

family time

Newsletter from Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital



Kid BITS



Declutter and Destress

Studies show that disorganized homes are linked with higher levels of stress. The stress is more prevalent in women than men.

Clutter can leave a person feeling overwhelmed, anxious and depressed. Eventually, it affects a person's ability to focus and sleep.

The good news - clutter is fixable.

- Brainstorm ways to de-clutter your home.
- Involve *everyone* in the de-clutter process.
- *Complete* one room or task at a time. Success provides energy to continue.
- Organize each room so clutter does not take over again.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT:

- unexpectedlydomestic.com/declutter-your-home-checklist/
- budgetdumpster.com/resources/how-to-declutter-your-home.php

Podcast for Kids

For years, parents have used smart phones and wireless listening devices to enjoy podcasts at home and on the go. Podcasts can now entertain and educate children.

A good podcast:

- Allows kids to learn on their terms.
- Engages kids to *learn by listening*.
- Encourages kids to talk with others about what they hear and learn.
- Provides hours of entertainment *without* screen time.

Examples include:

- *Story Pirates*
- *Little Stories for Tiny People*
- *Wow in the World*
- *Five Minutes with Dad*

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT

- commonsensemedia.org
- fatherly.com/play/the-best-podcasts-for-kids/

Media Screens and Sleep

Experts report an increase in the use of screen media devices among kids - toddlers to teens.

A major concern is the use of these devices at or shortly before bedtime. Studies suggest an adverse affect on a child's sleep.

Use of media screen devices often delays bedtime. Kids beg parents to finish games or activities instead of getting their much-needed sleep. In addition, violent video game play before bed *stimulates* kids. This disrupts their natural sleepiness and prevents relaxation.

Light from these screens can also reduce a child's natural sleepiness at bedtime. It increases alertness at a time when kids should feel sleepy. As a result, kids not only experience less sleep, but also a poorer quality of sleep.

When kids do not get good quality and quantity of sleep, they:

- Have behavior problems,
- Show little interest in learning new things,
- Fall asleep during the daytime hours,

- Do poorly in school,
- Are prone to obesity,
- May suffer depression, and
- May suffer other health problems.

Parents can help ensure their kids get *good sleep*.

- Start a regular bedtime routine. Be consistent. Allow time for falling asleep and getting the advised hours of sleep.
- Avoid media screen use *at least one hour before bedtime*.
- Read a printed book before bedtime. It could be together or alone.
- *Keep media screen devices out of the bedroom at night.*

- Adjust the bedroom temperature to a cool 65 – 70 degrees.
- Make sure kids get physical exercise during daytime hours.

If you have school age kids or teens, discuss the negative effects of interrupted sleep. Help them change their poor sleep habits. Good sleep patterns can improve daily life.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT

- parenthelpline.org
- uwhealth.org/news/helping-kids-with-homework-anxiety/13838
- webmd.com/parenting/features/coping-school-stress#1



Sippy Cups - Not a Good Option

A snap-on lid and spout make sippy cups handy. They help babies avoid messy spills. However, according to experts, sippy cups may have a negative effect on a baby's speech development.

Babies need to develop a mature and proper swallow pattern. Open cups and straws help babies exercise facial muscles and the tongue and soft palate that aid in speech and swallowing. Sippy cups and bottles do not develop these necessary oral skills.

Sippy cups encourage constant sipping. If babies sip anything but water, it may lead to tooth decay. Constant sipping can also affect mealtime. Babies may not eat the nutritious food needed for healthy growth because they are not hungry.



Instead of sippy cups, parents can introduce:

- Small sized open cups, without lids. Start with a few tablespoons of water to control big spills.
- Straws. Many baby cups include soft, pliable straws. Be patient as your baby learns to seal his lips and suck.
- Cups with a cut-out lid. These allow babies to learn to drink from a cup while controlling the chance of messy spills.

When you give your baby a cup, make sure it:

- Is BPA free.
- Has handles, easy for baby to hold.
- Is small enough for little hands.
- Does not have cracks that may harbor bacteria.
- Gets cleaned after each use. Wash *all* parts of cups, straws and lids to eliminate growth of bacteria and mold.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT

- explorekidtalk.com/no-more-sippy-cups/

Timely Tip



Reading is more than just saying the words on a page. When reading with your young children, a print book is better than a tablet. Tablets can distract kids. Conflicts over who controls the tablet can spoil the fun.

With a print book, parents and young children hold the book and turn pages together. They discuss the pictures and the story.

Read on your tablet if you like, but share a traditional book with your children.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT

- usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2019-09-30/paper-books-beat-tablets-for-parent-child-interactions-study-finds

classes & events

Carol Jo Vecchie Women & Children's Center at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital
Pre-registration required for the following classes. Unless otherwise noted, call 217-744-2229.

- Baby Basics I - All About Baby
- Baby Basics II - Parenthood
- Birth Center Tours
- Childbirth Express (Saturday class)
- Dinner for Two—Breastfeeding Your Baby
- First Steps Mom-and-Baby Support Group
- Joy of Grandparenting
- Marvelous Multiples
- New Daddy Boot Camp
- Welcome Baby Sibling Class

For information on these classes and other support groups, log onto www.st-johns.org.

HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital Breastfeeding 24-hr. Warmline—
217-535-3983

Dealing with Feelings Support Group for Pregnancy, Baby Blues and Postpartum Depression

Learn coping skills, receive comfort and support, and share feelings. Meet in the St. John's Children's Hospital First Floor Conference Room, Classroom #2 (1030B) every other Tuesday from 12:30 to 1:30. Go to the www.parenthelpline.org home page for a list of dates and times.

Memorial Medical Center
Pre-registration required for the following classes. Unless otherwise noted, call 217-788-3333.

- Adoptive Parents Class
- Baby Care Users Manual
- The Get-Real Breastfeeding Guide
- Grandparent Class
- I'm Going to Be a Big Brother/Sister
- Infant Safety Classes
- Lacion Consultation
- Mom/Baby Support Group
- Teen Pregnancy Class
- Working and Breastfeeding

For information on these classes and other support groups, log onto www.memorialmedical.com

The winter season offers indoor activities to keep families busy. Check the websites below for events.

- presidentlincoln.illinois.gov
- acesignco.com/museum/
- www.hcfta.org/ (*Hoogland*)
- www.facebook.com/events/676464536094526/ (*Winter Indoor Farmer's Market*)
- uispac.com (*UIS*)
- illinoistimes.com
- springfieldmoms.org
- visitspringfieldillinois.com/ThingsToDo/Events.aspx

Parent Help Line

Parenting tips New ideas Referrals

We welcome all parenting concerns - big or small.

Call (217) 544-5808 or (888) 727-5889.

10 a.m. to 10 p.m. – 7 days a week – 365 days a year



Log onto www.parenthelpline.org.

We continue to add new tips to help parents.

Find information on topics below, and much more!

Protect Your Family Against Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Tips for Flu Season

Routines and Rituals Make Family Life Easier

Decrease the Amount of Sugar in Your Family's Diet

Help Your Preschooler Learn to Read

Improved Sleep May Improve Behavior

Common Sense Media

Talk with Your Kids About Politics



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