

# What Can You Check Off Your List Today?

October 2009

## DEAR FAMILIES,

Many of you may have seen the movie *The Bucket List*. In this movie, two men realize that they have limited time left on this Earth and decide to make the most of it. They make a list of everything they have always wanted to do and spend their last days checking off items.

So here we are in the waning months of yet another year, and while you and your child have many years left of life, the years of childhood are quickly scooting by. Why not make your own version of a Bucket List? Call it the Magic of Childhood List and include all of those things that you want to do while your child is still young.

Wake up in the middle of the night to see a meteor shower. Play hooky from school and work, and play putt-putt golf in the middle of the day. Make a tent in the living room and eat pancakes for dinner (inside the tent). Take a family portrait. Find a favorite book from your childhood and read it together. Make a pilgrimage to every ice cream parlor in your city. Run through a sprinkler (with your clothes on). Make a tradition of catching a ball game at least once a year.

When you are immersed in the day to day of raising a child, it is hard to believe that time can pass so quickly. Nevertheless, while the days seem to crawl, the years do fly by. Before you know it, this wondrous being that is your child will be grown and gone. By making a list, you are being intentional about celebrating the joy that is to be had in these fleeting years of childhood. With that intentionality, the years of childhood will live on in the memories and traditions you create.

A mother recounts the day her son was born. She scooped him out of his bassinet in the hospital and just held him, basking in his softness and smell. One of the nurses scolded her and said, "Do not hold him too much when he is a baby, you don't want to spoil him." An elderly woman who was nearby leaned over and whispered, "Don't pay her any attention, when are you going to hold that baby, when he comes home from college?"

Take a break from the mundane. Bask in the wonder and delight that is childhood. What can you check off your list today?

Respectfully,  
The Education Team



If you would like to respond to anything you read, have parenting questions or child development topics that you'd like to see explored in future issues of this monthly newsletter, please email us at [education@childtime.com](mailto:education@childtime.com). We would love to hear from you!

## AMAZING AND SIMPLE WONDERS

***We overestimate children academically and underestimate them intellectually.* – Lilian Katz**

"It's easy to dismiss children's explorations because they move quickly, make messes, and put themselves in seemingly risky situations. I have developed the practice of waiting before jumping into a situation to determine what the thinking might be underneath a child's behavior. I have come to see that with most everything children do they have something in mind; a purpose or question they are pursuing. When I take even their smallest actions seriously, I am astonished at children's deep engagement with the simple wonders around them; I notice they are studying and speculating, engrossed in the moment."

This is from Deb Curtis' article, "[Seeing Children's Lively Minds at Work](#)," in the March/April 2009 issue of **ChildCare Exchange**, a journal for early childhood educators.

As a parent, can you remember back to a time like this: You walk into your child's room to discover water all over the floor and wonder what on earth is going on? You almost yell, "Stop, you are making a huge mess!" but before you got the words out your child turned around holding something that looked like a wet ball covered in globs of white chunks. He says, "Next time, I guess I won't use so much water."

No matter what your response was, here is a suggestion for the next time you find yourself in this kind of encounter with your child. When you encourage your child to have a playful experience with the world, you are not supplying the right or wrong answers to problems, but you are supplying the avenues for finding solutions. This is how life-long learners are created.

At Childtime, we know that children gain knowledge about the world through every experience we provide. That is why we put so much effort into documenting and showcasing an experience or a piece of work that your child has participated in. We want you to understand the learning that is happening as a result of our curriculum. Giving children the opportunity to document their learning themselves helps them gain a deep understanding of what they are capable of, and even of the world around them. Revisiting and reflecting on an experience are critical parts of true learning.

Our Empowered Child™ curriculum supports your child by developing the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to succeed in kindergarten, throughout your child's formal education and across a lifetime of learning. In addition, Childtime teachers value your child as an individual. Students leave our program well-prepared for their future education, and empowered to acquire the skills they will need to become responsible members of their community, creative problem solvers and life-long learners.

## CHILDTIME'S THE EMPOWERED CHILD™ CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The Empowered Child™ curriculum supports your child by developing the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to succeed in kindergarten, throughout elementary education and across a lifetime of learning. Childtime teachers plan lessons in many important academic disciplines, including:

### SCIENCE

Performing experiments, investigating properties and observing cause and effect help your child build scientific thinking skills and a connection with the natural world.

### READING & WRITING

Your child learns to love and understand the written word by journal-writing, experiencing wonderful books, storytelling and participating in regular large and small group activities that focus on letter shapes and sounds.

Through The Empowered Child curriculum, children feel valued for who they are. Students leave our program well-prepared for their future education, empowered to acquire the skills they will need to become responsible members of their community, creative problem solvers and life-long learners.

### MATHEMATICS

By counting, patterning, sorting, classifying, estimating and predicting, your child develops foundational math skills and an appreciation for the world of numbers.

If you have questions about the Childtime classroom experience, please speak with your director or contact us at [info@childtime.com](mailto:info@childtime.com).



[www.childtime.com](http://www.childtime.com)

## FOCUS ON LEARNING AT CHILDTIME®

A common activity in a Childtime classroom is children pretending to be someone or something other than themselves. This is often overlooked as children just playing, but children are actually learning many different things. When children use their imaginations, they learn to:

- Problem solve.
- Build relationships with others.
- Negotiate and take risks.
- Use physical, social and cognitive skills.
- Construct their own rules.
- Test hypotheses and debate them with their peers.
- Have confidence in themselves as learners.
- Be comfortable with making mistakes.

The next time you see children engaging in imaginary play, notice the enrichment and growth that is evolving as they learn about themselves and their surroundings.

## EXTEND THE CHILDTIME EXPERIENCE INTO YOUR HOME

**There are many ways to support your child's development at home. Here are some activities you can do together that will support your child's growth.**

**Infant** – Sit on the floor away from your baby. Move two interesting toys (one in each hand) forward until they both reach her. Join in her laughter.

**Beginning Steps/Exploration Station** – Sit on the floor facing your child and hold hands. Lean forward so he goes back and reverse the process in a seesaw motion. Sing a favorite song together to the beat of your movements.

**Early Learners** – Gather 6-10 medium-sized empty boxes or food containers. Take turns placing the boxes on top of each other until they fall down. Count the boxes as you go. If your child seems interested, try finding boxes or food containers in different sizes and build with those.

**Skill Builders/Kindergarten Connection** – Grab a piece of paper and a pencil. Help your child write down the shoe sizes of every member in the family. Gather one shoe from everyone and have him place them in order from smallest to biggest.

**Discovery Club** – Locate a pair of dice, some paper and a pencil. Have your child pick her favorite number. Keep track of how many rolls it takes to roll her number five times.

