



# "CORE"tastic Kids Newsletter



## Family Reading Activities (Part 1)

Children become readers when their parents read to them. It really is as simple as that. And here's the good news: It's easy to do and it's great fun! With a little practice you will be making the memories of a lifetime.

It is best to read to your child early and often. But it's never too late to begin.

With younger children, remember that reading is a physical act, as well as a mental one. It involves hand-eye coordination. So, when you read, involve your child by:

- Pointing out objects in the pictures
- Following the words with your finger (so your child develops a sense that the words go from left to right on the page)
- Having your child help turn the pages (to learn that the pages turn from right to left)

### **Activity 1: Look for books**

The main thing is to find books you both love. They will shape your child's first impression of the world of reading.

Keep in mind your child's reading level and listening level are different. When you read easy books, beginning readers will soon be reading along with you. When you read more advanced books, you instill a love of stories, introduce new vocabulary, and build the motivation that transforms children into lifelong readers.

### **Activity 2: R and R – Repetition and rhyme**

Repetition makes books predictable, and young readers love knowing what comes next. For this activity, you'll need books with repeated phrases and short rhyming poems. A few favorite books are:

- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jr
- *Horton Hatches the Egg* by Dr. Seuss
- *The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper

-Read slowly. With a smile or a nod, let your children know you appreciate their participation.

-As children grow more familiar with the story, pause and give them the chance to "fill in the blanks."

-Encourage your children to pretend to read, especially books that contain repetition and rhyme. Most children who enjoy reading will eventually memorize all or parts of a book and imitate your reading.

When youngsters anticipate what's coming next in a story or poem, they have a sense of mastery over books. When children feel power, they have courage to try. Pretending to read is an important step in the process of learning to read.

### **Activity 3: Poetry in motion**

When children act out a good poem, they love its rhyme and the pictures it paints with a few well-chosen words. They grow as readers by connecting emotion with the written word. For this activity, you'll need poems that rhyme, tell a story, and are written from a child's point of view.

Poems are often short with lots of white space on the page. This makes them manageable for new readers and helps to build their confidence.



*Where performance meets potential.*

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### **Calendar of Events:**

**We will be closed for the  
Thanksgiving Holidays  
November 24-26, 2010**

**New class schedule will  
begin January 10, 2011**



# Body Works — From the Inside Out

## Building Better Bones

Some exercises may help stave off the debilitating effects of Osteoporosis

By LAURA LANDRO managing editor for The Wall Street Journal

It's a dangerous byproduct of aging you can't feel or see: your bones getting thinner and more fragile. But it may be possible to stem bone loss before full-fledged osteoporosis sets in with certain types of exercise.

While adequate intake of calcium and vitamin D are considered important for bone health, a growing number of studies show a strong association between exercise and improvements in bone mineral density—the amount of calcium in the bone. Because bone is living tissue, it responds to exercise by becoming stronger and denser.

Studies indicate that the pull of muscle on bone stimulates the bone to grow, incorporate mineral and become stronger. In weight-bearing exercises with high impact—such as walking, jogging, racket sports and volleyball—bones and muscles work against gravity to build strength. And a combination of resistance and strength-training exercises not only helps build bone but also builds up the muscles that support the skeleton, improving balance and posture to help avoid the falls that lead to fractures.

Rather than stick to one form of exercise, a program that incorporates aerobic, weight and strength training is my best course, says Miriam Nelson, director of Tufts University's John Hancock Research Center on Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Prevention. "It's not just about maintaining bone density, but about maintaining fitness," Dr. Nelson says. "Even if you have frail bones, if you have muscle strength and balance, you won't fall, and if you don't fall, you aren't going to have a fracture."

Osteoporosis, or porous bone, now affects 10 million to 12 million people older than age 50. And as many as 47 million people with low bone mass—known as osteopenia—are at risk for future osteoporosis. The problem is that the body fails to form enough new bone, reabsorbs too much old bone, or both, increasing the risk of fracture.

As many as half of all women and a quarter of men over 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis, according to the National Institutes of Health. That can quickly lead to a worsening quality of life, more fractures and even death: An average of 24% of hip-fracture patients age 50 and over die in the year following their fracture, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

## Consistent Results

The exact role of exercise in the prevention of bone loss is still somewhat controversial. So far, most studies have been performed on relatively small groups of women, and in some, participants also received nutritional supplements or hormone replacement therapy.

Even so, says Scott Going, a professor of nutrition and physiology at the University of Arizona, studies of resistance training consistently show gains in bone mineral density of about 1% to 3% at the most critical hip and spine areas in premenopausal and postmenopausal women. (That's roughly equivalent to preventing one to four years of decrease in bone density in postmenopausal women and older men). Fewer studies have been done in men, but Dr. Going says findings are similar.

The University of Arizona's Bone Estrogen Strength Training Study, or BEST, conducted from 1995 to 2001 on women ages 45 to 65, found that weight-bearing and resistance exercises over a one-year period, combined with a calcium supplement, significantly improved bone mineral density at fracture-prone areas. The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health and the calcium supplement Citracal, now owned by Bayer HealthCare. (A recent study in the British Medical Journal has raised concern about calcium supplements, finding a 30% higher risk of heart attack in healthy older women who took them.)

says, "but if you follow a safe progression, then you can help stimulate the bone," he says.



Develop an attitude of gratitude, and give thanks for everything that happens to you, knowing that every step forward is a step toward achieving something bigger and better than your current situation.

Brian Tracy

## Getting Going

Though taking up walking or other weight-bearing exercise is fairly simple, it helps to get some guidance on resistance and strength training. Researchers in the BEST study developed a 45-minute exercise program to be performed three times a week; it is available free online at [bayerhearts.com](http://bayerhearts.com), along with videos showing how to do the exercises properly. Other groups offer similar regimens, including the National Osteoporosis Foundation, at [nof.org](http://nof.org).

It's important to build up gradually and be careful to avoid soft-tissue and joint injuries, Dr. Going says, but the aim should be to increase the weight load and intensity of the workout over time. "You may have to do weights at a higher level than you are used to," he

### Rule of Thirds—Professional Development Secrets

You might be like many who organize [professional development](#). You are experienced, thoughtful and very, very busy.

**So what is the "Rule of Thirds?"**It's the biggest little secret in education. There are three BIG thirds in professional development (PD).

The first third of the three comes from the circumstances of the actual professional development day. I am shocked at how often someone asks me to fly 5,000 miles to his or her school and yet there's a terrible microphone, poor seating and abominable lighting. Some "providers" ensure there are plenty of donuts, as if that would optimize staff learning. Others give me a screen 6' x 6' for 500 people. That's like watching a movie in your [living room](#) on an iPod. Instead get a 10 x 10' screen!

Over the years, I have been asked to speak in a movie theater, a bar, a library, a lunchroom and, even a race-track. A cheap or free venue is NOT a bargain if the staff has a bad day. Now you should know that I am good at working miracles with whatever someone gives me, but why take risks if you don't have to?

The first third of the three parts is: **optimize learning conditions!**

The second third of the value in professional development comes from having a **relevant, high quality, and very engaging presenter**. That's right: 33% of the value from any professional development that comes from the caliber of presenter. By the way, those who [hire](#) me say that I consistently get "rave" reviews. I will always do my best to be the best you can get.

The third of three thirds comes from the **follow up**. Every teacher needs to have weekly or monthly "check-ins" that jump-start the changes. Teachers are busy and sometimes stressed. In fact, they are so busy, that you practically have to "get in their face" to get them to do something out of the ordinary. Without adequate follow up, you are getting only one third of the potential value.

Follow up should be 1) book study 2) professional learning communities 3) weekly emails 4) teachers blogging about the strategies they use 5) short weekly staff meetings with quick sharing and celebrations.

Without those three BIG qualities, you have little chance. But now that you know better, see what you can do to make it happen.

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## Math Activity: *Pumpkin Measurement*

Incorporate measurement using the fall season's popular item. Here are some suggestions:

- **Pumpkin Line-Up:** Pick out 3-5 pumpkins. Have child line up each pumpkin in order from the lightest (pumpkin that weighs the least) to the heaviest (pumpkin that weighs the most) by holding each pumpkin and estimating. Model this procedure with a pumpkin. Talk aloud to model the thinking child should use as they complete this task. Once the child has decided on the order and recorded it, they should actually weigh the pumpkins to check their order. Smaller children can arrange pumpkins in order from smallest to largest/largest to smallest. This activity could be done at the pumpkin patch for a fun family outing.
- **Pumpkin Belt:** Place a large pumpkin on a table. Ask child to look at the pumpkin and imagine making a string belt to go around the widest part of the pumpkin. Without actually measuring, they are to cut a piece of string they think will be just big enough to be a pumpkin belt. After the child cuts a belt, he/she should wrap the belt around the pumpkin to check. If several children are participating, have children hang their string and record it on a graph as *too long*, *too short*, or *just right*. This activity can be used with several large pumpkins. Use a tape measure to find the actual circumference of the pumpkin.



### Exercise of the Month Turkey Trot Time

Build up your balance, strengthen your quadriceps muscles, and fine tune your motor coordination all at the same time. Squat down to a sitting position on your heels, hold arms out to the sides or in front of you for balance and begin to move around. The only part of your body that should be touching the ground are your feet. Waddle around and make silly turkey noises. Get your gobble on! See who can travel the furthest or the fastest. Set up a small obstacle course to go through as a turkey and just have fun with it.



### Attention and Focus

Individuals with attention and focus problems can focus attentively on certain activities like, playing video or computer games or checking and updating facebook. But when it comes to schoolwork or managing day to day responsibilities, some are easily distracted and have a hard time staying on task. ADHD doesn't impair the ability to pay attention but rather the ability to control what one pays attention to. The focus of your attention determines your life experiences. Where you put your attention, is where you put your energy.

Making simple changes in diet, sleep, exercise, and routines can help in improving attention and focus. Trying more involved approaches like incorporating relaxation techniques and yoga are also beneficial in improving attention and focus.

Since awareness is considered to be the first step in growth in some models of human development, self awareness can help support growth in individuals with focus and attention deficits. Once we are self aware and become more familiar with our actions, we can take concrete steps to bringing change in our behavior. We can then uncover the potential, creativity, and talent already inside us.