



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

March 9, 2021

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.

Nutrition Month

March is [National Nutrition Month](#). This month gives us a time to learn about informed food choices, healthy eating, and ways to live a healthier lifestyle. There are many things the whole family can do to learn and adopt healthier food choices. Educating yourself on nutrition and healthy choices can be a great place to start. Learning MyPlate and the different food groups can help us eat a balanced diet. This [MyPlate matching](#) game can be a fun, interactive way to learn the different food groups. [Reading nutrition labels](#) can also help us learn more about the food we are eating. [Planning meals ahead of time](#) can also be a great way to get the whole family involved in decisions around healthy eating. Making little changes, like to [the snacks we are eating](#), can also add healthier food choices to our day. Adding a few new things each week can help us make healthier choices over time.

St. Patrick's Day Activities for Kids

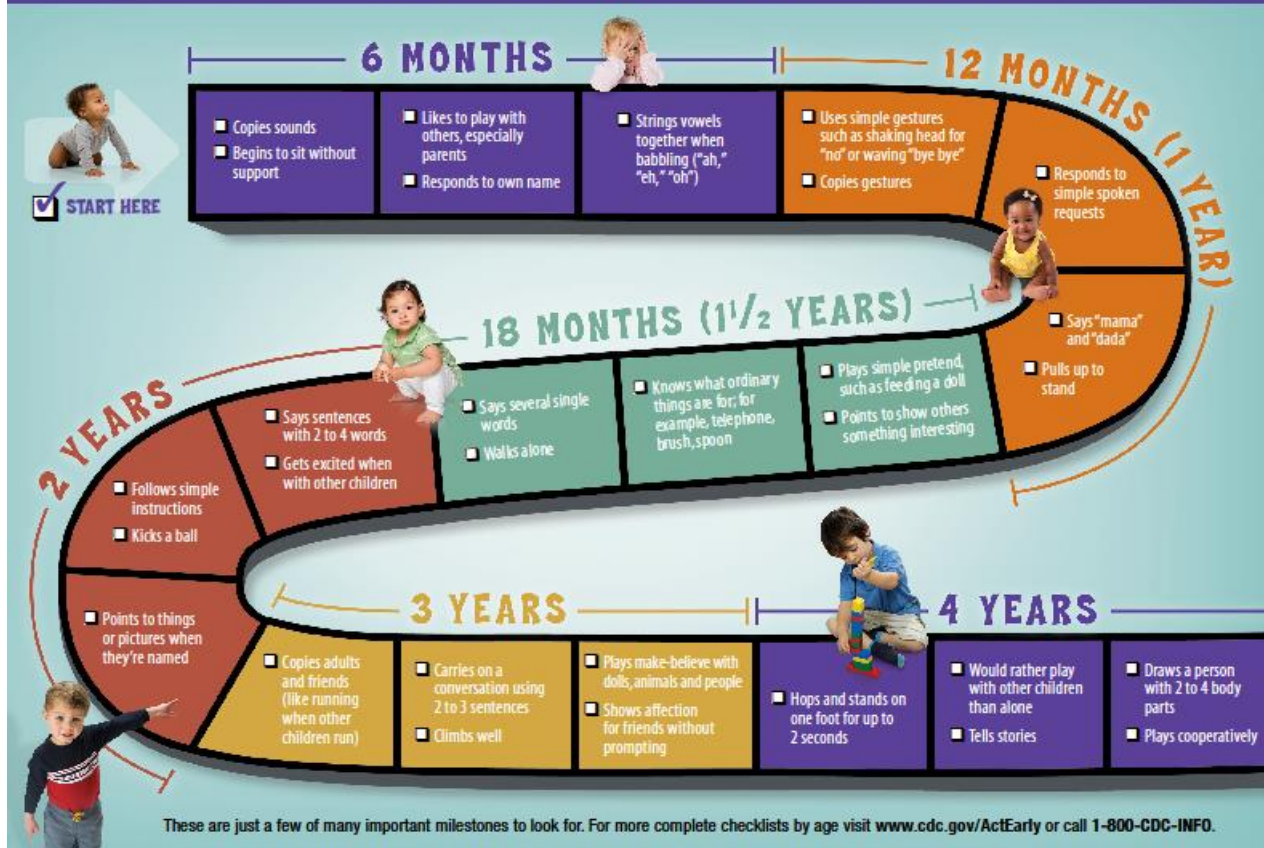
Many people have St. Patrick's Day traditions. Whether it's wearing green, drinking green beverages or making a [traditional Irish meal](#), there are fun ways to celebrate. If you are looking for activities to do with your children, try these [crafts](#). To combine St. Patrick's Day and education, [these activities](#) can give you some ideas. If you're feeling the itch to get outside and chase some leprechauns, here's [some additional outdoor fun](#) to enjoy.

Developmental Milestones

Sometimes parents become overwhelmed with analyzing their child's achievements as they reach certain ages. Comparing [developmental milestones](#) of your child to another child is normal, but it's important for parents to understand that every child does not develop at the same rate. These changes can vary widely and while some can be a [cause for concern](#), others fall within an [appropriate range](#) for childhood development. Every child is different. If you have any concerns, speak with your pediatrician.

Your Child's Early Development is a Journey

Check off the milestones your child has reached and share your child's progress with the doctor at every visit.



If this graphic is difficult to see, you can download the pdf from the CDC [here](#).

Women in Science

For Women's History Month we look at the contributions of women in the fields of science and technology. Last year you may have heard of [Dr. Corbett](#) whose research contributed to the development of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. She is one of [several women](#) currently researching vaccines to address the pandemic. These women and others are [currently contributing to science](#), building on the foundation of previous female scientists who [dared to discover](#) new things about the world around us.

For more ways to introduce youth to the work of female scientists, [Mission Unstoppable](#) airs on CBS, some streaming services and has a YouTube channel. The show focuses on innovative work women are doing in a variety of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields in a tween friendly format. [If/Then](#) focuses on creating a culture shift among young girls to open their eyes to STEM careers.

How to Prevent Choking

When it comes to the safety of our children, there are millions of things to worry about. Some would agree that choking tends to be at the top of that list. While choking can occur throughout any stage of a child's life, it can become especially worrisome as the child begins to put objects in their mouth and also as they start to enjoy solid foods. To [prevent choking](#), there are things that parents and caregivers can do, including babyproofing your home and cutting food into small chunks. Parents should also take an [infant/child CPR class](#). If you have any questions regarding keeping your child safe from choking hazards, speak with your pediatrician.

How To Prevent Your Child From Choking

Choking is almost entirely preventable, but that doesn't make it any less terrifying for parents of small children. Prevent a choking episode by following these safety tips:



Babyproof your home. Put away objects like coins, batteries and small toy parts that could easily block your child's airway if swallowed.

Beware of problem foods. Foods like hot dogs, grapes, raw carrots and nuts are difficult for kids to chew and are more likely to cause choking.



Cut food into small chunks. Bite-sized pieces that are easy to swallow can reduce the risk of choking.

Learn first aid. Every parent should consider taking a CPR class and learning the Heimlich maneuver.



Don't stop a coughing child. If a child is coughing because they are choking, it means they are still breathing. Watch them carefully until they are able to breathe normally.

To learn more about how to notice signs that your child has a blocked airway, visit: [henryford.com/preventingchoking](https://www.henryford.com/preventingchoking)



Breastmilk and Formula, a Complicated History

The debate over how to feed infants may be one of the oldest in the history of mankind. Wrapped into this historical debate are discussions of women's independence, obligations to their husbands and economic desperation. It is possible that cows were, in part, domesticated to provide an alternative food source for babies. The history of wet nurses is complex and sometimes tragic. It is [far beyond](#) what can be [discussed here](#). The need for a [suitable alternative to breast milk](#) has been over 100 years in the making.

And now, the debate over [formula vs breastmilk](#) can easily become heated. But does it need to be a right or wrong decision? Is there room for a middle-ground? While there is some evidence that breastmilk may be better for gut health, other documented benefits are complicated by environmental factors like a mother's level of education, socioeconomic status and access to clean water to mix powdered formula. In reality, there are many things for a family to consider when [deciding how to feed a newborn](#). The complexity of

these decisions goes beyond how a baby is fed and the core issue should be supporting mothers, babies, and families as a whole.

In our next issue, we will share stories from three mothers who fed their babies in three different ways.

Delivery after Cesarean

It used to be that if you delivered a baby via cesarean section, any other child you delivered would also have to be delivered via c-section. Fortunately, medicine has advanced enough to allow for [vaginal birth after cesarean](#) (VBAC). There are [pros and cons](#) to VBAC, so make sure you research if [it's right for you](#). One of the best ways to determine if you should attempt a VBAC is to talk to your medical provider. [Henry Ford's Women's Health Services](#) is a great resource for medical care and to answer questions such as if VBAC is a good decision for you. Not all hospitals and birth centers allow VBAC at their facilities, so make sure you find that out before you commit to a delivery location. Henry Ford does allow VBAC with physician approval, so be sure to talk to your provider if you think it is right for you.

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a common health concern experienced by people of all ages. [Epilepsy](#) is a disorder of the brain that causes seizures. [Seizures range in severity and type](#), and being knowledgeable about the differences can help those who are affected. There are many ways you can support a loved one who is affected by epilepsy. Witnessing a seizure can be very concerning, however knowing the [proper seizure first aid](#), can help a person receive the proper medical attention. Raising awareness around epilepsy can also be a way to show support. There are many events that [raise awareness and support](#) for epilepsy.

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.