

# Bright Start UpDate

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## Go Green by Secondhand Shopping

Thrift stores are gaining popularity, and the time for garage and rummage sales will soon be here. These are opportunities for sellers to get rid of things they no longer want or need and for buyers to save family dollars. Secondhand has the added plus of being good for the environment by reusing items that not worn out or broken.

When purchasing a used product for children, it's important to make sure it is safe. It is a good practice to check the web site – [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov) – before buying or selling something secondhand. This web site includes clothing as well as children's products. If recalled products are sold or purchased, a child's life might be at risk.

Carefully inspect the merchandise before buying. Remember all items are sold "as is." Be sure to ask why the products are being sold. Are the items defective or of questionable quality?

You may want to hesitate before purchasing secondhand car seats, mattresses, soft toys or electrically powered items. Electrical items may no longer be safe due to worn cords. Soft toys and mattresses may not be sanitary.

Buyer beware when purchasing a secondhand car seat. A car seat that has all its original parts and labels, has never been in a crash, and fits your car and your child's size may be safe. If car seats are more than six years old, they are often outdated and most likely to be in poor condition. Car seats



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should meet the current federal safety standards.

Older cribs may no longer meet new safety standards. Crib slats should be no more than 2- 3/8 inches apart. No slats should be missing, loose or cracked. The mattress should fit snugly, with no more than the width of two fingers between the mattress and crib side. Mattress support hangers should be secured by bolts or closed hooks and tightened securely. Make sure that the side rail is in good working condition.

Cleanliness is critical when purchasing secondhand products for children. Can it be taken apart to clean and disinfect completely? Is it structurally sound and stable? Replacement parts for some items may be available for purchase. Instruction manuals should be available for equipment and toys.

When purchasing children's clothing, look for garments that are of good quality and do not

show excessive wear, such as frayed fabric. Look for secure buttons, snaps and hems. Zippers should work correctly. The garments should be free of stains and tears. Avoid clothing articles with drawstrings because of the strangulation hazard.

The world of secondhand purchases is a fascinating one; however, there are risks and rewards. To have a successful experience, carefully assess your needs, examine the product carefully, and use good judgment. Enjoy your shopping!

Prepared by Deb Sundem, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, Codington County, South Dakota State University

Sources:  
Ohio State University Extension. Selecting and Using Nursery and Baby Equipment Safety. 2003.  
University of Florida Extension Service. Garage Sales.  
<http://consumerreports.org> – Secondhand Woes: 10 recalls that put children at risk



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## From a Parent's Perspective – Surviving the “Terrible Two’s”

Yep, you guessed it - we have officially hit the temper tantrum stage. I was wishing and hoping that we wouldn't have *that child*. It is the situation in the grocery store that you steer away from or gawk at – the one where the parent is trying to calm his/her child without causing a scene. Throw in a little gagging and puke, and you have one heckuva good time!



Seriously though, this is the kind of situation I try to avoid at all costs, but how can I reason with a screaming two-year old who just wants a drink of milk? Come to find out that it is much easier to prevent tantrums than it is to manage them once they have erupted.

Some tips for tantrum prevention...good luck.

- Reward children for positive attention rather than negative. During situations when they are prone to tantrums, catch them when they are being good and say things such as, *Nice job sharing with your friend*.
- Give children control over little things whenever possible by giving choices. A little bit of power given to the child can stave off the big power struggles later. *Which do you want to do first, brush your teeth or put on your pajamas?*
- Do not ask children to do something when they must do what you ask. Do not ask, *Would you like to eat now? Say, It's supertime now.*

- Choose your battles. Teach children how to make a request without a temper tantrum and then honor the request. *Say, Try asking for that toy nicely and I will get it for you.*

Of course, as parents, we all know the golden rule of tantrums, *Never, under any circumstances, give in to a tantrum. That response will only increase the number and frequency of the tantrums.* But the rule makers aren't the parent standing in the grocery store with the screaming child either!

Prepared by Amanda Larson, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, BonHomme County, South Dakota State University

Source: Temper Tantrums: Guidelines for Parents from the National Association of School Psychologists at [www.napsonline.org](http://www.napsonline.org).

## Healthy Baby – Hearing & Your Baby

Your baby's hearing is essential to learning speech, language, and social development. Each year in the United States, 12,000 babies are born with a hearing loss. The cause of hearing loss for many babies is unknown. Unfortunately, the hearing loss can go unnoticed for months and years.

Most states, hospitals, and communities now offer hearing screening for babies. This screening is easy and painless. In fact, it's usually done while the baby is sleeping. Be sure to have a qualified professional such as an audiologist, or an ear, nose and throat doctor,



perform these tests. Your baby should be screened for hearing loss no later than one month of age. Since babies can pass the hearing exam and still develop a hearing loss, your doctor should routinely follow your baby's general health, development, and well-being.

Babies who test with a hearing loss should receive medical,

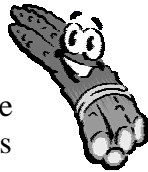
audiologic, educational, and support services no later than six months of age. Early age services will help the child develop communication and language skills that will last a lifetime. Each state has an Early Hearing Detection and Intervention program that works to identify infants and children with hearing loss. If you have concerns about your baby's hearing, call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

Prepared by Leah Burnison, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, Union County, South Dakota State University

Source: [www.cdc.gov/Features/NewbornHearing](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/NewbornHearing)

# Family Mealtime – Gus and Gussy’s Asparagus

Asparagus is an interesting and unusual vegetable that most preschool children have probably never tried. A story or tall tale can accompany a snack or meal to make trying a new vegetable more enticing to the children. Be creative and make up something fun if you don’t have a children’s book that fits the food you are serving. For example, you could make up a story about how Gus and Gussy Salamander learned to like asparagus one



day while at the park with their Aunt Susie Salamander. Aunt Susie brought asparagus to a picnic and they tried it for the very first time and discovered, to their surprise that they liked it.



For very young children, purchase canned asparagus as it will be easier to chew. Cut the spears in small pieces to prevent choking. For older children, fresh asparagus or frozen asparagus may be served, but it

would also be good to help them cut the asparagus into bite size pieces. If children are hesitant to try it, a small amount of low fat cheese whiz could be served with it.

Suggested Reading – *Oliver’s Vegetables* by Vivian French (1995).

Prepared by Sandra Namken, Extension Educator/Family & Consumer Sciences, Hamlin County, South Dakota State University

Source: SD Physical Activities & Healthy Snacks for Young Children

# Books and Baby – “Read to Me!” Selecting Books for Your Baby that Strengthen Pre-Reading Skills

“Read to me!” is one of the most significant requests your child will ever make. Even if your infant cannot utter those words yet, believe me, he or she is asking. Through reading, your baby connects to your voice and shares a special closeness with you, and the much needed pre-reading skills begin to grow.

Children start developing pre-reading skills at birth. They must develop six skills: phonological awareness, vocabulary, narration, print motivation, print awareness and letter knowledge in order to learn to read. When children are read to as infants and toddlers, the desire to learn to read is sown and their responsiveness to developing pre-reading skills is cultivated.

Choosing age-appropriate books for reading time may seem daunting. Here are some tips to help:

- To help develop print awareness, choose board or cloth books your child can hold as you read.
- Alphabet books strengthen letter knowledge.
- Books with pictures your child does not see every day helps extend vocabulary.
- Predictable books with repeated words, phrases, questions or rhymes help your child develop phonological awareness (sound structures of the spoken word).

Don’t be frustrated if your child wants you to read books over and over again. Repetition helps develop all six pre-reading skills. Take advantage of it. Mix things up a bit by focusing on the development of one of the six skills each time you read:

- Pause to let your child complete the sentence.



- Point out words that appear more than once.
- Ask questions like “What is happening on this page?” or “What do you see?”
- Point out illustrations that start with a specific letter.
- Be the listener; have your child “read” to you.

Visit your local library often. Ask about new books in the library. The librarian sees books every day and loves to help. While you’re there, don’t forget to pick up the State Library’s “Read to me!” growth chart and pamphlet. It lists several developmentally appropriate books for children ages birth to 5.

Prepared by Marta Lemke, M.Ed., South Dakota Department of Education Language Arts Curriculum Specialist

Sources:  
Every Child Ready to Read at Your Library, the American Library Association, 2004.  
Helping Your Child Become a Reader. U.S. Department of Education, 2002.

## Web Wise – Be Prepared for Any Emergency

South Dakota has experienced a number of natural disasters in recent years. There have been ice and snowstorms, flooding, wildfires and tornadoes. Today, our preparedness must account for man-made disasters, as well as, natural ones. Knowing what to do before, during and after an emergency is an important part of being prepared. It may make all of the difference when seconds count.

Here are some web sites that you may wish to check out:

- South Dakota Dept of Health – [www.bReadySD.com](http://www.bReadySD.com)
- South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service – [www.sdces.sdstate.edu](http://www.sdces.sdstate.edu) or <http://sdces.sdstate.edu/flood/>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency – [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- Center for Disease Control – [www.emergency.cdc.gov](http://www.emergency.cdc.gov)



## Reminder!

To meet your needs, please complete the Bright Start evaluation before March 31, 2010. The survey is found at

<http://brightstart2009.questionpro.com>

All responses will be confidential. We appreciate your time and effort.

Thank you!

The **Bright Start UpDate** is a monthly publication for South Dakota parents with young children under the age of five. It is brought to you as part of Governor Rounds Bright Start Program, an early childhood initiative with a number of different programs. **Bright Start UpDate** is published by the Office of the Governor 4,470 copies of this publication were printed at a cost of \$.46 per copy. You are welcome to make copies and distribute as needed. You can reach us by calling 1-800-305-3064 or check our web site at: <http://www.sdbrightstart.com>

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