

# EEP Family Connect



Late April, 2016

## Theme: Creepy Crawlies

Without a doubt, spring is here and with it comes the return of droves of tiny creatures such as ants and spiders, or as our children call them “creepy crawlies.” While some mommies and daddies may cringe at the thought of getting up close and personal with some of these, many children are fascinated by the little crawling or flying creatures...and for good reason. There just aren’t many things that move around, come in a variety of colors and are so readily available! Maybe the thought of picking up a worm after an April shower or letting a pill bug crawl on your hand gives you the shivers. As you know, your little ones often pick up on those things! Just let your little one know that it may be a bit hard for you to pick up that worm. And if you do or even if you don’t, you can make it a great lesson either way! Just acknowledging that you feel afraid sometimes is good for our little ones to hear. In our classrooms we say “All feelings are OK” and “Everyone feels scared sometimes.” And if you decide to pick up that worm, they’ll have a model of daddy or mommy doing something hard too and choosing to be brave. Oh, and don’t forget to take some good deep breaths before you touch that worm or deal with that spider. It’s part of “Doing Turtle” and oxygen helps! Enjoy touching worms and *connecting* together!



## Talk with me!

Here are some words I am learning over the next two weeks. If you happen to see any of these in books, or in stores or when we're out and about, point them out to me! Remember, even though I might be younger, I can still learn the other words too!

### Developmentally Younger

- ♥ Bug
- ♥ Butterfly (their wings go up)
- ♥ Caterpillar
- ♥ Spider
- ♥ Bee
- ♥ Ant
- ♥ Ladybug
- ♥ Worm
- ♥ Web
- ♥ Wings
- ♥ Eyes
- ♥ Legs
- ♥ Head
- ♥ Flying

### Developmentally Older

- ♥ Insect (another name for a bug)
- ♥ Grasshopper
- ♥ Potato bug/pillbug (they roll into balls)
- ♥ Bumblebee
- ♥ Fly (black and not clean...belongs outside!)
- ♥ Moth (the ones whose wings lie down)
- ♥ Centipede (the ones with all those legs!)
- ♥ Snail
- ♥ Slimy (another word for slippery)
- ♥ Dragonfly
- ♥ The life cycle of a butterfly (from egg to caterpillar to giant caterpillar to cocoon to butterfly)
- ♥ Aphids (little green bugs that are bad for plants!)
- ♥ Lands (what creatures do when they stop flying)
- ♥ Pollen
- ♥ Antennae
- ♥ Body
- ♥ Rub (like when crickets rub their legs)
- ♥ Spin (a web)
- ♥ Rolling into a ball
- ♥ Spots
- ♥ Frowning
- ♥ Friendly



## Read with me!

Books are a wonderful way for me to learn. I can look at the pictures with you and you can show me things on the pages. Sometimes the stories are too long for me to listen to but if you TELL me what's going on, I can probably listen for longer. I also will benefit from hearing the words over and over and over... Here are some of the books we'll be reading:

### *The Grouchy Ladybug* By Eric Carle



This one is about a grouchy ladybug who gets irritated with a friendly ladybug because he, the grouchy one, wants all of the aphids for his breakfast and is *not* interested in sharing! Sounds like something we can *all* identify with! There are lots of creepy crawlies in it (ladybugs, aphids, a bee, a beetle, a praying mantis) so it's great for vocabulary and is a sneaky way to introduce some wonderful, non-creepy crawly words like, grouchy, friendly, shouted, screamed, screeched, looked him straight in the eye, puffed itself up. This one is for developmentally older children.

### *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* By Eric Carle



An award winner for sure! It's a much-loved classic, super for teaching all kinds of food names and the life cycle of the butterfly. Even your youngest developing ones will like it. Be sure to pretend to chomp, chomp, chomp on the foods, and play peek-a-boo through the little holes. Yummy!

### *The Itsy Bitsy Spider* By Trapani



If you remember the song and how it goes, you and your little one will have fun learning some new verses and watching this silly little spider and the mischief he gets into!

### *Ladybug Girl and Bumblebee Boy* By David Sorman and Jacky Davis



Let's face it, playground play can be tough. It can be hard to come up with something to do with your little friends that's agreeable. Here, Lulu and her friend Sam work through their disagreements and pretend that the playground is in danger. They become Superheroes! It's Ladybug Girl and her new pal Bumblebee Boy to the rescue! This one is best for those who play imaginatively.

### *Grandma Loves Bugs* An app by Fairlady Media



A cute app featuring Grandma who needs help identifying bugs, coloring butterflies, matching letters, building a spider web and more. 10 mini games and 8 instructional videos for kids 5 and under.



## Play with me!

When you play with me, I love it. When I get your full attention, I feel really special. We can build something, go somewhere, make something or just play around with the toys I have. No matter what, I'll be learning about all kinds of things. Remember, just being with YOU makes it really fun. Let's play!

- ♥ The backyard or any little piece of ground that has dirt is the perfect place to find little insects and creepy crawlies like I've been learning about. A little spoon would help me to dig around and see what's down there. Maybe we could even take along a plastic jar to peek at what we find.
- ♥ Ants are fast and fun to watch. So are snails, pill bugs and ladybugs! A good way to catch some ants to watch is to put a piece of fruit or cracker outside on the ground and see what happens. If we put them in a jar I could watch them without getting them on me. I would love to see them up close. Then we can let them go again because that would be caring for our earth's little creatures.
- ♥ I'm learning to share. It can be hard sometimes. When you give me a bite of your cookie or a drink of your water, remind me that that's called sharing. Then ask me on occasion for a little bite of mine. See if I can remember how to share too. When I do, tell me how sweet I am to share. "Oh, what a sweet sharing boy you are!"
- ♥ We could go on an "I Spy... *insects*" walk! You could have your turn first: "Hmmm...let's see. I spy an insect that is flying over your head right now. Yes! It's a butterfly! Just like in our Hungry Caterpillar book!" Then it could be my turn: "I spy an ant!" I could point to show you where. That will help me remember the names of the insects and also help me learn the words that tell you "where" things are like 'up there' or 'under your foot daddy' or 'on that leaf.'
- ♥ There are some fun board games that would be a fun Friday night activity for us to play as a family. I would love to learn to play "Cootie". It's a pretty easy preschool game that everyone even grown-ups can play and have fun with.
- ♥ Play dough is so fun to squish and roll and my teachers say it makes my fingers **STRONG!** I would love to roll a long "snake." My teacher says to use both hands to roll. Then she says to pinch along the side of my snake using my thumb against my "pointer" and "tall man" fingers. She says that will make my fingers extra **STRONG!** After my snake, I might want to make a ball with playdoh. It could be the body of my creepy crawly. I could learn to make a smaller ball for its head. We could make our own little creepy crawlies to decorate the dinner table tonight!



## Sing with me!

Singing little songs with me may seem silly, but it's good for me to hear the words over and over. I might even sing along with you or add a little word here or there. Try singing when you hold me, or when I'm in the tub at night or how about in the car when we're going places? Here are some of the songs/chants we'll be singing:

### \*"Shoo Fly!"

(\*This is a great one to sing when you see an insect in your house (or anywhere else it shouldn't be) to help you teach your child (and yourself) a stay-calm response to encountering insects!)

Shoo, fly, don't bother me!

Shoo, fly, don't bother me!

Shoo, fly, don't bother me! For I belong to somebody!

### "Beehive Fingerplay"

Here is the beehive. (hold up fist)

Where are the bees? (point to fist and shrug shoulders)

Hiding inside where nobody sees. (put finger up and wag it back and forth)

Watch them as they come out of the hive...

1, 2, 3, 4, 5! (count off fingers one at a time)

Buzzzzzz! They're alive! (tickle as desired ☺)

### "The Itsy Bitsy Spider"

The itsy bitsy spider went up the waterspout.

Down came the rain and washed the spider out.

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain.

And the itsy bitsy spider went up the spout again.

### "What Friends Do"

(Sung to "London Bridge")

Friends take turns and share their toys, (put offering hand out)

Share their toys, share their toys.

Friends take turns and share their toys.

They have lots of fun!

Friends calm down (breathe) and work it out, (point your index finger)

Work it out, work it out.

Friends calm down and work it out,

They have fun!



## Pull me close...

I'm little but I have lots of feelings. Sometimes I cry because I'm tired and I don't even know why. Sometimes I laugh and feel giggly and it's good to hear you laugh and tell me you feel happy too. But sometimes when I'm mad I need you to help me know what that's called. Pull me close and tell me. There might even be times when you're mad about something I've done. Noticing that and telling me how you feel helps me to understand that we ALL have feelings and that all feelings

- ♥ I'm learning that "Doing Turtle" is a good idea when I feel a little mad. But I'm also learning that just stopping to breathe or say Bummer! Snap! might work *before* I get too upset and then maybe mad. Watch me and if you see me start to get frustrated or overwhelmed, let me know you care. "Bummer! Snap! It IS frustrating when you can't get things open!" Then tell me how proud you are if I get thru it. My teacher calls that "self-regulation" and says it's very important to get better at for everyone big and little!
- ♥ I forget the steps for "Doing Turtle." There are pictures on the next page. You might put them on the fridge or some other place I can see easily (nice and low). That would help me remember.
- ♥ If we bring some little ants in the house in a jar with some tiny holes, I could help take care of them. If you put some soil about  $\frac{1}{2}$  way up and you wrap black paper around the outside of the jar, they'll make tunnels near the sides so we can see them easier. It could be my job to give them little pieces of cracker or fruit each day. That's teaching me an important lesson in caring for something and that's a very good feeling.
- ♥ Going fast and hurrying is so hard. But sometimes we *have* to go fast so we won't be late to go somewhere or do something. One time, my teacher said, she could beat me in a race. She could put her coat on faster than me. It was fun to race and when I won, hurrying didn't feel so bad. Another time, my teacher gave me a choice when we needed to hurry. She asked if I wanted to have my Superman or Batman toy in the car. Giving me fun choices helped me get to the car much faster.
- ♥ Sometimes I have to have a break. It helps me have a little time to think about what I did and get calm. When I'm calm, I make better choices. Sometimes I feel really sad or even really mad because I don't want to be away from the rest of what's going on. When my break is over and I'm feeling calmer, talk with me about what happened. Pull me close and remind me that you love me and care about me and that's why you want me to take breaks and learn to calm myself when I need to. It will help me learn to make better choices. It will help me to understand.

## Doing Turtle!

