



# Starting Strong Connection

## Introducing the New Starting Strong Connection Newsletter

Welcome to the new Starting Strong Newsletter. We are close to the end of our first year of this three year pilot program and have learned many things along the way.

As the coordinating agency, Early Childhood Connections has decided we would like to stay connected to all of you and help you stay connected to this exciting project. In this effort we will be publishing a quarterly newsletter.

The first year of Starting Strong Rapid City has been an exciting one. We have served 30 three year olds in 6 programs to provide a minimum of 448 hours of early childhood education.

As we head into the Starting Strong second year we will serve another 30 three year olds as well as the 30 children who are now four. Programs like Starting Strong provide the foundation for:

- School readiness,
- Positive attitudes toward education,

- Less need for remedial and special education services in schools,
- Fewer problems with truancy and delinquency,
- Higher graduation rates,
- Higher earnings and success later in life.

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☺ Please remember to inform Early Childhood Connections of any changes in your address or contact information.

☺ If you plan to withdraw from the program please call Kim Booth at:

342-6464

or email at:

[kimbooth@rushmore.com](mailto:kimbooth@rushmore.com)



**If you know a family who would be interested in a scholarship for their child to attend preschool through Starting Strong  
Call 342-6464**

**Early Childhood Connections is still taking applications for Starting Strong Scholarships for the 2013/2014 school year.**

**We have several slots left for 3 year olds and also taking application for 4 year olds for a waiting list.**

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# The Journey of Mixed Emotions— Helping Your Child Learn About Feelings

## How to Help Your Child Recognize & Understand Sadness:

Sadness is one of the easiest emotions for young children to understand, and one of the first emotions that



Everyone feels sad at one time or another for a variety of reasons.

they can learn to recognize in others. Everyone feels sad at one time or another for a variety of reasons. As parents, we want to empower our children to recognize when they are feeling sad and, if needed, take steps to help themselves feel better or ask someone else for help. When you help your child recognize the physical features that accompany feeling sad and understand

the reasons why someone might feel sad, you are helping your child create the necessary building blocks from him

to manage his own emotions and relationships. Sometimes simply acknowledging your child's sadness is all that is needed. For example, saying to your child "You are sad that it is time to leave the park."

The way a child feels and behaves are closely related. Children who can manage their own emotions are better prepared to control their behavior. Children who can recognize their own feelings are better able to remain calm and use words, rather than challenging behavior, to communicate.

From Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Learning  
Backpack Connection Series

## Try This at Home

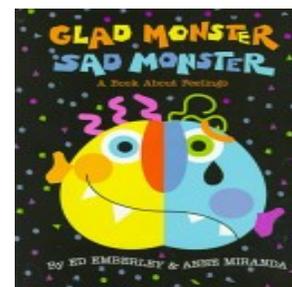
Notice and label when you, your child or others are sad. You might say:

- About yourself, "I'm feeling really sad that Grandma went home. Maybe I'll call her."
- About your child: "it looks like you are sad. You have tears in your eyes and your head is down."
- About others: "that little boy looks really sad. I wonder what might make him feel better?"

Share with your child times when you felt sad. What happened? What did you do? Did you stay sad forever? It is important for children to learn that emotions can and do change.

## Check out this great book about Emotions!

Glad, sad, silly mad-monsters have all kinds of different feelings! In this innovative die-cut book, featuring a snazzy foil cover, you'll try on funny masks as you walk through the wide range of moods all little monsters (and kids!) experience. Here's a fun, interactive way to explore the many different ways we feel. Caldecott Medal-winning author/artist Ed Emberley provides readers with an imaginatively crafted book that helps identify and understand emotions.



Glad Monster  
Sad Monster

# Growing Up Wild:

The Council for Environmental Education and Project WILD announced a fantastic nature-based early childhood program several years ago titled "Growing Up Wild". The program is designed with the goal of connecting children to nature. Children who have opportunities to play and learn in nature are more likely to:

- Handle challenges and problems more capably.
- Act responsibly toward the earth and each other.
- Be more physically active and aware of nutrition and less likely to be obese.
- Choose science or a related field for careers.
- Have a greater appreciation of the arts, music, history and literature.
- Become better-informed and



Teachers should be taking children outside to explore the wonderful world of plant and animal communities.

environmentally-aware adults.

The curriculum is designed for programs who service preschool age children. Each of the 27 activities include information on how parents can extend the learning at home. I will be including in each of our newsletters one of the activities to try at home.

This spring and summer take your child to the Outdoor Campus and explore the natural world together!!

Outdoor Campus West  
4130 Adventure Trail  
394-2310

## Literacy Corner: Nameplate Activity

Children are naturally curious about their names and become excited when they can identify letters in their names. Once they know some letters in their names they begin to find those letters all around them.

Sit with your child and write his/her name on poster board or paper, using a capital letter at the beginning followed by lower-case letters. Write the letters as large as the paper will allow, naming each letter as you write it. Encourage your child to repeat each letter name as you say it. Have your child use the markers and other materials to personalize the nameplate, keeping the letters readable. Talk about the letters as your child decorates the nameplate. "Oh, you are coloring the letter G yellow." "See, the G is shaped almost like a circle." Help your child decide where to display the nameplate.

If your child already knows all of the letters in his/her name, begin with the letters in his/her last name and then move on to other family members' names.

This activity is not intended to teach your child all the letters in his/her name in one sitting. It is an introduction only. You may want to focus on only the first letter of your child's name. And remember to have

FUN!!



## What is Typical for my 3 to 4 year old

### Language Speech

- Follows simple two or three step directions, in order
- Able to carry on a conversation for two or more turns on the same topic
- Uses four- to six-word sentences
- Uses pronouns (I, you, me, we, they) and some plurals (cars, dogs, cats)

### Speech is 90% understandable READING READINESS

- Able to describe actions in a picture (e.g., The puppy is sleeping.)
- Tells parts of a story while looking through a favorite picture book

### Understands physical relationships ("on," "in," "under," "over," "with")

### WRITING

- Begins to copy some capital letters
- Experiments with a variety of writing tools (pencil, crayon, chalk, paintbrush)

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**Children who start early,  
Start Strong.**



## Parent Event Sponsored by Banana Bunch & Dream Kids a Yummy Good Time!

On the evening of March 28th, families who participate in the Starting Strong Program were invited to attend a dinner at Banana Bunch Preschool & Child Care. The staff from Banana Bunch and Dream Kids hosted the event and did a wonderful job of providing a delicious and nutritious meal. Each participant was able to put together their own salad from a variety of yummy vegetables and goulash was the main dish. Nutrition materials were given to the families that were provided by Early Childhood Connections and the fitCare curriculum.

Please watch for postcards and fliers in the mail about these great parent involvement activities! The programs work hard to provide great family fun and learning activities and we would love to see 100% participation!! The last event for this year will be a Family Swim.



**Everyone got to make their own personal salad to go with the tasty goulash.**