

CONNECTIONS

Volume XXIV Issue 10.....A Publication of the Hull Public Schools

May 2024

The Best Art Studio of All: The Great Outdoors

By Lisa Daly, Community Playthings, April 2024

There are many benefits to doing art outside. Here are a few:

- Messiness is anticipated and OK. Paint spills and splatters are not as much of a concern in outdoor environments. Children do not feel pressured to be neat, and parents can relax. Paint or chalk on ground surfaces or fences may be hosed off or left for rain to wash away or the sun to fade.

- Children have more freedom. Many outdoor experiences offer fewer constraints and more space than indoor environments. Work surfaces are often large, allowing children to go big with their movements and create large-scale pieces of art. These larger "canvases" involve larger gross motor movement and more action which appeal to children who typically aren't interested in sitting for art.

- Natural materials offer opportunities for children to create art anywhere. Gathered leaves, seed pods, flowers, rocks, or sticks may be used for designs on a boulder, tree round, or in the sand. Natural sunlight heightens colors, and nature provides young artists with inspiration.

The outdoors lends itself to large, collaborative art experiences. Remember

the fun of building giant sand sculptures or towns at the beach with friends?

Outdoor art can be done on tabletops, but consider other options that offer varied exploration. A change in location, surfaces beyond paper, and unique mark-making tools offer intriguing possibilities. You can use the larger canvas of a driveway or a fence. Chalk is different on a wet surface than when dry. You can explore rolling larger items in paint onto flattened cardboard boxes. Explore other "paint tools" such as brooms, small sticks, or rocks.

Alternative vertical workspace may be made on fences or building walls. Children may paint directly on a wood fence or surfaces such as plywood or plexiglass that can be attached to chain-link fences or buildings. Spraying liquid watercolor on hanging bed sheets yields spectacular results. When finished, simply wash the sheets.

The outdoors is a unique studio, offering inspirational sensory experiences for young artists. By providing time, space, and resources, you can be sure that your children's creative expression will follow.



**Mother's Day
Make & Take Craft
Friday, May 3rd
11:00am-12:00 noon**

If your child is in half day preschool class here at the Jacobs, plan on coming late after preschool or early before the afternoon session. Please register by Thursday at noon.

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The Hull Family Network is funded by the Dept. of Early Education & Care.

Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant



Families come in all shapes and sizes. All children need a loving family to grow successfully. If you have ever thought of expanding your family or know of an adult, married or not, who has desired a family of their own, consider foster care. Fatima Sequeira is a DCF Foster Parent recruiter and would love to talk to anyone about the process and the many joys they will receive.

(508) 894-3841

or

Fatima.sequeira@MassMail.State.MA.US

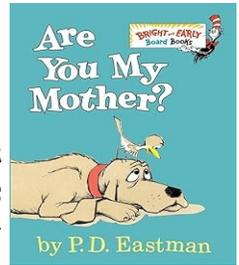
www.mass.gov/dcf



The Hull High School Band's Spring Concert will be held Tuesday, May 14th, at 6:00pm, at the Bernie King Pavilion. If the weather forecast is bad it will be held in the Hull High School Auditorium. This a free and fun way to introduce children to live music.

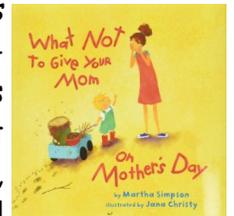
Books About Moms

P.D. Eastman's *Are You My Mother?* is a classic story about a baby bird in search for his mother after she left her egg in the nest to get a worm before her baby was hatched.



Does a Kangaroo Have a Mother, Too? by Eric Carle answers curious kids who wonder whether lions, bears, and monkeys have mothers, too. Bright collage illustrations and simple text reinforce the theme that everyone has a mother, and every mother loves her child.

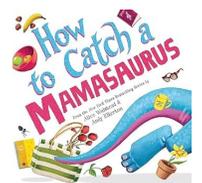
In *What Not to Give Your Mom on Mother's Day* by Martha Simpson, a little boy offers advice on what NOT to give your mom on Mother's Day...unless she's an animal. For example, don't give her a rotting log unless she's a salamander, or a bunch of flies unless she's a spider! What would Mom like best?



Laura Numeroff's *What Mommies Do Best* and its reversed book of *What Daddies Do Best* explores the many things that parents do best. Daddies can do lots of things, like bake you a birthday cake, play with you in the park, and take you trick-or-treating. But

what do they do best? Mommies can do lots of things, like teach you how to ride a bike, sew a loose button on your teddy bear, and read you a cozy bedtime story. But what do they do best? The answer is made perfectly clear in this irresistible celebration of parents and the everyday things they do.

How to Catch a Mamasaurus: A Mother's Day Adventure for Kids by Alice Walstead is another book in the *How to Catch a* series. This time, they're trying to trap the Mamasaurus—a wonderful creature like no other with strong spirit and a kind heart! On their quest to catch her, the kids think about all the amazing ways in which Mamasaurus is there for them, always ready to share her love and support. The perfect gift for children ages 4-10 to share with Mom at Mother's Day and beyond, this fun dinosaur picture book is filled with silly rhymes and illustrations sure to delight young readers and educators alike with STEAM concepts and classic hilarity and chaos.



Hull Family Network

Note from the HFN Coordinator:

Joan F. MacDonald, jmacdonald@town.hull.ma.us

This past month, as I handed out the ASQ Screening to parents in group, I joked with one parent that this would be the last one I ever asked them to fill out. I have always had mixed feelings about just handing them out en masse at group. It works to get them completed and checked off my grant requirement to-do list. Sometimes, though, it is just something parents just check without thinking or trying to see if their child really can do the skill. Either way, I do try to look at the items that children can't do yet and if there is a pattern that might raise a red flag to me. I enjoy the social-emotional screening that asks parents to say what they enjoy about their children. I hope you do take the opportunity to read the developmental tip sheets to learn how you can support their ever-growing and changing development. I enjoy explaining to parents and caregivers, how child development is all interconnected and seeing each child grow in their unique but similar way.



Toilet Training/Learning

Each year spring brings discussions of preschool and toilet training. There are as many ways to teach this skill as there are reactions from the children learning this skill. Children need to learn many individual tasks in order to be successful in learning to use the toilet, and even more importantly, they need to have some interest in order for you to have success.

Most children do have some ability to hold their pee or poop by 18 months of age. The other skills needed are the ability to pull underwear and pants up and down, tell a parent they need to go, the ability stop a preferred activity in order to use the potty, and the desire to control the process themselves. Typically in the 2- 3 year old range, children have all these individual skills and are willing to cooperate with their parents to use the toilet.

Some families have success going diaper-and-clothes less for 3-5 days so that their child really makes the connection of the feeling & activity. Some families will bribe a child with treats and prizes for all successful attempts. Others will work on the process more slowly, encouraging their child to try after meals and snacks, or upon waking, and then switch to underwear once the child is going frequently enough and expresses the desire to make the switch. Each of these styles works differently for individual children. The child who wants to be in control or the impulsive child will have a difficult time with a learning process that doesn't have them dictating the how & when. The easygoing child, who wants to please adults, will do fine with any technique but especially one that rewards them. Ask Joan for a handout with a more detailed explanation of toilet learning.

19 Ways to Take a Break



Being a mom (or a dad) can be tough some days, try one of these ways to take a break.



- Fly a Kite
- Watch the stars or clouds
- Take a Nap
- Let out a sigh
- Pet a furry creature
- Read or watch something funny
- Color with crayons
- Put on some music and dance
- Take a bike ride
- Take deep belly breathes
- Rest with your legs up on a wall
- Buy some flowers
- Take a bath
- Go for a walk along the beach
- Call a friend
- Engage in a small act of random kindness



- Climb a tree or some rocks
- Do gentle stretches

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Hull Family Network

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Check our website for additional events and information at

<https://www.hullpublicschools.org/district/hull-family-network>

This newsletter is provided by the Hull Family Network, now serving families with children up to age 8 years.



Sponsored by the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care and Care

What is the Hull Family Network?

The Hull Family Network supports all parents and caregivers who have children prenatal through age eight. Our goal is to help parents create and maintain a healthy family environment as well as to promote family well-being through parent education and community support.

Funded by the MA Department of Early Education and Care through a grant to the Hull Public Schools, the Hull Family Network provides playgroups, parent education workshops, parent support groups, family activities, as well as information on parenting and community resources. By providing family recreational activities and playgroups, we hope to help parents build connections that will extend beyond the HFN Center and be a support to them. By providing parent education workshops, support groups, and having an extensive parenting lending library, we hope to help parents enhance their child-rearing skills.

Our programs are free to all residents in the town of Hull who are pregnant or have children through the age of eight. Most of our programs are offered at our center which is located at 18 Harborview Road, inside the Jacobs School. We are open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday and are always happy to meet a new family.

Mother's Day Handprint Art Options



There is nothing cuter than art work using a young child's hand or foot prints for Mother's Day. The internet is full of options for adults to copy for the moms. All you need is paint, plain paper, and a few markers to turn their hands or footprints into a cherished work of art. Smart moms can leave this portion of the newsletter on dad's bureau with some paint.

