



Parent Connection



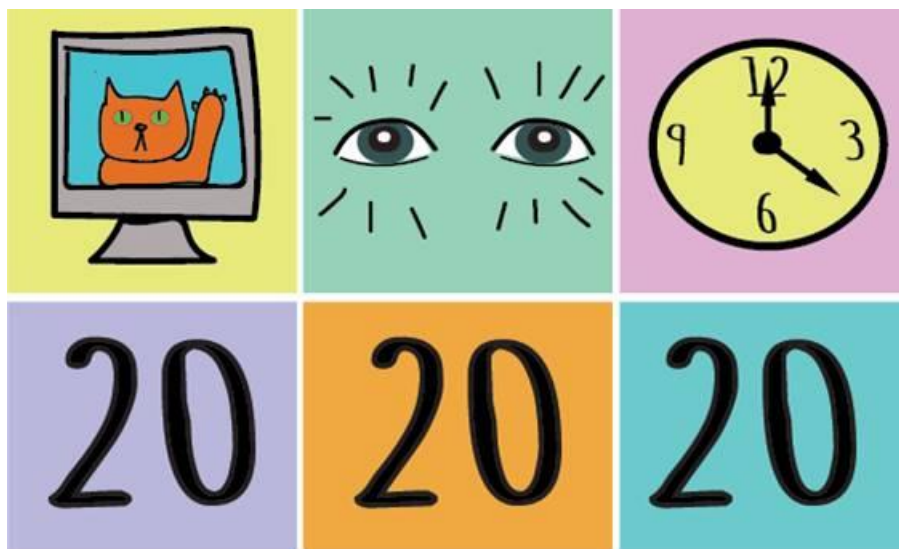
HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

September 22, 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 Eyes from Increased Screen Time

With the increase in screen use many children are experiencing, you may be wondering what to do to protect your child's eyes. There is no evidence that digital screens cause eye damage, but they can cause eye strain. Fortunately, there are simple ways to [prevent eye strain](#). Most experts recommend following the 20-20-20 rule: take a 20 second break to look at something 20 feet away every 20 minutes.



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You also need to remember to blink. We tend not to blink as often when looking at screens and that can cause dry, scratchy feeling eyes. Adding a few seconds of blinking to the beginning and ending of your 20-minute breaks can be an easy way to refresh eyes. And don't forget to adjust the size of documents and windows on devices.

Are you wondering if you or your child(ren) need blue light blocking glasses? [There isn't any evidence that they help](#). But if they give you piece of mind and fit into your budget, they don't hurt either. Just remember blue light blocking devices aren't a replacement for taking breaks to rest your eyes.

If anyone in your family is experiencing eye problems or having trouble seeing a computer screen from a safe distance (about an adult arm's length), please talk to your healthcare provider or eye specialist.

Body Image

A child's self-image is made up of how they view themselves, how they think others view them and who they would ideally like to become. A large component of how a child views themselves is often their body image. Body image is how we think, see and feel about our body. Having a positive or healthy body image means that you view your body accurately and feel comfortable with it. If your child is having a hard time with their body image it can help to [encourage a healthy body image](#). Often, children can begin to develop a negative body image because the adults in their lives have a negative body image. This doesn't make you a bad parent. We all struggle with issues that can affect our children. Learning [how to avoid passing down](#) body image issues can help.

Some tips for helping you and your child feel good about your bodies:

- *Think of all the great things your body can do!* Your body works hard all day and night to help you breathe, think and move.
- *Remember that healthy bodies come in all shapes and sizes.* Try not to compare yourself to anyone else.
- *Be kind to yourself by taking good care of your body and mind.* Eat healthy foods and participate in physical activity that helps you to feel strong.

Representation Matters

Often in the media, we see people of color placed in stereotypical roles. There has recently been a push for more diversity and inclusion in films and television. We are beginning to see [the impact that it has on underrepresented cultures](#). Experiencing diversity is not only good for the person being represented, but also for all people. Seeing and acknowledging that people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds can achieve goals and have diverse, complex lives is important. Whether it is Black Panther gracing our screens with endless images of both Black men and women in leading, strong, powerful roles or Crazy Rich Asians being [the first modern all-Asian cast in over 25 years](#). Representation should also take into account the diverse images of [gender identity and sexual orientation](#).

When people only have access to negative images, it can affect their personal and public assumptions about a particular culture. The recent changes in television and film seem to be slowly increasing positive images of underrepresented cultures and diverse beliefs. These changes can have a beneficial impact on our everyday lives.

Is It COVID-19, the Flu or Allergies?

Back in March, every random symptom I felt or sneeze from my son had me looking up the symptoms of COVID-19. Many months into the pandemic, I am back to looking for the more likely causes. *Woke up with a sore throat?* Maybe I'm a little dehydrated. *Son sneezing a lot?* Well, he did just get into a dusty bookshelf. But as we move into the traditional cold and flu season, during a pandemic, it makes sense that we'll question every little symptom again. There is [overlap in symptoms](#) when looking at COVID-19, influenza, a cold, and allergies. Fortunately, social distancing, hand hygiene, wiping down high touch surfaces and mask wearing will help protect against COVID-19, the flu and colds.

You can add another layer of protection with the flu shot. In the U.S., more than 1,650 children died due to the flu between 2004-2018. Historically, 80-85% of [flu deaths are in unvaccinated children](#). Families Fighting Flu [gathered personal stories](#) of the flu gravely impacting the lives of loved ones. Scientists say it is possible to be infected with both the coronavirus and flu at the same time, [but don't know how serious that will be](#). Why not [reduce that risk with a vaccine](#) that will reduce your chance of catching the flu by 40%-60% and reduce the severity of illness if you do get the flu? If you have specific questions about the safety of the flu shot for the children you care for, please talk to their pediatrician.

Getting a Flu Shot at Henry Ford

To keep everyone safe, we cannot have walk-in flu clinics this year. If you already have an appointment scheduled, ask about getting your flu shot then. Most specialty clinics will have flu shots available this

year. Caretakers accompanying patients at an appointment may be able to receive a flu shot at the same time. Ask at check-in so staff can register caretakers before going to the exam room. Pediatric clinics may not have the high dose vaccines appropriate for people 50 years and older, so please ask ahead of time. Many medical centers are also holding flu clinics for people ages 9 and older. You can make an appointment for a flu clinic near you by calling (800) 436-7936. Online scheduling for flu clinics will be available in early October. We will provide updated information on that process when it is available.

If you currently have a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, please contact your provider to discuss the best time to get vaccinated for the flu.

Kid-Friendly Workspaces

Many students are currently in a virtual learning environment instead of going to a school building each day. With this change in how we normally begin the school year, setting up their workspace to be both [comfortable and conducive for learning](#) helps them to adjust and be successful in this new normal. There are also [design tips for younger children](#). While every child's learning style is different, we should pay attention to any changes needed to make sure their space has minimal distractions.

Understanding Cultural Appropriation

As Halloween fast approaches, many children are looking for the perfect costume. Halloween is a time many children want to dress as their favorite television, movie or book character. When choosing a Halloween costume, it is important to [understand the term cultural appropriation](#). Cultural appropriation is borrowing a look or trait from a culture that is not your own. Cultural appropriation can be harmful because it can lead to the promotion of negative stereotypes or generalizations surrounding a group of people. We often do not intend to be culturally offensive.

There are many [things a person can ask themselves](#) when helping a child decide on a Halloween costume. Some things include, does this costume mock cultural or religious symbols (such as dressing as a Native American), attempt to represent an entire culture (such as wearing a sombrero and poncho), or take away from human suffering (such as a costume as a homeless person or prisoner)? Skin darkening in any respect is not a good idea. Halloween can also be a great time to teach about cultural appropriation and provide an opportunity to start a discussion on stereotypes and why certain costumes are a better choice than others.



Fall Family Activities

Fall is an amazing season with many family traditions. Fall activities may look a little different this year, however there are still many fun family things to do. Many of these activities can be done [in the comfort of your own home](#). Carving pumpkins can be a great family activity. These [pumpkin carving templates](#) can be fun for those of any age. A [fall nature scavenger hunt](#) can also be a fun way to get outside and enjoy the changing temperature and leaves with the whole family. Baking can also be a great fall activity to do inside the home. These [fall recipes](#) can be enjoyed by the whole family.

Virtual Classes for Adults & Kids

The Henry Ford C.A.R.E. Program is offering two new virtual classes beginning in September. One for school-age kids called Kids Art Club and one for adults called Altered Book Club. Both are free and open to the community. A gift will be mailed to anyone who signs up AND attends any of the C.A.R.E. Program art classes in the months of September, October or November.

A list of classes is available and you can register [here](#). You can contact the program at CaregiverResources@hfhs.org or (313) 874-4838.

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.