

## KID BITS



### The attendance habit

Students who have good attendance in preschool and kindergarten are likely to continue the habit throughout their school careers. Talk to your little one about why it's important to go to school—so he can learn about letters and numbers, finish his art projects, and play with his friends.

### Family-night leader

Consider holding a weekly family night, and take turns picking activities to do. When it's your youngster's chance, she might decide where to go for a walk and what snack to bring. She'll practice making decisions, and you'll add variety to your evenings.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Your child's brain is like a construction site. Every time he has a new experience, his brain creates new connections. The more experiences he has—like romping in the woods, visiting a craft store, or watching a school marching band—the more "building" is going on at the "construction site."

### Worth quoting

"Some old-fashioned things like fresh air and sunshine are hard to beat."

Laura Ingalls Wilder

### Just for fun

**Q:** How do you stop a dog from barking in your backyard?

**A:** Put it in your front yard!



# Discipline with love

To encourage better behavior from your little one, you may find that gentle, loving strategies get the best results. Keep these tips in mind.

### Remain calm

Take a deep breath before you correct your child. Then, try whispering instead of shouting. ("Close the door *gently* instead of slamming it.") To hear what you're saying, your youngster will need to slow down and listen carefully. *Bonus:* You'll set an example of how to stay calm even when you're frustrated or angry.

### Be respectful

Giving your undivided attention when you talk to your child about her behavior shows respect. Kneel to her level rather than disciplining her from across the room. Acknowledge her feelings, but remain firm as you explain what she did wrong. ("I know you're upset that your brother won't give you his toy, but we don't pinch.")



### Find the good

Your youngster naturally wants to please you, so when she behaves well, let her know that you noticed. ("You put your clothes in the hamper without my reminding you. That helps keep our house neat.") Positive reinforcement will motivate her to repeat her good behavior.

*Tip:* Use consistent consequences to get your child to follow rules. For example, if you take away a ball every time she throws it in the house, she'll learn not to throw it.♥

## That's a-maze-ing!

Creating and playing with 3-D mazes gives your youngster's fingers a workout and strengthens muscles for writing. Here are suggestions.

● **Toy route.** Have your child arrange an obstacle course of small toys on a sheet of paper. He can use a crayon to create a path on the page by drawing around and between the objects.

● **Magnet magic.** Ask your youngster to make a maze on a cookie sheet with strips of masking tape. Place a paper clip at one end, and hold the cookie sheet while he steers the clip along the path by moving a magnet underneath the sheet.

● **Sweet or salty.** Give your child a toothpick and a plate of sugar or salt. He could use the toothpick to clear a path for you to follow with your finger. Then, trade roles.♥





These cubes are two of the most fascinating materials in the Montessori curriculum. At one level, they are simply a complex puzzle in which the child is challenged to rebuild the cubes and rectangular prisms contained in the box back into the form of a larger cube. Color coding on the outside of the box and the sides of certain pieces

### **The Binomial & Trinomial Cubes**



helps the child detect the pattern. The material is also an exercise in algebra and geometry, representing in concrete form the cube of a binomial  $(a + b)^3$  (above left) and a trinomial  $(a + b + c)^3$  (left) where  $a = 2$  cm.,  $b = 3$  cm., and  $c = 4$  cm.