

## A note from the office:

*February 2026*

We're in our kindness era!

We are looking forward to another great month at Building Blocks! We are excited to celebrate friendship and kindness this month! Here are a few reminders as we head into February:

- **Monday, February 16th**- Our center will be closed for staff training and professional development. No childcare will be available.
- **Sign in/out sheets**- Please be sure you are taking an extra minute to sign your child in and out on the attendance sheets hanging outside the classroom doors. The school-age sheets are located on the front entry table.
- **Pant donations**- We are in need of kids' pants sizes ranging from 2T-7/8. If you have any you would like to donate, please drop them off in the office! We thank you in advance for any donations!
- **PM School Routes**- A reminder if your child rides the vans/buses in the afternoon, please be sure to call the center by 3:00pm (1:00 PM on Fridays) to let us know if they will not be needing a ride.

**Miss Molly** has been a great addition to the Building Blocks crew! She is normally with the school-agers in the afternoon, but does amazing in all of the rooms. She is always willing to go where we need her, and we appreciate that!

We hope everyone has a wonderful month!

*Miss Erica & Miss Whitney*

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Josiphene

Lucas

Audrey

Miss Bella

Nathaniel

Axel

Denny

Miss Zoe

Isla

Braxton

Miss Soraya

Jeremiah

Elliot

Miss Izabella





## Backpack Connection Series

### About this Series

The Backpack Connection Series was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

### The Pyramid Model



The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org).

### More Information

More information and resources on this and other topics are available on our website, [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org).



National Center for  
Pyramid Model  
INNOVATIONS

[ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org)

# How to Help Your Child Recognize and Understand Fear

Brooke Brogle, Alyson Jiron & Jill Giacomini

Fear is a normal and healthy human emotion. We all experience fear from time to time. However, children and adults experience the world differently, so it is not uncommon for children to be afraid of things that don't make sense to their parents. Separation from parents, monsters under the bed, loud sounds and other experiences which may seem minor or silly to adults are quite real to children.

You can teach your child how to experience fear in a positive way. For example, it is good for children to have a healthy sense of caution—they should be afraid of running into the street. However, when a child has too much fear it can interfere with normal, healthy development. When you teach your child to recognize and label fear, it helps him to better manage his emotions and handle life's challenges.



### Try This at Home

- **Notice and label when your child or others are scared.** Include the physical features of fear. You might say:
  - » About your child, "You jumped and grabbed my leg when you heard that loud sound. You were scared."
  - » About others, "I see that little girl crying. She is scared because her mommy is leaving. I wonder what would make her feel better."
  - » About yourself, "I was really scared when I couldn't find you. My heart was beating really fast. Taking deep breaths and giving you hugs helps me to calm down."
- **Provide comfort and spend quality time together when he is scared.** If your child is afraid of the dark, you can tell a story at bedtime and cuddle in the dark before you leave his room. This will help him to feel safe.
- **Use playtime to explore fears.** Children learn through play. Puppets and toys are great to role play situations that your child understands. For example, "Wow, this dinosaur is shaking. He is scared because he is going to the doctor tomorrow. Let's help him by telling him what will happen at the doctor's office and teach him how to be brave."
- **Celebrate your child's successes.** If your child is afraid of dogs, you can plan to walk by a house with a safe dog. When you have walked by the house you can say, "Wow, you walked right by that doggy. You are super brave!"
- **Read books about being scared.** Talk with your child about what the character is feeling and experiencing and come up with ideas that might help. There are many books and

activities to help your child learn about emotions at <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/Implementation/Program/strategies.html>.

### Practice at School

Teachers use stories, pictures and puppets to help children understand how it feels to be scared and discuss what they can do to feel better. Children practice making scared faces in the mirror or find pictures of people who look afraid. As a group, children talk about things that frighten them and the fact that things that are scary to one person may not be scary to someone else. When children have the opportunity to talk about their own feelings and learn about how others feel, they are better able to manage their own emotions and can begin to empathize with others.

### The Bottom Line

When you help your child to understand and label all of his feelings, including fear, sadness and jealousy, you give him more freedom to accept and experience the ups and downs of his life, which will ultimately reduce challenging behavior. Spend quality time with your child and listen to his worries and fears. This time together will help him to feel cared for and safe. With love, practice and language he will learn that, although the feeling may be uncomfortable, it will pass. For more information on how to teach your child about emotions, take a look at the *How to Help Your Child Understand and Label Emotions* handout in the Backpack Connections series.



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SOUTH FLORIDA

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Office of Special  
Education Programs

## Weekly Themes:

2/2 - 2/6	Dental Health
2/9 - 2/13	Valentine's Day
2/16 - 2/20	Community Helpers
2/23 - 2/27	The 5 Senses

## Stay in touch :



@BuildingBlocksPreschoolIowa



@buildingblocks\_official



buildingblockshome.com

## Teacher Fun Fact

### Chocolate Kisses or Conversation Hearts?

Miss Erica: Both  
Miss Whitney: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Jessica: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Shantel: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Becky: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Yesenia: Conversation Hearts  
Miss Clarissa: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Lexi: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Yasmin: Chocolate Kisses

Miss Katrina: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Chloe: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Izabelle: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Shelby: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Mya: Conversation Hearts  
Miss Anna: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Breonna: Chocolate Kisses  
Miss Zoe: Chocolate Kisses

## Photos of the Month





# Health & Fitness Tips:

## FEBRUARY IS CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

It's never too early to start focusing on your child's oral health. The American Association of Pediatric Dentists recommends that parents establish a dental home for their child by their first tooth or first birthday. Here are a few tips for maintaining your child's oral health.



1. Schedule routine check-ups every six months.
2. Clean your baby's gums daily. Until teeth come in gently wipe a damp washcloth over the gums to clear away harmful bacteria after each feeding.
3. Start to brush with the first tooth. Use water & a tiny bit of children's toothpaste (about the size of a grain of rice).
4. Brush twice each day for two minutes. Children ages 2-6 should use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Always supervise kids younger than 6 when brushing.
5. Snack healthy! Fruit jucie, sports drinks, fruit snacks and sticky candies all pose serious threats to your child's teeth. Give kids calcium-rich snacks like cheese or low-sugar yogurt.
6. Keep them hydrated. Avoid sugary drinks and stick to good old-fashioned water. Water helps to rinse away any sugar or particles that can lead to cavities.
7. Replace your child's toothbrush every 3-4 months.

## Almond Snack Mix

### INGREDIENTS:

- ⅓ cup whole, unsalted almonds
- ⅔ cup whole-grain cereal squares
- ½ cup low-fat granola (without raisins)
- ¼ cup dried apricot halves, cut into pieces OR ¼ cup golden raisins
- ¼ cup sweetened, dried cranberries



### DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spread the almonds in a single layer on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 5 to 10 minutes, or until lightly toasted, stirring once or twice to ensure even baking. Transfer to a plate to cool completely.
- Meanwhile, in a large bowl, stir together the remaining ingredients. Stir in the cooled almonds.



## Heart Healthy Snack Ideas for Kids

- Prepare grab-and-go snack bags. Mixed packaged cereal (not sugary brands) with dried fruit & nuts, and portion into sandwich bags.
- Make smoothies. Blend milk with frozen fruit and a banana. Add yogurt for extra thickness.
- Put grapes in the freezer - they taste just like popsicles.
- Spread peanut butter on apple or pear slices.
- Dip raw vegetables, like baby carrots, in hummus or salsa.
- Use cookie cutters to make healthy sandwiches in fun shapes. To make heart healthy, use whole grain bread, lean lunchmeat & vegetables. Avoid regular mayo, salami, bologna, liverwurst and pepperoni, which are all high in saturated fats.



## Care-A-Lot

Love is in the air!

We have new faces this month in the Care-A-Lot room, and we are excited to make new friends! We are excited to watch our new friends learn and grow during their time in our classroom!

We will be doing a lot of tummy time to help strengthen our neck muscles. This month we will have a fun PBIS Kindness theme week! Watch for a sign to be hung with the fun themed days!

**Yasiel** is working so hard at holding his own bottles when he eats! He is so close to doing it!

XOXO

**Miss Jessica**

## Bees

Welcome to a month of love!

This month we will be learning about dental health and how to keep our teeth healthy. We will also learn about love and kindness in the spirit of Valentine's Day! We will work on using our words and sign language to communicate our needs to those around us!

**Ryker** loves to make us smile when it comes to walking. He loves to do the opposite of what is being said. **Taylor** has been working on using sign language for his emotions!

We hope this month brings love to all!

**Miss Yesenia & Miss Clarissa**

## Dragonflies

Love is in the air!

Welcome to our new friends! We are excited to get to know you and learn with you! This month we will learn the classroom expectations and rules. We will really focus on using toys nicely together! We will also spend time learning how to use walking feet to stay safe at Building Blocks.

On **Friday, February 13th** we will have our Valentine's Day party! We will have fun celebrating kindness and love as a class!

**Juliet** is new to our room and is making so many friends! **Eric** is such a big helper in the classroom! He likes being in charge of holding the toy bins while we clean up centers!

Stay warm!

**Miss Katrina**

## Disney

Hello and Happy Valentine's Day!

Welcome to our new Disney friends! We are ready to learn more about them, watch them progress in their milestones and help them explore their environment! We will also be making heart art with our hand prints for Valentine's Day!

**Avacyn** is almost crawling like a pro! **Lorenzo** is holding his bottle all by himself when he eats!

Have an amazing day!

**Miss Becky & Miss Shantel**

## Ducks

This year our class is full of sweethearts!

This month we will focus on our ABCs and helping our new friends adjust to their new schedule and classroom. We will be practicing using our walking feet and keeping our hands to ourselves to respect our friends' personal space. It will be a fun month of learning!

**Arya** is amazing at using her listening ears and helping her teachers pick up toys! **Violet** is so close to being able to walk all by herself!

We look forward to enjoying another amazing year with our new classmates!

**Miss Soraya & Miss Alejandra**

## Butterflies

In February, love fills the air!

This month we will be learning about dental health, Valentine's Day, community helpers and our 5 senses. The week of 2/9-2/13 we will have PBIS Kindness week! We will spend the week celebrating love, kindness and friendship with Valentine's themed dress up days. Keep an eye out for a poster with the days on the door.

**Anna** is our new friend and everyone enjoys playing with her. **Kathy** was helping a friend when they were sad.

We can't wait for warmer weather!

**Miss Lexi & Miss Yasmin**

*Love Our Center?*

**HELP US  
GROW!**

### 3 WAYS TO SUPPORT US ONLINE

- FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM
- LIKE, SHARE, COMMENT & SAVE OUR POSTS
- SCAN THE QR CODE & LEAVE US A REVIEW!

**WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP!**



## Caterpillars

We can't wait to spread love this month!

We will be learning about all the different community helpers, dental health, and Valentine's Day this month! The kids will practice taking turns with toys and using their inside voices when playing with others.

Please make sure to check cubbies for any updates, art projects, or notes on items your child might need in the classroom.

**Grayson** is always so kind to his friends and everyone who walks into the class gets a warm greeting! **Leilani** has been great sharing with her friends!

We are excited to learn and grow together this month!

**Miss Chloe**

## Frogs

Wishing you a month filled with love!

This month we will learn all about our community helpers and what they do! We will also make festive Valentine's Day art and cover our classroom in hearts, pink and red! We will decorate heart-shaped cookies and play in a sensory bin filled with pink sand and hearts for fun searching and counting. We will start our assigned classroom jobs and learn how to help around the classroom to make it run smoothly. The solution we will be working on is asking for help. We will practice how to ask an adult for help when we have a problem that needs solved. We will also practice classroom rules, such as, sitting on a dot when lining up to leave the room!

**Melody** has grown so much since she has started in the classroom. She is communicating and using her words with friends to express her emotions. **Dominic** is such a good listener and always the first to be a leader when it is time for directions and transitions in the room.

Enjoy a short and sweet month filled with a lot of joy!

**Miss Shelby**

## Pre-K

Hello February!

This month we will continue our pet study. If you have a pet you want to share with the class, please reach out to Miss Anna or Miss Bonnie! We will learn how pets can complete jobs or how they can support people (service animals). Some pets even have jobs on farms helping herd animals! We will learn about different characteristics of pets and how to care for them.

On **February 13th**, we will have a Valentine's Day party. Please bring in a decorated box for valentines!

We will focus on how to ask nicely this month! We will practice by asking to take turns at centers with toys and what to do when/if a friend says no. We will also review how to use kind hands at Building Blocks.

**Xander, Joy & Penelope** played laundromat. They washed, dried and ironed an outfit for Miss Anna's baby doll. **Julian** was feeling sad so **Benji** brought him the llama stuffie from the library and read him a book.

Happy Valentine's Day!

**Miss Anna & Miss Breonna**

## Turtles

February, here we come!

This month we will be focusing on using our words and communicating when we do not like what a friend is doing by saying, "Please stop, I do not like that." We will also be practicing our different voice levels and when we should use each of them!

On **February 13th**, we will have a Valentine's Day party! If you would like to make a themed box/bag to put valentines in, you can bring them that day! Be on the lookout for our Valentine's Day themed art, they are going to be turtley awesome!

**Axel** is doing so well when it is time to use his listening ears and follow directions. **Evalyn** has done so much practicing using the solution cards. She has them mastered and uses them regularly.

See you in March!

**Miss Izabelle**

## Lizards

Welcome to the month of hearts and spreading love!

We are going to be spending the month learning our shapes and colors while we talk about community helpers, dental health, Valentine's Day and our 5 senses. We will make Valentine's Day themed slime and celebrate the love and kindness we share between friends! We also have PBIS Kindness Week the 9th-13th with fun dress up days to celebrate being kind to others! We will be practicing how to wait and take turns with others and how to sit nicely at the lunch tables. We will also be reviewing the rules and expectations at our center, which helps the kids remember how to follow the rules!

**Benji** is really good at sharing toys with his new friends in the 3s. **Olivia** is super good at making friends feel welcomed and sharing her things with them.

From our hearts to yours with love,

**Miss Mya**

## School-Agers

Welcome February!

This month we will be doing Valentine's Day, dental health, community helpers and our 5 senses art after school!

We hope everyone is having a great year so far and we love hearing about their day when they get back from school. A reminder that we need you to sign your child in and out on the clipboards located on the tuition table by the office. This is a requirement by HHS & the food program. We will spend time this month practicing how to take turns and share how to use our walking feet in the center to stay safe!



**Kenna** is always a huge help in the mornings getting two of our friends from the building to the bus and buckled. **Asher** is always so kind to his friends.

We hope everyone has a great month!

**Miss Molly**





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 CAPS OFF TO KINDNESS Wear Your Favorite Hat	10 PEACE, LOVE & KINDNESS Wear Tie-Dye or Bright Colors	11 COMFY KINDNESS Wear Your PJs	12 SUPERHEROES OF KINDNESS Dress like a Superhero!	13 BE KIND, VALENTINE Wear Valentine's Day colors & hearts	14 
15	16  NO SCHOOL Sioux City Community Schools Building Blocks is CLOSED today	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 NO SCHOOL Bishop Heelan Schools	28