

STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES

Family and Consumer Science News

Help children understand their feelings during parents' divorce

Going through a divorce can be stressful for parents. It is also stressful for the children. While parents need to take care of and manage their personal stress, they also need to be mindful of the emotions their children are feeling.

Katey Masri, manager of Oklahoma State University Extension's Co-Parenting for Resilience program, said children of all ages may experience different emotions during this time.

"It's not unusual for parents to notice significant behavioral and emotional changes in their children, especially within the first year after a divorce," Masri said. "While some of these issues will resolve with time, the child's sense of loss and emotional trauma can last for many years."

It's important for parents to put their own feelings aside and make themselves approachable to their children. Parents often get caught up in their own stress and distraction and may not realize the children don't want to reach out to them. Masri encourages parents to actively invite their children to express themselves and let them know it's safe to talk about their feelings.

"Sometimes a child's emotions are directed at the parent, and that can be tough to hear as the parent," she said. "It also can be hard to hear children express good things a co-parent does,



but it's important for children to express their emotions."

An activity that can help children express their feelings is talking about the day's high and low points. Encourage children to talk about the lowest part of their day but be sure to follow that up with having them talk about the best part of the day, too.

It can be beneficial, especially for younger children, to name their emotions. There are more feelings than simply happy or sad. Considering making a "feelings" chart to help kids identify their specific emotions.

Masri said dealing with emotions affects people in different ways. Some people may experience physical symptoms such as stomachaches, headaches or tight muscles.

"Children need to be made aware that their own bodies may react differently in stressful situations. This can help assist them in their ability to cope with the stress earlier and better," she said.

It can be helpful for children to draw their emotions. Another idea to is make paper faces with removable facial features.

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Make various shapes for eyes and mouths for children to express specific emotions. They also can create a feelings box in which they place drawings or written feelings.

“The idea is to put their worries in a safe place so they can take a break from thinking about them,” Masri said.

For older children, use conversation starters to explore feelings. Examples include “Sometimes I worry about ...” or “I’m feeling sad because ...” Another option is to read age-appropriate books about children and emotions.

Being more aware of children’s emotions may require parents to be more aware of their own feelings. Divorce brings a wide range of emotions that shouldn’t be ignored. Seek professional help if necessary.

For more information about children and feelings surrounding divorce, check out OSU Extension fact sheet T-2389.



Summer Veggie Stir-Fry



Ingredients:

- 1 box dry whole-wheat spaghetti
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 3 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 ½ lbs lean pork, fat trimmed cut into strips
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large zucchini, cut into strips
- 2 large bell peppers (any color), cut into strips
- 1 Tbsp sesame seeds

Instructions:

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Set aside.
2. In a small bowl, combine honey, soy sauce, and vinegar.
3. In a large skillet heat oil over medium-high heat. Add pork and cook 4-5 minutes each side or until golden brown. Add garlic and vegetables. Cook another 5 minutes or until they are crisp-tender.
4. Add pasta and soy sauce mixture. Toss to combine.
5. Divide into bowls, top with sesame seeds and serve!

Tips:

Choose lean pork when buying to cut out some fat and calories!

Nutrition Facts: Servings: 8. Amount per serving: Calories: 350; Total fat: 8g; Carbohydrates: 45g; Fiber: 6g; Sugar: 9g; Protein: 28g

For more on this recipe, visit onieproject.org

Five Common Sunscreen Mistakes – And How to Avoid Them

July is UV Awareness Month

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States, affecting one in five Americans in their lifetime. Yet most cases of skin cancer can be prevented by protecting your skin from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. The best way to do this is by seeking shade, wearing protective clothing, and applying a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.

However, in a recent survey, the American Academy of Dermatology found that 65% of people say they often forget to reapply their sunscreen — leaving people vulnerable to dangerous ultraviolet radiation from the sun. For example, the AAD found that only about a third of Americans reapply their sunscreen every two hours while outside. Since sunscreen wears off, incorrect usage can leave you unprotected and susceptible to skin cancer.

To protect your skin and reduce your risk of skin cancer, below are five common sunscreen mistakes — and how to avoid them:

1. **Ignoring the label.** There are a variety of sunscreens on the market. To effectively protect yourself from the sun, the AAD recommends looking for sunscreens that are broad-spectrum, water-resistant and have an SPF of 30 or higher.
2. **Using too little.** Most people only apply 25-50% of the recommended amount of sunscreen. However, to fully cover their body, most adults need about one ounce of sunscreen – or enough to fill a shot glass. Apply enough sunscreen to cover all skin that isn't covered by clothing. Apply the sunscreen 15 minutes before going outdoors, and reapply every two hours while outdoors or after swimming or sweating.
3. **Applying only in sunny weather.** Alarmingly, the AAD found that only about 20% of Americans use sunscreen on cloudy days. However, the sun emits harmful UV rays all year long. Even on cloudy days, up to 80% of UV rays can penetrate your skin. To protect your skin and reduce your risk of skin cancer, apply sunscreen every time you are outside, even on cloudy days.
4. **Using an old bottle.** The FDA requires that all sunscreens retain their original strength for at least three years. Throw out your sunscreen if it's expired or you're unsure how long you've had it. In the future, if you buy a sunscreen that lacks an expiration date, write the purchase date directly on the bottle so that you know when to toss it out.
5. **Relying solely on sunscreen.** Since no sunscreen can block 100% of the sun's UV rays, it's also important to seek shade and wear sun-protective clothing, including a lightweight, long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV protection, when possible. For more effective sun protection, select clothing with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) label.

Sunscreen is the most important skin care product you can use, as it helps prevent sunburn, skin cancer and premature skin aging, including wrinkles and age spots. However, to ensure the best protection for you and your family, it's important to follow the manufacturer's directions before using sunscreen.

If you have questions about sunscreen, including how to select one for you and your family, [talk to a board-certified dermatologist](#).

National Immunization Awareness Month

For more information on National High Blood Pressure E



National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) is an annual observance held in August to highlight the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. For more information visit cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niam/index.html

Family & Consumer Sciences helps communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.



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National Grief Awareness Day

All of us have experienced grief in one way or another throughout our lives. As part of the human experience, grief encompasses the emotions that appear in response to loss. Sorrow and suffering, although painful, are a natural reaction to loss. Whether grieving the death of a loved one, or grieving a relationship, job loss, or other life event, the process of grief is something that comes in waves and is not linear. Every individual has a unique journey through grief, which often includes stages such as denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

National Grief Awareness Day takes place on August 30th each year, with the mission to educate people on grief and create space for loss. The day also offers resources for those experiencing grief and an opportunity to share stories of grief and let others know they are not alone.

Grief doesn't always entail the loss of a life. It can occur through life transitions, changes in identity, and both large and small traumas. You may be grieving a cancer diagnosis and an idea of what you thought your life would look like. Regardless, every type of grief is valid.

There are numerous ways to cope with loss and grief. You can find support through therapy and support groups. Be gentle and patient with yourself as you honor grief, and don't be afraid to ask for help from loved ones. Express yourself through hobbies, art or writing, and come up with ways to process and honor what you've lost.

Grief is like a never-ending ocean. Waves that feel engulfing, waves that can pull you under, and waves that you somehow, can get through. But you are not alone in your grief. In time, the waves will pass, and you will resurface.

Kristen Luft, Caringhouse

Strengthening Oklahoma Families is a bi-monthly publication of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The information given herein is supplied with the understanding no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied.

Dates to Remember

August

- ❖ 3rd - Starlight OHCE Meeting
- ❖ 8th - In-Towners OHCE Meeting
- ❖ 9th - OHCE Executive Meeting
- ❖ 16th - Shahan OHCE Meeting
- ❖ 22nd - Co-Parenting for Resilience (Wagoner County OSU Extension Office)
- ❖ 28th - Pre-registration forms due for Indoor Fair Exhibits
- ❖ 30th - Entry drop off for Indoor Fair Exhibits

September

- ❖ 1st - Baked Goods due (a.m.) for Indoor Fair
- ❖ 1st - Judging of Indoor Exhibits
- ❖ 1st - Exhibit Hall open for Indoor Exhibit Viewing (p.m.)
- ❖ 2nd - Exhibits released
- ❖ 7th - Starlight OHCE Meeting
- ❖ 12th - In-Towners OHCE Meeting
- ❖ 19th - Co-Parenting for Resilience (Wagoner County OSU Extension Office)
- ❖ 20th - Shahan OHCE Meeting

October

- ❖ 5th - Fall Extravaganza
- ❖ 10th - In-Towners OHCE Meeting
- ❖ 18th - Shahan OHCE Meeting
- ❖ 24th - FCS Day on Campus

Wagoner County Groups

In-Towners

2nd Tuesday of Month, 10 a.m.
Yorkshire Village, Wagoner

Shahan

3rd Wednesday of Month, 10 a.m.
Wagoner County Fair Building

Starlight

1st Thursday of month, 7 p.m.
Individual homes



**Say
Yes to FCS**

Attention High School Juniors & Seniors

Save the Date

Say Yes to FCS Day at the OSU Campus

October 24, 2023

Pre-registration is required. Contact the Wagoner County OSU Extension office for more details!

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