



Child Care Resources Inc.

tip sheet

Ideas and information about child development and early education for parents, professionals and the community-at-large.

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Main Office

4601 Park Road, Suite 500
Charlotte, NC 28209
Main line (704) 376-6697
Fax line (704) 376-7865

Cabarrus County Office

2353 Concord Lake Road, Suite 160
Concord, NC 28025
Training/Main (704) 786-1023
Fax line (704) 786-1034

Union County Office

105-A Cedar Street
Monroe, NC 28110
Training/Main (704) 238-8810
Fax line (704) 238-8811

Website: www.childcareresourcesinc.org

Email: mailbox@childcareresourcesinc.org

Access this and other tip sheets through the CCRI FaxBack Line: **(704) 335-9421**

Fostering Independence In Your Child

An important part of growing up is becoming independent, learning self reliance, and gaining the ability to solve one's own problems. Here are some ways to foster self-esteem and independence:

- Encourage your child to make choices. Give real choices, and make sure you can accept what your child decides. For instance, do not ask a four year old, "Do you want to go to bed now?" Say instead, "It's bedtime. Do you want to brush your teeth before or after the story?"
- Set realistic goals and help your child succeed in completing tasks. For example, while two year olds can pick up their toys, they need help and encouragement.
- There will be times when children need extra support or comfort, and may need you to do things that they could do themselves. A tired child may find putting all the blocks away overwhelming. By lending a hand instead of demanding that she do it all herself, you get the task done cheerfully.
- Pose little problems to give your child practice in finding solutions. For example, "What would you do if it started to snow, and you didn't have your boots?" or "What would you do if you fell on the playground and hurt your knees?"

- Share your pleasure in your child's good decisions. As your child matures, point out the things he can do for himself. "You noticed it was getting colder, and decided to put on your sweater. That's really taking care of yourself."

The key to fostering independence is to respect your child's efforts to do things herself and to help her when the task seems overwhelming.

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child care search

Resource & referral service

Mecklenburg County (704) 348-2181
Cabarrus County (704) 786-1024
Union County (704) 238-8800