

EEP Family Connect

Late January, Early February, 2016



Theme: Home and Family! It's Valentine's Day!

Aaaah, home. It's the place where our family is. It's the place where we can kick off our shoes and enjoy the people and things we call our own. This theme is all about the two best things our little ones find comfort in: home and family. Sometimes we are so automatic about doing things in our homes; making dinner, sweeping the kitchen, dusting the furniture, making the bed, it's easy to forget that letting our little ones help us do a little part can be a *huge* learning experience! As you talk about the rooms in your home, the things that go in those rooms and of course the people that live there, your little one will begin to put it all together. How about playing the "Room Blitz Game?" Set the timer for 5 minutes. On your mark, get set, go! Pick up things that don't go in the room but that go in other rooms and take them there (baby's blanket goes in her bedroom, Daddy's cup goes in the kitchen, sister's book goes in her room on the bookshelf). Little ones learn where things go and hey, the house gets straightened up, too! Can't beat that!

Home can be a great place to enjoy *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

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| ♥ Family | ♥ Door |
| ♥ Mommy | ♥ Toilet |
| ♥ Daddy | ♥ Bathtub |
| ♥ Baby | ♥ Sink |
| ♥ Boy | ♥ Bed |
| ♥ Girl | ♥ Stove (discriminated from refrigerator) |
| ♥ Love | ♥ Table |
| ♥ Heart | ♥ Chairs |
| ♥ Valentine | ♥ Where you take a bath? Sleep? Eat dinner? |
| ♥ House | ♥ Something that goes in the bathroom, kitchen, bedroom |
| ♥ Kitchen | ♥ Inside, outside |
| ♥ Bathroom | |
| ♥ Bedroom | |
| ♥ Window | |

Developmentally Older

- | | |
|--|---|
| ♥ Home (another word for your house) | ♥ Sofa/couch (discriminated from chair) |
| ♥ Apartment | ♥ Curtains |
| ♥ Living/family room | ♥ Street (child names his/hers) |
| ♥ Garage | ♥ Ways to make your house nice (vacuum, dust, sweep, wash, paint) |
| ♥ Floor | ♥ Upstairs/Downstairs |
| ♥ Ceiling | ♥ Grandma, grandpa |
| ♥ Walls | ♥ Older, younger |
| ♥ Closet | ♥ Pink, white |
| ♥ Roof | ♥ Woman, man |
| ♥ Chimney, fireplace | |
| ♥ Dishes | |
| ♥ Silverware (spoons, knives and forks are all...) | |



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:

Just Grandma and Me

By Mercer Mayer



Little Critter and his grandmother spend the day at the beach. Little Critter is a good helper, even at the beach. When his grandmother's hot dog falls in the sand, he washes it off in the ocean! Grandma is a great example of patience through all the joys and mishaps of a special summer day they share together at the beach.

The Three Bears

By Paul Galdone



This is a great version of the story! It's a little long, so your little one may not be able to sit and listen to the whole thing. But we hardly ever read the words at school! We "read the pictures" instead of the words. It keeps their attention, especially the littlest ones, so much better!



Clifford's First Valentine's Day

By Norman Bridwell

Have we mentioned that we love Clifford books! They're simple, have great vocabulary, model kindness and you can easily tell the story by reading the "pictures." When you do, they work for developmentally young ones, too! Clifford has many things happen in this one. He makes a mess with the Emily Elizabeth's Valentine supplies, gets glue on his paws and falls into the mail chute. All ends well as usual. Lots of feelings (love, happy, worried/upset, scared, and relieved) and potential why questions like (e.g. "Why is Emily Elizabeth a little worried?" "Why is she happy now?") that are perfect for your developmentally older ones.



My PlayHome by PlayHome Software Ltd

This very interactive dollhouse app is perfect for our Home/Family Theme. "The characters eat, sleep, shower, brush their teeth and more. Want the room to be darker? Close the drapes! Fancy a change in music? Pop a different CD into the stereo!"

\$2.99 for Android, \$3.99 for iOS (iPad and iPhones)



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!

- ♥ I LOVE looking at pictures of our family! I especially like it when we have snapshots that you give me to play with and look at and sort. I would love to make an "I Love My Family" book! Maybe you have some extra pictures of our family (don't forget our pets, too!) that we could glue onto paper? We could tie it with ribbon or even staple it. Either way, I'd love to have my own pictures of us to look at by myself or with my friends at school.
- ♥ In my preschool classroom, we usually exchange Valentines. I would love it if you'd help me to "write" my name on my Valentines. Even if I can make just one letter or a scribble, that would make me feel so grown-up! Ask me to write my name and see what I can do...maybe I'll surprise you!
- ♥ Play dough is one of the most fun things I do at preschool. Doing it at home is fun, too. You can make it at home with me! Because it's almost Valentine's Day we could add some red food coloring to make it pink. When we cut shapes out, we could use heart-shaped cookie cutters and practice saying, "Happy Valentine's Day...I love you!" to all the people in my family!

Playdough

- 2 ½ cups of flour
- 1 ½ cups salt
- 1 Tablespoon Alum
- 2 pkgs. of Kool-Aid
- 3 Tablespoons oil
- 2 cups boiling water

Mix the dry ingredients and add boiling water and stir quickly. Knead dough and keep adding flour until the dough is no longer sticky. Enjoy!

- ♥ I am a super-duper helper! Let's play a little game of clean up! Put several things in a laundry basket from different rooms of the house. Then see if I can put them where they go! Ask me if I know which room the toothbrush goes in? How about Mommy's shoes? Daddy's hammer? The spoon? When I get back from my last one, put in a treat for us to share!



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:

“The Barney Song: I Love You”

(Sung to the tune: “This Old Man”)

I love you,
You love me,
We're a happy family,
with a great big hug,
and a kiss from me to you,
Won't you say you love me too?

I love you,
You love me,
We're best friends like friends should be,
With a great big hug,
And a kiss from me to you,
Won't you say you love me too?

“I Love Mommy (and Daddy, and Brother, and Sister and Grandma...)”

(Sung to the tune: “Frere Jacques”)

I love Mommy, I love Mommy.
Yes I do; yes I do.
And my mommy loves me,
Yes, my mommy loves me,
Loves me too; loves me too.

Change Mommy to Daddy, Brother, Sister, Etc. ☺



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 are okay.

- ♥ It's nice to hear you say, "I love you." When you come in to wake me in the morning and snuggle with me, it would be so nice to hear. When I go to or get home from preschool, I'd really like to hear it then, too. I can't hear it enough!!!
- ♥ Sometimes, when I've been disciplined for doing something or you've been angry with me, I really need to hear that you still love me. I know when I've disappointed you and sometimes I wonder if you still love me even when you're not mad anymore. Help me know that you still love me...no matter what!
- ♥ I know that you cry sometimes just like me. It's important for me to understand that crying and being sad is normal and natural for everyone...even big people. Crying might be scary for me at first, but if you can talk to me and teach me to cuddle *you* and comfort *you* when you cry, I'll learn how to help my friends when they cry, too. That's an important way to show love to my family and friends.
- ♥ When I do sweet things for you or other people in our family, remind me that I'm being loving. You could tell me, "Wow, sweetie you really showed love to Daddy by getting his book for him!" I need to hear it and when I know you're happy about it, I'll want to do it more!!!

♥ "All Our Feelings Song"

(Sung to the tune of "*She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain*")

We'll be sharing all our feelings every day.
We'll be sharing all our feelings every day.
If we're happy or we're mad, if we're scared, calm or sad,
We'll be sharing all our feelings every day.

We'll be working out our problems every day.
We'll be working out our problems every day.
If we're snacking or we're cleaning, if we're waiting or we're playing,
We'll be working out our problems every day!