



www.chesterfield.gov/parenting/

Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Positive Parenting Coalition

Educating, supporting and empowering professionals to assist families in achieving their full potential.