



News for the Nurturing Child Care Professional

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Taming Tempers



Improving Lives. Improving Texas.

Parents expect temper tantrums from 2-year-olds, but angry outbursts don't necessarily stop after the toddler years. Older kids sometimes have trouble handling anger and frustration, too.

Some kids only lose their cool on occasion. But others seem to have a harder time when things don't go their way. Kids who tend to have strong reactions by nature will need more help from parents to manage their tempers.

Controlling outbursts can be difficult for kids—and helping them learn to do so is a tough job for the parents who love them. Try to be patient and positive, know that these skills take time to develop and that just about every child can improve with the right coaching.

A Parent's Role

Managing kids can be a challenge. Some days keeping the peace while keeping your cool seems impossible. But whether you're reacting to an occasional temper flare-up or a pattern of outbursts, managing your own anger when things get heated will make it easier to teach kids to do the same.

Reacting to your child's meltdowns, with yelling and outbursts of your own, will only teach your child to do the same. But keeping your cool and calmly working through a frustrating situation lets you show — and teach —

your child appropriate ways to handle anger and frustration.

What You Can Do

Regulating emotions and managing behavior are skills that develop slowly over time during childhood. Just like any other skills, your child will need to learn and practice them, with your help.



Kids whose temper outbursts are routine may lack the necessary self-control to deal with frustration and anger, and may need more help managing

those emotions.

These steps may help:

- **Help your child put it into words.**
- **Listen and respond.**
- **Create clear ground rules and stick to them.**

Coping Strategies

Kids who've learned that it's not OK to yell, hit, and throw stuff when they're upset need other strategies for calming down when they're angry. Offer some ideas to help your child learn safe ways to get the anger out or to find other activities that can create a better mood.

- **Take a break from the situation.**
- **Find a way to (safely) get the anger out.**
- **Learn to shift.**

- **Teach them to take deep breathes.**

Building a Strong Foundation

Fortunately, really angry episodes don't happen too often for most kids. Those with temper troubles often have an active, strong-willed style and extra energy that needs to be discharged. Try these steps during the calm times.

- **Help your child label emotions.**
- **See that your child gets a lot of physical activity.**
- **Encourage your child to take control.**
- **Try to be flexible.**

As anyone who's been really angry knows, following sensible advice can be tough when emotions run high. Give your child responsibility for getting their anger under control, but be there to remind him or her of how to do it.

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Questions?

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Factors influencing a child's food preferences

A child's food preferences is a product of many factors, including "neophobia," or the fear of anything new, including new foods. Child neophobia has been shown to be a major reason for low fruit and vegetable intake. Neophobia appears to reach a peak between the ages of 2 and 6; rejection of vegetables in particular is common at this age.

Several studies have found that repeated

Exposure to a new food can reduce the neophobic response. In one study, researchers assigned parents and their children to one of three groups: the Exposure group, the Information group or the Control group.

Parents in the Exposure group gave their children a taste of a previously disliked vegetable every day for 14 days. They presented the vegetable in a positive manner and did not use any type of reward to get their children to eat the vegetables. Parents in the Information group received only nutrition information, and parents in the Control group received nothing.

After 14 days, children in the Exposure group had increased their preference and intake of the vegetables more than did the other groups. This led the authors to conclude that "a parent-led, exposure-based intervention involving daily tasting of a vegetable holds promise for improving children's acceptance of vegetables."

Note: A general rule is that a child may have to be exposed to a new food as many as 10 times before accepting it.

Other factors that affect a child's intake of fruits and vegetables include:

The availability of fruits and vegetables in the home

- Their accessibility (such as ready-to-eat carrot sticks)
- Peer influences
- Parental influences
 - Television
 - Eating out



Keep your children safe when feeding them fruits and vegetables

Babies and young children under age 5 (including toddlers and preschoolers) are at risk of choking because they cannot chew or swallow well. The following fruits and vegetables are not recommended for these individuals because they can cause choking:

- Cooked or raw whole-kernel corn
- Whole uncut grapes, berries, cherries, melon balls, or cherry/grape tomatoes
- Raisins and other dried fruit
- Whole beans
- Hard pieces of raw fruit
- Raw vegetable pieces (such as carrots, green peas, string beans or celery) or hard pieces of partially cooked vegetables
- Whole pieces of canned fruit (cut them up instead)

Note: Other foods that can cause choking include marshmallows, tough pieces of meat, peanuts, nuts and seeds, peanut butter, hard candy, jelly beans, popcorn, hot dogs, potato and corn chips, pretzels and chunks of cheese. To be safe, it is best to supervise children during mealtimes.

When serving fruits and vegetables to young children, keep the following safety rules in mind:

- Cook foods until they are soft enough to pierce easily with a fork.
- Cut soft foods into small pieces.
- Cut soft, round foods such as carrots into short strips instead of round pieces.
- Cut grapes into quarters.
- Remove pits and seeds from very ripe fruit, and cut the fruit into small pieces.



Looking for Free Cooking and Nutrition Classes? Call Joe Lynn or Alexis at (936) 336-4558, ext. 221.

Laughter, the Best Medicine, Rx

HUMOR FIRST AID KIT

Make your own humor first aid kit. Your own kitchen or tool area is an excellent place to start. Don't

forget thrift stores or local garage sale.

Stock your kit with things that always make you smile or laugh,



such as:

- funny cartoons
- jokes
- comedy tapes---video or audio
- greeting cards
- funny smelling pen or crayons
- balloons
- writing paper for drawing or writing
- string
- humorous book
- a picture of someone (probably you) that is weird
- a box of assorted-size blocks for stacking
- a Reader's Digest with good joke sections
- an odd-shaped kitchen utensil
- toilet paper
- a blind fold
- a wig
- paper sacks/plastic baggies
- clown makeup
- an unusual hat
- a mask
- a hand puzzle
- a hair brush
- any small empty pop can
- a mirror
- a noisemaker/a party horn
- hair accessories—like barrettes or ribbons
- cards
- a can of silly/thoughtful sayings
- confetti
- clay or some pliable material
- small wrapped packages with something inside such as thought for the day or candy



The experience of laughter can increase our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. The benefits of laughter can be documented when we consider how laughter serves to safeguard our health, to increase our ability to problem solve, and to help us with difficult events or situations.

Who laughs? Everyone. Some more easily than others!

What makes us laugh? Individuals differ in what they consider to be funny or humorous. Culture, gender, health, financial situation, religion, and mood are all factors which influence what appears funny to each person.

Where and when do we laugh? Our culture and life experiences will influence where and when we laugh. Anything can be funny---if the time or situation is right for humor!

Why do we laugh? Laughter is very good for us! After a good belly laugh, we might feel as refreshed as though we had taken a nap. Laughter provides release from tension and the opportunity to see a problem from another perspective.

How do we laugh? Some of us laugh quietly, some simply smile, while others laugh loudly. Someone might laugh with their whole body while another doesn't move at all.

Is all laughter healthy? No. Laughter that hurts someone's self-esteem is not healthy. Laughter that builds upon another's pain or makes another appear foolish is not healthy.



PHYSICAL BENEFITS OF LAUGHTER

Each person has a unique way of laughing which is not only individual but also based on gender, socialization and life experience. When we laugh we engage various muscle groups throughout our body. The deeper the laughter, the more we exercise these muscle groups as well as our internal organs. Some researchers have suggested that deep, hearty laughter is equal to running or rowing a boat for several minutes. The natural defense mechanisms of the body are mobilized by positive emotions such as humor and laughter. Laughter is relaxing and can lift our spirits. After a good laugh, we can think more clearly because we have saturated our body with oxygen and exercised our heart and other muscles. Laughter can release chemicals in our body that are beneficial in fighting depression and the experience of pain and discomfort. Laughter increases the production of three catecholamines: adrenaline, norepinephrine and dopamine. These neurotransmitters sharpen our awareness of our environment by stimulating our nervous system.

Laughter, The Best Medicine, Rx. has been adapted by Linda Ladd from a workshop developed by Linda Ladd, PH.D. and Carol Michael-Bennett, M.S. for the Oregon Extension Service.

“JEST” FOR THE HEALTH OF IT ...

Contact Alexis if you want to schedule your own Staff Development workshop on this topic!

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Headaches in Kids: What You Can Do to Help

Headaches occur at any age, from two to three years of age and older. The number of new severe headaches peak during adolescence. Headache symptoms in youngsters do not exactly mirror those in adults. As a result youngsters often remain without a correct headache diagnosis for many years until the episodes take on an older age pattern. Severe adult headache with disability that lasts for up to a day, often with nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light and sound is a migraine. Since children and adolescents can experience severe headaches and not be able to describe what they are feeling, it's important for parents to provide information. With a little background, careful observation, and creative questioning, you can get an idea about your child's headaches and seek the right diagnosis.



- When they're fairly young and before they complain of headaches, children may get other childhood migraine syndromes. The two most common are abdominal migraine and cyclic vomiting syndrome.
- Children may not report nonpain symptoms normally associated with a migraine episode, such as sensitivity to light or sound.

By watching you child's behavior, you can help identify what your child may be experiencing when they have a migraine attack. For instance:

- Watch to see if they go into a quiet place to rest or even nap.
- Notice if they talk to you less than usual or have a mood swing.
- Watch for a change in their daily routine.
- Be aware of when they resume their normal activities.
- Look for signs of nausea or stomach upset.

Treatment for young people

The approach to treatment depends on the level of disability a child or adolescent experiences. If the person experiences mild disability then the treatment can be as simple as reassuring them and making sure they get some rest.



However, if the episodes cause moderate to severe disability, such as duration of pain for four or six hours, and prevent the child from staying in school or participating in his or her usual activities, your provider should recommend other medi-

cations or treatments.

A child or teen who is getting a headache one or two times a week should use preventive therapy. It is best for parent and child or teen to review the subject with their practitioner who will be familiar with the medications available and assess which one might prove optimal.

Non-pharmacologic approaches

Non-pharmacologic approaches can be used in all young patients and can be quite beneficial. The following regular lifestyle routines or habits may prove very helpful in your child:

- Make sure they sleep at the same hours nightly, if possible.
- Make sure that they exercise regularly as this reduces stress, anxiety, mood swings and helps them keep their weight under control.
- See to it that they eat on a regular schedule and don't skip meals.
- Commonly used supplements and herb butterbur may be helpful in migraine prevention.
- Decrease caffeine intake from soft drinks and iced tea to one dose a day or less.
- Check to be sure that they drink plenty of water, particularly during the summer.
- Consider more formalized therapy, including biofeedback and stress management techniques, if these simple lifestyle changes don't produce positive results.

As a parent, one of the best solutions you can try is education— for yourself and your child.

© 2006 American Headache Society

Field Trip Survival Kit

If you are guilty of not liking field trips, because they are no picnic for you, then take a look at some steps you can take to make field trips easier on both you and the children.

Quick Tips!

- ☺ Time trips so children are not hungry or tired
- ☺ Remind your children of the rules, and word those rules positively
- ☺ Have activities for your children to do on the trip
- ☺ Praise children for following rules
- ☺ Use time-outs if behavior problems occur



Getting Ready to Go

- **Go over the game plan.** Before you leave, discuss where you will be going, how long the trip will take, and what you will be getting or learning while you're out.
- **Go over the ground rules before you leave.** Some rules for the car/van: wear a seatbelt; use your indoor voice, and keep your hands to yourself. Some specific: walk don't run, stay where and adult can see you, and use your indoor voice.
- **Give your children something to do.** In the car, your children can count cars and license plates from different states. You can play games or sing together.
- **Reward good behavior.** If your children behave well on the trip, encourage and praise them for following the rules. Plan to do more fun things.

While You're Out

- It's more effective to tell a child what to do rather than to tell the child to stop doing something. Say things like: "Keep your hands at your side," "Use your indoor voice," or "Stay where I can see you."
- Use your attention as a reward for good behavior. For example, if the child is whining, you might say, "I'm not going to talk with you until you use your big boy voice," then do not respond to the child until he/she speaks in an appropriate tone.
- If the child continues to misbehave, take him/her to a quiet place in the aisle or outside the location and stand there quietly for 30 seconds. If you're in the car, and the bad behavior continues, pull the car over when it is safe and stop for a brief time-out.

Source: Kids Health

Revised By: Alexis Cordova

TRAINING CALENDAR

Date/Location/Cost	Session/Time	Session/Time
June 13; Liberty; \$5/session <i>Facilitator:</i> Sharon Kruger, Region 5	"No more time outs: adult child interaction" 8:30 a.m.—10:30 a.m.	"Terrific Transitions" 10:45 a.m.—12:45 a.m.
July 25; Liberty; \$5/session <i>Facilitator:</i> Sharon Kruger, Region 5	"No more time outs: supportive environments" 8:30 a.m.—10:30 a.m.	"Schedules and Routines" 10:45 a.m. -12:45 a.m.
August 8	TBA	



See registration form included...

101 Ways to Praise a Child



WOW • WAY TO GO • SUPER • YOU'RE SPECIAL • OUTSTANDING • EXCELLENT • GREAT • GOOD • NEAT • WELL DONE • REMARKABLE • I KNEW YOU COULD DO IT • I'M PROUD OF YOU • FANTASTIC • SUPER STAR • NICE WORK • LOOKING GOOD • YOU'RE ON TOP OF IT • BEAUTIFUL • NOW YOU'RE FLYING • YOU'RE CATCHING ON • NOW YOU'VE GOT IT • YOU'RE INCREDIBLE • BRAVO • YOU'RE FANTASTIC • HURRAY FOR YOU • YOU'RE ON TARGET • YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY • HOW NICE • HOW SMART • GOOD JOB • THAT'S INCREDIBLE • HOT DOG • DYNAMITE • YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL • YOU'RE UNIQUE • NOTHING CAN STOP YOU NOW • GOOD FOR YOU • I LIKE YOU YOU'RE A WINNER • REMARKABLE JOB • BEAUTIFUL WORK • SPECTACULAR • YOU'RE SPECTACULAR • YOU'RE DARLING • YOU'RE PRECIOUS • GREAT DISCOVERY • YOU'VE DISCOVERED THE SECRET • YOU FIGURED IT OUT • FANTASTIC JOB • HIP, HIP, HURRAY • BINGO • MAGNIFICENT • MARVELOUS • TERRIFIC • YOU'RE IMPORTANT • PHENOMENAL • YOU'RE SENSATIONAL • SUPER WORK • CREATIVE JOB • SUPER JOB • FANTASTIC JOB • EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE • YOU'RE A REAL TROOPER • YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE • YOU ARE EXCITING • YOU LEARNED IT RIGHT • WHAT AN IMAGINATION • WHAT A GOOD LISTENER • YOU ARE FUN • YOU'RE GROWING UP • YOU TRIED HARD • YOU CARE • BEAUTIFUL SHARING • OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE • YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND • I TRUST YOU • YOU'RE IMPORTANT • YOU MEAN A LOT TO ME • YOU MAKE ME HAPPY • YOU BELONG • YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND • YOU MAKE ME LAUGH • YOU BRIGHTEN MY DAY • I RESPECT YOU • YOU MEAN THE WORLD TO ME • THAT'S CORRECT • YOU'RE A JOY • YOU'RE A TREASURE • YOU'RE WONDERFUL • YOU'RE PERFECT • AWESOME • A+ JOB • YOU'RE A-OK MY BUDDY • YOU MADE MY DAY • THAT'S THE BEST • A BIG HUG • A BIG KISS • SAY I LOVE YOU!

Compliments



Summer Camp Safety Guidelines

Parents typically ask a lot of questions and do their research first before deciding to send a youngster to a camp setting in the summer or during breaks within the school year. But one important topic that often gets overlooked is summer camp safety. Before sending in that deposit, parents should determine whether the facility/staff has in place appropriate written health guidelines and a medical protocol in case the need arises.

Parents should ask about the following summer camp safety areas before sending their youngster off to camp:

- What is the counselor-to-child ratio?
- What safety training does staff receive?

- Do the camp organizers have a crisis management plan in place?
- Have they requested updated information and multiple contact options so you can be reached in the event of an emergency?
- Have organizers been alerted about any medical conditions/special needs of kids?
- Ask how medications are transported and whether staff knows how to use things such as inhalers or auto-injectors.
- Ask for an emergency contact number that you can reach someone at in case a need arises with you, and you need to contact your camper.
- Many camps require a recent health evaluation signed by a doctor before a child is admitted to camp.



- What is the group's practice for hydration?

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, illnesses that commonly affect camp life and which require intervention include the following:

- Upper respiratory tract infections
- Vomiting and diarrhea
- Impetigo and fungal skin infections
- Asthma and allergy
- Ear infections
- Streptococcal pharyngitis and sore throat
- Lice and scabies
- Conjunctivitis (pinkeye)
- Poison ivy and poison oak
- Sunburn and heat-related illness

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Hand Sanitizers and Washing Go Hand in Hand

Which is best? Hand washing or hand sanitizers? Not surprisingly, the answer is using both. Using both hand-in-hand is an optimal way to keep your kids healthy, and is preferable to choosing one or another. That's because good ol' hand washing cleans hands while hand sanitizers typically get rid of more germs. The combination can be a better fighting duo against colds, flu and other viruses that are lurking out there and causing members of your family to get sick.

While correct hand washing remains the best overall way to keep your hands germ-free, studies have shown that the majority of people don't wash their hands effectively. To do it right means spending 20 to 30 seconds

with a lather and vigorously washing all parts of the hands, including fingernail areas. A common practice of early educators is to teach kids appropriate hand-washing techniques by having them sing "Happy Birthday to You!" twice while washing hands.

Health studies have shown that companies, schools, hospitals and general workplaces have lower incidences of colds, flu and absences due to illnesses when they provide access to hand sanitizers. And since sanitizer products are essentially alcohol suspended in a water-based gel, no substandard products are known to be on the market that "rob" people of their effectiveness.

If you want to provide better protection to

your kids against colds, flu or other viruses, consider the following:

- Donate a large commercial-size container of hand sanitizer to your child's daycare or classroom.
- Provide your child with a personal-size sanitizer to keep in his/her backpack.
- Stock hand sanitizers in your bathrooms at home and have your kids add their use to their hand-washing routine.
- Hand sanitizers can dry out skin. Be careful!



After-School Snacks

It's a scene that plays out daily in homes everywhere. Kids come in from school and head straight to the kitchen looking for something to eat. How can you make sure your child gets nourished but still has room for a healthy dinner?

Create a List of Healthy Options

Come up with a list of healthy options together and be sure to include a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. While a slice of

★ And to Wash it Down...

Don't offer soda or other sugary drinks at snack time. It's best to stick with water or skim or low-fat milk. If you'll be eating dinner soon, offer water, as milk can be pretty filling.

cake or some potato chips shouldn't be forbidden foods, such low-nutrient

snacks shouldn't be on the everyday after-school menu.

Make Healthy Snacks an Easy Choice

Don't expect kids—even teens—to cut up their own veggie sticks. It's just too much bother, especially when they're hungry. Kids are more inclined to eat what's handy. That's where you come in. Make healthy snacks easily available by packing them in their



lunchboxes or backpacks or by having them visible and ready-to-eat at home.

Older kids often like making their own snacks, so provide the ingredients and a few simple instructions. If dinner is just around the corner, consider allowing a "first course," such as a small salad or side vegetable while you finish preparing the family meal.

For further information visit:

www.kidshealth.org

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Encouraging Your Child's Sense of Humor

A sense of humor can brighten family life. You can blow raspberries on a baby's belly, put on a silly hat and chase a 3-year-old, or pretend to fall into a pile of leaves to amuse a first-grader. As kids grow into preteens and teens, you can share puns and jokes as their sense of what's funny grows more sophisticated.

Laughing together is a way to connect, and a good sense of humor also can make kids smarter, healthier, and better able to cope with challenges. We tend to think of humor as part of our genetic makeup, like blue eyes or big feet. But a sense of humor actually is a learned quality that can be developed in kids, not something they're born with.

Kids with a well-developed sense of humor are happier and more optimistic, have higher self-

esteem, and can handle differences well. Kids who can appreciate and share humor are better liked by their peers and more able to handle the adversities of childhood. And a good sense of humor doesn't just help kids emotionally or socially. Research has shown that people who laugh more are healthier. But most of all, a sense of humor is what makes life fun.

It's never too early to start developing a child's sense of humor. It's important to keep up this encouragement as kids grow. When you're playful and humorous with your child, delighting in silliness and laughter, you help him or her develop a playful and humorous attitude about life.

One of the best ways to do this from the

toddler years on is to spend time every day being receptive to the many opportunities your child gives you to smile or laugh.

What else can you do to encourage your child's sense of humor?

- **Be a humor model.**
- **Take kids' humor seriously.**
- **Teach kids that adults are funny, and that they can be too.**
- **Create a humor-rich environment.**

Above all, humor is social. A key aspect to developing your child's sense of humor is to take time to have fun as a family. Share jokes, play games, and watch funny movies together.



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Teaching Kids Not to Bully

picking on others or been labeled a bully.

As difficult as it may be to process this news, it's important to deal with it right away. Whether the bullying is physical or verbal, if it's not stopped it can lead to more aggressive antisocial behavior and interfere with your child's success in school and ability to form and sustain friendships.

Kids bully for many reasons. Some bully because they feel insecure. Picking on someone who seems emotionally or physically weaker provides a feeling of being more important, popular, or in control. In other cases, kids bully because they simply don't know that it's unacceptable to pick on kids who are different because of size, looks, race, or religion.

In some cases bullying is a part of an ongoing pattern of defiant or aggressive behavior. These kids are likely to need help learning to manage anger and hurt, frustration, or other strong emotions. They may not have the skills they need to cooperate with others. Professional counseling can often help them learn to deal with their feelings, curb their bullying, and improve their social skills.

Some kids who bully at school and in settings with their peers are copying behavior that they see at home. Kids who are exposed to

aggressive and unkind interactions in the family often learn to treat others the same way. And kids who are on the receiving end of taunting learn that bullying can translate into control over children they perceive as weak.

Helping Kids Stop Bullying

Let your child know that bullying is unacceptable and that there will be serious consequences at home, school, and in the community if it continues. Be sure to:

- Take bullying seriously.
- Teach kids to treat others with respect and kindness.
- Learn about your child's social life.
- Encourage good behavior.
- Set a good example.

Try to understand the reasons behind your child's behavior. In some cases, kids bully because they have trouble managing strong emotions like anger, frustration, or insecurity. In other cases, kids haven't learned cooperative ways to work out conflicts and understand differences.

Starting at Home

When looking for the influences on your child's behavior, look first at what's happening at home. Kids who live with yelling, name-calling, putdowns, harsh criticism, or physical anger from a sibling or parent/caregiver may act that out in other settings.

It's important to keep your own behavior in check too. Watch how you talk to your kids, and how you react to your own strong emotions when they're around. There will be situations that warrant discipline and constructive criticism. But take care not to let that slip into name-calling and accusations. If you're not pleased with your child's behavior, stress that it's the behavior that you'd like your child to change, and you have confidence that he or she can do it.

If your family is going through a stressful life event that you feel may have contributed to your child's behavior, reach out for help from the resources at school and in your community.

Getting Help

To help a child stop bullying, talk with teachers, guidance counselors, and other school officials who can help you identify situations that lead to bullying and provide assistance.

As difficult and frustrating as it can be to help kids stop bullying, remember that bad behavior won't just stop on its own. Think about the success and happiness you want your kids to find in school, work, and relationships throughout life, and know that curbing bullying now is progress toward those goals.

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Testing for Radon in Child Care Settings
How to Control and Remove Biological Pollutants
Controlling for Combustion Pollutants

Spanish

Promoviendo Actividades de Alfabetización en Centros de Lugares Infantiles



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