Attachment and bonding should be reinforced throughout the early childhood years. Benefits of a secure attachment include an optimistic attitude toward life and greater resilience to stress or trauma, and expansion of earning pathways. Here are some tips for nourishing bonds with preschoolers:

• Identify your child’s temperament and choose parenting strategies that are sensitive and responsive to it. Work with a child’s temperament, rather than against it, to convey acceptance and respect.

• Plan family routines and schedules to maximize time together. With young children, it’s not a matter of quality of time versus quantity of time you spend together — they need lots of both. Explore and enjoy the world together in simple ways — reading and singing together, taking walks, or playing together in the backyard or neighborhood park. Good childhood memories build bonds that last a lifetime.

• Include preschoolers in the everyday jobs and chores of family life. For example, three-year-olds can help pick out cereals during grocery shopping. They can help feed pets or put their dirty clothes in the hamper.

• Preschoolers feel closer to parents they believe in. Be a good model. Behave in the same respectful manner you expect of children. Avoid fibs and white lies that can confuse and alienate children.

• Be your child’s island of security. Be alert to comfort needs and respond in ways that particularly soothe your child. Some children enjoy having their foreheads stroked; others just want a lap to mold into.

• Gentle touch and physical closeness are important throughout the early childhood years. During bath time, meal time, or bed time, children who are hugged, kissed, nuzzled, and gently handled soon learn they are special to others and worthy of love.

• Be consistent in your own mood and temperament. Children need stable, reliable parent responses that are predictable more often than not. If you suffer from an ailment such as depression or substance abuse, seek help. Keeping your mental outlook on an even keel is a lasting gift to children.

• Avoid comparing siblings to each other. Focus on each child’s individual strengths and talents, rather than using them to size children up to each other. Refrain from saying things like, “Your brother never used to act like that. Why can’t you learn to be more like him?”

• In simple, everyday ways, find ways to express how much you love and cherish your child. A Valentine’s card — especially when it’s not even Valentine’s Day — can mean a lot. Don’t let a day go by without saying, “I love you.”

Try these activities at home to help support your child's skill development.

**Science and Fine Motor Activity:**

This fun and interactive activity will keep your child engaged and work on fine motor skills and science exploration. Who doesn't love food and animals?

**Supplies:**
- Fruit loops or cheerios
- Pipe cleaners
- String

**Activity:**
1. String cereal onto pipe cleaner
2. Make a heart design with the pipe cleaner
3. Attach string to the pipe cleaner
4. Hang the feeder on a tree
5. Observe birds, squirrels and other animals eat the cereal.
6. Take pictures or collect information on what animals you see or how long it takes for all of the food to be gone!

**Social Emotional and Literacy:**

February is a great month to work on friendships and kindness. Throughout the month of February take a little time out of each day and perform a random act of kindness, all it will cost you is time and leave you with a warm heart.

Reading to your child before bed every night is a great habit to develop. Try out some of the books on Page 4 about friendship, kindness and of course Valentine’s Day to build your child’s literacy skills and help develop an idea of what it means to be a friend.

**Math Activity:** Heart Numbers

Use these fun heart number cards to help your child practice and learn math concepts. You can use these printable cards for sorting, matching, ordering, comparing and even addition and subtraction. You can find heart cutouts and other fun Valentines materials at your local dollar store to make this math activity more interactive and engaging. Use the link below to get your free number heart printables. [https://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/free-printable-heart-number-cards.html](https://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/free-printable-heart-number-cards.html)
National Children’s Dental Health Month:

Brushing Teeth:
For children 3 to 6 years of age, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day or as directed by a dentist. Supervise children’s brushing and remind them not to swallow the toothpaste.

2 minutes x 2 times per day

Thumb Sucking:
Sucking on thumbs, fingers and pacifiers may help children relax. Most children stop sucking their fingers by the age of four. Continuing to suck their thumbs after that age can cause problems with growth and alignment of teeth.

Did you know?
- Your baby’s teeth are at risk of decay as soon as they appear — which is around six months of age.
- Your baby’s first dental visit should occur no later than one year old.
- Don’t share utensils or clean a pacifier by putting it in your mouth. You can transfer cavity causing germs to your child.

Why baby teeth are important:
- Baby teeth can help your child chew properly.
- Baby teeth help with proper speech development.
- Baby teeth ensure proper mouth shape.
- Baby teeth are placeholders for permanent teeth. If permanent teeth develop in a mouth that is unhealthy, they are very likely to become decayed.

Suggested Toys for Connecting with Children

Here are some ideas for toys that you and your child play with together to build strong connections. Choose creative, constructional toys like:

- Building blocks
- Legos, Duplos, Tinker Toys
- Lincoln Logs
- Mr. & Mrs. Potato Head
- Dollhouse with miniature people
- Crayons, Stencils and Paper
- Toy farm animals
- Play Dough & molds
- Small stuffed or plastic animals
- Dishes, pots & pans & play food
- Train set
- Play garage with car

Important Dates

February 3: NO SCHOOL—ALL STUDENTS

February 17: NO SCHOOL—ALL STUDENTS

March 19-20: NO SCHOOL—PRESCHOOL ONLY (Montessori in Session)

March 23-27: NO SCHOOL—ALL STUDENTS

Enrollment Corner

ASCCs are finalizing Transition to Kindergarten packets with parents. If you have not completed this form please meet with them at the school to reserve your child’s kindergarten seat. Our goal is to make the move to kindergarten simple and easy for all families.

Beginning February 4, ASCCs will start meeting with parents of returning preschoolers to complete the Returning Child Packet. This reserves your child’s preschool seat for the 2020-21 school year. If you are planning to move over the summer or would like to change schools, this is the best time to secure your child’s seat for next year.

Sibling enrollment for CPS families begins on March 2 for neighborhood schools. Visit any Hub to register.

Growing Great Kids:
Here are some great books about friendship, kindness and of course Valentine’s Day to build your child’s literacy skills and help develop an idea of what it means to be a friend.

**Bear’s New Friend:**
Eager to play in the fall leaves, Bear heads out to find his friend, Mouse, but is startled by clatter in a tree. Determined to find out who is making all the noise, Bear goes on a short journey, picking up all of his friends on the way, until he discovers a quite bashful owl whom he declares their NEW FRIEND!

**Fish is Fish:**
Two best friends, a minnow and a tadpole, are practically inseparable until the tadpole grows legs and decides to explore the world beyond the pond. When the tadpole, now a frog, returns to tell his friend of the extraordinary things he’s seen, the minnow, now a fish, tries to follow in his footsteps, but quickly finds that land is not what he expected. Friendship truly saves the day in this imaginative tale of a fish out of water.

**Love Monster:**
Love Monster is a slightly hairy monster trying to fit in with the cuddly residents of Cutesville. But as it turns out, it’s hard to fit in with the cute and the fluffy when you’re a googly-eyed monster. And so, Love Monster sets out to find someone who will love him just the way he is. His journey is not easy—he looks high, low, and even middle-ish. But as he soon finds out, in the blink of a googly eye, love can find you when you least expect it.

**Beekle the Unimaginary Friend:**
This magical story begins on an island far away where an imaginary friend is born. He patiently waits his turn to be chosen by a real child, but when he is overlooked time and again, he sets off on an incredible journey to the bustling city, where he finally meets his perfect match and--at long last--is given his special name: Beekle.

**The Day it Rained Hearts:**
One day it rains hearts, and Cornelia Augusta catches them. She realizes that the hearts are perfect for making valentines. Each heart is special in its own way, and Cornelia Augusta knows exactly who to send them to: her animal friends. A fun way to spark creativity and thoughtfulness! The perfect book to pair with Valentine’s Day crafts.

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**Supplies needed:**
- Wide, large wood craft stick
- Assorted pom poms
- Assorted heart stickers
- Pair of googly eyes
- Craft glue

**Directions:**
1. Begin by applying a strip of craft glue to the wood stick. Apply it thick and generous so the pom poms adhere well.
2. Begin pressing pom poms into a single row, moving along the length of the wood stick. Press them close together using any color pattern you wish.
3. Now it is time to give your love bug some eyes. Apply some craft glue to the front of the first pom pom and press two googly eyes to it. Press them firmly and hold them in place for a few seconds until they are well adhered.
4. Last but not least, give your sweet little love bug some ears. We took two heart stickers and used a little glue to apply them sticking out of the top of the head. You can opt to do this as we did, or you can snip two small pieces of pipe cleaner and apply those instead to look like little antenna. Your little Valentine’s Day love bug is now complete.

Adapted from: myteenguide.com