

the FIRST WORD

From His First Breath to Her First Diploma, You Can Count on LOUDOUN County's Premier Magazine for Families!

FEBRUARY 2009

February Is...

Dental
Health Month

**OTC
Medications**
Understanding
their mystery

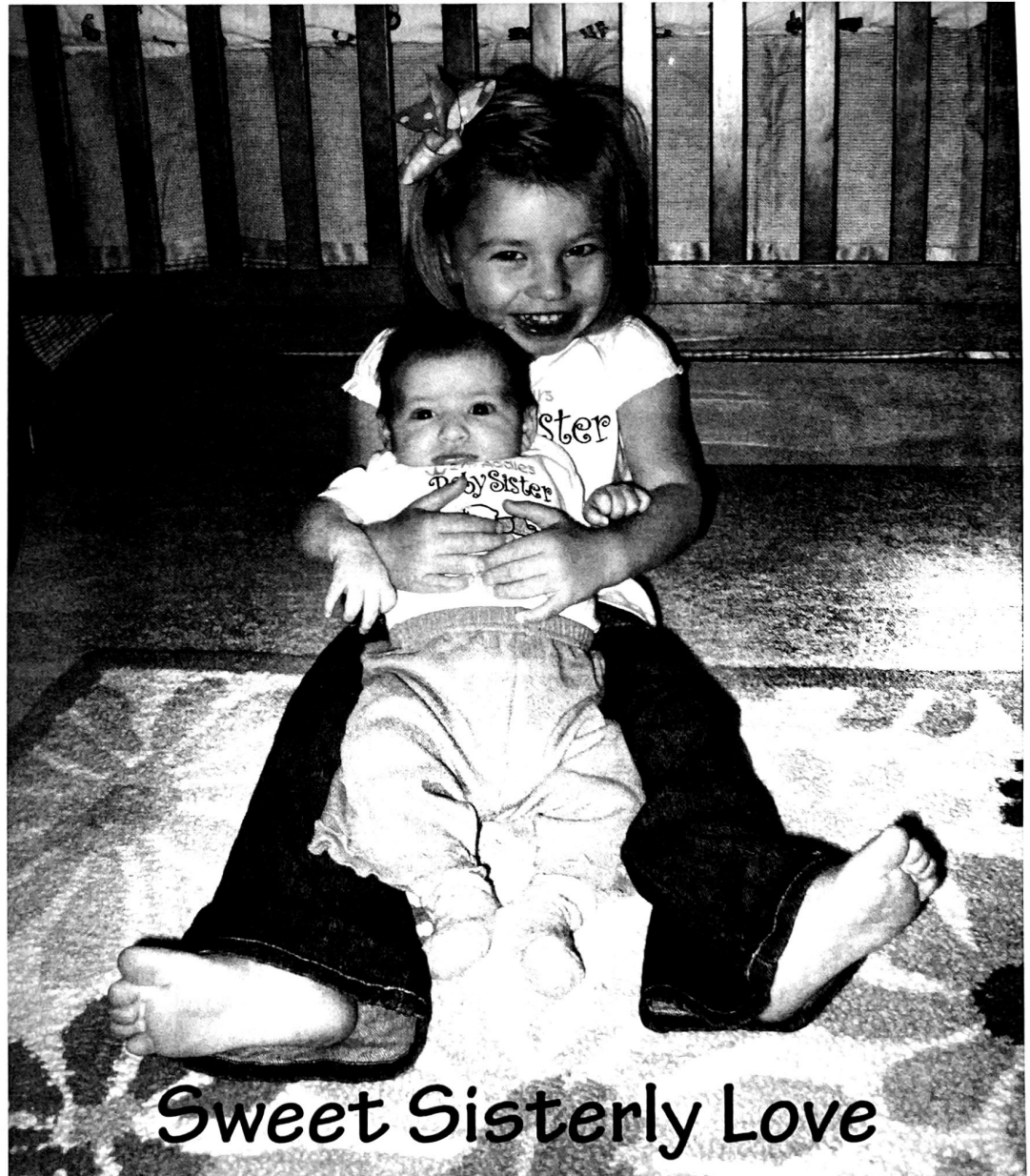
Nursing Moms
Got the Flu?
Now What?

Safety First
Packing tips for
daily emergencies

**Reading and
Technology**
Maintaining
Balance in
Educationa

**Plus, Much
More!**

Love is in the Air...



Sweet Sisterly Love

TheFirstWordOnline.com

Maintaining the Balance in Today's Technological Society

Lenora Falciani, M.A. Reading and Language Arts, B.A. Early Childhood Education, Reading Specialist,
Owner: Innovative Ideas in Education, LLC. Ashburn, VA,

When I was first approached to write an article about using technology to help reinforce reading skills, it immediately brought about mixed emotions. Given that I am a Reading Specialist with a deep love of books and a belief that today's children do not read enough nor engage in activities that require them to use their imaginations, I struggled with how to approach this topic.

Using technology to help your child boost reading skills raised my eyebrows because I believe that "reading and being read to" are factors that impact literacy development and strengthen reading skills. Reading to our children and encouraging them to read many different kinds of literature is what is near and dear to my heart; but the reality is that technology is all around us. It is part of our daily lives and surrounds us like the air we breathe.

**"...remember to be
creative and make
learning engaging
and fun."**

When a student sits at the computer and plays a reading game, they are captivated by the graphics used to create the game. Usually, these games provide the child with instant feedback in the way of sound or graphics to indicate whether the child completed the task successfully. As a parent or a teacher, it is challenging to compete

Attention Parents and Teachers:

Spend a night of creative game-making! You will get great tips for increasing the educational value of family game night AND receive the materials needed to make games to reinforce any skill! There is a \$35 registration/materials fee.

Offered in conjunction with Teacher's Apple of Ashburn and Innovative Ideas in Education, LLC.

Friday February, 27th 7:00 – 9:00 at
The Teacher's Apple/20937 Ashburn
Road

Please RSVP to 703-723-2753 by
February 23rd.

with these visual delights; however, it can be done if we remember to be creative and make learning engaging and fun. Playing Scrabble or Apples to Apples, during a family game night, for example has value. Not only do children get the message that you love them and enjoy spending time with them, they learn reading skills in the process.

We need to maintain balance in our lives and help our children learn balance in their own lives. Balance for some might mean reading more books and spending less time playing video or computer games. As parent's we need to evaluate how much time our children spend playing computer games, versus reading a book, or engaging in meaningful activities that require the use of their imaginations.

In our present day society, children from the youngest preschooler to the oldest high school student are more computer literate

than many adults. You can usually get help for a computer problem from a young adult faster than a help desk or computer manual. Our education system has done a great job making our students' computer savvy and they will need these skills to get ahead in the future but let's not allow them to lose their love of reading.

It's true, that there are many websites that can help students practice reading skills, make crossword puzzles with science vocabulary, and make word searches with word study lists. These resources are helpful and can be navigated pretty easily. The market is flooded with computer software and hardware that teach children how to read or refine the skills they currently possess.

Your child's teacher or school computer specialist can be a great resource for the latest and greatest technological tools that can help your child develop as a reader. Computer games to reinforce all kinds of skills from identifying short vowel sounds to developing reading comprehension can be purchased at local computer retailers.

Remember though, please, to make time for reading every day. Use hands-on tools like magnetic letters for example to help kids practice word study lists and white boards for older students to make outlines in preparation for. Don't forget to encourage your child to use dictionaries to discover word meanings and not always rely on spell check on the computer. What should happen in the event that the power goes out? Where will they be if they can't get to a computer? Seriously though, computers are a necessary learning tool in this day and age but don't forget to nurture your children's love of reading, encourage them to think critically and use their imagination daily.✎

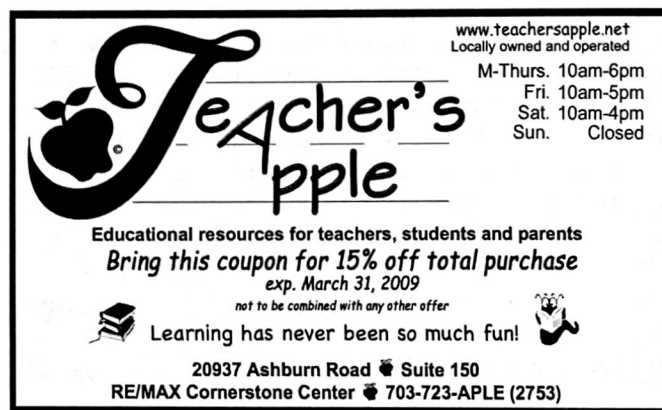


Play Classes
and
Workshops

sign language for babies

Contact Dana or Denise at BabySigns.com
Find a class > Virginia > Instructors

The World's Leading Sign Language Program for Hearing Babies!



www.teachersapple.net
Locally owned and operated

M-Thurs. 10am-6pm
Fri. 10am-5pm
Sat. 10am-4pm
Sun. Closed

Educational resources for teachers, students and parents
Bring this coupon for 15% off total purchase
exp. March 31, 2009
not to be combined with any other offer

Learning has never been so much fun!

20937 Ashburn Road Suite 150
RE/MAX Cornerstone Center 703-723-APPLE (2753)