



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

May 15, 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.

5-2-1-0: A Daily Healthy Lifestyle Message

By now, you may be looking for a way to put a little routine and health back into the lives of your children. But after two months of crisis, how do you re-introduce healthy habits that might have lapsed? One easy way to do that is to focus on the lifestyle message of [5-2-1-0](#). This means that every day, children should strive for:

- [5](#) Fruits and vegetables
- [2](#) Hours or less of screen time
- [1](#) Hour or more of physical activity
- [0](#) Sugar-sweetened drinks

Keep in mind, these are goals, not mandates. You must give yourself time to improve and understand setbacks happen. The good thing about a daily lifestyle message is that you can start over every day!

Parenting Children with Special Needs in a Pandemic

The phrase “it takes a village to raise a child” has an especially important meaning for parents of children with special needs. From school services to weekly therapeutic services, medical care, and most importantly a well-planned routine, parents rely on others for help. The daily lives of these families have been impacted by the coronavirus. ABC News does a nice job of highlighting some of the [struggles these families face](#). Nothing can replace the in-person supports, but there are resources that may help.

A special education teacher (and sibling of someone with autism) offers words of [support](#) during this difficult time. The Henry Ford Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities is offering Applied Behavior Analysis via virtual care. You can learn more [here](#) and request services by emailing aba@hfhs.org or calling (313) 972-3050. The [Michigan Alliance for Families](#) is another good resource for families seeking support.

Celebrating at a Distance

Graduation season is approaching, however this year things look a little different. Whether it is preschool, kindergarten, high school, or college graduation, [our students deserve to celebrate](#) the accomplishments they have worked so hard to achieve. Celebrating at a distance is possible and can often be a fun change. Some fun ways to celebrate may include: a car parade, custom T-shirts, front yard signs, virtual (FaceTime, Zoom, Skype) graduation parties [and much more](#).

Emotional Eating

As parents, we often find ourselves in many stressful situations. During this pandemic the stress may be even stronger. Stress can be handled in various ways. Emotional or stress eating is something we may find ourselves doing. [Emotional eating](#) is consuming food in response to feelings other than hunger. Emotional eating not only affects adults, but also [kids and teens](#). If we find ourselves emotionally eating, there are many things we can do to change the habit. You can keep a journal to identify emotions that trigger eating, take a walk, meditate or call a friend or family member.

Motivating Our Children

It's easy for us to be less productive than usual due to our current health crisis. As information changes from day to day, we are forced to live with the unknown of what tomorrow or next week may look like. This could cause us to lose motivation, especially with completing daily tasks and moving forward with pursuing goals. Our children can also struggle with these feelings as well.

Giving children choices, along with taking the time to problem solve issues together, may help increase their motivation to complete schoolwork, chores, and other tasks. Here are [5 tips](#) for effectively motivating kids during a pandemic. In addition to staying motivated, we want to make sure we are decreasing the level of stress our children may be experiencing. [These techniques](#) are helpful when trying to keep your child's energy upbeat during these chaotic times. Also, if you're looking for some more entertaining activities to help you through the quarantine, check out [this list](#) of fun indoor activities.

Worried about Someone's Safety?

Stay-at-Home orders and social distancing can be especially problematic for people at risk for domestic violence or child abuse. Financial, emotional and social stresses caused by the pandemic can compound existing family issues and promote controlling and manipulative behaviors. The American Psychological Association explains why [COVID-19 increases risks](#). Figuring out [how to help](#) can be tricky; the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) (1-800-799-7233, 1-800-787-3224 TTY), and the [Crisis Text Line](#) (text HOME to 741741) are both great resources for getting help. The best thing you can do is check in with friends and family on a regular basis. Let them know you are there to help.

Suicide Prevention

A global crisis like COVID-19 can increase the risk of suicidal thoughts. If you or someone you know may be struggling, please review the action steps below. There are also resources for suicide [warning signs](#) at the National Institute of Mental Health.

5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain

ASK	KEEP THEM SAFE	BE THERE	HELP THEM CONNECT	STAY CONNECTED
"Are you thinking about killing yourself?"	Reduce access to lethal items or places.	Listen carefully and acknowledge their feelings.	Save the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number 1-800-273-8255.	Follow up and stay in touch after a crisis.

For more information on suicide prevention: www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention

National Institute of Mental Health

Pets and COVID-19

Pets are like family. And there are [many benefits](#) of having a furry family member. We have to make sure our pets are healthy not only for their sake, but also for the health of the family members that they interact with on a daily basis. According to the latest update from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), there are a small number of cats and dogs in the United States that are known to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. While it is also noted that the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to humans is considered to be very low, it's important to keep you and your family safe.

[Here's](#) what you can do to protect your family, your pets, and help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Also, if you have a pet that tests positive for COVID-19, please [follow these guidelines](#). Please contact your veterinarian with questions regarding additional information and testing.

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?

Please e-mail: ParentConnection@hfhs.org