



## 14 Ways to Show Love for Your child This Valentine's Day

1. Use plenty of positive words with your child.
2. Respond promptly and lovingly to your child's physical and emotional needs and banish put-downs from your parenting vocabulary.
3. Make an extra effort to set a good example at home and in public. Use words like "I'm sorry," "please," and "thank you."
4. When your child is angry, argumentative or in a bad mood, give him a hug, cuddle, pat, secret sign or other gesture of affection that he favors.
5. Use non-violent forms of discipline. Parents should institute both rewards and restrictions many years before adolescence to help prevent trouble during the teenage years. Allowing children of any age to constantly break important rules without being disciplined only encourages more rule violations.
6. Make plans to spend time alone with your young child or teen doing something they enjoy.
7. Schedule family meetings on a regular basis where everyone can talk about the week's events, share good news, give praise, set expectations, etc. Keep them brief, 15-20 minutes, longer if desired. Everyone should get input and airtime, but Mom and Dad have the final say.
8. Regardless of whether you actively try to pass on your values and beliefs to your child, they are bound to absorb some of them just by living with you. They will notice how disciplined you are in your work, how deeply you hold your beliefs and whether you practice what you preach.
9. Owning a pet can make children, especially those with chronic illnesses and disabilities, feel better by stimulating physical activity, enhancing their overall attitude, and offering constant companionship.
10. One of the best ways to familiarize your child with good food choices is to encourage them to cook with you. Let them get involved in the entire process, from planning the menus to shopping for ingredients to the actual food preparation and its serving.
11. As your child grows up, they will spend most of their time developing and refining a variety of skills and abilities in all areas of their lives. You should help them as much as possible by encouraging them and providing the equipment and instruction they need.
12. Your child's health depends significantly on the care and guidance you offer during their early years. By taking your child to the doctor regularly for consultations, keeping them safe from accidents, providing a nutritious diet, and encouraging exercise throughout childhood, you help protect and strengthen your child.
13. Help your child develop self-esteem by offering steady support and encouragement. They need you to believe in them as they learn to believe in themselves. Loving them, spending time with them, listening to them and praising their accomplishments are all part of this process.
14. Don't forget to say, "I love you" to children of all ages.

Reprinted from American Academy of Pediatrics  
Web site (<http://www.aap.org>)



*If you smile at someone they might smile back*

*Author Unknown*

## Toilet Training Toddlers

One of the biggest events in a young child's life - and a step toward growing up - is learning to use the toilet and not having to wear diapers anymore. Toilet training is the process of helping children learn to use the toilet instead of wetting or passing bowel movements in diapers. While parents may want to pick the age that their child will be when he or she is toilet trained, they might as well accept the fact that children will be trained when they are ready, not when it is convenient for their parents.

Toilet training is easiest when children are physically and emotionally ready, which usually happens between the ages of 2 and 3 years. Typically, girls gain bladder and bowel muscle control before boys do, but each child is an individual and will be toilet trained according to his or her own time clock.

How will you know if your child is ready to begin toilet training?

- Can she follow simple directions?
- Does he remain dry at least 2 hours at a time during the day?
- Can she walk to and from the bathroom, pull down pants, pull up pants?
- Does he remain dry during nap time?
- Can she tell you when she needs to go?
- Does he understand words about the toileting process?
- Does she seem comfortable with wet or soiled diapers?
- Does he show interest in the toilet or the potty chair?
- Are her bowel movements regular and predictable?
- Has he asked to wear grown-up underwear?

Dress your child in clothing that is easy for him/her to get off without help. Avoid shirts that snap in the crotch and shorts with zippers, snaps or buttons. Children who are learning to use the toilet need to be able to pull their pants down and up quickly and easily. It might even be good to let your child have some time during the day when he or she goes without a diaper. If she has an accident without a diaper, she will feel what is happening and will likely express discomfort. This is an excellent "teachable moment" when you can gently explain that sitting on the potty keeps her clothing dry and clean.

You can find other articles such as this on the Wyoming Parent Education Network at [www.wpen.net](http://www.wpen.net)

## Camp Pecometh - Summer 2008

Deaf Independent Living Association (DILA) announces it's first overnight summer camp program. The camp will be held Friday, August 8 through Sunday, August 10, 2008, featuring three days and two nights at the beautiful, waterfront property of Camp Pecometh, 136 Bookers Wharf Road, Centreville, MD 21617.

There will be a variety of fun adventures planned, including:

- Canoe trips
- Giant water trampolines
  - Fishing
  - Hiking
  - Campfires
  - Swimming
  - Splashdown
  - Crafts

Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Siblings of Deaf or Hard of Hearing Children ages 5 - 17 are welcome to attend. Cost is \$100 per child and registration is on a first come, first serve basis.

For more information or to register please contact DILA at [dila@dila.org](mailto:dila@dila.org) or (410) 742-5052 (v/tty)

## Lions Camp Merrick

Fee: \$25 per camper registration fee  
Plus \$425 per week camping fee

3 Sessions offered this year

Sunday, June 22 - Friday, June 27, 2008

Saturday, June 28 - Thursday, July 3, 2008

Sunday, July 6 - Friday, July 11, 2008

Camp is the place to make and renew friendships while enjoying fun and games during the summer break. Lions Camp Merrick works hard helping children make memories that will last a lifetime.

For more information contact:

Lions Camp Merrick

3050 Crain Highway #202

PO Box 375

Waldorf, MD 20604

(301) 645-5616

[cmpmerrick@aol.com](mailto:cmpmerrick@aol.com)

Or visit their website at

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



## **A Lifetime of Learning and Earning: A Transition Series for Families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students**

The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center offers online *A Lifetime of Learning and Earning: A Transition Series for Families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students*.

The purpose of the series is to provide families with important information about vocational rehabilitation, employment, and post-secondary education. With this knowledge, families can actively support and guide their children's transition planning for life after high school. The series is also a useful resource for transition and guidance counselors, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and other educators who are involved in student transition.

The first two publications in the series are:

*A Lifetime of Learning and Earning: Vocational Rehabilitation Services FAQ for Parents of Deaf and Hard of Hearing High School Students*. This publication addresses aspects of vocational rehabilitation, including eligibility requirements, application process, career planning, services provided, financial obligation, and appeal process.

The second publication, *A Lifetime of Learning and Earning: A Family Guide to Work Preparation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing High School Students*, addresses the question, "How can your child prepare for life after high school?" and provides three important steps to support high school age children's preparation for adult life. The publication also offers an overview of postsecondary realities and vocational rehabilitation services, additional websites, questions to ask, and suggested readings.

Both publications are written by Annette Reichman, director/liaison for the Office of Special Institutions in the U.S. Department of Education, and Susan Jacoby, manager of Transition National Mission Initiatives at the Clerc Center.

The publications are available for free as Adobe PDF files at <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/>

### **TRANSITION CONFERENCE**

**Saturday, March 8, 2008**

**8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**New Life Center of**

**Mountain Christian Church**

**1824 Mountain Road (Route 152)**

**Joppa, MD**

Focus 2008 - Guideposts for Success presents a free conference for transitioning teens and young adults with disabilities, their families and professionals. Visit with representatives of agencies, organizations, and support groups and attend workshops which address critical issues in the transition process from high school to the adult world.

For more information contact the Harford County Commission on Disabilities at (410) 638-3373 (v/tty) or [disability@harfordcountymd.gov](mailto:disability@harfordcountymd.gov)

### **Rising to a Higher Level Conference**

**April 24 - 27, 2008**

District of Columbia Area Black Deaf Advocates announces that their 2nd Eastern Regional Conference (ERC) will be held on April 24 - 27, 2008 at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the ERC is to give members, advocates, allies, families, and professionals of Black Deaf Community an opportunity to seek practical tools, learn and grow as a strong community. The goal of the Conference is to strengthen the educational, cultural, social, civil, and economic advancement of deaf/hard of hearing African-Americans. The theme of the conference is "Rising to a Higher Level"

For more information, contact Ruth Reed at [Ruth.Reed@gallaudet.edu](mailto:Ruth.Reed@gallaudet.edu) or Dorian Fletcher at [dorian4002000@yahoo.com](mailto:dorian4002000@yahoo.com) or visit their website at <http://www.dcabda.org/>

### **Community of Practice on Early Childhood Family Support**

The CoP is an on-line gathering place that brings together families, professionals, researchers, and policy leaders to share insights and experiences that can lead to wisdom-based actions.

Together, we can enhance the quality of life of families who have children with disabilities To join these conversations, start new discussions, search for resources, and more visit:

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

Click on Communities of Practice and select and click on Early Childhood Family Support



## Family Support and Resource Center

Maryland School for the Deaf  
Steiner Building, Room #100  
8169 Old Montgomery Road  
PO Box 894  
Columbia MD 21044

Phone: 410-480-4597 (v/tty)  
Fax: 410-480-4598  
E-mail: [partners@msd.edu](mailto:partners@msd.edu)

A statewide support service for families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and the professionals who support them



## Fishful Thinking Initiative

Fishful Thinking SM is a program designed to educate parents and teachers about the power of Optimism and its role in childhood development. The program, sponsored by the Pepperidge Farm Goldfish brand, was developed by Dr. Karen Reivich, co-director of the Penn Resiliency Project at the Positive Psychology Center and a research associate in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania.

Optimism is defined as the skill of seeing the positive aspects of a situation, the believe that things can change for the better and that one can control the direction of one's own life. Optimism is critical to kids today who face more challenges and stress than we did as children. Optimism enables children to achieve their goals, succeed in school, and stay resilient no matter what life throws in their path. Optimism also has long term, tangible benefits. Research shows that optimistic people perform better in school, are at lower risk for depression and have better overall physical health. Best of all, research has demonstrated that Optimism is a teachable skill that every child can learn and benefit from.

The Fishful ThinkingSM program provides the tools parents need to teach their kids how to think optimistically about themselves and how to use their Optimism to overcome life's obstacles, persist in the face of adversity, and transform setbacks into manageable challenges. By teaching kids Optimism today, we are equipping them with the skills and strategies they can rely on to shire in the face of adversity for the rest of their lives.

For more information visit the Fishful thinking website at:  
[www.fishfulthinking.com](http://www.fishfulthinking.com)

## SAVE THE DATE

The Maryland State Department of Education,  
Parents Place of Maryland,  
Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council and  
The Abilities Network

Would like to invite you to our next event

Parent 2 Parent Support Forum Presents:

Cultural Diversity and Effective Outreach Strategies for  
the African-American, Asian, Hispanic, and Orthodox  
Communities

March 13, 2008

9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Maryland School for the Deaf - Columbia Campus  
8169 Old Montgomery Road  
Columbia, MD 21043

Light continental breakfast will be served as well as a catered lunch

For more information contact Family Support & Resource Center at [partners@msd.edu](mailto:partners@msd.edu) or (410) 480-4597

Cecil County Public Schools - Parent Resource Center for  
Special Education Presents a:

### Resource Conference

Conference sessions designed to provide in-depth information on a variety of Special Education topics.

**Saturday, March 8, 2008**

**9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**Bay View Elementary School**

**910 North East Road**

**North East, MD 21901**

Free sessions, continental breakfast and materials

Registration is appreciated, but not required

For more information contact:

The Parent Resource Center for Special Education  
(410) 996-5637