



BEST BEGINNINGS

Alaska's Early Childhood Investment

July – Sept. 30, 2011

1. 'Spoil' them with attention (:30)

Lots of positive touch and affection during infancy is good for kids. Studies suggest that children who are shown more affection early in life turn out to be kinder, more intelligent, and to care more about others.

The baby brain is shaped every day by what we do and don't do. Children who are held more, whose cries as infants receive quick responses, and who are disciplined without spanking or hitting, learn to be better, kinder people.

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2. Ready for Kindergarten (:28)

When it comes to getting ready for kindergarten, familiarity with letters and numbers is great. But other skills are more important. Skills like the ability to communicate thoughts and needs. The ability to listen. To play well with others. And to have strong fine-motor skills. Perhaps most important is enthusiasm. Eagerness for learning sets a child on the path to success.

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3. What is early learning? (:28)

Early learning happens everywhere and all the time. Right from birth – and probably before – babies and young children cannot help but learn. They are naturally wired up to learn about the world around them. They are even learning about learning. So

everything that happens in a young child's life is a learning experience. What they learn – now that's the key. And that's where we come in.

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4. Get outside (:29)

It's summer! And Alaska summers are perfect for brain-building activities with young children. Go to Best Beginnings Alaska-dot-O-R-G to find great activities you can do anywhere in Alaska. Go for an ant hike by crawling around on your bellies. Collect bugs. Or go on a nature safari scavenger hunt. Young children need a variety of simple, hands-on experiences for their brains to develop.

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5. Family-friendly work place (:30)

Does your business support parents of young children? Research says that employees with family-friendly policies have higher retention rates, greater employee loyalty, and increased productivity. Flexible hours or alternative work schedules, resources to help parents find child care, and pre-tax flexible spending plans all help families. And build a strong, productive work force for the future.

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