



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

May 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. 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.

Wearing a face mask

With Governor Whitmer requesting people wear face masks when they are in enclosed spaces, it is important to make sure you are using it properly. Read more about wearing a mask properly from Henry Ford LiveWell by clicking [here](#). If you are considering a face mask for your child, it is important to know the risks and benefits. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend a face mask for children under 2 years old because of suffocation risks. For more advice on face masks for kids, read their recommendations [here](#). If you need help making your own mask, the CDC recommendations are [here](#).

Keeping in contact with grandparents

During these times of social distancing we often find ourselves missing the relationships we are so used to. The bond between grandparents and grandchildren is one of those very important relationships. There are many fun things that can be done all while social distancing. Weekly video chats (try FaceTime, Zoom, or Skype) are a great way to see each other face to face. During these calls, a fun activity could be reading a book. Both participants could have the same book and follow along together, or the grandparent could read the book to the child. Another fun activity is to invest in window paint and play tic-tac-toe through the front door. The child and grandparent can see each other, all while keeping a barrier between them. Other good ideas can be found [here](#).

Toxic positivity

In the age of social media, we are accustomed to seeing posts around having a positive attitude no matter the situation. We see things like, “good vibes only,” “you’ll be fine,” and “just smile.” These are all examples of a term called Toxic Positivity. The phrase toxic positivity is the culture of portraying yourself as being happy no matter what. You’re switched off to anything that might be viewed as negative and feel pressure to act like everything is ok no matter the situation. [Read more.](#)

Managing Stress and when to ask for help

These are challenging times. No doubt about that. With routines upended and lots of unknowns, it can be hard to manage stress and emotions. There is nothing wrong with that. It is perfectly normal, and you are not alone. Everyone experiences stress differently and sometimes it can be hard to assess everything we’ve lost in our normal day-to-day interactions. Learn more [here](#).

Boundaries and consent

We begin to teach children about boundaries at a young age. However, rarely do parents allow their children to set boundaries when it comes to their interactions with adults. Sometimes, children are also not allowed to have privacy in their personal space, like their bedroom. It's important that a child feels comfortable saying no when they don't like something, such as when they do not want to hug or kiss a family member or friend. It is also important to respect the boundaries that a child may establish when it comes to their space and belongings, always keeping their safety in consideration. Click [here](#) for guidance on how to help your child set boundaries.

Risky behavior

As the brain continues to develop, teens may engage in some activities that can put them at risk for harm either now, or in their future. During quarantine, some teens are becoming anxious to get out of the house, away from parents, siblings, and other family members. They may even see other friends being allowed the freedom to leave their homes, which can make your rules seem harder to follow. It's important for parents to be aware of certain behaviors that teens may decide to engage in during these times. Read [more about risky behaviors](#).

Supporting grieving children

One of the hardest things about this global pandemic is helping children manage grief and loss. All children have had their lives upended and some are also struggling with the loss of loved ones, often unexpectedly. Henry Ford has put together some tips and [resources](#) that may help you.

Give yourself grace

A lot of parents are [burnt out](#) by our current pandemic lifestyle and the effects of that are starting to show. We're stressed, tense, angry and yet, still trying our best. Almost every day, someone tells me "give yourself grace." But what does that mean? For some, it means treating yourself the way you would treat your best friend. Would you yell at her for not cooking dinner one night? Call her a bad parent? Likely, no. For others, it means relaxing your [parenting](#) standards. What worked two months ago, may not work today. Accept that. Whatever [grace looks like](#) for you, it will feel like relaxing the pressure you put on yourself and will allow you to enjoy more and stress less.

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.

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

Please e-mail: ParentConnection@hfhs.org