

ZEKE'S FUN AT HOME ACTIVITY CORNER

April 30 2020

Dear Zoo-Friends,

This week's playful lessons will celebrate **Helping Hands!** Today we call our theme, "**Helping Hands Helping Around the House!**" This concept is so critical to child-development that we will extend it to next week's lesson theme called, "**Growing Strong and Capable Children!**" From a very young age, you can teach your child how to do simple chores. This does so much for the mind, body and spirit. We'll show you how in today's lessons.

- 1) **Zoo-phonics:** If you can, play an outside game with the Zoo-phonics "a – z" Cards. How about a game of "Red Light, Green Light"? Your child(ren, family) will stand about 20 feet from you. You will hold up one of the Animal Alphabet Cards and show and call out, one at a time, "Missy Mouse!" (example). You'll then turn your back to them quickly. They'll come running to you, Signaling and sounding Missy Mouse's letter. Soon, shout out "Green light!" and spin around quickly and try to catch them moving! If they moved, you can send them back to the starting line (or not).
- 2) **Engineering:** This is definitely a "**busy hands**" concept. Look for tasks your child(ren) to do *with* you today. (I prefer the word, "task." The word, "chore" implies "hard work.")). Do not be afraid to ask a young toddler to help. For example, give him/her socks to match. *Children can (even "littles"):*
 - a) carry their plates to the kitchen.
 - b) learn to fold their own clothes and put them away. (It doesn't have to be perfect!)
 - c) toss paper garbage in the trash can.
 - d) pick up his/her toys and put them in the proper places.
 - e) help you wash the car, dog, dishes.
 - f) feed the dog or cat.
 - g) vacuum. Dust. Fold wash rags and small towels etc.

Here's Are the Secrets:

- 1) Start when your child is young so s/he enjoys learning how to do new things. Learning to be dexterous builds empowerment. And, by the time they are four or five, they won't have a sense of frustration if they can't do things well or easily. (However, it is never too late!)
- 2) Give tasks that are simple and age-appropriate. Give a task that requires "pick up and place" movement or simple movements such as washing with a sponge or rag.
- 3) Always praise and encourage. This is brand-new to him/her so there will be spills and imperfection. Your encouraging voice and patience reinforce his/her confidence and joy.



DID YOU KNOW? Children are born with surprising dexterity. They play with their own fingers and toes constantly as almost-newborns. From this point on, their hands are constantly moving. Soon they are grasping objects. Next, they will pick up Cheerios® or small pieces food from their highchair tray and bring it to their mouths. Each day, they refine their skills. Parents can help them by providing the child with tasks to do with their hands and fingers.

- 3) **Recreation:** Let's MOVE again today. Before children can have strong fingers and hands, they need to have strong bodies. Hand your child two (one for each hand) small, individual cans (like apple juice or tomato paste) and raise the arms and hands over the head, up-and-down, up-and-down, like an "overhead press." Next have him/her raise both arms out in front. Now left the hands towards the chest. Now lower. Lower and lift. Lower and lift." That is a like a "triceps curl." Both will aid dexterity, coordination and build some muscle.



You Can Do It Too! If you have hand weights, model for your child. Exercising together is a wonderful family activity.

