



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

September 8, 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.

Debunking Mask Myths

We all know that wearing a mask is important for people of all ages. However, there are still many myths around mask wearing. Many of us have heard various arguments with some of the more common myths being that masks limit oxygen, they do not need to be worn if outside, and they will increase carbon dioxide levels. [Henry Ford LiveWell](#) would like to help clarify some of these misconceptions surrounding masks.

There are also [myths associated with children](#) wearing masks. It is important to remember that wearing a mask is a safe way to protect yourself and those around you. Please watch the video below with your child to help with explaining wearing a mask properly with them.



Bullying

Bullying is something people of all ages can experience, but especially children and teens. [Bullying is](#) when someone is picked on by a person or group. There are many forms of bullying, including physical, verbal, psychological, and cyber. Bullying can look different and affect each child differently. If you are concerned that a child is being bullied, there are many [ways to help](#). There are also [many things children](#) can do if they find themselves in a bullying situation. While in the situation, it can be helpful to tell a trusted adult, walk away, or find a true friend. Bullying can be very stressful, but there are many resources to help those of all ages.

Raising Socially Assertive Kids

Being [assertive](#) is a good skill. It allows children to speak up and advocate for themselves while respecting the needs and boundaries of others. It can also increase self-esteem and self-confidence. It can give children the tools they need to respond well to challenging situations. Being assertive does not come naturally to everyone, but it can be [taught](#).

Assertive children are better able to speak up when they see something wrong. Teaching children to be [socially aware](#) will help them understand and respond to what they see in the world. Role playing situations your child might encounter can also help them work through how they want to say things. This can also be useful when talking about something that already happened if your child wished they had done something differently. Teaching children to [stand up for themselves and others](#) in a calm and assertive way can make a big difference for everyone involved.

Supporting Teens: Living with Uncertainty

This year has been full of uncertainty. That can be hard for anyone. It is especially hard for teenagers. Typical [teenage insecurities](#) are likely made worse by current events. With the start of school, your teen may feel the anxiety and disappointment of the spring again. To help teens feel seen, [acknowledge their losses](#) and help them develop new routines. Research has shown that teens [can benefit from helping others](#). Finding creative ways to provide help to others while still maintaining social distancing may also provide some benefits and stability to your teens.

Childhood Trauma and Resilience

When a person experiences a trauma before their 18th birthday, this is called [childhood trauma](#). While trauma can be experienced in many ways, some of the most common ones are shown below:



If a child experiences significant or prolonged trauma, it can result in toxic stress. The development of [toxic stress](#) can lead to long-term physical, mental and emotional health problems. These stress experiences are often called [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\)](#) and the more ACEs a person experiences, the more likely they are to have lifelong health issues and even a shorter life expectancy.

However, having trauma in your childhood does not automatically mean you will become sick or die earlier than expected. One of the best ways to overcome the effects of ACEs is to build [resilience](#), which is the ability to return to being healthy and hopeful after bad things happen. You can build resilience through protective factors. It can help to think of protective factors and ACEs like a seesaw; whichever side has more weight is more likely a predictor of developing resilience. The biggest predictor of developing resilience is a child having a stable and committed relationship with one supportive adult. This adult does not have to be a parent, just any adult in their life who can provide a supportive and strong relationship. For more ways to build resilience, click [here](#).



Relationships During a Pandemic

Social distancing has changed the way that people explore dating. It has also changed how people in current relationships learn how to stay connected. Whether you are living with your partner or building your relationship while living in separate spaces, learning how to navigate our new reality while keeping our relationships healthy can be challenging. [These 10 important steps](#) can be very helpful to anyone working to maintain a healthy relationship during these times.

Internet Safety: Identifying Predators

Keeping our children safe, both virtually and in person, is always at the top of our list of priorities. Before it becomes obvious to parents, children may begin to display certain behaviors that could be a sign that a predator has contacted them online. Below is a short list of behaviors to look for:

- Becomes secretive about online activities
- Becomes obsessive about being online
- Receives phone calls or messages from people you do not know
- Receives gifts, mail, or packages from someone you do not know
- Withdraws from family and friends
- Changes screens or turns off computer when an adult enters a room

If your child has displayed any of these behaviors, it may be time to have a serious conversation with them regarding online safety. Asking your child [specific questions](#) to help guide the discussion could help you obtain the information needed to help law enforcement catch a predator. [Here](#) you can also find other ways to protect your child from online predators.

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.