What Is Autobiographical Memory?

Autobiographical memory is “our store of past events that has personal meaning” (Cleveland, E. & Reese, E. 2005). Autobiographical memory develops in the early preschool years (age 4+), but you can work on the skills your child will need now!

Autobiographical memory is linked to academic and personal success. Children with better autobiographical memories:

1. **Tell More Detailed, Complex, and Coherent Stories**
2. **Develop Higher Self-Esteem**
3. **Have Higher Levels of Emotional Regulation**

**Read Books Together**
Ask who, what, where, and when questions

**Talk about Interesting Past Events**
Use photos and videos to share with others

**Talk about How Events Made You Feel**
Ask— what did your child like/not like? Why?
How can you develop your child’s autobiographical memory?

**RECALL** WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOUR CHILD!

- **Retell** events that have happened, books read
- **Elaborate**
  - Give new information (e.g. The lion had a big furry mane - a mane is the lion’s fur around his head.)
- **Confirm**
  - Acknowledge his/her responses and feelings (e.g. That’s right, we did see a lion!)
- **Ask open ended questions**
  - Who/What/Where/When
- **Let your child take the lead**
  - Talk about what is interesting to your child
- **Link the events to emotion words**
  - How did the experience make you feel? How did the characters in the book feel?