

# INTRODUCTION

This 48 page thematic book about safety first contains a collection of skill-based activities and ideas for children ages 3 to 6 years. The ideas and suggestions are based on the philosophy of developing the whole child through play, exploration and varied experiences. These activities should enhance the child's ability to develop communication, motor/physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and adaptive/self-help skills. The teacher should approach and implement the activities in a way that takes into consideration each child's individual needs and abilities.

Many of the activities have been organized to meet the criteria of the interest areas (centers) found in most early childhood classrooms. They include:

- Art and Crafts
- Housekeeping
- Outdoor Play
- Blocks and Building
- Library/Writing
- Math and Manipulatives
- Music and Movement
- Table Toys
- Dramatic Play
- Sand and Water
- Computer Center
- Cooking and Nutrition

Opportunities to develop pre-literacy and literacy skills should be apparent in every center in the classroom. Using the activities in this book, children can explore the basic concepts of color, shape, number, quantity and position that naturally occur in a stimulating, early childhood environment. It is essential for early childhood educators to build each child's vocabulary every day. It is one of the basic components needed by children in order for them to become successful learners and literate adults. In almost every activity throughout the day, there will be an occasion to incorporate information related to basic vocabulary concepts. With this book, one will discover activities and games which will allow the children to explore new vocabulary and ideas and build their knowledge of concepts.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This resource book includes an array of ideas, activities and reproducible pages that you and other early childhood educators can utilize to develop stimulating activities around a given theme. The graphics, clip art, game ideas and other reproducible pages throughout the book are meant to be copied for individual classroom use. You may adapt or modify the ideas or instructions to best meet the developmental level of the children you serve. As a time saver, protect your work by laminating the products or placing the reproducible pages in plastic page protectors. The following describes each section and some helpful tips and hints regarding how to implement the ideas into your curriculum:

### Everything You Need to Know About...

This section includes a number of interesting facts or points about safety in general. It also includes a list of websites that may be used as a resource for additional information on the topic.

### Dictation and/or Creative Writing Page

Library and Writing

Use this page for children to write their own words or stories. Make several copies and place them in your writing center with appropriate writing tools.

### Clip Art

There are many uses for these cute, simple thematic illustrations. Each graphic can be enlarged or reduced to meet your individual needs. You can use the clip art illustrations in the following ways:

In newsletters and notes  
On rebus stories or letters  
In experiential charts or books  
As part of your routine chart

In rebus recipe charts  
On song charts  
In each center or area  
On charts and bulletin boards

In thank you notes  
On homemade games  
With your calendar  
On rewards/certificates

## Awards and Certificates

Use these cute, thematic certificates to reward children or thank volunteers. You can use the awards to:

Recognize accomplishments  
Recognize good sportsmanship  
Acknowledge acts of kindness

Praise good deeds  
Support teamwork  
Support positive behavior

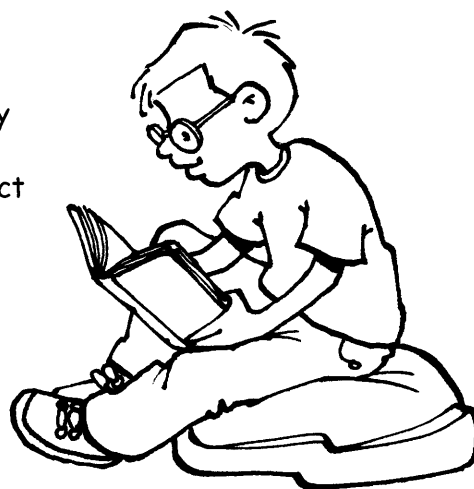
Identify strengths  
Thank volunteers  
Acknowledge good choices

## Thematic Literature List

### Library and Writing

This list of children's literature with the theme of safety includes books to read to the class, picture books, and books for beginning readers. A list of vocabulary words pertinent to the theme of safety first is also included. Here are a few tips for reading books aloud:

- Select good, well written and illustrated books
- Position yourself so that each child can see the book
- Review some of the words in the book before you read it
- Change the intonation of your voice to dramatize the story
- Read leaving words out to elicit responses from children
- Point out beginning consonant sounds (phoneme) and connect it with the letter (symbol)
- Comment on words that rhyme
- Point out the title, author and illustrator
- Point to words from left to right and top to bottom, etc.
- Keep the children on track - listening to the story
- Ask "wh" questions - "what, where, why, when"
- Expand on the concepts in the book in other centers
- Repeat readings of the same story



## Songs, Poems and Fingerplays

### Music and Movement

Songs and fingerplays are an essential piece of an early childhood curriculum. These simple thematic jingles are set to familiar children's songs. Short poems and fingerplays are also included in this section. They help children to learn about the rhythm and rhyme of our language. (Copies of the songs and poems can be shared with parents and used at home.) The songs can be written on large poster board so that children, families and volunteers can follow along. Clip art pictures can be added in place of words to create a rebus song chart. Develop a song basket filled with copies of each song. (Song cards can be made by copying each song to a large index card. Glue a clip art picture to the back of each card and laminate for durability. Place the song cards in a large basket for children to easily select a song they wish to sing.)

## Activities and Games

These skill-based activities and games can be used with the entire class, small groups of children or by individual children. The activities have been organized as they relate to interest centers typically found in the early childhood classroom. Use the ideas and activities in each section to facilitate the following skill development and concepts:

### Dramatic Play

exploring emotions  
dress-up & make believe  
using creativity  
acting out life experiences  
pretend play & role play

practicing skills  
sharing & turn-taking  
imitation  
resolving conflicts  
receptive & expressive language development

vocabulary development  
using imagination  
social skill development  
self-help skills

## Outdoor Play & Field Trips

exercise  
social skills  
trying new things

exploration  
following directions  
fair play & sportsmanship

gross-motor skills  
teamwork  
building concepts

## Math and Manipulatives (Science)

using math & science tools  
social skills  
language skills  
visual-perceptual skills  
measurement relationships  
experimentation & exploration  
learning about your surroundings

following directions  
cognitive skill development  
math concepts & properties  
position, quality & quantity  
recording information  
learning properties of substances  
number, letter, shape recognition and matching

time & space  
findings & predictions  
living & non-living things  
gathering information  
turn-taking

## Music and Movement

gross-motor development  
following directions  
movement of body parts  
language skills

singing & vocal expression  
rhyme & rhythm  
exploration of emotions  
individual expression

beat  
math skills  
pre-literacy skills  
imitation

## Library and Writing

literacy skills  
sound-symbol relationships  
creative writing  
concept & vocabulary development  
looking at, listening to and participating in stories

use of writing tools  
exploring books  
self-expression

retelling stories  
following directions  
attention span

## Patterns and Crafts

## Arts and Crafts

This section includes several patterns or craft ideas to utilize in your art center. One must always consider that, for the young artist and creator, the "process" is much more important than the product. The young artist develops skills in several development domains. Use the ideas and activities in this section to facilitate the following skill development and concepts:

creativity  
exploration & experimentation  
learning properties of substances  
building self-esteem  
building fine motor skills  
following directions

pre-literacy skills  
unique products  
using drawing, writing and cutting tools  
finding new ways to use materials  
manipulation of various materials

## Bulletin Board Ideas

Several suggestions are included for creating interesting and informative bulletin boards based upon the theme of safety and can be used in a variety of ways in the classroom. Here are a few tips:

Keep them neat and professional looking  
Display photos of kids at play & work  
Display magazine pictures of "real" things  
Keep them current to theme or activities of the program  
Display at the appropriate height for children's viewing  
Display higher for family members and volunteers

Display children's unique creations  
Change the boards periodically  
Use neat and concise letters & writing

## My Book About...

### Library and Writing

Make copies of the pages in this section to create an interesting book about keeping safe near the street for your young learners. Simply duplicate the pages, cut and assemble them by number. Attach the pages together with staples or brads. Laminate the front and back for durability. Children will enjoy listening to the story and coloring the pages. Older children may have the skills to color, cut, assemble and read the story for themselves. Having children make their own book helps develop pre-emergent reading skills in early learners.

## Goodies to Make and Eat!

### Cooking and Nutrition

The recipes found in this section are devoted to cooking and nutrition. Clay or dough recipes, which you may use in your art or sensory area, are also included. The recipes can be copied onto poster board, large sheets of paper, or recipe-sized cards so that children, families and volunteers can follow along. You may want to add clip art pictures in place of words to create rebus recipe charts. Use the recipes in this section to facilitate these developmental skills:

following directions  
cooperating with others  
counting & measurement concepts  
sensory exploration of foods  
pre-literacy and literacy skills

performing activities in sequential order  
manners and taking turns  
use of simple kitchen utensils  
observation of food in different forms  
practicing different food preparations

## At Home With...

This section is meant to provide families with ideas and activities to do at home with their children. These activities will help to encourage communication between family member and child, as well as support the skill development of the child. The activities should be optional for those families who wish to and have the time to participate. Educators may wish to incorporate the ideas into their newsletters or simply attach the "At Home With....." sheet to their notes.

### Parent/Family Involvement

Throughout each theme book, educators will note the various opportunities to encourage parent/family involvement. Communication between parents and the program is one key to increasing parent involvement. One mechanism to increase communication with parents is through notes or newsletters.

#### Tips for Notes and Newsletters

Make them visually appealing - add clip art	Write blocks of information
Be specific when referring to a day or time	Typewritten or printed
Write about each center, activity, or type of news	Make it neat - professional
Add a response sheet for parents	Proof for typing errors
Request assistance - parent volunteers for at least one activity	
Keep them easy to read - vocabulary/avoid lengthy sections	
Avoid using last names on general newsletters without permission	
Add questions for parents to ask their children to encourage conversation	

### Note:

All of the patterns and illustrations in this book can be enlarged to better suit the needs of young learners.