



# Gaithersburg Judy Center

## August Newsletter 2018



**Come Join in the Fun in August!**

**Jump Bunch:** Wednesday, Aug 1 AND Monday, August 6 at 9:15 to 10:00 a.m.  
**Literacy Play and Learn (LPAL):** August 1, 2, 7 and 9 from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.



**Let's get reading!**  
**Pick up a flyer at the Judy Center or at the Gaithersburg Library!**

### Montgomery College is holding it's Single Parent Conference

Saturday, August 11, 2018  
 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 Rockville Campus, Science Center

For more information go to  
<http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/Events/Single-Parent-Conference/index.html>

## Is Your Child Ready for School? Parent Information Session Tuesday, August 14 6:30-8:00 pm @GJC

### Library News

Check out the storytimes for Gaithersburg Library!

<https://host.evanced.info/montgomerycountymd/evanced/eventcalendar.asp>

### FAMILY STORYTIME (BIRTH – 5 YEARS)

**Event Type:** Storytime  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 1, 2018  
**Start Time:** 9:30 AM & 10:30 AM  
**Library:** Gaithersburg Library

**Description:** Family Storytime (All Ages) - These 25-30 minute programs are designed to delight children of all ages. Filled with diverse stories and activities that promotes and develops language skills and imagination.

### MAKE AND TAKE TUESDAY (AGES 3-8 YEARS)

**Date:** Tuesday, August 21, 2018  
**Start Time:** 10:30 AM  
**Library:** Gaithersburg Library

**Description:** Get ready to rock with these easy to make instruments! We'll use everyday materials to create fun instruments you can make music with all summer long. Best for ages 3-8 years, with a caregiver.

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**Follow us on Twitter: Michele Dean @GaithersburgJC**

# Growing Independence: Tips for Parents of Toddlers and Twos

The years of toddlers and twos should be some of the most joyful years for you and your child. These children grow by leaps and bounds—walking, talking, laughing, singing, helping, and gaining new life experiences every day. Your child now has foods she loves and favorite toys; she has her own likes, dislikes, and opinions. She is naturally developing independence. Despite all this progress, this age range is sometimes called terrible because children may have some challenging behaviors.

**Here are tips for parents to make the toddlers and twos joyful years!**

- 1. Provide opportunities for your child to be independent.** Toddlers and twos can carry their own lunch boxes, put toys away, put their shoes by the door, and help with chores like putting clean laundry into drawers.
- 2. Give your child time to do simple tasks on his own.** Children at this age can do many things older children can—it just takes a little more time. When planning your family's schedule, add extra time for things like putting on shoes, walking to the car, emptying a backpack, and feeding the dog. It's worth it to make them feel capable and independent. Also remember to provide plenty of time to transition from one activity to another; toddlers and twos can't immediately switch gears like adults can.
- 3. Offer your child choices.** Let her pick out pajamas, healthy snacks, and favorite play activities. Rather than setting up a power struggle between you and your child, empower her to make her own choices.
- 4. Choose your words wisely.** When giving your child a choice, ask a question: "Would you like to put your coat on in the bedroom or in the kitchen?" If something is not a choice, make a statement: "You need to put your coat on before we go outside." Being as clear as possible about what he can and can't decide for himself as you support your child's growth and independence will reduce frustrations for both of you.
- 5. Avoid engaging in daily power struggles with toddlers and twos.** Developing independence can mean children do or say the opposite of what an adult asks, just to show their power. If there's a behavior that's particularly important to you, be consistent each time a struggle begins, and make your expectations clear. If it's a daily struggle, try one of the tips in this list to engage your child's cooperation. For example, if you need to leave right at 7:30 a.m. and every day that's an issue, consider providing more transition time. Or if you expect your 2-year-old to help clean up toys before bed, include a choice such as whether she wants to start with the crayons or the books.
- 6. Engage and interact with your child.** Set him up at the kitchen counter to tear lettuce or break uncooked pasta. Give him a bowl and spoon as you make breakfast. Hop to the bedroom; sing in the car; read favorite books over and over. Share experiences and laughter together.
- 7. Be joyful.** The experience of delight these children bring should not be overlooked. Smile, dance, laugh, and show her you love her. Play outside in the snow. Splash each other at the pool. Have a dance party in the kitchen. Toddlers and twos are so much fun!
- 8. Create a routine.** While you don't need to set exact times for activities, toddlers and twos like to know what's going to happen next. Always read two books before bed, for example. Always wave out the window at child care drop-off. Having a predictable routine fosters children's independence because they know what's happening next, which helps avoid surprises, struggles, and tantrums.
- 9. Respect your child as a person.** Tell him what's going to happen today: "I'm picking you up right after nap today." Let him know what's happening next: "After breakfast, we'll get you dressed." Give cues: "We'll start putting the blocks away in a few minutes." And give him the opportunity to do it for himself: "Do you want to put your socks on by yourself?" Respect your child as an individual.
- 10. Toddlers and twos are learning all the time.** They learn through their play, so be sure to give your child lots of time for both indoor and outdoor play experiences. Blocks, animal figures, dress-up clothes, cardboard boxes, bubbles, sticks, leaves, balls, and interesting kitchen utensils (pots and pans, empty spice containers)—these can all be exciting tools for learning through play.

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Laurel Bongiorno, PhD, is dean for the Division of Education and Human Studies at Champlain College, in Burlington, Vermont, and provides oversight for Champlain's MEd. program in early childhood education. She writes and presents on play, play as learning, developing creativity, and other early childhood topics.