



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

June 26, 2020

We know life may be challenging right now and we want you to know your Henry Ford pediatrician is still here for you. We will continue to be a source of information and care for your child. Below we have collected articles and resources we think you might find helpful. We hope you and your family are staying safe during this pandemic.

Don't Skip Your Child's Annual Well Visit This Year

As we start to shift to a "new normal" following Michigan's mandated stay-at-home order, it is important that you and your child's general health remain a top priority. Over the past few months, doctor's appointments have been cancelled, delayed and rescheduled. But that doesn't mean COVID-19 should be an excuse to skip out on annual wellness visits.

Studies by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) have shown a major drop in the number of pediatric appointments scheduled around the country. Health systems have even adopted the use of #CallYourPediatrician to encourage parents to reschedule appointments. Henry Ford pediatrician Dr. Tisa Johnson-Hopper, M.D., discusses why well visits and immunizations are so important and what you can expect at Henry Ford when you come to your appointment in an article you can [read here](#).

Love Is Love: Celebrating Pride Month with Your Child

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer ([LGBTQ+](#)) Pride Month is currently celebrated each year in June to honor the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan. If you aren't familiar with Pride Month, this [brief overview](#) may help. Essentially, it is a chance to highlight the ongoing work to achieve equality and justice for LGBTQ+ people and celebrate the impact they have in the world.

No matter how you and your child identify, you can get in on the fun and support Pride. This list of [ways to celebrate Pride](#) can give you a starting point if you're new to Pride or wanting to stay low-key this year. Reading [books](#) about LGBTQ+ characters can help familiarize your child with aspects of the LGBTQ+ experience. If you are feeling a little nervous about what to expect or how to involve your kids, this [essay](#) from a heterosexual mom may help you get more comfortable. So can reading these [stories](#) and looking at these [photos](#) of other parents supporting their children during Pride Month. Whatever activities you do, teaching your child that everyone deserves love and support is a lesson that should be taught all year long.

Supporting your LGBTQ+ Child

[For parents of LGBTQ+ children](#), there are many [resources available](#) to help with educating yourself and other family members so that your child feels loved and supported. If you have a child who is transgender, our very own Dr. Connelly has shared some [thoughts and resources](#) to help you in becoming both educated and supportive throughout their individual process.

Fourth of July Activities

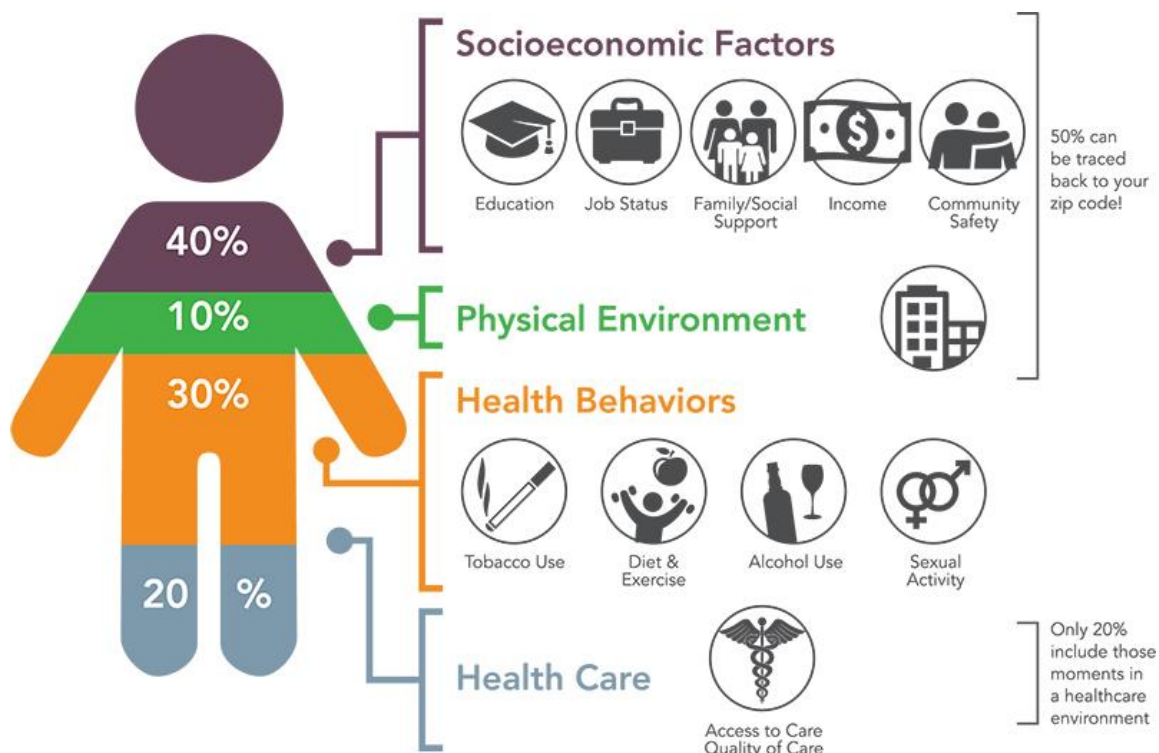
Fourth of July is a holiday that people of all ages can enjoy. Many tend to think only of fireworks during Fourth of July, however there are many things you can do in addition to fireworks to celebrate. Arts and crafts, fun recipes, and yard games are all [fun ways to celebrate](#). Fourth of July parties and activities may

look a little different this year, but there are still many ways to participate in your favorite traditions. These Fourth of July inspired activities can all be done [within your immediate family](#). If fireworks or sparklers are something you and your family enjoy, it is important to remember firework safety. There are [many things you can do](#) to keep your fireworks and sparklers enjoyable. For example, keep a bucket of water nearby, never re-light or pick up a firework that hasn't properly ignited and never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.

Social Determinants of Health

There are many things that affect a person's health. Diet and exercise are important. But, did you know that grocery stores and parks are also important? Grocery stores and parks are part of a group of things called the social determinants of health. The first two minutes of [this video](#) helps explain them.

The social determinants of health are divided into four categories: socioeconomic factors, physical environment, health behaviors, and health care. Half of what affects a person's health can be decided by where they live. Only a fifth can be decided by the health care someone receives.



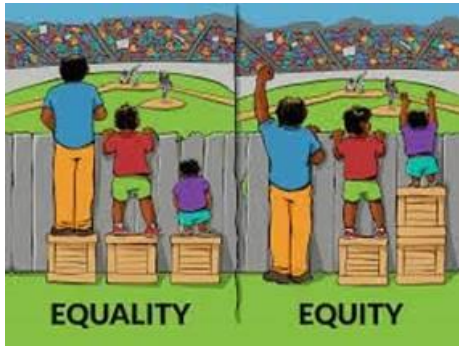
Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement, *Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems* (October 2014)

These categories are important on their own. But they also work together. For example:

- It's hard to eat healthy food without a grocery store nearby.
- It's hard to exercise without parks and outdoor areas nearby.
- It's hard to stay well if you can't see a doctor or pay for medicine.
- It's hard to follow doctor's orders or learn about a disease if you don't read very well.

You may have heard that [COVID-19 affects underrepresented groups more](#) than other groups. Why is this happening? The answer is the social determinants of health. For decades, and even centuries, underrepresented groups have been affected by policies and laws making it harder for them to change their social determinants of health. So, they are more likely to develop diseases like asthma, heart

disease and diabetes. When a new, deadly disease comes along, they have a harder time fighting it. Lack of transportation and health care may also cause people to wait longer to get care.



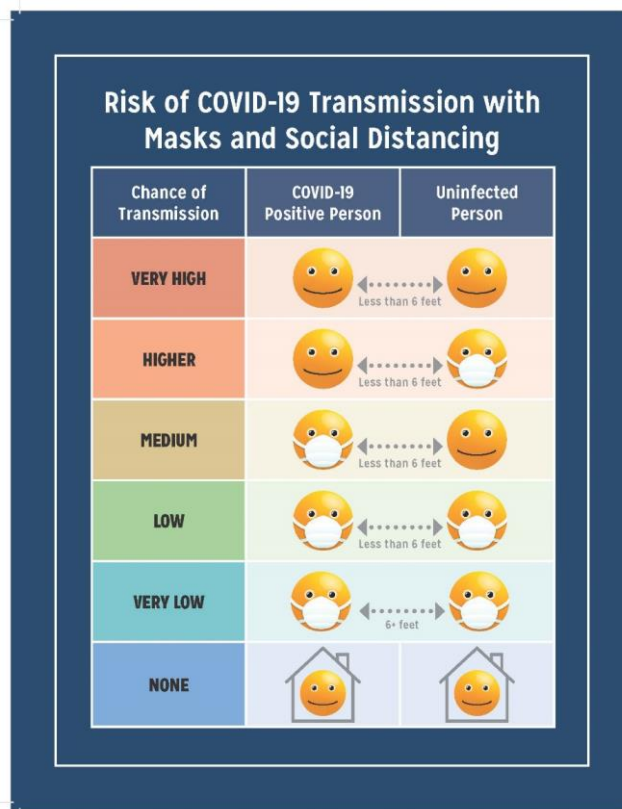
How can we do better? We need to make sure people have the things they really need to be healthy. Making sure everyone has good healthcare is important. But it is not enough. We also must improve the social determinants of health. We need to change policies and laws that negatively affect people of color. Equality isn't enough. We must look at [equity](#) and give each person what they need.

Underrepresented groups need safe housing, good food, and good education. To improve overall health and reduce costs, we must go [beyond medicine](#) and take care of the things that make good health possible. [Dr. Abdul El-Sayed's TEDx Talk at the University of Michigan](#) from 2017 makes this clear.

To see what the Pediatrics Department is doing to help, learn more about our [School-Based and Community Health Program](#) and [Let's Get Healthy!](#) The Henry Ford [Community Health](#) page also has information on other things Henry Ford is doing.

Staying Safe: Do You Need a Mask and Gloves?

Coronavirus [mostly spreads](#) through close contact with other people. If you are going to be out and around people, masks are an important [safety precaution](#). Don't let the summer heat and humidity keep you from [being protected](#). If your child is hesitant to wear a mask, [this article](#) from a pediatrician shares some ideas, such as making your child the family mask monitor. Remember that masks are not recommended for children under two or people who cannot remove it themselves.



Gloves are meant to protect you for a single task. Germs collect on gloves just like hands. Wearing gloves while touching lots of things causes [cross contamination](#). The best protection is to limit what you touch and wash your hands using soap and water or a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash your hands before and after touching your face.

How is your child doing? How are you doing?

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.

For teens and adults, Henry Ford has the Community Emotional Support Call Line available. You do not have to be a Henry Ford patient to use this line. It is available 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. at (313) 874-0343. You will be able to speak with a therapist and be connected to more resources if needed. See this [flyer](#) for more information.

*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.*