

CONNECTIONS

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Healthy Eating Routines

Feeding is one of a parent's most important jobs. It helps children grow healthy and strong, but meal and snack times also give parents a chance to help their children feel important and loved; understood and respected; and learn to trust that others will care for them.

♦Remember: Meals are about more than food. They are a time to connect with your child. Talk with her and don't let her eat alone. Children who eat dinner with their family tend to have less weight problems, eat healthier and do better in school.

♦Establish regular meal and snack times beginning when your child is 9 to 12 months old. This helps children learn



to link their feelings of hunger with eating at regular times across the day.

♦Offer 3 to 4 healthy food choices at each meal—among those your child likes. Research shows that children will choose a healthy diet when they are offered a selection of healthy foods.

♦Don't force your baby or toddler to eat. This often results in children refusing the food and eating less.

♦Offer your child a healthy snack

between meals if you think he is hungry — so if he doesn't eat much at a meal, he doesn't have to wait long to eat again.

♦Limit juice to no more than 4 to 6 ounces a day. Juice has lots of sugar. Add water to the juice or offer fresh fruit instead. Only give juice in a cup.

♦Be flexible about letting little ones get up from the table when they are done. Babies and toddlers can't sit for long. Plan for three meals a day of about 10 to 20 minutes and two to three snacks of about 5 to 15 minutes.

♦Don't give up on new foods. You may have to offer your child a new food 10 to 15 times before he will eat it. Encourage your child to touch the new food, lick and taste it. Let him see you eat it. Dipping into ketchup, salsa, yogurt can make a new food familiar.

♦Turn off the TV (computers, etc.) at mealtimes. The television can distract children from eating and takes time away from talking as a family.

♦If you are concerned about your child's weight or activity level, talk to your child's health care provider.

From "Healthy From the Start" by Zero to Three



Jeanine Fitzgerald returns February 23rd to present on Emotions Coaching.
 Look inside for more information on this and other special events.

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Published by Maggie Ollerhead & Joan F. MacDonald

Hull Early Childhood Advisory Council

Community Partnerships for Children

Budget Process & Advocacy

As many of you are aware, the Governor released his proposed budget for next fiscal year. He is proposing level funding for the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant (CFCE) line item 3000-7050, formerly know as Mass. Family Network and CPC line. In April the House will release their version and then in May the Senate will release their version.

Throughout May & June the House and Senate will negotiate a compromise budget for final approval by the Governor.

This years CFCE grant receivers have been invited to attend Advocacy Day, which is sponsored by a large variety of children's organizations.

This year Advocacy Day will be held on February 11, 2010 from 10 am to 12 pm at the statehouse.

We realize that going to Boston with/or without children can be difficult, so we are asking that you to contact Senator Hedlund and/or Representative Bradley and thank them for their continued support of level funding for this line item/program. We want them to help us continue to provide a variety of programs to families in Hull. Both of our local legislators offer office hours either in Hull or Hingham each month if you would prefer to visit them. Their contact information is available at mass.gov on the web.

From the CPC Coordinator's Desk.....

By Maggie Ollerhead - mollerhead@town.hull.ma.us

Please read the article on the left for information about the upcoming budget process and how you can help.

Power Struggles and Giving Choices

Sometime after the age of 18 months, children begin to want to express more and more independence, which although is developmentally appropriate, causes concern among parents. Learning to pick your battles is one important technique to lessening conflicts. Another one is to begin to teach your child how to make choices and then give them any variety of choices to lessen the amount of time that you have to make a specific command. For example, when it is time to get dressed giving the choice of "do you want to wear your jeans or your red pants today?" eliminates discussion to those two choices.

A common power struggle often involves leaving someplace, for example: a play date or preschool. A choice in this situation can be "It's time to go, should we walk or jump to the car?" If your child continues to protest it can be "your choice is to walk out like a big girl/boy or for me to carry you out" and then follow through.

Lastly, acknowledging your child's feelings of disappointment, sadness or anger with statements such as " I know you are sad that we have to leave but we have to go now" These techniques can also reduce the extended discussion that many parents get involved in.



Ways to Cherish Your Child

Say "I love you" every day * Give praise often * Make time to be together * Discipline with love and consistently * Delight in your child's individuality * Share hugs * Establish family traditions for everyday and special times * speak directly and listen attentively * schedule your child's check-ups & immunizations on time * help your child learn from their mistakes * be patient* remember to smile.



Hull Family Network

Note from the HFN Coordinator:

Joan F. MacDonald, jmacdonald@town.hull.ma.us

We have been offering new playgroup sessions every 6 weeks this year. The reason for this is to ensure that families on the waitlist would not have to wait too long for a playgroup. Winter 1 playgroup session will end on February 11th and the Winter 2 playgroup session will begin on February 22nd. The playgroup flyer is included in this month's newsletter with both the new schedule for playgroup and information on how to register. Joan will draw the lottery on Wednesday, February 17th beginning at 11 a.m. and families will be contacted after that time with information on which playgroup they got into. We look forward to seeing families either in playgroup or at one of our special events this month.

Loving Without Smothering



It's hard to be a parent. Sometimes all the advice from "experts" can make you worry that you're not doing enough. This guilt can make you over-protective and over-directive of your child.

Throughout a child's life, they and you will strive to balance how independent they will be. This balancing act begins at around 8 months when they first learn they can crawl away from you.

They enjoy seeing how far they can go, but then quickly become scared, realizing that they need you. This struggle with independence continues well into adulthood and is the source of many parent-child difficulties.

Give your child a chance to be her own person. When she is a year old, this means giving her a chance to explore her environment: to get stuck crawling under the chair and **then** to allow her to figure out how to get out. Giving children choices in what they wear, eat and play with allows them to express an opinion in a safe manner when you give age appropriate choices ("Do you want a banana or grapes for snack?").

Don't do things for him that he can do himself. Praise and encourage the effort not always the finished product. Better to let your child learn that he can make some of his throws into the basketball hoop then to pick him up and have him get all of them.

Expect her to take responsibilities for herself, as she is able. This helps her learn to be responsible for her own actions. This can be as simple as putting her clothes in the hamper, placing his coat on a low hook once he learns to take it off. Allowing your child some time to try to figure out a toy or puzzle before you jump in and offer help. Asking them how they think something could be fixed or done gives your child a chance to problem solve and goes a long way to learning independence.



February is National Dental Health Month

Good dental care begins before children's first teeth emerge.

- ◆ Clean a baby's gums by wiping them with a damp wash cloth
- ◆ Never put a baby to bed with a bottle containing juice, milk or other sugar containing liquid-water only.
- ◆ Begin to brush a baby's teeth with water as soon as they emerge. After a child can spit, begin to use toothpaste.



**Mama Steph
is coming to the
Hull Family
Network
on February 16th
@ 10:30 a.m.
Children ages birth
to 5 years old are
welcome to attend**

HULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Check our website for additional
events and information at
www.town.hull.ma.us
click on the Hull Schools link

This newsletter is a
collaboration of
Hull Family Network
&
Community Partnerships for
Children

Sponsored by grants from the
Massachusetts Department of Early
Education and Care

What is the Hull Family Network?

The Hull Family Network supports all parents and caregivers who have children prenatal through age three. Our goal is to help parents create and maintain a healthy family environment as well as to promote family well being through parent education and community support.

Funded by the Mass. Dept. of Early Education and Care through a grant to the Hull Public Schools, the Hull Family Network provides playgroups, parent education workshops, parent support groups, family activities, and information on parenting and community resources. By providing family recreational activities and playgroups, we hope to help parents build connections that will extend beyond the HFN Center and be a support to them. By providing parent education workshops, support groups, and having an extensive parenting lending library, we hope to help parents enhance their child-rearing skills.

Our programs are free to all residents of the town of Hull who are pregnant or have children through the age of three. Most of our programs are offered at our center which is located at 7 Hadassah Way. We are open Monday-Friday 8:30- 2:30, and Tuesday until 7:30 p.m. and are always happy to meet a new family.

Blast-off Rocket Candy Card

Your child will lift his classmates' spirits into the stratosphere with this valentine made from a Hershey's Kiss and Life Savers candy.

MATERIALS:

Scissors

Lightweight colored paper for the body and the flame (we used a 3 1/4-inch pink square for the body and a 3-inch orange square for the flame)

Double-stick tape

A roll of round candies (we used Life Savers candy)

A foil-wrapped Hershey's Kiss

Marker

Time needed: Under 1 Hour

1. For the body, cut the paper to fit around the roll of candy, including a bit of overlap. Tape the paper to the roll.
2. Cut the tail flames and include a 1/4-inch tab, as shown below. Snip the tab in half along the solid line, fold the 2 flaps in opposite directions, and tape the flame to one end of the candy roll.
3. Tape a wrapped chocolate kiss to the other end.
4. Use a marker to write your message on the rocket or the flames.

Tips: Write the recipient's name on the flames shooting out the back.

