



Welcome to the winter edition of our newsletter.

We've had a busy few months at **kidsunlimited** welcoming lots of new faces and sharing many different experiences. We hope you've had a chance to view the nursery's online diary pages to find out more about the daily activities that your children take part in. Our **ku:sign** programme is in place at all nurseries and a quick guide explaining the benefits and key signs is available to download from our website 'In the Nursery' / 'Activities' page. We are updating our website with recipes, activities and information on a daily basis so please have a look and let us know if there is anything else you would like to see included.



Our Early Years team has shared their experience in some informative articles, in this newsletter, around how toddlers learn, tips for potty training and how to offer choices to your children. If you'd like to find out more about any of these areas please speak to your nursery manager.

In September we launched our employee awards scheme in every nursery to recognise employees who make a difference in their nursery. The GEM awards have been very well received by staff and parents alike and we thank you for taking the time and interest to register your views on a particular member of the nursery team. Your opinion is most important to us and I would like to encourage you to complete a nomination form whenever you feel that a particular member of the nursery team deserves to receive an award.

The development of our new nursery in Esher is progressing well and will be open in January 2011. We are also planning two new nurseries for the second half of the year which will open in Reigate and Maidstone. I would also like to take the opportunity to extend a warm welcome to parents, children and staff in our East Barnet nursery which we acquired in September. We are delighted to include this former Kiddi Kids nursery in the kidsunlimited portfolio and trust that the children, parents and staff at this nursery are looking forward to the redevelopment of their outside play area.

I do hope that you will enjoy reading this newsletter and thank you for your interest.

Rosamund Marshall
CEO

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!



kidsunlimited nurseries across the UK have been enjoying the winter weather over the last week or so. Our Hamilton nursery just outside Glasgow experienced the heaviest snowfall with up to a foot of snow falling in just one morning.

Everyone has been wrapping up snugly in their coats, hats, scarves and gloves and spending time outdoors enjoying the fluffy white snow. The snow is making the nurseries feel even more festive as they all busily plan and prepare for nativity plays, concerts and dinners.



kidsunlimited make Pudsey proud!

kidsunlimited raises money for the BBC's Children in Need every year and this year hasn't been any different. To get into the spirit of this occasion, the children together with parents and staff members became involved in a fundraising extravaganza to help raise money for the charity.

From wearing spots, pyjamas or yellow and red clothes to baking cakes and sponsored walks, the children got involved in lots of fun games and activities to make this event even more special. Thanks to your enthusiasm and support, **all together we managed to raise over £11,000!** And that's not all, as the money is still keep coming in.

I just want to say: "A big Thank You and Well Done Everybody." This has been tremendous achievement and makes me feel very proud.

Ros Marshall



East Barnet

Raised over £1,200 the most of all our nurseries. They all wore fancy dress for the day and made Pudsey's biscuits as well as completing an obstacle course.



Highbury

Raised over £500. Children with parents and staff went on a sponsored buggy walk together with Pudsey Bear, Gunnersaurus and football legend Charlie George dressed in yellow and red clothes.



North Cheam

Raised over £500 and Jasmina, the Nursery Manager, spoke on BBC Radio 2. Fund raising activities included a pyjama day, Teddy's Picnic and wearing spotty eye patches for their Pirates & Princesses day.



Callands

Raised £241.10 with a 'dress up day'. Each room choose a theme including cowboys and cowgirls, Disney Characters, Fairies and Angels and one room even did Oliver Twist.

Nursery news



Ofsted result sparks off huge celebration

Celebration is in order at **kidsunlimited** day nursery Milton Park at Abingdon, Oxfordshire, after it received an outstanding rating from Ofsted. The Nursery Manager Charlotte Green said, *‘This inspection report validates the hard work and dedication of all the staff here.’* Charlotte and her team led the nursery through a dramatic change influencing every element of the nursery day.

Ofsted stated *‘This nursery has improved immensely since its previous inspection. A new enthusiastic senior management team has instigated significant positive changes. All children, including those with additional needs, flourish making quick progress in their learning and development.’*

Congratulations to kidsunlimited Macintosh!

Ruby King and Megan Pike have had their first poem’s published in a Manchester Poetry book this month. Macintosh pre-school children worked creatively by putting pencil to paper and wrote their first poems.

Megan’s First Poem

My name is Megan and I go to preschool,
My best friend is Libby who is really cool.
I watch Milkshake on TV,
Playing with cars is lots of fun for me.
I just love curry to eat,
And sometimes chocolate for a treat.
Pink is a colour I like a lot,
My pink bike is the best present I ever got.
My favourite person is the baby in Mummy’s tummy,
Who is a gem,
So this, my first poem, is just for them!

Megan Pike (3 years)

Ruby’s First Poem

My name is Ruby and I go to preschool,
My best friend is Madison who is really cool.
I watch Peppa Pig on TV,
Playing with dolls is lots of fun for me.
I just love pizza to eat,
And sometimes chocolate for a treat.
Pink is a colour I like a lot,
My Barbie is the best present I ever got.
My favourite person is Daddy, who is a gem
So this, my first poem, is just for them!

Ruby King (3 years)

Old meets new at 21st birthday celebration

Staff and children reunited after 21 years

kidsunlimited Lynda Ellis recently celebrated their 21st birthday by hosting an autumn fayre that saw family, friends and past nursery children attend. The event took place at the nursery on Broomhall Road in Sheffield on Saturday 11th September. The free family event included a wealth of activities, including a visit from Ore & Friends exotic animals, a children’s entertainer, face painting and raffle prizes.

‘Our autumn fayre was such a memorable occasion it was great to see children that had been at the nursery some 21 years ago when it first opened. Children and parents were being reunited with past friends’ commented nursery manager Paula Oldale, *‘Fun was had by all and many memories shared.’*

As part of the celebrations 21 red and green balloons were released by staff and past nursery children.



Total Fitness Wilmslow - Diwali

During the month of November **kidsunlimited** Total Fitness nursery celebrated Diwali - the Hindu Festival of Light. The children painted with henna on their hands (this is called Mendhi) and they made “rangoli” patterns in sand to put outside the front door – this brings in luck from the goddess of fortune. They also made “diwas” which are small clay pots that hold the Diwali tea light.

Amita set up an altar like she would have at home and they dressed up as the characters from the Diwali story King Rama and Queen Sita, the ten-headed demon. All our outfits were traditional Indian dress.



kidsunlimited Lynda Ellis working with Sheffield City Council

On a cold autumn morning the children and staff of **kidsunlimited** Lynda Ellis day nursery wrapped up warmly in their winter coats, hats and gloves all ready to meet their resident gardener Gordon, to plant spring bulbs. Sheffield City Council had kindly donated 1,000 spring bulbs to the nursery as part of their ‘Greener Campaign in the Community’. The children dug small burrows in the ground with their **ku:**gardening tools and planted a mixture of spring bulbs.



Parent tips

Potty training

Is your child ready? Your child may be ready to start trying to use the potty if they:

- Stay dry for a couple of hours each day.
- Take an interest when family members or friends go to the toilet.
- Notice the physical signs of when a bowel movement is taking place.
- Let you know when their nappy is soiled.

When to wait? It's usually best not to start toilet training your child during times of stress e.g:

- The arrival of a new baby in the family.
- Starting a new childcare setting.
- Moving house.
- Family illness.

Top tips for potty training

Be positive and give lots of praise whenever your child uses the potty.

Let them get involved with choosing the potty or toilet seat.

Don't rush things, go at your child's own pace and be prepared for setbacks.

Dress your child in clothes that can be pulled down or up easily - you may also consider using training pants/pull-ups at first.

Never force your child to sit on the potty as this will only upset them.

Some children are afraid of the toilet flushing so ensure they feel safe and secure.

If your child has an accident, don't show your annoyance or frustration; stay positive!

Get your child into a routine so every time they use the potty they wash their hands.

It can take much longer for a child to stay dry at night – start trying once they are successfully using the toilet and have had a few dry nappies by the morning.

Recommended reading

For children



I want my potty

ISBN: 9780007236213

Harper Collins

Children's Books



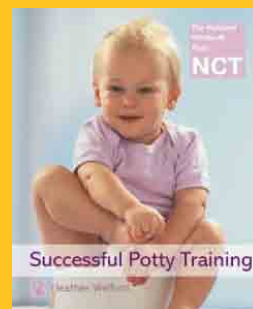
Pirate Pete's potty: potty training for boys

ISBN: 9781409302209

Ladybird Books Ltd

Recommended reading

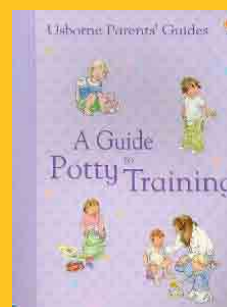
For parents



NCT - Successful Potty Training

ISBN: 9780007136063

Thorsons



A guide to potty training

ISBN: 9780746077986

Usborne Children's Books

Parent tips (continued)

How do toddlers learn?

Consider a toddler's first year of life. He or she has developed from a helpless being, entirely dependent on adults, to a small person who is able to make their needs known by using an increasing range of body and facial movements and language. Children learn about the world through their senses; they are whole people who have feelings, ideas and relationships with others and it is the relationship with parents and carers which is the most important in a child's life. Parents are children's first teachers; children develop language skills by listening and mimicking their parents. When they are born, children have the capability of producing any sound made in any spoken language in the world. They are sponges, taking in all the information we give them, directly or indirectly. They do not have the power to filter it; they just absorb it which is why it is essential to make sure that what we give them enriches their development.



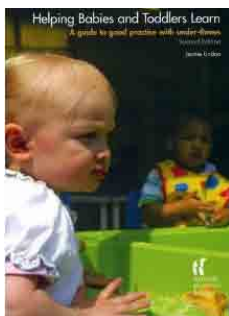
So how do we help children to learn while ensuring their safety and letting them know there are certain boundaries?

Toddlers are still largely self-centred with little understanding of the needs of others. Play is a vital part of their world. "Play is children's work" and it is through play that they develop their imagination, communication and understanding. Everyday experiences that we as adults often take for granted, fill children with awe and wonder.

Take, for example, the fun children have at bath time as they swirl, splash, and scoop the water, taking pleasure in the tactile experience. We support their learning by putting all sorts of objects into the water; containers, jugs, sponges, dolls and plastic toys. We gently guide their understanding that water needs to stay in the bath otherwise the mat gets wet and feels cold when they get out. We extend the pleasure and the learning using a water tray or kitchen sink, adding colour or bubbles or glitter to make "coral" reefs. When out for a walk, we point out the drain cover that is round, a circle, and then make a circle with our thumb and forefinger. Later, when washing hands, the same shape can be made and soap bubbles blown. Numbers and shapes are more fun to learn if they relate to parts of our body and also help in learning the names of these parts – two ears, eyes, nostrils etc. This leads on to a growing awareness of symmetry. Using these same numbers in counting rhymes, reinforces numbers in a fun way and assists with the early rhythms of speech

The examples of learning through play are endless. The thing to remember is that what are mundane and commonplace to us (a staircase, for instance,) are sources of wonder and excitement to a toddler – try getting down to a toddler's level at the base of your stairs, look up and then consider how a toddler might view it, without adult eyes.

To a toddler, an adult is the best and most enduring learning resource in their world



Recommended reading For parents

Helping babies and toddlers learn - a guide to good practice with under 3s by Jennie Lindon

ISBN: 9781904787877

National Children's Bureau

Parent tips (continued)

Choices for your child

We often hear “If give them a choice then I am here all day” or “how can I be in negotiations with my 2 year old?!”

The art of offering choices

This should not take all day nor should it feel like you are entering into negotiations, however, children do require choices in order to understand and learn self discipline and consequence.

Children who can make choices will become more independent, confident and have increased self esteem. Often too much is offered for the child to make a decision from, and then it descends into negotiations or the frequent changing of the child’s mind, which leads to stressful parenting!

Making a choice on behalf of a child

There are occasions where you do have to make a choice on behalf of your child, for example:

“The weather is cold today, you need to wear your winter coat.”

Always offer explanations for your choices, so they know why you have made the decision. Children do need the opportunity to have choice, they also need to be aware on occasions some things just ‘have to be’, and this is learning the art of receiving and understanding instructions. Be careful you don’t offer choices that can not be followed through for example:

“You can come with me now or stay there by yourself”

Stay patient and read our top tips.



Offering choices

-Top Tips

Offer choices that are structured and defined.

Keep to two items or two alternatives (anymore can be confusing).

Explain that these are ‘their’ choices, if your child declines either, then explain you are more than happy to make the choice. Often this is more than enough for them to return to making their own choice!

Don’t back down or change your mind, as the next time a ‘choice’ is required the same will happen and eventually it will result in taking time and negotiating with your child!

Ultimately you as the parent have the control and choice over what your child chooses, so always bear this in mind.

Happy choosing!

Don’t miss out

In the future we’d like to send out electronic versions of our newsletter to ensure you always receive your copy. Please email your address to us at marketing@kidsunlimited.co.uk, telling us your child’s name and nursery or fill in the form below and return to your nursery.

Name:

Nursery:

Childs name:

Email address: