

FEBRUARY 2024



**Social Development:** Feelings, Being a Friend

**Writing Skills:** Letters: Hh & Vv Colors: Pink Numbers: 11 & 12 Shapes: Heart

**Themes:** Valentine's Day, President's Day, My body (5 Senses, Feelings, Getting Dressed, Staying Healthy)

**Science:** Heart Beats, Color Mix Red+White=Pink



We will be **CLOSED** Monday  
February 19th



## Valentine's Day Activities

We will have special Valentine's activities  
on Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>.

For ALL age groups: if you choose to  
send valentines, it is best **NOT** to  
write individual names on each card.  
Have your child write their name or mark  
their "mark," on each card, but address  
them to "my friend" or leave blank. We  
will celebrate in each of the classrooms  
with plenty of heart filled activities,  
games, and art.

## February Birthdays!



**\*Addie C. \* Izzy C. \* Ronan L.\*  
\* Lorenzo M. \* Sterling M. \*  
Ms. Teresa**



# 8 Mistakes Parents Make With Preschoolers

Find out how you can avoid these common parenting missteps.

By Jennifer Soong

Sometimes, it may seem like your preschooler has the innate ability to push you to the outer edge of your patience. And that's on a good day.

Fear not, moms and dads. You're not alone. Preschoolers want to own their newfound independence. But they also want the close attention and love of their caregivers.

Michele Borba, EdD, author of *The Big Book of Parenting Solutions*, says, "These ages (3-5) are among the most active and frustrating in terms of parenting."

Here are eight common mistakes parents of preschoolers make and some smart fixes to help avoid or resolve problems.

## 1. Straying Too Much From Routines

Consistency is key for preschoolers, says pediatrician Tanya Remer Altmann, author of *Mommy Calls: Dr. Tanya Answers Parents' Top 101 Questions about Babies and Toddlers*.

When you're not being consistent with your routine, preschoolers get confused and may act out more or throw more temper tantrums. Altmann says, "If sometimes you let them do something and sometimes you don't, they don't understand."

Your child probably wants to know why last time Mommy let her play on the playground for 10 minutes when school got out but this time wants her to get in the car right away. Or why did Mommy lay down with her for 10 minutes last night while she fell asleep but now says she can't.

**Fix it:** Be consistent across the board -- whether it's with discipline, sleep habits, or mealtime routines.

Altmann says if your routine is consistent 90% of the time and your child is doing well, then so are you, and a minor exception may be OK.

## 2. Focusing on the Negative

It's easy to hone in on your child's negative actions -- like yelling and screaming -- and ignore the good ones.

Altmann says parents tend to focus on what they don't want their preschoolers to do. "They'll say, 'Don't hit. Don't throw. Don't say 'poopy pants,'" she says.

**Fix it:** Notice when your child is doing something positive, and reward the good behavior.

The reward for positive actions can be your praise, or it can be giving your child a big hug or kiss. "Those types of things really go a long way with preschoolers," Altmann says.

Tell your child, "I like the way you sat quietly and listened," or "That was good when you were so friendly to the child on the playground."

## 3. Missing the Warning Signs

Parents often try to reason with children when they're in the throes of a temper tantrum, repeating, "Calm down, calm down." But that's like trying to reason with a goldfish, Borba says. "You've got power immediately beforehand when you can still distract or anticipate. But once the tantrum is in full force, you've lost it. The kid is not hearing you."

**Fix it:** Figure out and anticipate what your kid's natural warning signs are, Borba says. The usual ones are hunger, fatigue, and boredom.

So don't take your child to the supermarket unless she's napped or you've stashed a healthy snack in your purse.

## 4. Encouraging Whining

Does your child's whining drive you crazy? For instance, does it drive you up the wall when, right before dinnertime while getting ready to preparing food, your child starts crying, "I wanna go to the park," or "I wanna go play with Riley."

Borba says parents often give in to these whines, but this only reinforces the attention-getting behavior. Your child will figure out which buttons to push and then push them over and over again.

"This is the age when your children come out of their shells," she says. "Watch out, because they figure out what works."

**Fix it:** Ignore it.

For behavior that isn't aggressive, like a whine or sulk, you're better off if you don't respond to it at all. If you're consistent, Borba says, your child will think, "Well, that didn't work."

## 5. Overscheduling Your Child

Parents often line up a slew of activities, like dance or music classes. Then they wonder why their child isn't getting in bed and falling asleep right away after so many activities that must have made her tired.

The problem, Altmann says, is that they're still wound up and need time to calm down. Every child needs down time, especially preschoolers, she says. Whether your child is at preschool for two hours or there all day, it can be very exhausting.

**Fix it:** Don't overschedule your child or shuttle him from one activity to the next. Give your child time to unwind with free play when he gets home from school.

## 6. Underestimating the Importance of Play

Many parents feel they should sign their children up for enrichment programs to give them an edge. But that's not really the case.

What's most enriching at this age, says psychologist Lawrence J. Cohen, author of *Playful Parenting*, is free play. That includes dramatic play (make believe), rough housing, and goofing around.

"Free play is how children's brains develop best," he says. "In play, children will naturally give themselves the right amount of challenge -- not too easy or too hard."

**Fix it:** Allow your child time and space for free play. Remember that preschoolers define play as "what you do when you get to choose what to do."

Free choice -- the voluntary aspect of play -- is important, Cohen says. "Preschoolers love to vacuum or do housework, but it's play. It's not on

their chore list. They've chosen to do it and they're just doing it for fun," he says.

## 7. Getting Distracted By the Daily Grind

Your child may play well independently, but that doesn't mean he or she doesn't crave your attention. "There's something children miss out on if parents don't get on the floor and play with them," Cohen says.

Not only do parents not get down and play, many parents are too easily distracted by their cell phone, email, or other multitasking. "Kids aren't dumb," Cohen says. "They know whether we're really paying attention or not."

**Fix it:** Set a timer, be enthusiastic, and stay involved for your designated play period with your child.

"A half an hour of concentrated play where you give your undivided attention and you're not worried about dinner or work," Cohen says, "is better than all day when you're only half paying attention."

## 8. Overreacting to Lies

Cohen says lying really freaks parents out. He urges parents to see the behavior as experimenting rather than as "a moral thing."

"When children start to lie, it's a big cognitive advance," he says. "It's kind of exciting and a little bit scary. It has an emotional charge. But then parents freak out and have visions of their child in prison, so they get very tense and anxious about it."

**Fix it:** Don't overreact. Know that telling a fib or two is a normal part of your child's development.

And don't get hung up on the lie itself, Cohen says. For instance, if your little Pinocchio is denying he had anything to do with a spill, you can say matter-of-factly, "You feel bad about that and I understand."

Effective parenting takes time, patience, and love. It also takes remembering that changes may not happen overnight. But as the old maxim goes, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." And again.

WebMD Feature Reviewed by Dan\_Brennan\_MD on June 24, 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 AM: Fig Bars & Milk  L: Turkey & Cheese slices, crackers, carrots, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Graham Crackers & Fresh Fruit	2 AM: Cheerios & Milk  L: Chicken Nuggets, mashed potatoes, mixed veggies & milk  PM: String Cheese & Club Crackers
5 AM: Toasted Bagel & Cream Cheese  L: Fish sticks, rice, peas & carrots, milk  PM: Goldfish Crackers & Raisins	6 AM: English Muffin w/ Jelly & Milk  L: Pasta Alfredo, steamed broccoli, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Fresh Fruit & Snack Mix	7 AM: Pancakes & Fresh Fruit  L: Chicken Noodle Soup, Fresh Fruit, & Milk  PM: String Cheese & Club Crackers	8 AM: Cereal Bars & Milk  L: Cheese pizza, green beans, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Pretzels & Fresh Fruit	9 AM: French Toast Sticks & Milk  L: Grilled cheese sandwiches, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Graham Crackers & Fresh Fruit
12 AM: Cinnamon Toast & Milk  L: Fish sticks, tater tots, fresh fruit, & milk  Pm: Pita Triangles & Hummus	13 AM: Low-Fat Yogurt & Graham Crackers  L: Cheese pizza, green beans, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Snack Mix & Raisins	14 AM: Waffles & Bananas  L: Cheese quesadillas, vegetarian refried beans, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Pretzels & Cheese sticks	15 AM: Fig Bars & Milk  L: Pasta Alfredo, mixed veggies, fresh fruit & milk  PM: String Cheese & Club Crackers	16 AM: Cheerios & Milk  L: Vegetarian bean & cheese burrito, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Animal Crackers & Fresh Fruit
19 	20 AM: Pancakes & Fresh Fruit  L: Turkey Sliders, fresh fruit, carrot sticks & milk  PM: Animal Crackers & Fresh Fruit	21 AM: English Muffin w/ Jelly & Milk  L: Chicken Taquitos, carrots, fresh fruit, & milk  PM: Crackers & Sliced Cheese	22 AM: Cereal Bars & Milk  L: Pasta w/ marinara sauce, mixed veggies & milk  PM: Club Crackers & String Cheese	23 AM: French Toast Sticks & Milk  L: Cheese quesadillas, vegetarian refried beans, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Goldfish Crackers & Raisins
26 AM: Cinnamon Toast & Milk  L: Cheese pizza, green beans, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Pretzels & Fresh Fruit	27 AM: Low-Fat Yogurt & Graham Crackers  L: Vegetarian bean & cheese burrito, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Goldfish Crackers & Raisins	28 AM: Waffles & Bananas  L: Chicken Nuggets w/ BBQ dipping sauce, mashed potatoes, peas & milk  PM: Graham Crackers & Fresh Fruit	29 AM: Fig Bars & Milk  L: Pasta Alfredo, steamed broccoli, fresh fruit & milk  PM: Fresh Fruit & Snack Mix	

