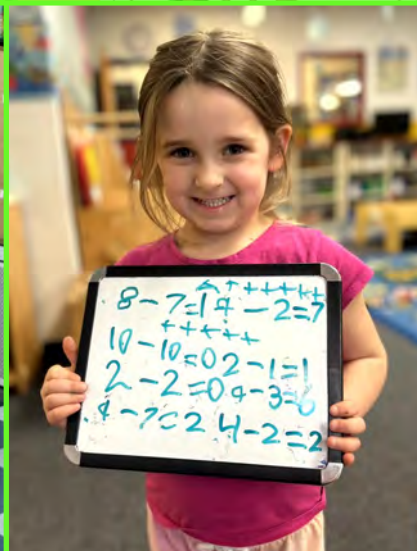




The Official Poko Loko Newsletter
March 2024

Our Little Learners



March Madness



March 2
Dr. Seuss' Birthday



March 10
Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 15
St. Patrick's Day Party
Wear Green!!!



March 17
Happy St. Patrick's Day!!!

March 19
First Day of Spring



March 19
Tornado Drill

March 29
Easter
Egg Hunt



Summer is just around the corner!! Don't forget to sign up for **Good Times Summer Day Camp!!**



Lots of Poko Loko Love



6 Tips to Raise an Optimist

Wondering how to raise an optimistic child? After all, kids who see the glass as half full are better at dealing with life's challenges—and happier too. Here's six tips to help yours develop a sunny outlook on life.

There are many reasons to encourage optimism in our children, including long-lasting positive affects on their mental and physical well-being. (Did you know optimists are much more likely to live past 100?) But how do you go about raising an optimist? Put these six tips into practice, for starters, and watch the positive benefits extend to the rest of your household.

1. Quit complaining.

Melissa Baldauf often catches herself worrying out loud as she drives her sons, ages 2 and 4, through the Seattle rain to child care. “We’re never going to get there,” she might say, or “We’re always running late.” Focusing on negative thoughts and frustrations, though, is classic pessimism. The more you moan about money problems or a tough day at work, the more likely it is that your kids will learn to do the same thing. Instead, try talking about things that go right (“I killed a big project at work today,” or “I had the nicest encounter at the post office today”). During dinner Jenn McCreary, a Philadelphia mom, plays “roses and thorns” with her 9-year-old twins. Each family member reveals the best and worst thing that happened to them that day. Rather than grumbling about the thorns, the goal is to focus on the positive. The bonus round is McCreary’s favorite part: “We all share one hope for tomorrow,” she says.

2. Have high expectations.

Even before her sons started kindergarten, Priscilla Baker began posting a to-do list above the light switch in their rooms reminding them to make their bed, get dressed, brush their teeth, and tidy up their room. “They weren’t allowed to come down for breakfast until they’d finished all their jobs,” says the Blacksburg, Virginia, mom. While she initially came up with the idea to reduce her own workload, Baker quickly realized that her boys were also benefiting from the routine. “They’d come downstairs all excited and say, ‘Mommy, I made my bed really well. Come check.’ They felt so proud,” she says.

Kids won’t develop an optimistic, “can-do” attitude unless they have the opportunity to prove their worth. “Entrusting children to complete tasks makes them feel capable,” notes Tamar Chansky, Ph.D., a child psychologist and the author of *Freeing Your Child From Negative Thinking*. Chores need to be age appropriate, since the point is for kids to succeed. A 2-year-old can pick up her toys, a 3-year-old can put dirty clothes in the hamper, a 4-year-old can carry plates to the sink, a 5-year-old can

empty wastebaskets, and a 6-year-old can sort laundry.

3. Encourage reasonable risk-taking.

We all struggle with how much to try to protect our kids from getting (or feeling) hurt. It’s embarrassing to fall off the monkey bars in front of your friends or join an ice-hockey league when you don’t know how to skate, so it’s natural to want to shield your child from these types of situations. But discouraging him from doing an activity because he might not be as skilled as other kids undermines his confidence—and encourages pessimism to seep in.

You’ve simply got to start letting go of the reins, emphasizes Parents advisor Michael Thompson, Ph.D., author of *Homesick and Happy: How Time Away From Parents Can Help a Child Grow*. Allow your kindergartner to play alone in the backyard or go on a school field trip without you as a chaperone. Over time, build up to bigger risks, like climbing the rock wall at a fair or going to sleepaway camp. “You don’t want your child to be afraid to try new things,” says Dr. Thompson. “You want him to come home and say, ‘Mom, I did it!’”

4. Wait before reacting.

When Dr. Reivich heard that another second-grader had been calling her daughter fat, her first instinct was to phone the girl’s parents—but she stopped herself. “I wanted to teach Shayna to be her own advocate,” she says, so they plotted out what Shayna could say the next time it happened. When it did, Shayna delivered her prepared script: “Number one, I am not fat. Number two, that’s not a nice thing to say to a friend.” The other girl apologized, and Shayna came home feeling empowered. Curbing your “mama bear” instincts can take enormous self-control. When your child is trying to sound out a new word or taking a long time to fit a piece into a puzzle, it’s easy to quickly intervene. “But letting your child try to solve things without your help will boost her sense of accomplishment and also make her more optimistic about what she can do in the future,” says Dr. Reivich.

5. Embrace the struggle.

When my own first-grader, Blair, toils over a worksheet, she often exclaims in exasperation, “I’m bad at math!” Unfortunately, a single setback may be enough for kids to concoct a permanent sense of their shortcomings: “I’m not smart.” “I stink at soccer.” “I can’t draw.” To prevent those types of conclusions, try to change your child’s perspective, says psychologist Andrew Shatté, Ph.D., who creates training programs to help kids power through challenges. To reframe his thoughts more positively, you might say, “New sports are hard to learn at first,” or “I know you can’t tell time yet, but you will.” And let him know he’s not the only one (“Lots of kids in your class are feeling as frustrated as you are,” or “I had a tough time when I started learning subtraction



FEBRUARY Fun



too”). Help him stay hopeful by mentioning another skill he worked to master: “Remember when you couldn’t read and how much effort that took? You’ll get this too.”

6. Keep it real.

When Tracy Reinert’s family moved to Florida, her 6-year-old son, Matt, had trouble fitting in at first. “I don’t have any friends,” he moaned to his mom. To cheer him up, she was tempted to tell him, “You have lots of friends back in New Jersey, and when the kids here find out what an awesome guy you are, they’re going to beg to be your friend.” But she bit her tongue because she didn’t want to give him false hope. Smart move. “Kids can see right through that kind of self-esteem boost,” says Dr. Shatté. Ironically, reassuring your child that everything’s going to turn out great often has the exact opposite effect. “Optimism actually requires thinking realistically more than positively,” adds Dr. Chansky. “That way your child is prepared for whatever he faces.”

After all, if the Florida kids didn’t start hanging out with Matt, he might conclude that he wasn’t truly such an awesome guy. Instead, Reinert sat him down for a heart-to-heart chat. “It’s challenging to move to a new place and start over,” she explained. “Making friends takes time.” After that, Matt stopped complaining and took active steps to solve the problem. He asked his mom to take him to the closest playground after school and to let him ride his bike around the neighborhood to meet kids who lived nearby. Within a few weeks, he had some new buds. “He suddenly realized that things were going to work out,” Reinert says, “and he ended up teaching me a thing or two about being optimistic.”

- By Vicki Glebocki, Parents Magazine



Register for Summer 2024!

Remember, if you have a child at camp and Poko Loko, you still get the additional 10% family discount off both children!!

This year will mark the twentieth summer of Good Times Day Camp in Libertyville! The schedule is packed with non-stop fun and excitement for kids ages 4 thru 12. Camp drop off and pick up will be based out of the Canlan Libertyville Sports Complex across the street from Poko Loko. Campers will have access to the indoor basketball gym with equipment, soccer fields, board games & more.

Campers will swim three days a week at Wheeling Aquatic Center, Rainbow Falls, Hawthorn Woods Aquatic Center, and the Vernon Hills Aquatic Center. Every Monday the camp goes on a fun half day field trip and on Wednesdays a full day field trip. Some trips scheduled this summer include Lake County Fair, Medieval Times, Brookfield Zoo, and everyone's favorite Great America.

Every Tuesday and Thursday campers will have fun during the special guests and events time. This year the camp will enjoy teddy bear stuffers, water balloons, and a color run.

Remember spots fill up fast. If you have any questions please talk to Peggy, Matt, Paulette, or Heidi at the front desk.

{Brochures are available!}



Good Times

summer day camp

June 10 to August 9

- **Swimming 3 Days a Week**
- **Exciting Sports**
- **Fantastic Field Trips**
- **Special Events**
- **Based Out of Libertyville Sports Complex**

***A Sensational Summer
Experience Awaits...***



Go online at www.goodtimesdaycamp.com to see the 2024 Calendar