



Growing readers!

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Putting Your Family Calendar to Work

Most families have a calendar somewhere in the kitchen or office. Calendars help young children learn the basics of the days of the week and the months of the year. Your calendar offers opportunities for other learning as well. Take some time to use your calendar in a few new ways. Below are some ideas to get you started:

- **Create birthday reminders!** Encourage your child to mark special birthdays on the calendar. This can include siblings, grandparents, and even teachers! When a special birthday is coming up, seeing the reminder can prompt your child to create a special birthday card for that person.
- **Identify interesting words for the month.** Use the activities going on at your house during that month to put together a short list of interesting words. For example, during August your word list could include vocabulary words related to the weather (humid, hazy, tropical) or words related to the upcoming school year (anticipation, transition, supplies). Make a game of incorporating your month's calendar words into conversation.
- **Develop family timelines.** Flipping back and forth through the months can help your child develop a timeline or sequence of events, and can deepen your child's understanding of concepts such as before and after, yesterday and tomorrow. Some families create a visual timeline to mark significant events such as a new baby or the start of school. These timelines help a child understand why something isn't happening right away.
- **Strengthen an understanding of numbers (called "numeracy").** Talk about the 1st day of the month, the 2nd day, the 3rd and so on. Encourage exploration using these terms. "The 1st day of this month is a Wednesday. What day is the 1st day of the month next month? How many days does this month have? Does next month have the same number of days, or does it have more?"

As you can see, calendars are useful tools to have around the house! These seemingly simple tasks reinforce more complex concepts and vocabulary in a fun and engaging way.