

Raising Great Kids



NOVEMBER

Children's Fears

Like adults, young children have fears. Oftentimes, however, adults have a hard time dealing with children's fears. Children usually experience many more fears than adults because they are small, powerless and do not understand the world. Common fears are fears of the dark, loud noises, separation, abandonment, monsters, animals, unfamiliar situations and people.

Some children by nature, are more high strung and fearful. Being raised with harsh discipline and criticism also causes children to be fearful. Since fear is learned, children may develop fears by watching other people who are frightened of certain things. They can actually be taught by others to fear, e.g., "Don't go near the dog! It may bite," is a common statement to a child that could lead to fear of dogs. Here are a few things you can do to help your child cope with fear.

- ★ Move close to the child. Share your adult strength by holding him gently.
- ★ Calmly listen to the child's fears. Show you understand by saying something like, "It sure is dark in this room."
- ★ Ask what you can do to make the fearful situation easier. The child might want you to hold him close, or sit by him for awhile. You might offer to put a night light in the room.
- ★ Later on, talk with the child about the frightening experience. "The darkness scared you, didn't it?" Ask him questions about the fear and what it felt like. Let him talk some of the fear out. Help the child understand that it is okay to be frightened, that you have fears too, and when you were little you had similar fears. Help him identify some fears he has overcome, e.g., going to school, playing with other children.

It is important to recognize children's fears for what they are ~ a natural reaction to an unfamiliar circumstance. Z

Source: *Family Information Services*, March, 2000.



Safety Scoop

**Remember ~
one person-one belt.**

Parents who buckle up show their children that it is important to ride safely.

-  Never hold a child on your lap. You could crush him in a collision.
-  Never put a belt around yourself and a child on your lap.
-  Two people with one belt around them could injure each other.
-  Never let children ride in the cargo area of a station wagon, van or pickup. Z



Did You Know?

Did you know that children get burnout too?

Children need downtime just as adults do. A sign that your preschooler is suffering from burnout or is tired could be, while he is engaged in an activity, he frequently gets angry, e.g., out-of-control screaming. Your child needs unorganized time to amuse himself. Some ways that you can help are:

- ★ Consider your child's personality when making plans for him. Does he need time after an activity to shut down for awhile, be alone to nap or play quietly?
- ★ Introduce different activities slowly. Try new activities one at a time.
- ★ Allow your child to choose and be involved in activities that appeal to him, not you.
- ★ Set a good example yourself. Take time to relax and recharge your battery. If parents don't enjoy free time, it's hard for them to understand why it's so important that children have free time. **Z**

Q & A How can I help my child develop good language skills?

Children's speech increases by leaps and bounds as they grow. First they hear a word many times, then they add it to their dictionary of words in the brain. Once they understand words, then they are able to use them. As children talk, they add different cues, such as tone of voice and movement to their words and phrases, to help us understand them. Some ways by which you can help your child develop good language skills are:

- ★ Talk to him and hold conversations with him.
- ★ Match your words to what the child can understand.
- ★ Read to him.
- ★ Listen to him carefully, patiently and with love.
- ★ Talk about what you are doing as the child watches.
- ★ Talk with the child about the color, shape, and size of different objects.
- ★ Use repetition.
- ★ Give the child good eye contact. **Z**



Snow Waffle

- 1 (12 oz) box mini-waffles
- 1 (8 oz) fruit-flavored yogurt

Spread yogurt on one waffle, just enough to cover the top of the waffle, about 2 teaspoons. Top each waffle with another making a sandwich. Put waffles in a freezer bag, plastic wrap or in a covered tray and freeze until firm. **Z**

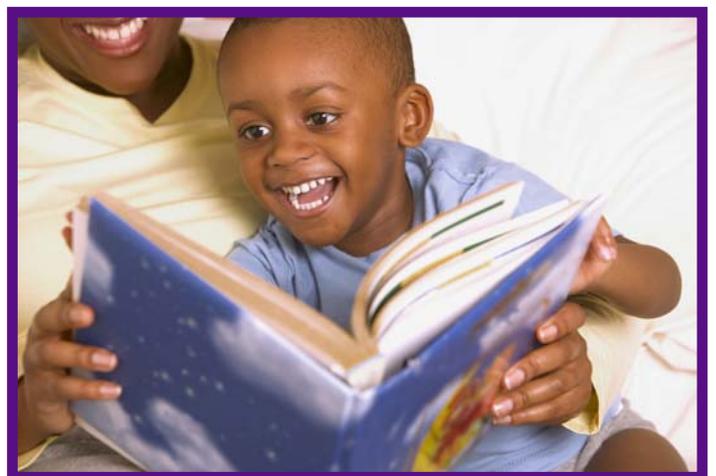
Source: *101+ Snack Time Ideas*, Penn State Cooperative Extension.

Kids Can Help

Children can bring the ingredients, spread yogurt on waffle, cover with another and put in bag, wrap or in covered tray.



All children must be supervised when they are in the kitchen.



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