



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

December 1, 2020

We know life may be challenging right now and we want you to know your Henry Ford pediatrician is still here for you. Below we have collected articles and resources we think you might find helpful. Information in our newsletters is yours to use when it is helpful to you and yours to disregard when it is not. We hope you and your family are staying safe during this pandemic.

Protecting Kids in Winter

Building the perfect snowman can be fun at any age. It is [important to stay safe and warm](#) while playing outside in these cold months. [When playing outside](#), we want to remember that layers are important. Starting with layers that consist of cotton or wool can be great to put on under a coat. These layers are meant to trap in the warmth. The outer layer should consist of a snug fitting, water and wind resistant coat or snow suit. Checking that the cuffs around the wrist and ankles fit tight is also important in trapping the warmth. Mittens and a tight-fitting hat are also necessary. If outside on a sunny, winter day, [sunscreen is also something we may forget](#). Many times, we only think of sun protection during the summer months, however UV rays are still present during the winter months.

Transitioning to Solids

Transitioning a baby to solid foods can be an exciting and scary time. [This exciting milestone](#) usually happens somewhere between 4 to 6 months of age. At the early stage of transition, solid foods are meant to accompany breast milk or formula. There are many things to look for when determining if a baby is ready for solid foods. For example, can your baby sit without support and hold their head in a steady upright position? Is your baby showing a desire for food? If a baby is ready for solid foods, [there are a lot of great foods](#) to introduce. A baby cereal is a great first-time food. Introducing single ingredient, pureed fruits or vegetables is also a great place to start. It is important to wait 3 to 5 days between new foods to rule out any food allergies. As always, when introducing a diet change, seeking the guidance of your pediatrician is always recommended.

Car Seat 101

Car seats are vital to keep children safe. But with so many options, guidelines, and price points, selecting a car seat can seem a little overwhelming. The first thing to know is that all car seats sold in the US meet the federal safety guidelines. Most of what you are paying for are the features that may or may not be helpful for you. Healthy Kids has a [nice breakdown](#) of the types of car seats and when they should be used. For recommendations on specific seats and other resources, check out [Car Seats for the Littles](#) website. They also have a Facebook group that you can join to ask questions. Just know that they are very strict with safety guidelines. It can be a good idea to join the group and get a sense of how it operates before asking questions.

Regardless of the car seat you select, there are a few things to keep in mind. Follow the recommendations of the car seat manufacturer. Each one has different guidelines based on their safety testing. These guidelines cover cleaning, if the seat can be used after a minor accident, and if extra pieces can be added. Most car seat companies do not recommend the use of strap covers or other after-

market items that may interfere with safety. It is recommended to use a new car seat. Here are some [things to consider](#) before looking at used seats.

'Tis the Season for Giving

Giving back to the community can be done in a variety of ways. Whether it is donating to a local organization that supports children or volunteering your time at a local food bank, finding ways to give back during these trying times is important to help uplift and build community. It's also a great way to show our children the importance of helping others. [Here](#) is a list of organizations that will graciously accept your time or money to help support worthy causes. If you are not able to give time or financial support, [Giving Tuesday](#) provides ideas on other ways to support causes that may be near and dear to your heart.

Connecting with your Children

The more stress parents are feeling, the harder it may be to truly focus on and connect with their children. There is no shortage of stressors in 2020 and not a lot of options for distraction. But as we move into the colder months in Michigan, try to find some time to pause the stress for [quality family time](#). It doesn't really matter [what you do](#). Watch a show together, play a game, read a book, take a walk, cook dinner. The key is to be as present as possible during that time. Don't forget that [parental self-care](#) can make it easier for you to enjoy the time with your children. And for the times when you just cannot give any more, plan some time to be in the same space, even if you are doing different things.

Pet Therapy

Dogs can truly be your best friend. The same can be said for cats, turtles, and bunnies as well. Whichever animal your family decides to enjoy, all of them become members of your family. While they can be challenging to care for, having pets comes with [plenty of perks](#). Pets can also provide a sense of belonging and ease anxiety for people who are in long term care or receiving treatment for certain medical conditions. Learn more about [pet therapy](#) and check with your local hospital or clinic to see if they offer pet therapy services.

Hanukkah for Kids

Hanukkah is the Jewish festival of lights. It lasts for eight nights and is [based on a story](#) about a miracle involving a menorah and oil that was only supposed to last one night but lasted eight nights. This year, Hanukkah starts on December 10. One way to learn more about the holiday is to [read some books](#) with your child. This [webpage](#) also has a nice summary. Once you've learned about the history and traditions of Hanukkah, there are lots of ways to celebrate. You can [make some crafts](#) and decorate your house with them. You can play the classic game [dreidel](#) or make some [traditional Hanukkah foods](#). Even if you are not Jewish, learning about other religions and traditions can be fun and help you understand more about people with beliefs different than yours.

Has your child's behavior changed?

Have you noticed any changes in your child's behavior or emotions since the pandemic started? If you have any concerns or questions, please call (313) 451-0720. This is a Google Voice phone number that will call our Henry Ford coordinator who can help to connect you with a behavioral therapist for children.

Are there other topics you are interested in and would like to learn more about?

If yes, please e-mail us at ParentConnection@hfhs.org or to unsubscribe.