



# Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

**February 8, 2022**

*Your Henry Ford pediatrician is here for you. Below we have collected articles and resources we think you might find helpful. Information in our newsletter 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.*

## **Black History Month**

During the month of February, every year, a celebration is held honoring African American history and achievements. This is commonly known as Black History Month. This celebration occurs in the [month of February](#) to coincide with the birthdays of Fredrick Douglass, an abolitionist who escaped from slavery, and President Abraham Lincoln, who formally ended slavery. [Black History Month](#), originally known as “Negro History Week,” was started in 1926 by [Carter G. Woodson](#) and took place the second week of February. In 1976, Gerald Ford extended the celebration to the entire month of February.

There are [many ways we can celebrate](#) Black History Month as a whole family. Reading [books](#) by African American authors, watching [movies](#) highlighting Black history, or attending a Black History Month [event in your community](#) are all ways we can further educate ourselves and celebrate Black lives and history. [The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History](#) offers many great learning opportunities year-round, but especially during Black History Month. There are many [craft projects](#) that can teach younger children the importance of Black History Month. If you aren’t celebrating Black history already, Black History Month is a great time to start!

## *HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT BLACK HISTORY MONTH*



Support Black-owned businesses in your community



Read a book or watch documentaries about Black history



Volunteer at local community organizations and get involved



Educate friends and family

### **Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month**

Dating violence can consist of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse. One in three teens will experience dating violence before they become an adult. [February is Dating Violence Awareness Month](#). The goal of this awareness month is to bring education and advocacy with the hope of ending this type of violence. There are many ways young people and those around them can raise awareness against teen dating violence. Education is one place to start. [Teaching teens what a healthy relationship looks like](#) can help them to be more aware of the relationships they are in or will be in the future. If they see an example of dating violence on TV or in a movie, discuss what parts of the relationship aren't healthy. Talking to every young person, no matter their gender identity, is also important. Anyone can experience dating violence and making everyone aware can help with prevention.

[Talking openly and honestly](#) with teens about relationships and letting them know that relationships are difficult can help them feel comfortable speaking out when a concern arises. This video from [amaze.org](#) can help start the conversation surrounding teen dating violence. Giving teens the tools to have conversations about teen dating violence and relationships can help them be a positive influence on their peers and help them have healthy relationships throughout their lives.

### **Pandemic Stress and Regression**

If you have noticed your child regressing (potty accidents, temper tantrums in teenagers) it may be a side effect of the pandemic. [Some regression is a normal](#) part of childhood development. Children learn to be more independent and then demand greater assistance. Children may be testing the adults in their lives to make sure they are still present and supportive. If you've been noticing more regressive behavior, the [stress and disruption of the pandemic](#) may be the cause. Helping children through normal or stress related regression may not be that difficult. Provide love and [support](#), helping them as needed. If your child is old enough, talk to them about how they feel and the support they want. Remember that any major changes or stressors, even good ones, can cause regression. But, if any of your child's behaviors are concerning, please reach out to your pediatrician.

### **When Will the Pandemic End?**

As we come upon two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, the question on everyone's mind is when and how it will end. The hard answer is that no one can tell us when the pandemic will end. This past month has seen surges of the [Omicron variant](#). Hospital workers have been exhausted and overwhelmed with patients, and everyone is tired and stressed. But there could be a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel.

It is possible that the Omicron surge peak has passed as cases are decreasing. But it doesn't necessarily mean the pandemic will end. There are likely to be more variants, and no one can be sure exactly how the pandemic will end. But [here are two scenarios](#) that could play out.

So, where do we go from here? You might be sick of hearing it, but right now, the best thing you can do is get vaccinated and [boosted](#). Mask up in public places. Get tested if you have [symptoms](#)—and encourage your friends and family to do the same.

### **Valentine's Day Crafts**

While we're all stuck inside due to cold weather and snowstorms, one way to break up the time is to do some [Valentine's Day crafts](#). These [cute crafts](#) will both occupy kids and provide decorations for the holiday. If your kids need valentines to pass out at school, these [homemade ones](#) should do the trick.

**Heart Disease Awareness**

[Heart disease](#) is a leading cause of death and illness in the US, with more than 650,000 people each year losing their lives and many more diagnosed. February 4<sup>th</sup> was [National Wear Red Day](#), a day to wear red and raise awareness of the risks of heart disease. However, the entire month of February is a time to [start some new habits](#) for heart health. You can make this a fun family activity by printing out the graphic below and playing Heart Healthy Bingo with your children or grandchildren. It's a great way to start them on the road to heart health and to hold yourself accountable. Other fun activities, such as coloring sheets and fitness ideas are available [here](#).



# HEART HEALTHY BINGO!

Choose 10 or more heart-healthy behaviors to practice as a family. When a behavior has been practiced, please mark off the square.

Eat a fruit or vegetable with your breakfast.	Eat a healthy snack.		Drink water with a slice of fruit in it.	Go for a walk or bike ride with a family member.
	Be physically active for 60 minutes or more.	Try a new fruit or vegetable.	Eat a low-sodium snack.	Try a sparkling or carbonated water.
Read a nutrition facts label with an adult.	Spend a day without drinking a sugary drink.	Tell a family member 3 health benefits of being physically active.	Explain to a family member why tobacco is bad for your heart.	
Explain why it's important to avoid secondhand smoke.	Track your physical activity for a day.	Name 5 foods high in sodium.		Eat three different colors of fruits and vegetables in one day.
Try a handful of unsalted nuts as a snack.		Tell a family member why sugary beverages are bad for your heart.	Try a breathing exercise to help with stress.	Count how many glasses of water you drink in one day.

**SIGN UP TODAY!**



**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of family member:** \_\_\_\_\_

© Copyright 2021 American Heart Association, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit. All rights reserved. Kids Heart Challenge is a trademark of the AHA. Unauthorized use prohibited. 8/19 DS14874

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](mailto:ParentConnection@hfhs.org) or to unsubscribe.