



PARENTS' GUIDE

Welcome aboard "The Wheels on the Bus." This award-winning series will not only entertain your children, but will also demonstrate important early socialization skills and behaviors. As a parent or caregiver, you can play an active role in helping your child grasp these concepts by highlighting examples from the DVD and playing games that demonstrate similar lessons and behaviors.

SHARE THE EXPERIENCE

Watch the DVD with your child whenever possible. It's important to them that you share the experience! Sit together and play off of their enthusiasm. Point out funny things or sing along together during musical sequences. By sharing the experience with them you are letting them know that they are important, and you are giving them one of the greatest gifts a parent can give a child – your time.

www.thewheelsonthebus.com

SINGING AS A TEACHING TOOL

Music and singing are wonderful ways to engage young children and are a natural part of their everyday life. Watch children at play and you will see them improvise and make up their own songs. Music offers a wonderful, developmentally appropriate way for children to learn valuable skills, such as rhythm and tempo, new words and rhyming, and especially their ABCs! Singing the song "High, Low, Fast, Slow" and accompanying it with movements, introduces tempo and opposites. "Fill it Up!" teaches the importance of healthy, nutritious eating. "Everybody on the Bus is Going Somewhere" highlights different professions and helps young children broaden their focus to include thinking about what other people are doing and experiencing.

Singing with children can be a fun and valuable experience. You don't need to sound like a professional singer. Make up new verses for "The Wheels on the Bus" together – it is a perfect song for interaction and improvisation. As you and your children go about your daily routine, think of new verses for "The Wheels on the Bus," appropriate to what you and your children are doing. Examples could be – "The people on the bus clean up their mess!" or "The children on the bus now go to bed!" Go ahead – have fun!

KINDNESS AND GOOD MANNERS

Children can be taught to be kind and considerate through the positive role-modeling of their parents, caregivers and other examples. As you watch "The Wheels on the Bus" series with your children, point out examples of Mango, Papaya, Coco and Argon being kind to

each other. Remind your child of these scenarios as you go about your day. Good manners are an extension and example of kindness. Listen for the five magic phrases that our characters use – please, may I, thank you, you are welcome, and excuse me. Encourage your child to use these phrases and be sure you and your caregivers demonstrate these phrases in your own actions. Your children will love these words and they will truly seem like magic! They define your child as kind and considerate, and will result in praise and acceptance, and open doors to positive child and adult relationships.

FRIENDSHIP

In "Mango's Animal Adventure," Mango and Papaya meet all sorts of new friends, from the shark at the aquarium to the mouse who rides with them on the bus.

Friendships are a key part of a child's development. Warm, sensitive, and responsive interactions help children develop a secure, positive sense of self and encourage them to respect and cooperate with others. Children who see themselves as highly valued are more likely to feel secure, thrive physically, get along with others, learn well, and feel part of a community. Talk about "friendship" with your child. Identify who their friends are, and who are friends of the family. Friendships are one of the cornerstones of a happy life, and it's healthy and important for children to have an awareness of them at this early age.

BELONGING

Throughout this episode of The Wheels on the Bus, Mango and Papaya are searching to understand who they are and where they belong. During their

journey, they encounter many different people and animals and gain an understanding that all people (and animals) have a special "place that they call home," as the song says.

Engage your child as the characters meet new people and visit new places by asking them if they think Mango and Papaya belong there. Point out the differences between the animals that make one home appropriate, while another impossible (cows don't live in aquariums...fish can't live on farms). Teach your child that everyone is part of a community. Talk about the community that Mango and Papaya live in, and then talk about your own community and how your family fits into that community. It's very reassuring and comforting for children to know that

they belong – to a community; a family; and to a parent or caregiver.

NUTRITION

The song "Fill It Up!" is a fun and catchy way to encourage your child to put healthy and nutritious food in his or her "health tank." Fresh and nutritious foods fill the health tank up with fuel (like filling a gas tank). Sugary, processed foods take healthy fuel out of the health tank, leaving it empty. Children as young as three readily grasp this concept and start to understand that there is a trade-off between healthy eating and the occasional treat. Talk about healthy foods with your child. Have fun by identifying healthy foods for a child, a monkey, a toucan, and even a dragon.

We hope you enjoy this and other "Wheels on the Bus" videos. As parents of young children ourselves, we design each program to address and explore the issues that we face daily with our own families. We believe that young children can indeed learn from watching videos. We do our best to make sure that ours are filled with music, humor, kindness and a simple curiosity about the world.

Enjoy the show!

From the parents who produce "The Wheels on the Bus."

