



WHAT'S INSIDE: crafts & recipes | parenting connection | program highlights



THE CHILD CARE EXTENSION

Training opportunities:

BEST CARE

AVAILABLE FACE TO FACE (JANUARY - MAY)
Best Care is 10 hours of verified TAPP trainings offered face to face in locations across the state. On page 3 of this newsletter, you will find more information about Best Care.

GUIDING CHILDREN SUCCESSFULLY

AVAILABLE ONLINE AND/OR IN PAPER FORM
Guiding Children Successfully is 30 hours of verified TAPP trainings offered online or in paper form. For more information go to uaex.edu/guidingchildren.

BEST CARE CONNECTED

AVAILABLE ONLINE UNTIL JUNE 1ST, 2017
Best Care Connected is 5 hours of verified TAPP trainings offered online. For more information go to uaex.edu/bestcareconnected.

4-H AFTERSCHOOL

AVAILABLE FACE TO FACE IN SELECT COUNTIES
Arkansas 4-H Afterschool is 5 hours of verified TAPP trainings offered face to face to people that work with after school youth. For more information go to uaex.edu/4h-youth/activities-programs/afterschool/.

PLAY IS THE WORK OF CHILDHOOD

Fred Rogers, more widely known as Mister Rogers, offered uncanny insight into the lives and thoughts of children. One of his more well-known statements relates to childhood and play, "Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But to a child, play is serious. Play is really the work of childhood."

Because of changing expectations from parents and more rigorous kindergarten benchmarks, it is easy to assume that free play is time wasted or stolen from "real" instruction. Although some formal instruction and structure is helpful for older children, it should be balanced with free play and exploration and limited to short bursts with younger children. Be sure to allow children to have their own time and to attempt to workout problems on their own. Here are a few tips:



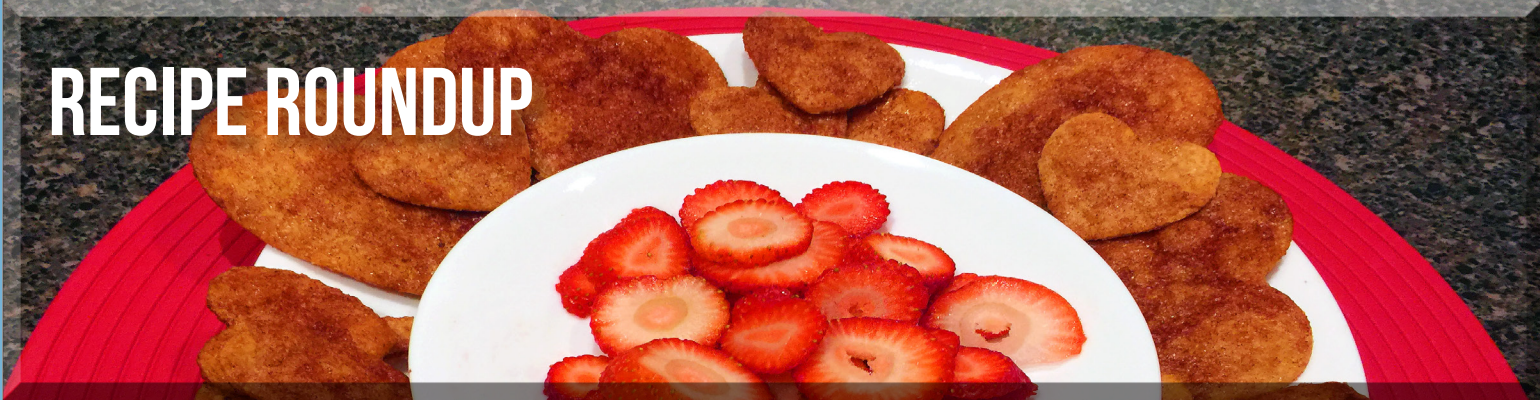
Avoid "helping" a child who can do something on their own: Unless a child asks for help or they are in danger of harming themselves or others, let them fumble with the task. If they ask for help, only offer the amount of help needed to get them to the point where they can do it alone. For example, if a child is attempting to zip their coat to go outside, let them try. If they need help, only start the zipper and then let them finish. You will show confidence in their success, and your child will feel far more accomplished and independent. It may take a minute longer, but it is well worth it.

Resist the urge to provide structured activity during unstructured times: In the interest of avoiding boredom, we are probably doing more harm than good in giving children too much

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RECIPE ROUNDUP



Heart Shaped Cinnamon Sugar Chips

This simple recipe provides easy tasks that can be kid friendly. Feel free to use this recipe year around with other shapes.

Supplies

Plastic Knife
Cookie Sheet
Heart Cookie
Cutter

INGREDIENTS

1 Whole Wheat Tortilla
1/2 tsp Cinnamon
1 T Sugar
1T Butter, melted
2 sliced strawberries

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees, and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a bowl, mix the cinnamon and sugar together.
- Using your cookie cutter, cut hearts out of your tortillas. One tortilla should equal about 5 small hearts.
- With a pastry brush, lightly coat your heart chips with half of the butter on each side. Add the rest of the butter to your cinnamon and sugar mixture. Brush your cinnamon sugar butter mixture on each side of the tortilla.
- Bake for 10 to 15 minutes until crisp. Let the chips fully cool before enjoying!

Serving Suggestion: Serve with any type of sliced fruit and/or yogurt dip.



CRAFT CORNER

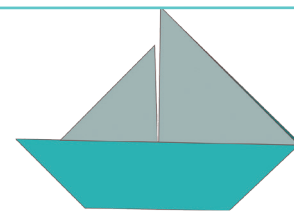
Fun With Origami

What do cardboard boxes and fancy napkins have in common? Origami!

Children love origami! It can be evidenced by their amazement of their first paper airplane, paper hat, or paper boat. Origami is a great way to merge science, technology, engineering, art and math all together: STEAM. Not a believer? Here are some ways that origami can be used to enhance skills:

- Origami has been found to strengthen math concepts like geometry and fractions.
- Origami has been shown to improve spatial visualization and problem solving skills through hands-on learning. Such skills allow children to comprehend, characterize, and construct their own language for the world around them.
- Origami is a way to explain physics concepts. For example, a thin piece of paper is not very strong, but fold it like an accordion it will be.
- It's just PLAIN FUN!

No matter which way you fold it, origami is a great way to get children engaged in an exciting activity that is worth the benefits.



There are many origami crafts that you can do. One that is great to try first is the Sailboat. For instructions go to: <https://origamiusa.org/diagrams/sailboat>. Origami USA provides pdf copies of instructions for a variety of origami. Be sure to check out [Youtube](#) for tutorials.

BEST CARE

Training for Arkansas
Childcare Providers



If you are an early childhood professional, and want to learn more about caring for young children you may be interested in the Best Care. The University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, in partnership with the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Association, is offering training for early childhood professionals. Best Care offers up to ten hours of early childhood professional development.

Your local County Cooperative Extension Service offers Best Care classes for early childhood professionals and others interested in learning more about young children. Classes are free and are verified through Traveling Arkansas' Professional Pathways (TAPP) and supports the Better Beginnings Program.

2017 TOPICS

- Two Bite Club
- Grow It, Try It, Like It Pt 1-2
- Active Play
- Child Care Prepared: Disaster Preparedness
- Classroom Transitions
- Let's Sing...Do, Re, Mi!
- Celebrating Cultures: Activities and Resources for the Multicultural Classroom
- Infant and Toddler Literacy; Effective Communication Skills

TOPIC Highlight:

Child Care Prepared: Disaster Preparedness

Disasters are scary—for kids and for adults. Talking about disasters before they happen and teaching kids basic preparedness skills can empower them to feel secure in times of crisis.

Here are some tips for talking to kids about disasters:

- **Explain why.** From the beginning of the discussion, activity, drill, etc. let children know what you are doing and why.
- **Be Honest.** Give children information that is clear, accurate and age appropriate. Don't give in depth details or graphic examples that will confuse or disturb children.
- **Listen.** One of the best ways to understand what kids already know and need to know about disasters is by listening. Listen carefully to their discussions and answers. Let them express their feelings in a safe atmosphere.

PARENTING CONNECTION

ACTIVE PLAY: ACTIVITIES TO GET YOUR CHILD MOVING

Here are two activities you can pass on to you parents to use at home or even use in the classroom yourself.

Bubble Wrap Jumping

- Tape a length of bubble wrap (1/2 inch bubbles pop best) to the floor so it won't slip.
- Show your toddler how to bend his knees and lift his arms when jumping.
- Turn on lively music with a strong beat and encourage your child to jump to the music!

Matching Socks Game

- Obtain at least five or more pairs of socks of differing colors, patterns, and sizes. Separate pairs of socks into two identical piles.
- Scatter the socks from one pile throughout the room or yard.
- Spend a few minutes explaining differences in socks. Talk about colors, patterns and sizes. Ask if

a large orange sock will match a small purple sock. Will a striped sock match a plain black sock? Help your child understand what is meant by a match.

- Give your child a sock from the second pile. Ask him to run and find the matching sock, and bring the pair back to you or place in a designated basket/tub.
- Give your child another sock to match until all the socks are matched.

Level of Difficulty

EASIER: For a younger child, lead him to the correct sock match, and discuss with him why the socks match.
HARDER: Show school-aged child the sock they must match, but do not let them take the sock with them when looking for the match.
VARIETY: Have the children match different colors, sizes, and/or patterns.

- **Be Reassuring.** Children can experience stress when they do not understand what they perceive to be a dangerous situation. Let them know that disasters are scary and it's okay to be scared when thinking about disasters
- **Limit Graphic Images.** Avoid using graphic images or videos that show destruction. During or following a disaster, limit children's exposure to the news media which could scare or confuse them as it could appear the disaster is happening over and over again.
- **It's Okay to Say, "I Don't Know."** Children and parents may ask questions to which you may not know the answers. Please remain calm and don't make up an answer. It's okay to say you don't know and then offer to find an answer for them or refer them to additional resources.

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adult-led playtime. By offering children structured activities and limiting their free-play time, we inadvertently limit their creativity and interfere with their ability to self-govern. Kids who aren't allowed creative, child-directed playtime (even if that time is spent with a caregiver) tend to be easily bored and have difficulty coming up with things to do on their own. Why? Because they are used to an adult telling them what to do next. Allowing children to play without the interference of an adult is how they learn to problem-solve and create.

Reject the assumption that learning and play are separate: It is a dangerous myth that learning is separate from play. When children play and interact with their surroundings, they learn. They learn how people and objects behave. They learn how their bodies work. They learn physics, psychology, engineering, biology, botany, music, art, dance, theater, conflict resolution, emotion regulation, relationship management, and innumerable other things that help them interact successfully in the world. By assuming that play is frivolous and learning is important and those things are separate, we are not only doing a disservice to kids, we are making our jobs as parents and teachers more difficult.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Best Care: www.uaex.edu/bestcare

Best Care Connected:

www.uaex.edu/bestcareconnected

Guiding Children Successfully:

www.uaex.edu/guidingchildren

4-H Afterschool: <http://www.uaex.edu/4h-youth/activities-programs/afterschool/default.aspx>

Personal and Family Life Resources:

www.arfamilies.org

Childcare Resources page:

www.uaex.edu/childcareresources

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