Resources for Children's Good Health

FAMILY VOICES®

Bright Futures: Family Matters

Volume 8, Issue 2
Winter 2007

Healthy Homes, Healthy Families

Here's hoping everyone's holiday gifts included the gift of good health. A healthy diet and regular exercise are only part of promoting a healthy lifestyle. It's equally important to make sure our homes are healthy and safe. Here are some tips for promoting family and home health during the winter season. These will help your family not only enjoy a happy new year, but a healthy one too!

Wash Your Hands: Clean hands prevent illness and save lives! One of the easiest, cheapest ways to stay healthy is to wash your hands often. Make sure you and your children wash after using the bathroom, before eating, after playing with pets or pet toys, and after sneezing or blowing your nose, etc. Make it a habit to wash your hands when you first come home. Disease spreads from person to person as well as from object to person. Read the hand-washing primer at www.cdc.gov/cleanhands/ (English) or **en Español** at www.cdc.gov/nceh/vsp/pub/handwashing/spanish.htm.

Home Maintenance: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That goes for maintaining both family and home health. The American Lung Association offers a healthy home maintenance guide with monthly, seasonal and annual recommendations for home health. For example, in winter, be sure to have your heating system inspected, check the batteries in smoke detectors and clean all exhaust fans and vents. Read the entire guide at www.healthhouse.org/maintenanceguide.asp.

Home Safety: Locks on your doors and childproof caps on your medications are two important ways to keep your home and family safe. Statistics say that family members are more likely to have an accident at home than at school or work. Falls inside the home are a leading cause of injury. Read the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development booklet about home health hazards and ways to prevent them at www.hud.gov/offices/lead/helpyourself/ (English **en Español**).

Household fire safety: Home fires are the third leading cause of preventable accidents and deaths. One third of home fires start in the kitchen. Smoking is the leading cause of the 12% of fires that start in bedrooms. 74% of fire-related deaths occur in homes without smoke detectors or where the detectors were not working. It's critical to have working smoke detectors on every floor of your home and to develop and practice an escape plan. There are smoke detectors with strobe lights for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. For a step-by-step guide for creating an escape plan visit www.riskwatch.org/parent_fireburn.html (English) or www.riskwatch.org/pdfs/Fire%20and%20Burn%20Preventionspanish-translated.pdf (**en Español**).

If you use kerosene heaters, wood stoves or fireplaces, read important information about Winter Fires and Safety Tips for the Home at http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-249.pdf.

Asthma and Allergy Triggers: One in 5 people have allergies and 20 million people have asthma; 6.3 million are children and that number is growing. In fact, asthma is the most common chronic childhood disease, and is the 3rd most common reason children younger than 15 years old are hospitalized. For both asthma and allergies, controlling the triggers – things that cause the attacks – reduces the attacks. Dust mites, molds, and second hand smoke are the most common household triggers. Dust mites accumulate in bedding and stuffed animals. Wash bedding often. If your child has stuffed toys, learn about asthma-friendly products at www.healthfinder.gov/news/newsstory.asp?docid=536115.

In winter, closed doors and windows keep in the heat. This also keeps in moisture and provides opportunities for mold to grow. Wipe up spills and air out bathrooms. Learn more about triggers and improving indoor air quality at www.epa.gov/iaq/asthma or call 1-866-No-ATTACKS (English **en Español**).

Gun safety: There is a gun in half of all U.S. homes and half of all gun-related accidents occur in the victim's home; 40% occur in a relative's or friend's home. If you own a gun you need to be responsible for the storing it safely. In general, unload it, lock it up and hide the keys. If your kids see an unsecured weapon, teach them: 1) not to touch, 2) to leave the area, and 3) to tell an adult. Learn more at www.kidsandguns.org.

Poisons: The household items that make our homes pleasant, like plants and cleaning products, can be dangerous for children. Medications that make health conditions more manageable may be harmful to curious children. Lock up household cleaners and keep medications out of reach. Call 9-1-1 if someone is poisoned and not breathing. For other poison emergencies, for questions about poisons and for information about poison prevention, call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1212 or visit www.aapcc.org.

Family Voices is a national grassroots network of families and friends speaking on behalf of children with special health needs. Our children are also part of the wider world of children. With an Improving Understanding of MCH grant, Family Voices works to encourage partnerships between families and professionals for children's good health. **Bright Futures: Family Matters** is a publication to share with your networks. Visit our Family Voices websites at www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org and www.familyvoices.org.

Partners…

The Nemours Foundation is committed to improving children's health and promoting household safety. They support the operation of a children's hospital, health clinics and research programs. In addition, Nemours health experts maintain the **KidsHealth**® website at www.kidshealth.org. This site, in English **en Español**, has parent, kid and teen sections. It's a great place to learn about hot health issues for 2007, physical, emotional and behavioral health, food and exercise, personal safety, household safety and childproofing, accident and injury prevention and much more!

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Family Resource Corner

It's flu season! The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 5 – 20% of the U.S. population gets the flu (influenza) every year; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and about 36,000 people die. The elderly, young children and individuals with special health needs are most at risk. To avoid getting this contagious illness: 1) get a flu shot every year; 2) cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze; 3) wash your hands often and thoroughly. Learn more about flu symptoms and prevention at www.cdc.gov/flu.

Have a case of cabin fever? A visit to the local library might be just the prescription for those winter blues. Libraries are more than places for borrowing books. They are also places to have fun. Many libraries have story and craft times for younger children. In addition, they host book clubs for teens and adults, as well as free lectures and demonstrations. If you don't have Internet access at home, many libraries have connections visitors can use for free. Oftentimes, libraries have passes families can borrow to get free or reduced admissions to museums and zoos. To locate the library in your city or town, visit http://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/tools/.

For more ideas about free, fun family outings visit http://childcare.about.com/od/enrichment/tp/freesummerfun.htm

Add some excitement to winter by jazzing up your diet. For information about seasonal fruits and vegetables, including recipes, visit www.5aday.gov/month/index.html.

Kids Corner – Learn about fire safety with Sparky the Firedog at www.sparky.org.

What's new in research?

If you made a new year's resolution, you're in good company. A December 2006 Marist College Institute Public Opinion Poll (www.maristpoll.marist.edu/usapolls/YR061228.htm) reports that 44% of adults made 2007 New Year's resolutions. The top three resolutions - be a better person, lose weight and stop smoking - were the same for men and women, although the order was different. In a separate study (www.omhrc.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlID=19), Dr. Alan Marlatt, director of the Addictive Behavior and Research Center at the University of Washington in Seattle, found 1) it's easier to begin a new habit than change an old one; 2) tt takes at least 90 days for new habits to become part of a person's daily routine; and 3) you're more likely to keep your resolutions if you tell a friend. So, if you want to quit smoking, you should also begin exercising, and tell your friends so they can help and support you.

Tidbits for the Month

February is National Children's Dental Health month. Learn more about this event, sponsored by the American Dental Association at http://www.ada.org/prof/events/featured/ncdhm.asp#fun

Learn more about promoting your children's oral health, including children with special health needs, at http://www.nidcr.nih.gov/HealthInformation/DiseasesAndConditions/ChildrensOralHealth/ (English **en Español**).

Child Passenger Safety Week - February 11 – 17, 2007. Car accidents are the number one cause of death for children 2 - 14 years old. For more than 20 years, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (www.nhtsa.gov) has promoted the use of child safety seats, booster seats and seat belts. Learn more about the proper use of these life-saving child passenger restraints, and about state and local events planned for this week at www.safecommunities.org/articles/555/1/Child-Passenger-Safety-Week-2007 or call the NHTSA at 1-888-327-4236 (English **en Español**).

Share your Views with Us!

We're looking for feedback about how this newsletter is meeting your needs for information and resources. Please take a few minutes to fill out and fax/mail the attached evaluation form to (617) 399-8325 or complete it online at www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org/feedback.htm.

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This digest is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Health Resources and Services Administration – Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Division of Child, Adolescent and Family Health U93MC0021

Bright Futures: Family Matters Questionnaire (also available at www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org/feedback.htm).

1. **Are you completing this questionnaire from a: (check one)**
   ☐ Family member/parent perspective? ☐ Professional perspective?

2. **Please indicate the overall value of this newsletter:**
   (Not Valuable) *(Very Valuable)*
   1 2 3 4 5

3. **How often do you forward or distribute this newsletter? (check one)**
   ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Regularly

4. **If you forward or distribute this newsletter, approximately how many people are included in this distribution?**
   _____(#)

5. **Do you forward or distribute this newsletter to: (check all that apply)**
   ☐ Families / Family Organizations? ☐ Professionals / Professional Organizations? ☐ N/A

6. **Please indicate, below, the maternal and child health topics in which you are interested (check all that apply):**
   ☐ Child Development
   ☐ Family Information and Support
   ☐ Healthy Sexuality
   ☐ Nutritional Health
   ☐ Physical Activity
   ☐ Safety and Injury Prevention
   ☐ Oral Health
   ☐ Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being
   ☐ Community Relationships and Resources
   ☐ Health & Wellness

   Other: _____

7. **Please indicate, below, the populations in which you are interested: (check all that apply)**
   ☐ Infants
   ☐ Children
   ☐ Teens/youth
   ☐ Children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN)
   ☐ Families

8. **Please tell us what you think of these newsletter features:**

	Not Useful	*Useful*	*Very Useful*	*No Opinion*
Main Article	☐	☐	☐	☐
Partner Highlight	☐	☐	☐	☐
Family Resource Corner	☐	☐	☐	☐
What's New in Research	☐	☐	☐	☐
en Español Highlights	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. **What do you find most helpful about this newsletter?**

10. **What could be improved or changed?**

THANK YOU!

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