

The Wellness Gazette

..... Your Source for Health, Mental Health, & Developmental Tips, Hints, & Ideas

April 1, 2020

Nurturing as Key Protective Factor

So much has changed in the last few weeks, and needless to say, the already challenging job of parenting young children has quickly become more intense than ever. You're tired, stressed, and you sure could use a break. (We get it!) And yet, here is the good news: some of the most powerful things you can do to protect your child from the stress of the world around them are to spend time playing, talking, coloring, reading, cuddling, and laughing together. **It's these simple, everyday acts of love and tenderness you show your child that are supporting and protecting their growing brains!** Early learning and academics are great, and what is even MORE important is that your child feels safe, loved, and secure in their relationship with you. In this Wellness Gazette series of communications, we will share tips, tricks, and ideas to support you and your family during this highly unusual time. If you have questions or suggestions for topics, we'd love to hear from you!



5 Free Ideas for Self-Care

Get social support

Connect with a friend by phone, FaceTime, or Zoom

Stay Hydrated

Drink plenty of water!

Sleep

We know this one can be tricky with young children.

We all cope better with stress when we are rested.

Exercise

Just a walk around the block can make a difference!

Take some time for something you enjoy

Reading, a shower or bath, a TV show that makes you laugh, etc.!

Self-Care Resources

Learn something new at Skillshare.com with a free 2-month subscription!

Have you heard of ASMR? Millions of people use ASMR videos on YouTube to relax, rest, and even fall asleep. Just go to YouTube and search ASMR!

Nike Training Club is waiving membership fees to almost 200 workouts you can do from home using their Apple and Android apps!

Do you want to practice mindfulness, get better sleep? Visit Aura for three months free using coupon code FINDPEACE2020

Did you know there are free online Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and other recovery groups all day long? Go to intherooms.com for more information and to sign up for your free account!

Do you have a resource to share with other families? Email it to us, and we'll help you spread the word!

5 Ways to Strengthen the Relationship with your Child

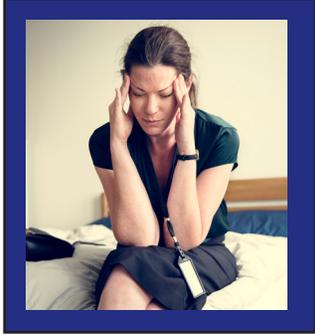
1. Play with them, and let them lead the play! Let loose. Forget the rules and just have fun.
2. Replace screen time with books, stories, and conversations!
3. Show them you're interested in what they say and do. Ask questions! Praise their hard work and good choices!
4. And forgive their not-so-good choices. Young children are early learners! Let them make mistakes, and show them how much you love them anyway!
5. Encourage and explore emotions. Even the difficult ones. Let them know they can trust you with whatever they're going through

Just a reminder that the best way to prevent getting sick is to simply **WASH YOUR HANDS!**

Is anyone else sick of singing Happy Birthday twice each time you wash your hands? Next time, make it fun by singing the chorus from these songs: Raspberry Beret, Love on Top, Truth Hurts, Jolene, Lose Yourself, and Karma Chameleon!

Do you have another song with a 20-second chorus? Let us know and we might share it in our next edition of The Wellness Gazette!

Ask Us!



Dear Mental Health Team,
Ugh, I snapped at my kids, and I feel terrible. What can I do?

Sincerely,
Stressed in Quarantine

Dear Stressed in Quarantine,

We all mess up from time to time! It's part of the human experience. Be gentle with yourself! This is a great chance to model to children how to apologize. Sometimes I mess up too, and once I'm calmer I try to come back and say, "I'm so sorry I was not calm and nice earlier. I was feeling stressed, but I should have been nicer. I'm going to try to do better next time. Let's take deep breaths together to practice being calm even when we're upset!" Also, remember to take care of yourself!

We're rooting for you...You got this!

Do you have questions for the Mental Health Team? Do you need tips, strategies or resources to help you with a specific challenge? There are a few ways to connect with the team. You can send a message through your child's teacher or your Family Advocate or you can send an email to us directly at mhsupport@childrenscenterva.com.

Another great resource is the Crisis Text Line. It's FREE and confidential, and a trained counselor will text with you anytime, 24/7. To get started, just text 741741.

In each issue, we will spotlight some of the strategies we have found to be successful in the classrooms that you can implement at home! This issue's focus is on transitions. We all know children (and adults, if we're being completely honest!) do not like to stop doing something they enjoy, even if they'll enjoy the next activity just the same! Here are some of the ways we help them through the switch to prevent any challenging behaviors!

* To help your child transition throughout their day, let them know they will have to move on to another activity a few minutes **before** it's time to do so. A good way to do this is to say what you will be doing, when you will be doing it, and what you'll be doing next. For example, you could say, "We're going to clean up your toys in five minutes so we can eat lunch." Give a two minute and one minute warning, too! Then say, "Time's up! It's time to clean up so we can eat lunch! I will help you put your toys away."

* Give her a special job! I gave a child the special job of walking around the playground with a whistle to let her friends know it was time to line up and go inside. Giving her this job helped her feel a sense of control of herself in a situation she typically didn't have any. The daily challenge of going inside disappeared, and it was helpful to me! This is always the first thing I try when a child struggles with transitions."

* Keeping a routine helps children know what is happening next, and that helps them feel safe and secure. Try to stick to a routine at home. It doesn't have to be rigid! Plan to eat meals around the same time each day. You can also plan to have play time, bathtime and bedtime, around the same time, too!

Bonus tip! Speaking of bedtime! Did you know that kids who regularly get enough sleep not only have better attention, memory, and mental and physical health, they have better behavior, too?

Behavior Tips

Did you try one of these tips? We want to hear your stories!

Is there a mental wellness topic you would like to know more about?

Please contact us at mhsupport@childrenscenterva.com to let us know!