

Center for Early Childhood Education

Newsletter

Our Mission: To help all children in Howard County to be successful when they enter school.

Issue 50, September 1, 2008



Does your preschooler pretend to write? Children learn to write long before they learn to read—with scribbles, marks that look like letters, and “play with writing” just as they do other pretend activities.

Support your child in this beginning writing stage.

Here’s what to do: Display their writing in a special place: refrigerator, bedroom door, taped to a bathroom tile, or any place it will be noticed by others so your child will know writing is important.

Modeling writing: as you write a shopping list, letter, e-mail, order something, explain to your child that you are writing, and have your child join in.

Invite your child to dictate stories to you: When your child is playing, ask them to tell you what they are doing, and write down exactly what they say, then read it aloud to your child, pointing to each word as you read it. Say, I have written down the words you said and this is what it looks like.

Create greeting cards for special occasions: Provide paper, crayons, and markers so your children can make cards and then “sign” their names. If they are old enough to copy letters, show them old cards that might have the words they need like “Happy Birthday.”

Take it outside: Let your child write or draw with chalk or old paintbrushes and water on sidewalks.

Encourage your child: Have lots of different kinds of paper, envelopes, pencils, crayons, and markers around the house where the child can easily find and use them.

“7 Biggest Mistakes Moms Make” (and Dads too!)

We thought you might be interested in the information in this article from TODAYshow.com *Parenting & Family*, “7 Biggest Driving Mistakes Moms Make” (and we say dads too!) The distractions parents face while on the

road can lead to accidents. The largest percentage of car accidents, 80%, are caused from driver distractions of just 3 seconds, and the leading cause of death for ages 3 to 33 are car crashes.

- **Chatting on your cell phone** is worse than driving drunk as documented by a University of Utah study. Both dialing a number and gabbing are dangerous because you are not focused on the road.
- **Feeling overconfident** in your driving ability? A University of Minnesota study showed women tend to drive as aggressively as men.
- **Do you know evasive moves** for avoiding an accident? You might want to take a defensive driving course. Some insurers offer policy discounts if you complete the course.
- **Driving while drowsy** is a problem for young parents according to the National Sleep Foundation.
- **Speeding** is often a cause because you are trying to get to the child’s daycare on time so you don’t get charged extra! Thirty percent of all fatal crashes are due to speeding. The faster you drive the longer it takes you to slow down, and you need 300 feet to stop your car going 60 miles an hour.
- **Snacking while steering** is sometimes the only breakfast you get as you drive your child to daycare and scarf down the coffee and bagel you have. When you look down at your food for a second, you are missing what is in front of you as your car is moving forward. If you really need to eat while driving, keep food to the side and take bites only while you are stopped at a light.

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- **Attending to your kids** can be done in a safe way. If your baby starts crying, start singing lullabies or pull over in a parking lot to comfort your child. If your children are fighting over something, either pull off the road or wait until the next stop light, and then turn around and take away what they are fighting over.
- **Slacking on car maintenance** caused 660 fatalities and 33,000 injuries in 2005, and many were due to tires that were under or overinflated or had worn treads. Make sure your mechanic checks your car's power steering, brake, transmission, and coolant levels each time you get an oil

change. Turn on your headlights and turn signals. Make sure they work, along with checking your brake lights. Be sure you have good wipers and windshield fluid and that your windshield is clean.

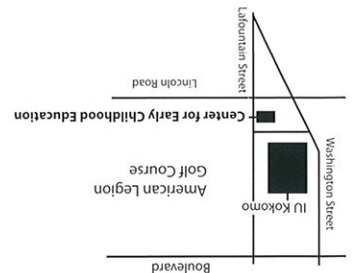
Don't forget to drive safely when you visit us on Thursday, September 11, for the Activity Day.



Center for Early Childhood Education

on the Indiana University
Kokomo campus

www.iuk.edu/ecec
ecec@iuk.edu
(765) 455-9427



CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
2300 S. Washington St.
P.O. Box 9003
Kokomo, IN 46904-9003

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
KOKOMO



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