



Learning to Grow

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII ♥ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Active Supervision



Have you ever taken your eyes off your child for a few minutes and he got into something he wasn't supposed to? Children are naturally curious. They are actively exploring their environment and if not properly supervised, they can easily get into dangerous situations.

Caring for young children requires active supervision, the most effective strategy for preventing injuries. According to the Early Childhood National Centers, active supervision includes six essential strategies:

- ♥ **Set up the environment** so you can easily supervise your child. Place higher shelves against the walls and secure them with tip proof anchors. Child proof all areas that your child has access to.
- ♥ **Position yourself** where you can see and hear your child. For example, if you are in the kitchen cooking, have your child nearby. Otherwise, using mirrors or cameras can be helpful so that you can respond quickly if the need arises.

- ♥ **Scan the environment** when going outdoors or into the garage for possible safety hazards. When any adult leaves the house, ensure that your child is in a safe spot. Do a scan around your parked car and the driveway to check for children, as well as toys that might attract a child.
- ♥ **Listen** closely for signals of danger. One strategy might be to attach bells to the door or gate which would help alert you to a child leaving or entering.
- ♥ **Anticipate behavior** by knowing your child's developmental ability.
- ♥ **Engage and redirect** by providing individualized care.

In this newsletter, we have included strategies to help put active supervision in place as well as tips for supervising fun activities with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

This newsletter includes:

- ♥ **Age-specific information and suggestions** about activities to do with your infant, toddler, or preschooler,
- ♥ **Featured activities** for each age group,
- ♥ **How This Helps:** a summary of your child's development by doing these activities together,
- ♥ **Resources:** for more information about this topic, and
- ♥ **Suggested Books:** a list of books to read with your child.

Infants

Young infants completely depend on adults to meet all of their needs. Mobile infants who are beginning to crawl, cruise, or walk may be able to get to objects that were once out of their reach. Using the active supervision strategies, here are some ways to ensure that your infant is safe.

- ♥ **Set up the environment** so that your infant cannot access materials that she may choke on. An easy way to check for toy safety is by using a recycled toilet paper tube. If it fits through the tube, it is too small and should be kept out of reach.
- ♥ **Position yourself** to have baby within your line of sight at all times. This may mean having multiple areas where you can put baby down in various areas of your home.
- ♥ **Scan the environment** to ensure that baby has easy access to safe materials and that unsafe areas are gated off.
- ♥ **Listen** for sounds (or absence of sounds) that could alert you to a situation in which baby is in trouble. Regular visual checks (for example every 15 minutes) are a good practice to have in place when an infant is asleep.

- ♥ **Anticipate behavior** especially with young infants as they begin to roll over and move in unexpected ways so that you can support their movements and prevent falls.
- ♥ **Engage and redirect** by having brightly colored objects, toys that make noises, and soothing music that may stimulate or calm baby.



Activity for Infants: *Aquarium*

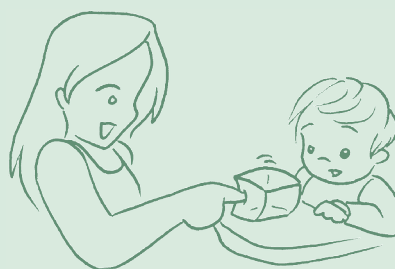
What You Need:

- Sponges
- Gallon-sized re-sealable bags (e.g., Ziploc bags)
- Duct tape
- Blue food coloring (optional)

What to Do:

1. Cut ocean creatures out of clean kitchen sponges and place them into a gallon-sized bag filled with about a cup of water. Add blue food coloring into the water for extra fun.
2. Seal the bag around all sides with duct tape to be sure it stays closed.
3. While your baby is seated on your lap, allow her to use her fingers to squeeze and pat the bag. You can say, "Look at the green fish. I see you squeezing the yellow star."
4. Supervise your baby closely and ensure that the bag is not punctured.

(See page 5 for information on how doing these kinds of activities with your child helps her development and school readiness.)



Toddlers

Toddlers are especially at risk for injuries, as they are mobile and curious explorers of their environment. You can use these active supervision examples and tips as you care for your toddler.

- ♥ **Set up the environment** by getting down to their level and looking at the world from their point of view. From this vantage point, you can see unsecured shelves that might look like a staircase or dangerous objects that are not as inaccessible as you once thought. Look for items that may appear to be candy such as button batteries and laundry detergent pods and store them out of a child's reach and/or in a locked cabinet.
- ♥ **Position yourself** to see where your toddler is as she may be interested in climbing things and manipulating objects. You can teach your child how to explore and engage in activities safely.
- ♥ **Scan the environment** for safety concerns, including water, as children can drown in as little as 2 inches of water in a matter of seconds. This means drowning can happen where you least expect it, such as in buckets, holes in the backyard filled with rainwater, inflatable pools, bathtubs, or even toilet bowls.
- ♥ **Listen** for sounds as your toddler learns how to play with other children. You can model how to play with others, including how to share and take turns.
- ♥ **Anticipate behavior.** For example, Maya has discovered how to climb. Knowing that she likes to practice this new skill, position yourself nearby where you can support her as she climbs.
- ♥ **Engage and redirect.** For example, if you know that Noah bites when he is frustrated, you can prevent the escalation of a conflict and support him by helping him resolve the problem.



Activity for Toddlers: *Safety Hunt*

What You Need:
Safety Stickers*

What to Do:

1. Tell your toddler that you are going on a safety hunt to find things that are safe and things that are not safe.
2. Show her the safety stickers included in this packet.
3. Take your child around the house to find things that are not safe (e.g., stove, oven, iron). Place the stickers on the dangerous item.
4. Say, "This means the stove is hot. OUCH!" Shake your hand as if it was hot to the touch.

*You can also do this activity using paper with a symbol on it (e.g., sad face) to indicate that this item is not for touching

(See page 5 for information on how doing these kinds of activities with your child helps her development and school readiness.)



Preschoolers

Preschoolers have growing cognitive abilities to understand and avoid risks, however each child's temperament plays into her decision to take risks. It is still important to actively supervise preschoolers. Some ways to use active supervision are:

- ♥ **Set up the environment** by implementing daily safety checks to identify potential hazards both indoors and outdoors. For example, store and lock all cleaning products, pesticides, and medicines; check indoor and outdoor spaces for equipment and materials that may have broken down and become unsafe; and ensure that all unused electrical outlets are covered with child proof caps.
- ♥ **Position yourself** to see the child, especially as she is mastering skills such as climbing, running, and jumping and trying new challenges such as pedaling tricycles and climbing equipment.
- ♥ **Scan the environment** to make sure equipment and materials are appropriate for preschoolers.
- ♥ **Listen** to her as she may ask questions about why something happens or why a certain rule exists.
- ♥ **Anticipate behavior.** Some children may question and test every rule and others may be

more cautious and follow the rules. You know your child best, so support her by reminding her often of safe habits.

- ♥ **Engage and redirect** by talking about rules and routines to help her make safe choices.



Activity for Preschoolers: *Buckle Up Teddy*

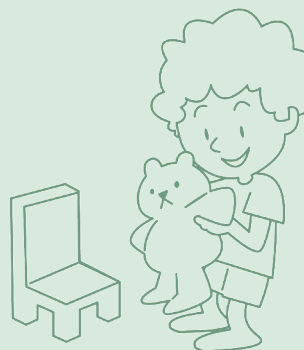
What You Need:

Large stuffed animal or doll

What to Do:

1. When you take your child on her next car ride, bring a large stuffed animal or doll along.
2. Say, "We need to make sure that Teddy stays safe in the car. Can you help buckle him up? Place the stuffed animal in the back seat next to your child. Encourage your child to snap the buckle together.
3. Talk to your child throughout the car ride and ask if Teddy is still safely strapped in.

(See page 5 for information on how doing these kinds of activities with your child helps her development and school readiness.)



How This Helps

The activities suggested in this newsletter help promote many different aspects of development:

Physical Development

- ♥ Use and strengthen small muscles such as facial muscles, fingers, hands, and toes
- ♥ Develop eye-hand coordination

Social and Emotional Development

- ♥ Develop a close bond with you
- ♥ Feel important and good about herself

Language and Literacy Development

- ♥ Learn to ask and answer questions
- ♥ Increase her observation, listening and understanding skills, and attention span

Cognitive Development

- ♥ Develop her curiosity about how things work
- ♥ Develop her thinking and problem solving skills



Kids in the Kitchen

Cooking teaches valuable lessons such as math (quantities, measurement), science (how matter changes), fine motor (stirring, pouring), and literacy (print awareness). As you make this recipe with your child, talk about kitchen safety. Show her how to handle items safely and allow her to do as much as she is capable of. Praise her efforts, and ask questions throughout the process to encourage her thinking skills. Most of all, have fun!

Bookworm Apple Bark

Adapted from *Kidspot Kitchen* <https://www.kidspot.com.au/kitchen/recipes/lemonade-scones-204>

Ingredients:

- 1 cup lemonade
- 2 t baking soda
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3 cups self-rising flour
- Milk or 1 egg
- Craisins (*optional)



Directions:

1. Heat oven to 425 degrees and line a baking tray with parchment paper.
2. Make “fizzy” lemonade by combining the lemonade and baking soda in a bowl. Together, watch bubbles form!
3. Mix flour, a few Craisins, heavy cream and fizzy lemonade. Mixture will be soft.
4. Place the mixture onto a lightly floured cutting board.
5. Together, pat it down (do not roll). Use a round cookie cutter to cut circle shapes. Place them on a lined baking tray approximately 1cm apart.
6. Brush tops with milk or a lightly beaten egg. Bake for about 10 minutes, or until tops are golden. Serve warm from the oven or halved with jam and fresh cream.

Resources

Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd Edition

http://nrckids.org/files/CFOC3_updated_final.pdf

These national standards represent the best evidence, expertise, and experience in the country on quality health and safety practices and policies that should be followed in today's early care and education settings.

National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness. *Active Supervision*

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/active-supervision.pdf>

Resources from Head Start on active supervision, including webinars, videos, and articles.



Suggested Books

Discover these books and more at the **Hawai'i State Public Library** www.librarieshawaii.org.

Infants and Toddlers

Brush, Brush, Brush by Alicia Padron

When children start brushing their teeth by themselves, they have to know how to get them really clean. This book uses cheerful pictures to show the basic tooth brushing steps.

Baby Bear Sees Blue by Ashley Wolff

Under the guidance of his watchful mother, a baby bear romps through a rainbow of colors, encountering everything from the radiant yellows of the sun to the sweet reds of some berries.

Preschoolers

Stick and Stone by Beth Ferry

In this funny story about kindness and friendship, Stick and Stone are two BFFs who demonstrate what it means to be a good friend.

Elephants Can Paint Too! by Katya Arnold

Did you know that elephants can paint just like children? This true story captures how Katya Arnold teaches painting to kids in Brooklyn and elephants in Thailand.



Learning to Grow is a project of the University of Hawai'i, Windward Community College, with funding from the Hawai'i Department of Human Services. Visit our website at www.learningtogrowhawaii.org or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/learningtogrowhawaii