



Families Matter

Children and Self Care—Lessons for Life

We all need to learn how to take care of ourselves and performing self-care activities with our children is an excellent way to do what you should be doing for yourself, while modeling healthy lifestyle choices for your children.

1. Take Care of Your Body

Try exercising together, shooting some hoops or playing catch. You can even do de-stress activities like deep breathing, long walks, or yoga. The point is to build a regular routine of physical self-care that maintains good health and balance.

2. Have Some Fun Together

Laughter can lower stress levels! Play a funny game; like Mad Libs, watch a comedy, or have a pillow fight. When you have fun together, make sure you are fully engaged and focused on the experience you are sharing with your child.

3. Enjoy the Great Outdoors

Getting outside with your kids shows them how a change in environment can be calming and help you find a sense of balance when you become stressed.

Go to the park or complete homework together in the back yard.

4. Help Others/Volunteer

Research shows the emotions and behaviors connected to giving to others are associated with greater well-being, health, and longevity. Teaching your kids the value of kindness is an important life lesson. Try volunteering at a local charity or in a church. Ask your kids to pick clothes and toys to donate, or give food to a local food pantry.

5. Decide what Works for You and Your Kids

Every once in a while sit down with your kids and brainstorm activities you want to do which promote self-care. Try to do activities you both like to do, or activities you can do at the same time. The important thing is make it meaningful to both of you!

Source: <https://www.uaex.edu/health-living/personal-family-well-being/navigating-life-blog/>



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POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY EXTENSION

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"When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it's our job to share our calm, not join their chaos." - L.R. Knost

When children are upset, we sometimes find ourselves getting caught up in their emotion. We can't find the right words to say. We react with them and nothing gets resolved.

Instead, let's lead children through their emotions. Let's teach them how to handle their feelings with

10 emotional coaching phrases.

EMOTIONAL COACHING PHRASES

1. It's okay to be upset. It's good to let it out.
2. I hear you. I'm here for you. I'll stay with you.
3. It's okay to feel how you feel. It is not okay to _____."
4. How you feel right now won't last forever. It's okay to feel how you are feeling. It will pass.
5. Let's take a breath, take a break, sit down, pause for a minute...
6. You are good and kind.
7. I'll be over here when you need me.
8. Let's have a Do-over!
9. What can we learn from this? What is the lesson in this?
10. You'll remember next time.

Adapted from Nurture & Thrive,
"10 Emotion-Coaching Phrases to Use When Your Child is Upset" by Ashley Soderlund.



Make Family Mealtime a Priority!
Kids who eat a meal with their families learn and get along better with peers better

Simple Tips:

- Shop your Pantry and Freezer
- Have Theme Dinners
- Do Simple Sides
- Plan Leftovers
- Utilize the Web and Friends!

Shop your Pantry and Freezer First: Before you head off to the store. Look to see what items you have on hand and what ingredients you might need to turn those into meals.

Theme Nights: Dinners come together faster when you don't have to think about the parts. Themes like; Mexican, pasta, Asian, etc. help you come up with a main dish and quick sides to help round out your meal plan.

Simple Sides: Make sure you keep your side dishes simple. Utilize quick cooking methods for vegetables like microwave steaming, or throw in a pan and bake it items. A good guide is two vegetables or a fruit and vegetable.

Plan Leftovers: Make more of certain items to use as leftovers or "planned overs" later in the week.

Fun with Weather:

Weather Chart

Each day for the month of April chart the weather. Was it sunny, rainy, cold, warm. Ask your child for as many descriptive words as they can think of about the day!!!

Measuring rainfall

On a rainy day, set out a container to measure the rainfall. Measure how much rain fell that day. Continue to measure the rain each day, and record for a few weeks. Ask your child to predict how much water will be collected. Ask at the beginning of the day and ask when it is raining. Did their answer change?

Plug and UnPlug— As a Family



In attempting to ensure quality family time, it is often suggested that we unplug and interact together without the distraction of screens (TV, cell phones, Computers, etc.) This sort of time is necessary, and there are lots of ways a family can be together without screens. However, it is hard to compete with this digital age, especially in times of physical social distancing.

Setting limits for screen time, especially for younger children, as well as setting rules for how and when screens are used are necessary boundaries. It is important for adults and kids to have time limits on screen time as well as balance between family/alone, indoor/outdoor, active/calm throughout the day.

It is also important to remember that all screen time is not created equal! Sometimes, a screen can be helpful in bringing family together; it's all in how you use it.

Kid's Room Cleaning Trick

Make it easier to put away, harder to get out

The premier rule for efficient children's storage? Make it easier to put something away than it is to get it out. For example, store picture books as a flip-file, standing upright in a plastic dishpan. The child flips through the books, makes his selection, and tosses the book in the front of the dishpan when he's done. Compare a traditional bookcase, where little fingers can pull down a whole shelf faster than they can replace one book. Build the effort into the getting out, not the putting away.

EGGcitement!

Homemade Easter Egg Dye

If you run out of Easter egg dye at the last minute, don't despair. Just pull out a package of powdered drink mix, mix with 2/3 cup warm water and place hard-boiled eggs into the mixture. Let them sit until they reach the color you desire, then remove and let dry.

One-Step Pink Eggs

If you want pink eggs for the Easter basket, simply add beet juice to the water when boiling the eggs.

Easter Egg Facts:

Dyed eggs can be eaten— if they have been kept in a refrigerator, and not hidden for more than 2 hours!

It is easier to peel a hard boiled egg if they are older (closer to the use by date)

so buy your Easter Eggs at the beginning of April.

Make sure the eggs you color aren't cracked. If any crack during dyeing or decorating, throw them away.

Easy Deviled Eggs

6 hard-cooked eggs
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon
prepared mustard
1/2 teaspoon salt
Paprika

Slice eggs in half lengthwise; remove yolks and set whites aside. In a small bowl, mash yolks with a fork. Add the mayonnaise, sugar, vinegar, mustard and salt; mix well. Stuff or pipe into egg whites. Sprinkle with paprika (optional) . Refrigerate until serving.

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POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY
EXTENSION



Celebrate Earth Day April 22

Mini- Garden Help your child start a Mini-Garden. The garden could be outside in a small section of the yard, or it could be inside in an old flower pot that sits in a sunny window. Let your child choose one or two kinds of seeds to plant. Have your child water and take care of the garden as it grows.

Nature Walk Take your child on a walk through a park or the woods. Walk slowly and stop frequently to encourage your child to look around carefully. What does he or she see? If you stand quietly in one place you might have a chance to see a bird or squirrel. Help your child find words to describe what they see and hear.

Rainy Day Chalk Art On a rainy day, or just after a rainstorm while the sidewalk is still wet, take your child outside to draw chalk pictures. You and your child will love the new, brilliant colors the chalk makes on the wet pavement.

Quick Fix Recipes

Twilley Whirly Pizza Rolls

13.8 ounce tube refrigerated pizza dough
½ cup pizza sauce
½ cup shredded Italian-mix cheese, divided
1 cup fresh baby spinach leaves

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Unroll dough from tube. Spread pizza sauce on top.
2. Sprinkle with half of cheese and top with spinach leaves. Roll up, starting with short end.
3. Cut into 8 pieces, then lay pieces flat in a greased pie tin. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and bake 22 to 25 minutes or until golden brown.

Sticky Chinese Chicken

1 cup finely crushed garlic & onion - flavored croutons
¼ cup cornstarch
2 tablespoons light soy sauce
2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
¼ cup canola oil

1. In a large bowl, whisk crouton crumbs and cornstarch. Stir in the soy sauce. Add chicken and toss until completely coated. Cover; refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
2. Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add chicken and cook, covered, for 20 to 25 minutes until nice and crispy and cooked through.

Turn about 4 or 5 times during cooking to avoid burning.
Drain on paper towels.
3. Serve immediately with additional soy sauce, chopped scallions, cooked rice and steamed sugar snap peas, if desired.

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