

## Coming in September 2003



Autumn Month  
Be Kind to Editors & Writers Month  
Children's Eye Health and Safety Month  
Classical Music Month  
Library Card Sign Up Month  
National Courtesy Month  
National Piano Month  
Organic Harvest Month  
Pediculosis Prevention (Head Lice)  
National Literacy Month  
Health in Aging

Labor Day (9/1)  
Fall Equinox (9/23)  
National Flower Week (9/21-27)

Baby Safety Month  
Cable TV Month  
National Bed Check Month  
Youth Month  
National Chicken Month  
National Honey Month  
National Rice Month  
Sickle Cell Month  
Read A New Book Month  
National Hispanic Heritage Month  
National Cholesterol Education and  
Awareness Month  
Grandparent's Day (9/7)  
Rosh Hashanah (9/27)

## National Literacy Month



This month, do your part to combat illiteracy by encouraging children to read. Celebrate National Literacy Month and International Literacy Day in the classroom, the home or wherever you can share a book with someone. Teachers, try setting aside time for free reading, taking your class to the library, and helping all students "Be a Reader." Parents and caregivers, find time to snuggle up with a child and a good book. Whatever you do to celebrate Literacy Month, be sure to help others realize that reading can open up the world right in your own home or classroom. Share the excitement and instill a love of reading in those around you. You can make a difference!

## **National Hispanic Heritage Month**

During this month, America celebrates the Hispanic cultures, achievements, and heritage by commemorating the following historical events:

- September 15 - Independence Day for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua
- September 16 - Independence Day for Mexico
- October 12 - El Dia de la Raza

Initiated by the U.S. Congress as Hispanic Heritage Week more than 20 years ago, the celebration has grown considerably. Hispanic Heritage Month is a nationally recognized celebration of the contributions, diverse cultures, and traditions of all Hispanic Americans. First established by Congress in 1968 as a three-day celebration in the month of September, the annual event was extended to a week in 1974 and then to a month in 1988.

Many Hispanic Americans trace their roots to the cultures of the indigenous peoples of the Americas -- including the Arawaks (Puerto Rico), the Aztecs (Mexico), the Incas (South America), the Maya (Central America), and the Tainos (in Cuba, Puerto Rico and other places). Some trace their roots to the Spanish explorers -- who in the 1400s set out to find an easier and less costly way to trade with the Indies. Others trace their roots to the Africans who were brought as slaves to the New World. For purposes of the U.S. Census, Hispanic Americans today are identified according to the parts of the world that they or their ancestors came from, including Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Spain, or the nations of Central or South America.

For further information and hands-on learning activities, please visit:

[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/lesson023.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson023.shtml)

## SITES TO SEE

### [The High Toll of Obesity in Children](#) 10-Jun-03

One in seven U.S. children and adolescents is obese. Severely obese youth have social and emotional problems similar to children who have undergone chemotherapy treatments for cancer, according to a new article in the Journal of the American Medical Association, "Health-Related Quality of Life of Severely Obese Children."

### School Lunch Program: Efforts Needed to Improve Nutrition and Encourage [Healthy Eating](#) 22-May-03

With child obesity rates double what they were in 1980, the General Accounting Office (GAO) concludes that schools can positively influence what children eat and what they know about good nutrition -- but they can't solve the problem alone. Schools also send a mixed message when they sell junk food and candy to fund activities.

### [Tools for "The Shape We're In" Campaign](#) to change the status quo. 22-May-03

Nearly half of America's youth, ages 12 to 19, rarely break a sweat, putting them at risk for obesity and diabetes. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) says that over the past 50 years, we've essentially engineered physical activity out of our lives. RWJ's "The Shape We're In" handbook has step-by-step instructions for getting coverage in your local press, organizing community events, and support materials for this public awareness campaign.

### ["Approved" Is Relative Term for Ed. Dept.](#) By Lynn Olson (August 6, 2003)

At a Rose Garden ceremony in June, President Bush proclaimed that every state had a federally approved plan for ensuring that all students are proficient in reading and math by 2013-14. But follow-up letters lay out a host of conditions that states must meet before their accountability plans under the "No Child Left Behind" Act of 2001 are deemed "fully approved."

### [The AGS Foundation for Health in Aging](#)

Nearly 25 percent of the American population will be over 65 within 30 years. For the first time in our history, people aged 85 and older represent the fastest growing of all age groups. It is because of the formidable challenges posed by this unprecedented "demographic imperative" that the American Geriatrics Society reached beyond its traditional role as a professional clinical society to launch in 1999 the first national public organization devoted solely to the special health care needs of older adults.

[The National Institute on Aging \(NIA\)](#), one of the 25 institutes and centers of the National Institutes of Health, leads a broad scientific effort to understand the nature of aging and to extend the healthy, active years of life. In 1974, Congress granted authority to form the National Institute on Aging to provide leadership in aging research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs relevant to aging and older people. Subsequent amendments to this legislation designated the NIA as the primary federal agency on Alzheimer's disease research.

[National Center for Health Statistics' Web site](#), a rich source of information about America's health. As the Nation's principal health statistics agency, we compile statistical information to guide actions and policies to improve the health of our people.

We are a unique public resource for health information—a critical element of public health and health policy.

[AoA](#) is the Federal focal point and advocate agency for older persons and their concerns. In this role, AoA works to heighten awareness among other Federal agencies, organizations, groups, and the public about the valuable contributions that older Americans make to the Nation and alerts them to the needs of vulnerable older people. Through information and referral and outreach efforts at the community level, AoA seeks to educate older people and their caregivers about the benefits and services available to help them.

[United States Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) provides several downloadable pamphlets addressing child safety concerns.

[The Head Start Family Literacy Project](#) is a five-year cooperative agreement between the National Center for Family Literacy and the Head Start Bureau. The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) was founded in 1989 with a grant from the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust. The National Center for Family Literacy is a nonprofit organization supporting family literacy services for families across the United States through programming, training, research, advocacy and dissemination.

[The National Institute for Literacy \(NIFL\)](#) is an independent federal organization leading the national effort toward a fully literate nation in the 21st century.

Since 1994, communities across the nation have celebrated National Family Literacy Day® in unique and creative ways on November 1st and the days and weeks that surround it. National Family Literacy Day® is a time to celebrate the impact parents have on their child's learning and the foundation of the family in education.

Family literacy programs, community centers, libraries and other organizations around the country plan special events that help raise awareness of family literacy. From Maine to California, and from Louisiana to Wisconsin, parents and their children, community leaders and educators, policy makers and volunteers come together on November 1 to read, play and learn.

Family literacy is a powerful and innovative approach to education. It is a bridge that leads to a more literate future for America's families.

Whether you're a family literacy teacher, administrator, elected official, or anyone concerned with helping families become self-sufficient, National Family Literacy Day® is the perfect opportunity to celebrate the success of families and family literacy programs nationwide.

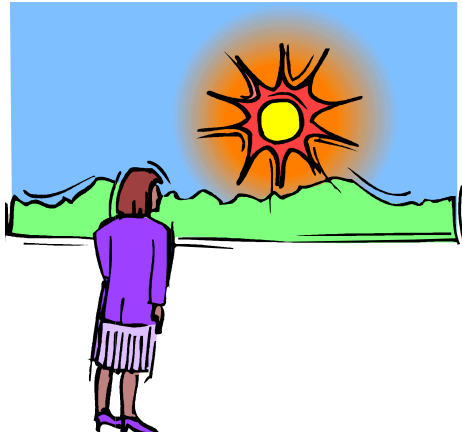
[National Family Literacy Day®](#) is co-sponsored by Toyota. Over the last ten years, Toyota has given nearly \$16 million to establish family literacy programs around the country. The National Center for Family Literacy is a nonprofit organization supporting

family literacy services for families throughout the United States through training, research, advocacy and program development.

[NCFL's research](#) on family literacy, and research from other sources on a variety of literacy topics.

The purpose of the [International Reading Association's Five-Star Policy Recognition Program](#) is to encourage states, provinces, and nations to adopt and implement policies that support effective literacy instruction for all children by honoring their rights to excellent literacy instruction.

## READ-VIEW-DO



## GRANDPARENT BOOKS

How Old is Old? by Ann Combs. Price Stern Sloan, Inc.

Love You Forever by Robert Munsch. Firefly Books

You're Only Old Once by Dr. Seuss. Random House

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge by Mem Fox. Kane/Miller Book Publishers.

Chicken Soup for the Grandparent's Soul. Stories from the heart of grandparents and grandchildren. The authors of this book intend to donate part of their proceeds to the Foundation For Grandparenting. Click [here](#) to learn more.

A Grandparent's Gift of Love by *Edward Fays*. The author was motivated to write this book after a tragic event. The stories and lessons learned from his grandparents offered hope and comfort. A companion book "The Grandparents Treasure Chest" is a keepsake journal that gives grandparents the tool to record their thoughts n being a grandparent. Warner Books 2002.

That's What Grandparents Are For by *Arlene Uslander*, illustrated by *Freddie Levin* (February 2002). In verse, and joyfully illustrated, this book celebrates the bond between grandchildren and grandparents.

### **Berenstain Bears - My Family Elders (FAMILY & COMMUNITY)**

#### ***Think & Do Activity Description:***

1. Explain to students that an elder family member is one that is much older – like grandma, grandpa – or an uncle or aunt. An elder family member can actually be anyone who we care about who also cares about us, like a good friend, caregiver, guardian, mentor, etc.

2. Ask students to share fun times they've spent with an elderly family member.
3. Encourage children to draw pictures of any elder family member(s) that they've had fun with.
4. Ask them to individually share with the class: the name of the person(s) that they drew, their role(s) (i.e., grandma, aunt, friend, mentor, etc.) and a fun time shared with them.
5. As each student gives his or her report, write key information onto the back of the pictures and staple them under the "My Family Elders" cover sheets. Be sure to also write the child's name on the front cover of his or her booklet! (Or, if children are old enough, they should write this information onto the pages themselves.)

**Objectives:**

Children will:

- Discuss fun times spent with grandparents or other elderly relatives or friends.
- Draw pictures of their grandparents or other family elder(s) and give a short oral report about them.
- Write or dictate key points from their oral reports onto the back of each picture.
- Have their pages stapled under a cover sheet to make "My Family Elders" booklets.

**Grades:** PreK-2

**McRel Standard(s):** Behavioral Studies - Standard 2.4, Knows that people tend to live in families and communities in which individuals have different roles.

**Core Curriculum Area(s):** Social Studies, Language Arts

**MY FAMILY ELDERS**

Creating print and oral reports on family elders.

**Learning Area(s):** Respect, Appreciation, and Family

**Episode: "Week at Grandma's" Synopsis:** Although first reluctant to spend time with their grandparents, Brother and Sister wind up developing a new respect for the fun to be had with "older people."

**Materials Needed:** white paper, marker, paper, crayons, stapler, colored construction paper

***Suggested Reading Home Connections***

"Big Mama's" by Donald Crews

"Song and Dance Man" by Karen Ackerman

"Little Bear's Visit" by Else Holmelund Minarik

**\*\*Tie this activity to Oral History by having children talk with grandparents or an elderly family member, friend or caregiver about what it was like growing up when they were a child. How was it different from today? Then have students share these stories with the class.**

## IN THE NEWS

### Education Forum Addresses Literacy Across North Carolina

The September edition of Education Forum showcases UNC-TV's literacy efforts in its Ready To Learn and Ready To Earn programs. In partnership with the statewide "Race 4 Literacy" campaign of the North Carolina Community College System and Fox 50 TV, representatives from North Carolina's Community College System, Library Association, Literacy Association, Reading Association and Department of Public Instruction, along with Head Start and No Child Left Behind, will explore how organizations can help citizens access literacy programs and services.

Other highlights include UNC-TV's Share a Story events, featuring North Carolina First Lady Mary Easley's appearance. Join Diane Lucas, UNC-TV's director of programming and outreach, for this edition of Education Forum at 10:00 a.m. on September 20, 2003.

### **"A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS" TAKES AN INTIMATE LOOK AT THE NATIONAL READING CRISIS**

Morgan Freeman Narrates One-Hour PBS Special on UNC-TV airs at 10:00 p.m on September 2, 2003-

**Washington, D.C.** –You could almost forgive superintendent Reggie Barnes if he gave up on the kids in his Mississippi Delta school district. Nearly everyone else has. The problems faced by schools around the country are magnified in Sumner, Mississippi. Low pay? Starting salaries are less than \$25,000 per year. Mediocre teachers? Barnes cannot afford to fire them, because they're so hard to replace. Uninvolved parents? Just 10 people came to the year's first PTA meeting. It's no wonder many of the children can barely read.

Across the country, schools are struggling with their most basic job: teaching kids to read. Thirty-six percent of all fourth graders read below the "basic" level, meaning they cannot understand a simple story, or they can barely read at all.

**"A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS"** tells the intimate story of parents and teachers who are fighting for change in two schools with long histories of failure. Academy Award-nominee Morgan Freeman narrates this PBS special, which will be broadcast on public television stations beginning in September 2003.

"Readers are made, not born," says executive producer Noel Gunther. **"A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS"** is an intimate story about what it really takes to teach a child to read. We spent a year inside these schools and found a story of hope, of faith, and of the power of committed adults to help shape the life of a child."

Bearden Elementary — Sumner, Mississippi

Bearden sits in the middle of a cotton field, as if to say, "Nothing will ever change."

Barnes, though, thinks otherwise. He's committed to the point of obsession, working late every night to recruit new teachers, to raise more money, and to keep his staff motivated. He vows not to rest until the children start doing better. But after six years of relentless work, Barnes is wearing down. His marriage has dissolved, his hair has turned gray, and, at 48, he already has an ulcer.

Reading is just one of many critical needs at Bearden. Barnes has built a health clinic, new classrooms and a badly needed playground. Now, after years of struggle, things are looking up. Mississippi has launched a statewide reading reform effort, and Netscape tycoon Jim Barksdale has pledged an additional \$100 million to help the weakest schools in his home state. But Bearden is behind in training its teachers in the reading curriculum and late in buying desperately needed books. With a roomful of children who need a lot of help, rookie teacher Jill Todd is understandably anxious. "I don't feel 100 percent prepared to go in a classroom and teach reading," says Todd. "It is really like chaos."

#### Walton Elementary — Fort Worth, Texas

At inner city Walton Elementary, the challenges are just as great. Kids stream in from housing projects in the shadow of an interstate highway. "We have children at Walton who don't know the alphabet," says Vanessa Kemp, the lead reading teacher. "They can't write their names. They don't know how to open up a book. They don't even know what a book is for."

Kemp and the staff at Walton have been focused on reading instruction for five years — and the results have been dramatic. Historically, Walton was one of the worst schools in Texas, but now it's striving for an "exemplary" rating — the highest grade a school can earn. Yet even now, nothing happens automatically. Every year, a first grader like Tavares Gross shows there is a new group of kids who desperately need help.

#### Nationwide

Bearden and Walton are hardly alone. Around the country, in all income groups and ethnicities, children are having trouble learning to read. The stakes are high: kids who read poorly are at high risk for depression, delinquency and substance abuse. "Reading is the gateway skill," says Phyllis Hunter, who led a major reform effort in Houston. "I call it 'the new civil right' because children can't access their other rights unless they can read and read well."

Bearden and Walton have both embraced reading reform, but they are at very different stages of the process. At Walton, a committed principal, dedicated teachers and a unified teaching approach have begun to deliver dramatic results. At Bearden, the changes have just begun, and it's clear that money alone is not the answer.

**BACK TO SCHOOL!  
BULLIES DON'T BELONG, PARENTS DO,  
AND EVERYONE NEEDS TO BE READY FOR A CRISIS**

**RALEIGH**-Three school safety issues top the minds of school officials and parents as students return to classrooms this fall across North Carolina. Based upon its work with school officials and parents, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention – Center for the Prevention of School Violence sees bullying, parent involvement and crisis response as the issues of greatest interest.

“The top strategies we continue to be contacted about by principals, teachers, and parents are preventing bullying, involving parents, and responding to crises,” says DJJDP – Center director Joanne McDaniel. “It is interesting and worth noting that these issues serve as a common thread among these different perspectives. Principals, teachers, and parents have in common an interest in student safety, and they know that preventing bullying, involving parents, and being ready to handle a crisis are keys to that safety.”

To help educate parents, school administrators, teachers, and students about the seriousness of bullying, DJJDP – Center and the Attorney General’s Office are sending a school-year calendar to every school and many educator and parent groups. The calendar features information about bullying, tips to prevent it, and artwork by North Carolina students; the calendar’s theme is [“Bullies Don’t Belong.”](#)

With regard to parent involvement, [DJJDP – Center](#) encourages schools to take early action to begin developing positive relationships with parents and likewise encourages parents to do the same with schools. The DJJDP – Center suggests schools open lines of communication with parents from the beginning of the school year and that schools work to make parent involvement meaningful and positive. Parents need to become and stay informed about their children’s school.

To aid schools in preparing for possible crises, DJJDP – Center and the Attorney General’s Office continue to work with schools on the critical incident response project. Begun two years ago when starter response kits were sent to schools across the state, continuous effort is being put forth to ensure that schools have critical incident response kits and crisis response plans. Schools continue to receive training in crisis response and are now able to be recognized by the DJJDP – Center and Attorney General’s Office for their preparedness through the Critical Incident Response Recognition Program ([http://www.cpsv.org/ Acrobatfiles/CIRK\\_recognition\\_information.PDF](http://www.cpsv.org/ Acrobatfiles/CIRK_recognition_information.PDF)).

For more information about school safety efforts in North Carolina, visit the [Center’s web site](#) or contact DJJDP – Center director Joanne McDaniel.

**TeacherSource From The Start:**  
September and October 2003 Themes

The September and October themes for the early childhood area of TeacherSource have been selected. The themes\* are as follows:

**September:** Math (Addition, Subtraction, Odd and Even, Greater than/Less than/Equal to)

**October:** Moving Across America: (Transportation sub-themes)

**FEATURED PROGRAM**



*Dragon Tales* takes children on a journey of self-discovery where they face challenges and overcome fears, while enveloped in a magical, supportive environment. The series gently inspires children to persist when faced with obstacles, to try different approaches to resolving a problem, and to understand that to try and not succeed fully is a natural and valuable part of learning.

In the course of their adventures, Emmy, Max, and the dragons help each other face fears and learn new ways to deal with problems they encounter—making friends, coping with fears, and learning new skills.

Children are encouraged to:

- Pursue the challenging experiences that support their growth and development.
- Recognize that there are many ways to approach and learn from the challenging experiences in their lives.
- Understand that to try and not succeed fully is a natural and valuable part of learning.

Workshops demonstrate how parents and caregivers of 2 to 7 year olds can:

- Encourage children to "problem-solve" along with the characters when they aren't sure what to do.
- Use the stories to begin discussions about similar challenges the children face.
- Participate with children in singing and dancing along with the dragons.
- Provide opportunities and props for children to engage in dramatic play.
- Read stories that touch on the themes developed in the show.
- Use the suggested [View and Do activities](#) to extend the lessons of each episode.

Parents remember to look at parenting challenges from all sides. Keep trying even when faced with difficult situations. Consider the following suggestions.

- Enjoy any success or achievement--large or small, partial or complete.
- Be aware that problems can be approached in more than one way.
- Consider their child's point of view.
- Set up clear and predictable routines.
- View parenting as a joyful adventure.