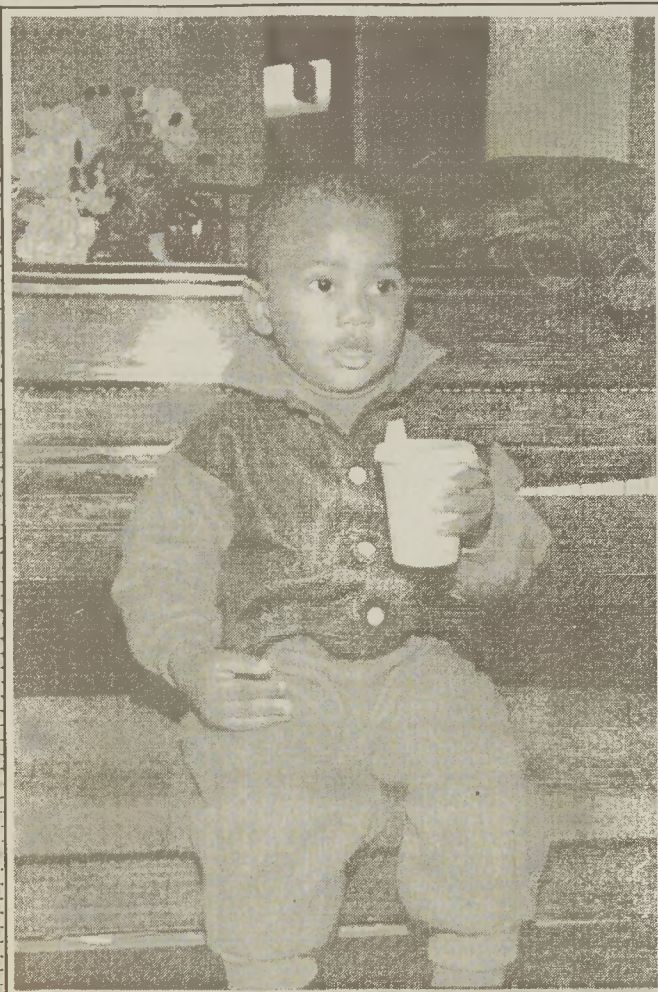


KIDS PAGE

Kid of Month



PHOTO/SUE ANN JOHNSON

Maceo Stevenson, 2

Birthday: July 12, 1994

Favorite food: Pizza
Favorite drink: Pink strawberry milk, Hershey quik milk....

Favorite video: Thomas

The Trustworthy Engine..

Favorite person: Grandma Joanne Stevenson.(Gaga)

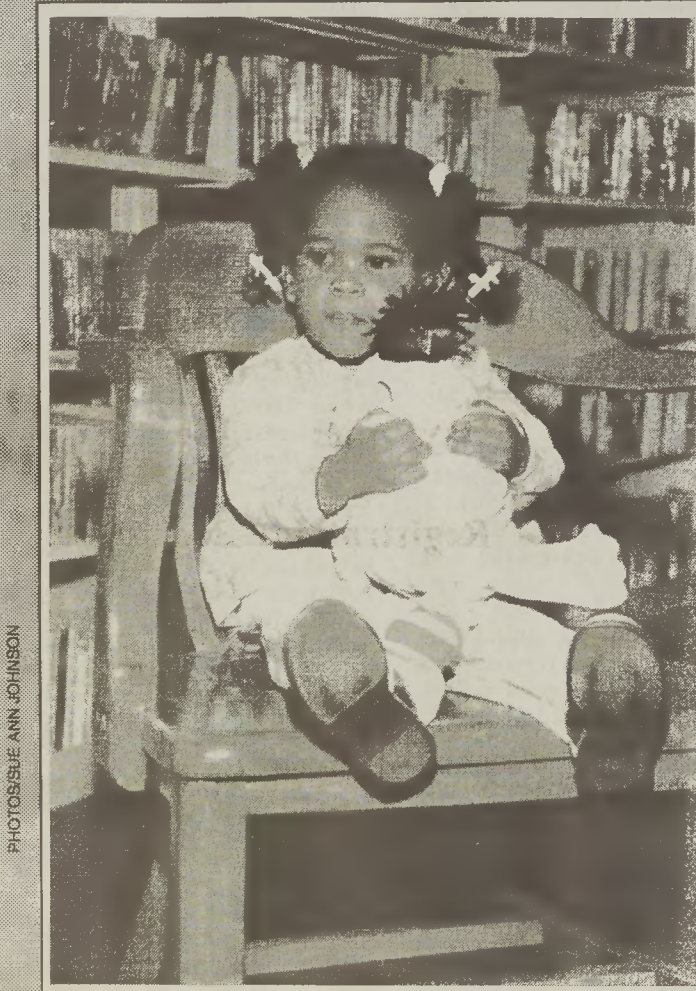
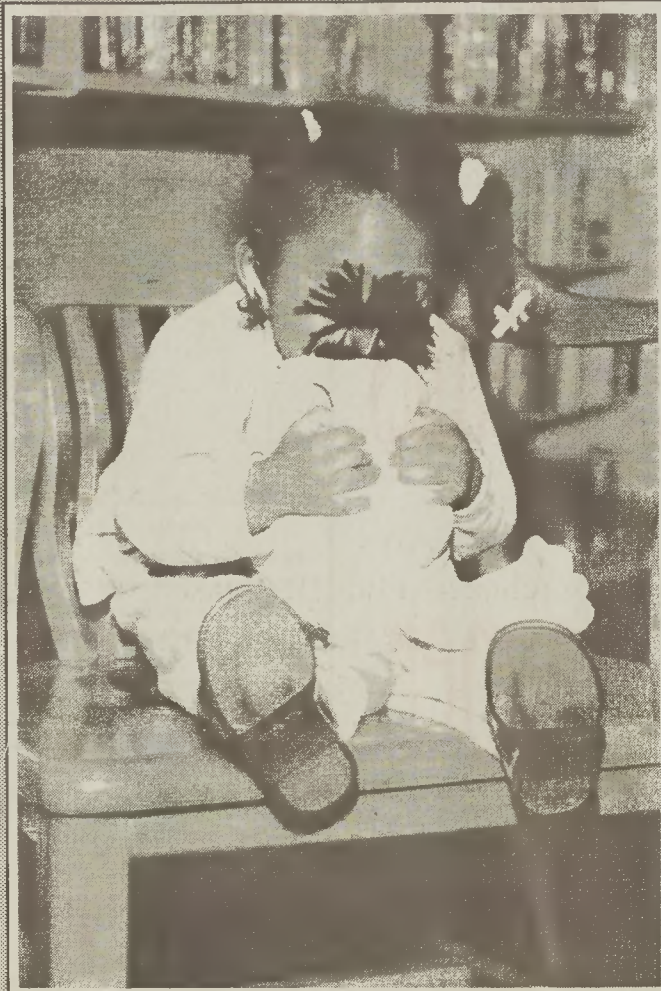
Favorite game: Catch

Favorite toys: Cars and fire trucks...

Also: Loves animals....

Parents: Malik and Bridget Stevenson of Charlotte

PEEK-A-BOO

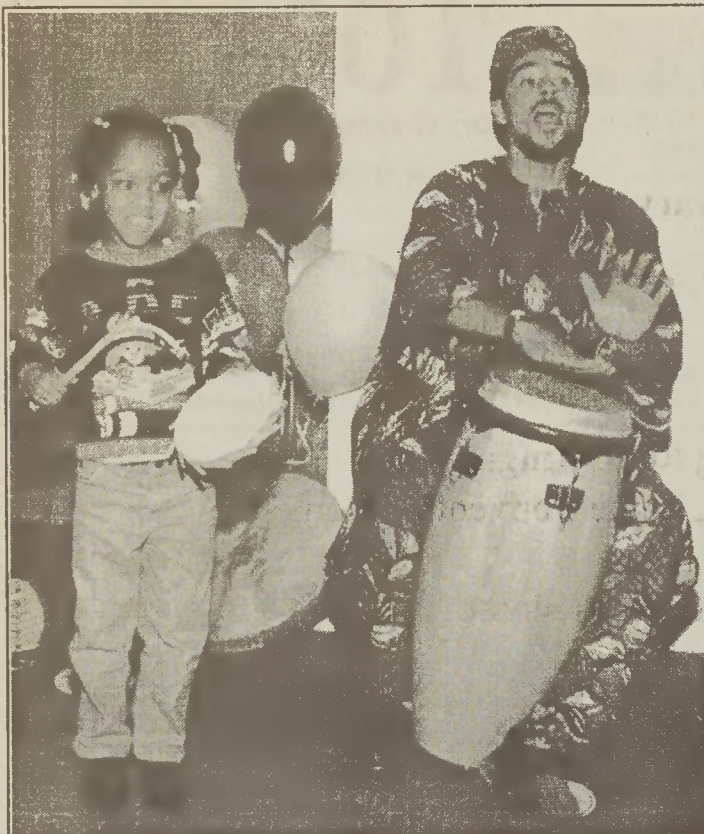


PHOTO/SUE ANN JOHNSON

Shealynn Womble plays peek-a-boo with the camera at the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County as she and her dolly visit Charlotte with her mother, Shelia Womble, African Pride's Carolinas' representative. Shealynn loves to have her father read to her.

How parents should cool out

Making music



PHOTO/SUE ANN JOHNSON

Demara Harris, 4, joins in the music making with African drummer and storyteller Obakunle Akinlana during Children's Book festival at the Main Branch of the Public Library in uptown Charlotte on Nov. 16. Demara's mother is Lara Harris. Dozens of children attended the festival which featured reading-a-loud, costumes and games, in addition to Akinlana's appearance.

The holidays are a joyful time, but the crunch of activities and added responsibilities and pressures can make them stressful, too. But it doesn't have to be that way. Try these tips from Family Center, and watch the holidays become truly merry and bright for every member of your family.

1. Keep your child on schedule. Meals and naps should occur at regular times each day. A well-fed and rested child is much more pleasant and cooperative.

2. Keep your child involved. While you are shopping, baking or wrapping presents, involve your child. Discuss colors and shapes or play a guessing game in the store. Let your child pour and stir cookie dough or stick tape on presents.

3. Do not feel guilty. Holiday time is a difficult time financially for most parents. You should not feel guilty because you are unable to meet the commercial demands of the

holidays.

4. Share yourself with your kids. Parents may not be able to give their children everything they want, but you can give of yourself. Plan a special activity that is just for you and your child. If you have more than one child, set aside time for each one individually.

5. Set rules and stick to them. Calmly discuss the rules you have set down with your child. Let them know what will happen if rules are broken. Be consistent.

6. Prepare for new experiences. "Pretend Play" helps a child grow and handle new situations. Teaching children how to deal with these situations beforehand can prevent an uncomfortable situation

and alleviate a great amount of stress.

7. Recognize and encourage good behavior. Children need it to learn what is right. Reward good behavior immediately! You can do this with verbal praise, hugs, a material reward or a special activity.

8. Know what to expect from your child. Learn what is normal behavior for your child's age. Unrealistic expectations and stress and

can damage the parent/child relationship.

9. When you feel stressed, take time out. Put the child in a safe place until all is calm. Count to 10 or take deep breaths. Think about the reasons for your anger. Direct your anger at something other than your child.

10. Take care of yourself. Do not neglect your own needs. Everyone functions better with adequate sleep, food and fun. Be good to yourself and be the best parent you can be, both for your sake and your child's.

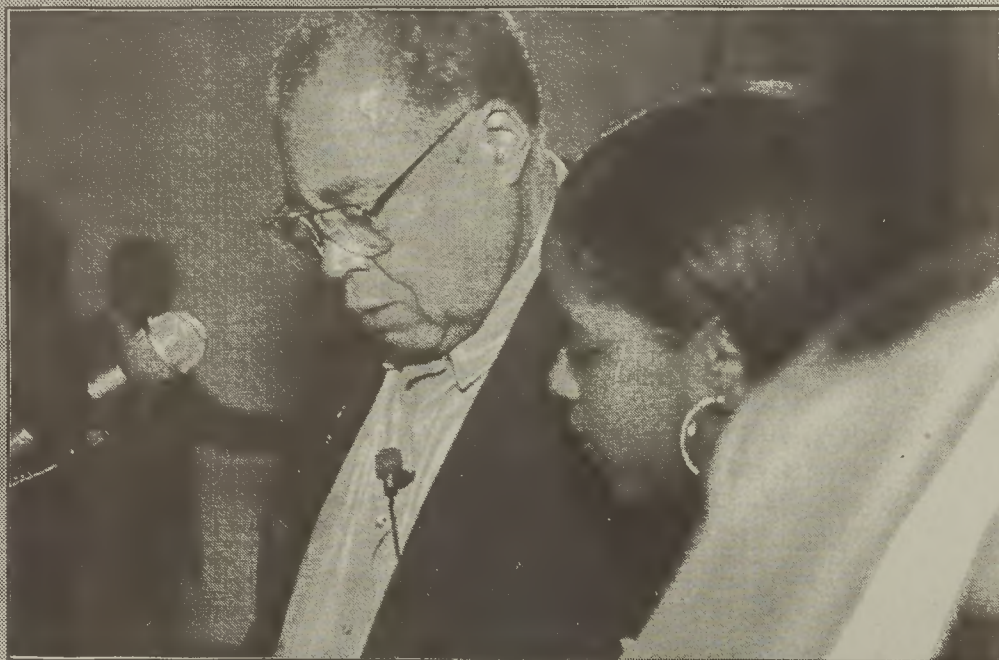
The Family Center operates a 24-hour parent stress line at 376-7244. Trained volunteers and staff can give advice, encouragement and support.



Make the holidays less stressful for adults

James Earl Jones visits Charlotte

Actor James Earl Jones, the voice of Darth Vader in "Star Wars" and Mufasa in "The Lion King," visited J.T. Williams Middle School last month on a Make-A-Wish-Foundation tour. The visit was a reward for a fundraising effort sponsored by the J.T. Williams student council for the Make-A-Wish foundation. Jones, seen here with student body president Laurin Davis, participated in the "Bell Atlantic - The Link To Make Dreams Come True" school assembly. Jones' powerful voice is used in several Bell Atlantic commercials. The company sponsored Jones' visit to Charlotte and other North Carolina cities to highlight the efforts of the Make-A-Wish organization to grant wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions and ways the local community can become more involved through volunteerism and financial support.



PHOTO/SUE ANN JOHNSON



Six-year-old twins Michael and Micah Gardner, on left, with brother Philip, 5, tagged along with father Michael Gardner to the 100 Men Who Cook event last month at the First Presbyterian Church in Gastonia. The children are students at Lowell Elementary School in Gastonia.