

Arkansas School-Age "LINKS"

September / October 2008

Page 1

ASU Childhood
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School-Age
"LINKS"
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ASU Childhood
Services

Seven Super Tools to Prevent Misbehavior

By Michael Ashcraft,

Co-Founder and CEO of Children's Choice

www.childrens-choice.org

Super Spaces

When you walk into a gymnasium, you behave differently than when you walk into a library. The environment sends cues to the brain about how you should feel and behave. Provide an environment for children that encourages desirable behavior. The space should say "Play with me!" in a way that clearly defines **HOW** to play. The way you arrange your space and what you put in your space tells children what types of behavior are expected in that space. Control the environment, not the child.

Super Relationships

Children will live up to or down to your expectations. Establish and encourage positive relationships, realistic boundaries and high expectations for children. The way children feel about themselves depends largely on their response to the "feedback" they have received from the important people in their lives.

Inside this Edition:

Seven Super Tools to Prevent Misbehavior	1-3
Help Us Help You—AETN Spotlight	3
Time for Time Out to Retire	4-6
Storytelling: An Ageless, Timeless Adventure	6
Professional Development	7
Movie Licensing	8-9
Report Calls for More Afterschool Programs	10-11
Activity Ideas	12-13
Lights on Afterschool	14
Websites to Check Out	15
QRS	16

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**ARKANSAS
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Seven Super Tools to Prevent Misbehavior

September / October 2008

Page 2

Staff and children can help other children to feel adequate or inadequate, likable or unlikable, lovable or unlovable, valuable or worthless, smart or stupid. If you have helped children to feel significant, empowered, and loved, they will be inclined to behave positively. If you give children a reason to feel inadequate and unneeded, they find themselves thinking they are a failure and do not have anything positive to offer. In turn, they tend to offer negative behavior.

SuperVision

When children know that adults are paying attention, it reminds them of the expectations for behavior and allows them to correct their own behavior and be self-disciplined. **FOCUS** your attention on the supervision of the children when you are with a group. **TALK LATER** with other staff during staff meetings, lunch and after work. Do not spend time talking unnecessarily when you are supervising children. **SPREAD OUT** when there's more than one staff person in an area so that you can supervise the entire activity area well. **SEE EVERYONE** - stand so that the whole group is in your field of vision and keep your eyes moving. **KEEP TRACK** of children who go from one area to another and children who go to the bathroom. **STAY AHEAD** of the group when going from one area to another, so the group or individual children should never get into a new unsupervised area ahead of you. **PREVENT** trouble before it starts. If you think the behavior is progressing towards undesirable action, get close and make eye contact. **USE EQUIPMENT CORRECTLY** - the way the equipment was meant to be used. For example, do not let children climb up the outside of slides or climbing

tubes. Use SuperVision and children will correct their own behavior.

Super Experiences

Misbehavior can be merely an attempt to escape from the dreary vacuum of idleness - bored kids misbehave. Introduce variety and novelty into the program experiences. Novelty in the form of experiential learning is a key to brain enrichment and self-discipline. Provide a variety of enriching experiences such as field trips, guest speakers, computers, music, language, sports, games, fine and gross motor stimulation, problem solving, science, math, building projects, role plays, dramatic play, creative and playful art activities, and long- and short-term projects. When planning for experiences, be intentional - plan activities with the goal of building a sense of community and for brain enrichment rather than providing activity for the activities' sake - just to keep them busy.

Super Relevancy

Establish relevancy when it comes to establishing rules and program goals. Get your children involved in deciding the standards of behavior and consequences in their program community. Make this an on-going experience, not a once-a-year activity. Your program should be like a mini utopian society, a real-world community that operates by standards of respect and caring, a neighborhood that polices its own behavior, a kinship of people who look out for each other. It should not be an adult-controlled dictatorship, but a community. For this to happen, you must take the time to establish meaning and relevancy.

Seven Super Tools to Prevent Misbehavior

September / October 2008

Page 3

Take the time to discuss the importance of following the rules for their own desires – how they will have more fun, have less stress, have more choices, have better supplies – if they follow the rules that they helped establish.

For more information visit:
www.childrens-choice.org/training.html

HELP US HELP YOU

AETN (Arkansas Educational Television Network) and PBS are a dynamic team in providing the kinds of television viewing that helps children learn. For generations, children have learned their letters and numbers from the friendly people, animations, puppets and other techniques that make learning fun and a natural part of children's lives.

Do you need resources for a classroom lesson? PBS has established a special online resource for early childhood providers at the "PBS Teachers" Web site. The site is: <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/earlychildhood/>. Drop-down menus provide easy access and search functions. Other online resources provide free electronic newsletters, information for parents, interactive learning activities and educational workshops.

AETN has several Early Childhood (K-2) services to meet the needs of Arkansas's childcare providers to help them be even more effective in the classroom. The monthly *AETN StationBreak News for Educators* newsletter and website includes information specifically for Early Childhood (K-2), and information about grants and other resources may link you to just the information you need.

Professional development workshops provided at your site or at AETN training facilities help you advance your skills and may provide professional development credits to advance your career. AETN is able to provide parent involvement and other workshops using enhanced educational resources. AETN's materials and services incorporate the latest research-based methods. For a full list of services available or to discuss your options, send an e-mail to education@aetn.org with the subject "Early Childhood" or call 1-800-488-6689. We look forward to hearing from you.

Everyone "Kneads" Kindness Activity

Help a child show someone special how loved they are by baking them some homemade bread from this tried and true recipe!

Materials Needed:

Measuring tools, bowls, measuring cup, towels, and the following ingredients: 1 package yeast, 1 T. butter, 3 cups flour, 4 T. honey, 1 1/2 t. salt, 1/2 cup water, and 3/4 cup buttermilk

Directions: Combine dry ingredients first. Then lightly knead bread, dusting with flour. Place in a buttered bread pan. Bake bread at 350 degrees for approximately 50 minutes until lightly browned. Cool, cut into squares, and share the delicious kindness with someone special.

Talk about It: Ask your child to name people that they consider kind and considerate. Encourage your child to identify characteristics that make these special people who they are. Then share with each other kind and considerate characteristics that you both admire.

Time for “Time-Out” to Retire! *Let the “Balance Center” Take Its Place*

If “time-out” could talk, he’d say: “I’ve been misused, abused, and accumulated too much emotional baggage through the years. I need to be replaced!” Let’s enter the 21st Century with “Balance Centers”. A “Balance Center” is a quiet space away from the maddening crowd and heat of action where a tired, angry, sad or aggressive child may go to regroup, recoup, re-center and regain their balance.

Entry into the “Balance Center” requires 3 deep long exaggerated breaths that immediately help a child center and re-focus. This helps children let go of what they’ve been resisting to feel so they can be present to solutions. Once inside a child will find soft pillows, beanbag chairs or rocking chairs and a box full of items to help them regain their composure.

Most importantly when a child first enters the “Balance Center” are kind and quiet words spoken from the staff about what might be of help to the child in regaining his/her balance.

“Johnny, sometimes when I’m angry or upset, it helps me to draw what I’m feeling or just make funny faces into my mirror for a few minutes. I know if I do anything when I’m that angry, I’ll only make a bigger problem. This box is full of tools that can be of help to you. Why don’t you take a look inside and see what you think would help you right now.”

Your center can create a “Balance Box” out of an empty copy paper box. Children like to collage the box with words like kindness, compassion and joy and then find or draw pictures that demonstrate these words. What will children find in the box?

1. A clipboard with paper, pencils, crayons, and several small journals made from recycled paper.
2. A small heavy plastic glove filled with fine sand to feel and squeeze.
3. A Kush ball, a stress squeeze ball, a few Toobers and Zots, and a Slinky.
4. A quarter size ball of beeswax to warm in their hands to shape and reshape.
5. An unbreakable mirror for making faces and looking deep inside themselves.
6. A small cassette headset with cassettes of ocean, winds, forests sounds, or Indian flutes.
7. Several short, easy to read books about handling our ups, downs, and disagreements.
8. A laminated picture of 30 faces expressing all sorts of feelings, with a word expressing that emotion to help a child identify their own feelings. What a child can’t speak they act out.
9. Several different types of conflict resolution with Q&A forms for a child to choose from.

Time for “Time-Out” to Retire

September / October 2008

Page 5

10. A cassette recorder and blank tape for children to use while discussing solutions to conflicts with one another. The focus is on talking with feeling to develop empathy and solutions to problems. Staff will then encourage children to make eye contact with one another and discuss “what will work” and “help instead of hurt”.

11. A kaleidoscope to look through. Concentric patterns help balance the brain’s right and left hemispheres. Also, mandala ink drawings, concentric patterns for children to color in their favorite colors are very centering and calming.

12. Stories and poems about how other resolve conflicts and face difficult emotions.

13. *The Ware Fuzzy Tale*, by Claude Steiner. (Based on Transactional Analysis). Children love this book and relate well to it’s principles of warm fuzzies and cold pricklies. (Create your own warm fuzzies out of velvety pompom balls; sweet gum tree balls make great cold pricklies.)

14. A small dictionary and a laminated copy of Sue’s “Tree of Human Values”.

15. A small attractive box with polished rocks, geodes, crystals and a magnifying glass

If a child is not willing to participate in the “Balance Center” to help themselves self correct when their actions are dangerous or very disruptive to others or themselves, a meeting with the child and their parents need to be made. Remember that democracy is not anarchy, and freedom is no license. When a child is being a tyrant, (playing I win, you lose game), an adult speaking with authority and setting inappropriate behavior and avoid conflict, are by default, teaching children to dominate, manipulate and control instead of looking for win/win solutions.

At the beginning of the family conference, ask Johnny to explain why this meeting has been called. This provides valuable information for staff to notice how the child views the problem and insight into how Johnny interacts with his parents and his parents with him. After the child has completed describing the problem we are trying to resolve, staff can then fill in any important facts that may have been omitted. Parents are then asked to support their child in making any necessary corrections. The actions that child needs to take should be spoken very clearly by staff. Again, our focus is always on solutions and win/win outcomes. The staff then asks Johnny what inappropriate actions he will commit to change, and what support he may need from us to do this. We ask Johnny to state in his own words the actions he thinks will solve this problem.



Time for “Time-Out” to Retire

September / October 2008

Page 6

If a child’s aggressive or tyrannical behavior continues, staff will need to look at whether the other children’s safety and well-being are being compromised by allowing this child to continue in the program. Referring the parents to a guidance counselor for help may be the next step to take. These actions are usually all that is required to help a child self correct without being dismissed from the program.

Good-bye “Time-out”! Although you may have started out with good intentions, you have become quite a dictator. “Balance Centers” are an effective way of empowering children in a democracy.

Sue has been recognized locally and nationally for creating excellence in her school-age program, The Clubhouse After-School Caring and Sharing. The Clubhouse opened in 1977 and in 1992 was selected as one of the top ten school-age programs in the nation by Working Mother Magazine and Michelle Seligson, Director of Wellesley College’s School-Age Child Care Project. Sue has taught School-Age Child Development at the college level and is a national school-age consultant and workshop leader. Sue has lead Wellesley College’s NIOST’s School-Age Faculty Institute, which was designed to develop competent school-age staff, leading towards accreditation through the Quality School-Age Initiative Project. Sue has authored 2 books, *“How to Work with School-Age Children and Love Them”* and *“School-Age Child Care Professional Training- A Workbook for Teaching Staff”*.

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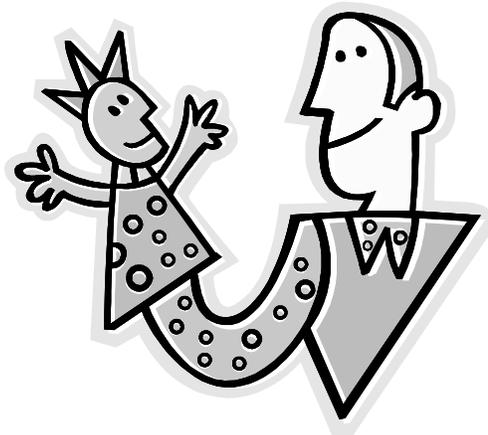
Mary Jo Huff presents

STORYTELLIN’: “An Ageless, Timeless Adventure”

Mary Jo Huff presented STORYTELLIN’: “An Ageless, Timeless Adventure” at the School Age Regional Workshop sponsored by ASU Childhood Services and School of the 21st Century–Paragould. The event was held at ASU Childhood Services on Monday, July 7, 2008, from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Mary Jo shared the message that storytelling helps develop imagination, early literacy, creativity, visual expression, critical thinking, and oral communication skills by showing participants how to make stories come alive with puppets, props, and playful tales. The storyteller in each participant emerged as they learned participation stories, told stories, and experienced tales for the storyboard.

Visit www.storytelling.com to learn about upcoming appearances, a wealth of resources, and enjoy a preview of her family friendly DVD.



“Hand down the past to the present and preserve the present for the future . . . tell a story”.

Professional Development

September / October 2008

Page 7



Course schedule for next semester:

September 15 - November 15, 2008

January 15 - March 1, 2009

March 15 - May 15, 2009

Everything needed to complete the training will be provided through ASU's online learning tool, "Blackboard Online," through www.astate.edu at no additional cost.

This training may be taken as an introduction for the provider new to the school-age field, or as a refresher course for those who have been working in the field for some time.

The five modules address the following topics:

- Growth & Development
- Planning a Safe and Healthy Environment
- Activities & Program Planning
- Guiding Children's Behavior
- Building Relationships

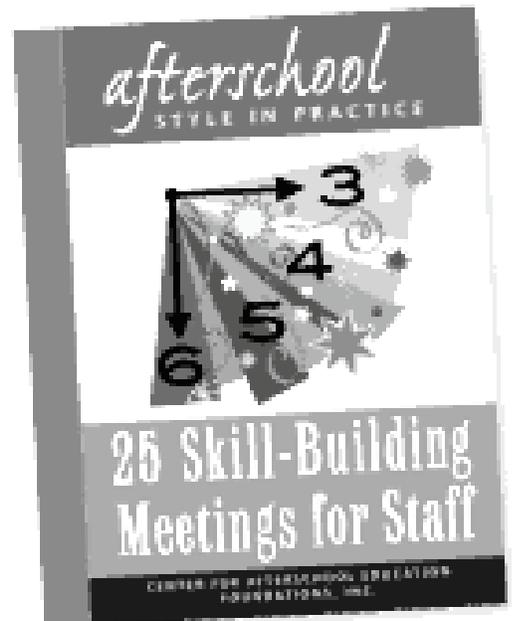
Attention Program Directors!!

AfterSchool Style in Practice:

25 Skill-Building Meetings for Staff

Turn principles for quality into every day staff practice with 25 ready-to-use one-hour trainings, complete with activities and handouts. To discover other excellent professional development resources to use when focusing on the professional development needs of you staff visit the Center of After-school Excellence website at

www.afterschooled.org



Movie Licensing by Charles Pekow

Editor's Note: There are the inevitable rainy days that bring us indoors, and perhaps around a DVD player to watch a movie. Yet, viewing these videos outside of a home requires a special license. Here Charles Pekow attempts to de-mystify the concept of an out-of-school time video license.

Stop the tape! That video license you've been using to show movies might not apply any longer to Disney productions. Most Disney films aren't covered for after-school showing by the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC) licenses any more.

The licensing needed to legally show videos outside homes varies with the studio and with the type of institution, and even by state. Different licensing bodies may control licensing for different studios, and maintain different contracts for public schools, religious schools, and before- and after-school programs. MPLC, for instance, licenses Disney for religious schools but not public schools. It licensed Disney for public schools in six states as a test before Disney dropped the idea.



Confused? You're not alone and it's even more complicated. "A lot of confusion comes in. (Educators) go to conferences and hear two different things," notes David Weightman, MPLC's manager of licensing.

Now, for instance, if you run a school age program and you want a license to show Donald Duck, MPLC will cover you; unless you operate in a non-religious school. And it is your location that matters-not who owns or operates a school-age program. The YMCA that operates a school-age program at its headquarters might remain covered by a MPLC license. But the YMCA program contracting to run a similar program in a public school building isn't. This statement is not 100% correct. Public school-based programs are grandfathered in if they received a license during the trial period that began about a year and a half ago. And the school must be licensed if the video is shown on school property. If the provider has a separate license for another facility- no good.

Schools are only exempt from licensing for showing films in class as part of a curriculum and a teacher attends. The school licensing exemption does not apply to our-of-school-time. Also, each school needs to be licensed (though a school district might get licenses in bulk). A school's license doesn't cover movies shown off premises.

Movie Licensing USA, another licensing company, covers public and private schools, but not religious schools.

Movie Licensing

September / October 2008

Page 9

To confound providers even more, the various studios operating under the Disney umbrella don't all operate under the same license. Films labeled Disney, Hollywood Pictures and Touchstone (all distributed by Buena Vista Pictures) are covered by Disney's own license. Another Disney studio, Miramax, licenses separately. But you probably won't show many Miramax pictures in your program. "Mostly, schools don't show movies full of foul language, violence, nudity and pornography," says Ray Swank, president of Swank Motion Pictures, the parent company of Movie Licensing USA. Swank founded the company in 1937 and still runs it. "We wouldn't send that stuff into a school. Disney bought the studio but lets its producers do their own thing," Swank says.

An MPLC license will still cover films from about 45 other studios, including major ones like Sony Pictures and Warner Brothers. But some studios do their own licensing.

Have questions? Contact the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation at www.mplc.com, (800) 462-8855; and Movie Licensing USA at www.movlic.com (877) 321-1300.

Other Resources to Check Out

Outside of the legal issues surrounding movie watching in afterschool programs, there are also issues surrounding the amount of time children spend experiencing the variety of different forms of media that exist. As school-age children get older, it gets harder to know of or control everything he is exposed to through media, of which movie watching is only a portion of their media experience. A school-age child's circle of

friends and influences continues to grow through school and outside activities. The following resources provide good tips and guidelines to consider when exposing school-age children to various media outlets:

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/children_and_movies

This site also addresses the topics of TV violence, music and music videos, and exposure to the news.

Common Sense Media

<http://www.common sense media.org>

Common Sense Media is dedicated to improving the media and entertainment lives of kids and families. They exist because media and entertainment profoundly impact the social, emotional, and physical development of our nation's children. As a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization, they provide trustworthy information and tools, as well as an independent forum, so that families can have a choice and a voice about the media they consume. Valuable on-line resources include: "Internet Survival Tips for Parents and Adults", "Internet Survival Tips for Kids", and "The Internet by Age and Stage" as well as "Common Sense Tips for a Healthy Media Diet"

common sense
media

Report Calls for More Afterschool Programs

September / October 2008

Page 10

Report Calls for More After-School Programs

By John Lyon- Arkansas News Bureau

LITTLE ROCK - A survey of 3,700 Arkansas children in grades 6 through 12 found that half of the students were unsupervised after school on a regular basis, according to a new report released Monday calling for more after-school programs in the state. The survey by students at the Clinton School of Public Service also found that a majority of the children would consider attending an after-school program if their school offered one. The report offers recommendations to the Governor's Task Force on Best Practices for After-School and Summer Programs. Gov. Mike Beebe created the task force earlier this year.

Hispanic students have the lowest participation in after-school programs but would be the most likely to participate if programs were available to them, the survey found. The survey also found that Northwest Arkansas has the greatest need for more after-school programs, and Pulaski County has the least need.

"These findings are very significant in regards to the gap between after-school care supply and demand throughout the state," said Paul Kelly, senior policy analyst for Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, who is working with the task force. State Sen. Shane Broadway, D-Bryant, a member of the task force, said he was not surprised by the finding that many Arkansas children are unsupervised after school. Offering good programs for those children is critical, he

said, but "a lot of the time it comes down to money."

Broadway is President of the Board of Directors of the Bryant Boys and Girls Club, which partners with the local school district to provide programs such as after-school tutoring. "I think it's going to probably vary from community to community as to what works well, but especially with competition for dollars, I think the best type programs that are out there are ones where you have a community commitment to making sure it's done well and done right," Broadway said.

Former state Sen. Peggy Jeffries of Fort Smith, State Executive Director of the conservative Eagle Forum, said she knows church and civic groups provide some excellent after-school programs, but Jeffries said to the extent the report advocates more school-sponsored programs, she disagrees. "The primary responsibility for a child's welfare should not be taken over by the state, and I feel like more and more that's happening."



Grant Funding Opportunities

September / October 2008

Page 11

Clinton School students Jose Guzzardi of San Paulo, Brazil, Marquita Little of Little Rock, and James Mitchell of Cleveland, Miss., completed the report as part of the school's practicum public service program. Sixteen schools were selected randomly to participate in the survey. The Clinton School students also sent questionnaires to school principals and organized focus groups with parents in each of the state's four congressional districts. In addition to calling for more after-school programs, the report cites a gap between the types of after-school activities that parents and students are interested in and what is offered. For example, students rated team sports and arts and crafts as two of their most desired after-school activities, yet those types of programs were the least offered. The report also argues for more affordable after-school programs and recommends efforts to increase public awareness of the programs.

In 1996, Wild Ones created the Seeds for Education Program to provide cash awards in the United States and Canada for "projects that create native plant landscapes or develop outdoor classrooms" (<http://www.for-wild.org/seedmony.html>). Work with the children in your program to learn what plants are native to your area. Then, brainstorm with the children to come up with a project that your program could do if awarded a grant. The deadline to apply is Nov. 15, 2008. Go to <http://www.for-wild.org/seedmony.html> for more information and to download an application form.

Home Depot and National Gardening Association

Grant: Youth garden grants – For child-centered garden programs that emphasize education, nutrition, environmental awareness, entrepreneurship, leadership development, team building, community support and service learning.

Funder: Home Depot and National Gardening Association

Eligibility: Schools and community organizations

Deadline: November 1, 2008

Amount: 125 grants ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 will be awarded

Contact: www.kidsgardening.com/YGG.asp.

American Honda Foundation

Grant: The American Honda Foundation was created in 1984 to say thanks to the American people for their support of Honda in its first 25 years in the United States. The foundation seeks to reward programs that reflect Honda philosophies, which it describes as imaginative, creative, youthful, forward thinking, scientific, humanistic and innovative.

Eligibility: Go to <http://corporate.honda.com/america/philanthropy.aspx?id=ahf>. Click on the link at the bottom under "To apply online." Interested parties must take a short quiz to determine eligibility.

Deadline: Deadlines to apply are quarterly. The next deadline is November 1, 2008.

Activity Ideas

September / October 2008

Page 12



Numbers in the News

Get the children in your program involved in a scavenger of sorts by seeing how many numbers from 1 to 100 your child can find in a newspaper. Page numbers, dates, and store ads will be good places to start the search. Children will also find lots of numbers on the sports page and throughout the newspaper. Cut out the numbers and paste them in sequence on a sheet of paper. The first group/individual to find all the numbers wins!

Copy Paper Scrap Projects



Make Your Own Envelopes

It's simple. Take apart an envelope and trace the outline of the envelope onto a sheet of cardboard. Use that template to create envelopes. Trace the outline of the envelope on the *printed* side of the paper. Then fold (so the printed side is inside the envelope) and glue the appropriate edges. *Voila!* You might even get a rubber stamp and stamp the inside flap or the back of the envelope "WE RECYCLE!"

Cheers! Make Your Own Drinking Cups

This is a great activity for teaching children how to follow directions.

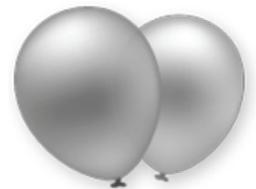
- Cut sheets of copy paper into squares. (Typical size: 8-1/2 inches square.)
- Place the printed side down on the desk so that the square looks like a diamond. The lower point of the diamond should be facing toward you.

- Take the lower point of the diamond and lift it up to meet the top point of the diamond. Fold. Your diamond is now a triangle. The base of the triangle is its folded edge. Now the *printed* side of the copy paper is facing you.

- Next, take the left point of the folded edge and fold it to the right so the point touches the midway point on the right slope of the triangle. (Students might use rulers to mark the halfway point -- 4-1/4 inches if you are using 8-1/2 inch square paper -- on the right slope so they will know where the left point of the folded edge should touch.) The fold makes it look like an arm has reached across a body to touch another arm.

- Then take the right point of the folded base and lift it up until it touches the left side. The folds now make it look as if the arms are crossed.

- Now, you have two points at the top. Fold one forward (over the crossed arms) and fold the other backward. Folding back those two points created an opening at the top of the cup. Insert fingers into the opening to form your drinking cup.



Balloon Head Race

Organize players so that they're into pairs and each team receives a partially inflated balloon. When the game starts, teams must race to a finish line carrying a balloon between their heads, remember don't use your hands. On hot days try it with water balloons or through a sprinkler. You can even try an obstacle course.

Activity Ideas

September / October 2008

Page 13

I Spy Shapes

Similar to the traditional "I Spy" game, this version has a twist and allows children to focus on fundamental geometry skills.

- One person secretly picks an object everyone can see. The object should have a geometric shape.
- This person then announces the shape by saying, "I spy a square."
- Everyone takes turns asking yes-or-no questions in an attempt to figure out what the object is.
- "Is it blue?" "Is it something we read?"
- After a few turns, call for guesses.
- Keep playing until someone guesses correctly.

Growing Crystals

Materials Needed:

- Epsom salt
- a tablespoon
- a cup of water
- a paper circle
- a large jar lid



Have children cut out a paper circle the same size as the jar lid. Place the circle in the lid. Measure 4 tablespoons of Epsom salt and dissolve all 4 tablespoons in the water. Stir the mixture thoroughly. Pour the mixture into the jar lid and then place the lid where it won't be disturbed. In a few days the water should evaporate and leave something very interesting (crystals will form as the water evaporates)!

Backpack Hunt

Make a list of items for teams to look for using only the items that they brought with them to program. This might include a backpack, lunchbox, purse, etc. Some suggestions of items to include on your hunt are:

- 1975 penny
- Unsharpened pencil
- Paperclip
- Food wrapper
- Piece of candy
- A sandwich bag
- Book from the library
- And many more!



Before play, divide into teams by tables, pairs, individuals or what seems best. Copy off the list of items for each team. Have them check off which items they have and the team with the most checked off, wins!!!!

Blinded Number Line

Provide blindfolds for all players. Set up teams into groups of 5-7 players. Every player will get one blindfold and will be instructed that they will receive a small tag with a number. They are to read that number to themselves and not let any else see it. Once all players have read their number they will be instructed to put on their blindfolds. When the leader of the game signals, all players on each team will try to put their members into a numerical order line. When they have accomplished this and are correct they are the winners. Consider using negative and positive numbers such as -2,-1, 0,1, and 2. The game will require all players to work as a team as they cannot talk.

Websites to Check Out!

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/afterschool/activities/>

The goal of the Exploratorium Digital Library Afterschool Project is to bring more science and math enrichment into out-of-school time using resources from the Exploratorium's Digital Library (www.exploratorium.edu/library), one of the many collections from the National Science Digital Library. Educators visiting the site will learn different afterschool activities through digital videos, concept maps, links to other STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) resources in NSDL, science explanations, educator tips, and related activities. Portable media in the form of a DVD is also available as well.

<http://www.yesmag.ca/>

YES Mag is Canada's award-winning science magazine for kids aged 9 to 14. Every issue brings science to life through colorful illustrations and photographs, fascinating articles, fun facts, and hands-on experiments. When you visit their website, check out the section called "Projects You Can Do at Home" for an extensive listing of fun activities that you can do at your afterschool program.

<http://meetthegreens.pbskids.org/features/>

THE GREENS, a PBS Web site that encourages kids to explore sustainability and take action wherever they can, is offering free Activity Guides to educators working with 9 to 12-year olds. How-to information pairs with hands-on activities to deepen understanding of topics like recycling and global warming with campaigns to reduce junk mail and get drivers to stop idling cars. Visit the website for the free guides.

<http://www.afterschooled.org/>

The Center for Afterschool Education is committed to making out-of-school time an exciting opportunity for learning, connecting, engaging, and growing. With practical resources, tailored to the unique world of afterschool, the Center helps you build the high quality programs you want, and all children deserve. Check out their website for resources and free monthly downloads.

* **On the Lookout for More Websites to Feature!** *
* Do you have a favorite website that you consult for your out-of-school time *
* program that you think others should know about? Send the website address *
* along with your name, city/program name to jenharris@astate.edu and it might *
* be featured in a future edition of LINKS. *

Quality Rating System (QRS)

September / October 2008

Page 16



Have you heard about it yet?
QRS stands for Quality Rating System.

The current Arkansas Quality Approval accreditation will be expanded and become the Quality Rating System. QRS consists of three levels. Each level contains indicators that recognize a program's accomplishments and the quality of services to children and families.

Want to know more? Plan to attend one of the information meetings listed below (registration is not required and no training certificates will be provided). For more about QRS, go to www.accessarkansas.org/childcare.

Arkadelphia

October 15, 12:30-2:30
Community Family Enrichment Center
301 N. 23rd Street

Benton

October 9, 12:30-2:30
First United Methodist Church
615 Main Street

El Dorado

September 10, 12:30-2:30
St. Paul United Methodist Church
700 W. 8th

Fort Smith

October 29, 11:30-1:30
Fort Smith Public Library Com. Rm.
3201 Rogers Ave.

Jonesboro

September 19, 12:00-2:00
ASU Childhood Services
615 University Loop East

Little Rock

October 14, 12:00-2:00
In His Image
5705 W. 65th

Lonoke

October 28, 12:30-2:30
First United Methodist Church
Center & Pine

Osceola

September 16, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Osceola Public Library
320 W. Hale Ave.

Rogers

September 30, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Central United Methodist Church
2535 W. New Hope Rd.
Rogers, AR 72758

Russellville

October 28, 12:30-2:30 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
304 S. Commerce Ave.

Searcy

September 17, 12:00-2:00 p.m.
ASU Main Building, Room 308
1800 E. Moore

Texarkana

September 4, 12:30-2:30
Sugar Hill United Methodist Church
1621 Sugar Hill Rd.

West Memphis

September 16, 12:30-2:30
Midsouth Community College
Magruder Hall 104, South Campus
2000 W. Broadway