



News From the DCCCC Office

June 2017

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Coming Soon to a Driveway Near You:

The Fourth of July Annual Bike Parade



PLEASE JOIN US

FRIDAY, JUNE 30

10:00 AM

IN THE DRIVEWAY.

BIKES, DOLL CARRIAGE, STROLLERS, PUSH TOYS, PULL TOYS – YOU NAME IT.

ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED BY JAMES BURGER, THE PROFESSOR OF PERCUSSION



From the Director

Dear Big Jeff,

My daughter wants a kitten for her birthday. Is this a good idea? Maybe it will teach her responsibility, but it sounds like a lot of work to me.

Signed,

The Truth About Cats and Dogs

Dear Truth,

I should probably preface my response with transparency – when faced with a parental decision “should we or shouldn’t we” pet decision, I consistently erred on the side of, “Why not?” Some of the creatures that came to live with us stayed for a long time as our gentleman dog did. Others passed through our family, for various reasons, in shorter periods. My own kids had a hamster for one day, before it escaped never to be seen again. No, really, it really did escape.

When the family is on board and you’ve done your research on what pet best matches your lifestyle, planned pet-hood can be a great experience. Pets can be fun. They provide companionship, promote empathy and help children understand what is involved in caring for another being. On the other hand, pets are a lot of work. They make a mess, they may be costly and they do add another dependent to the list of those who look to you to meet their needs.

The answer to your question, I think, starts with “Do YOU want a cat?” The work involved will fall largely to you. One thing that rarely works is extracting a promise from your child that she will be responsible for all the pet’s care. What children can do is participate in the process in smaller ways, like setting the cat’s food out once you have prepared it. As far as learning responsibility, children learn best by copying you. This may not be evident until they are older, but trust me, they are watching what you do!

If you realize that you are not ready for a kitten, you might consider an alternative:

Visiting invertebrates aren’t a bad start and are very popular at this time of year as bugs and worms are emerging. Your child can find them for free, have fun watching them and then release them at the end of the day. An inexpensive bug box provides good viewing and can be as much excitement as the bugs themselves.

Goldfish are inexpensive and require minimal care (but they do require care). Fish do succumb to illness and improper treatment, so know that their lifespan may be short.

Small rodents are a little more work, but can be entertaining. Rats are my favorite as they don’t bite often and they are easy to handle it. If the long naked tail bothers you, probably you should choose something else. And don’t get a male and a female of anything unless you are truly prepared. DCCCC had a pair of rats once that had 12 babies in one litter or was it 16?

Rabbits and guinea pigs can be soft and cuddly if they are handled frequently and gently. Be sure they are neutered. My family had a hormonal rabbit un-fondly known as the Attack Rabbit. We also had visiting classroom bunnies reputed to be house rabbits. It turns out that preparing your home for a house rabbit is roughly the equivalent of baby proofing it, but babies are less likely to chew on electrical cords.

Dogs? Cats? Whether you are a dog person, a cat person or both or neither, you probably already have a good idea of what's involved in including them in your family. Visit your public library or surf the net for more info.

Horses are large and a daunting commitment, but I'm a horse person myself, so I'd be happy to provide individual consultation on that topic. Riding lessons are a good start. Unless you are truly ready, I wouldn't give much thought to the pony thing until your child is 6 or 8 or 12 or 16 or so. Kittens are definitely easier!

So, there's my point of view, but you should consult your child's teacher to learn more about their interests. We're looking forward to hearing what you decide!

Signed,

Big Jeff



DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:

-Tuesday, July 4, Independence Day

**-Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 28 and 29, In-Service
and Transition**

-Monday, September 4, Labor Day

**-Thursday and Friday, November 23 and 24,
Thanksgiving Break**

-December 25-January 1, 2018, Winter Break



Baby Talk: Resources to Support the People Who Work With Infants and Toddlers

Issue No. 73 June 2017

Mothers and Infants Connect Through Song

As one of the first records of human music, infant-directed singing permeates cultural boundaries and parenting traditions. The act of mothers singing to infants is a universal behavior that seemingly withstands the test of time. Read about new research on this topic at <http://news.miami.edu/stories/2017/02/mothers-and-infants-connect-through-song.html>

Teaching a Toddler Social Skills

This column suggests 14 steps for supporting toddlers to develop social intelligence and build the capacity for interpersonal relationships. <https://www.mother.ly/child/teaching-your-toddler-social-skills-15-steps-to-success>

Want more ideas for supporting the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers? Go to this ZERO TO THREE site: <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development/social-and-emotional-development>

Practical Play and Toy Guide

Many early childhood professionals believe that commercialized toys and media are threatening authentic children's play. A recently published guide for families and professionals from **TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Childhood Entertainment)** supports child-directed, creative play with inexpensive, simple toys that encourage imagination. http://www.truceteachers.org/uploads/1/5/5/7/15571834/truce_play_and_toy_guide_2017_final.pub.pdf

Dual Language Learners: Primed and Ready to Learn

This May 2017 fact sheet highlights the science of how infants who are exposed to more than one language manage to learn each language successfully. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/dll-01-hearing-language-learning.pdf>

Link Between Autism and Extra Cerebrospinal Fluid?

A research network found that many toddlers diagnosed with autism at two years of age had a substantially greater amount of extra-axial cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) at six and 12 months of age, before diagnosis is possible. The more CSF at six months, the more severe the autism symptoms were at two years of age. To learn more, go to <http://news.unhealthcare.org/news/2017/march/infant-mris-show-autism-linked-to-increased-cerebrospinal-fluid>

Emergency Preparedness: Is Your Child Care Program Prepared? 10 Questions You Should Ask

Ensuring the safety of children in care settings is the most important job of early childhood professionals. This resource, which is available in English and Spanish, can be a helpful tool for families to use as they evaluate and/or communicate with their child's program about emergency preparedness. Early childhood programs may also find that the publication is a good starting point for self-evaluation of their emergency plans and processes.

<http://usa.childcareaware.org/2017/03/parents-child-care-program-prepared/>

The First Sights Babies See Sculpt The Brain's Visual Circuitry

When a newborn baby opens her eyes, she does not see well at all, and it can take months for her world to come into focus. Now scientists have found more clues about what happens in the brains of baby mammals as they try to make visual sense of the world. A study, published in *Nature Neuroscience*, is part of a project to map the functions of the brain areas that play crucial roles in vision. Read more at

<http://www.futurity.org/brain-visual-processing-circuitry-1332982-2/>

Baby Talk is a free, one-way listserv that is distributed monthly. Each issue features high quality, readily available, and free resources. To join the listserv, send an email **with no message** to

subscribe-babytalk@listserv.unc.edu Past issues are archived at <http://fpg.unc.edu/resources/baby-talk-archive>

To suggest resources, please contact Camille Catlett at camille.catlett@unc.edu



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