

CONNECTIONS

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Back to School Sleep Routines

Whether your child is starting school for the first time or entering his last year of high school, one thing that many children have to deal with is getting on a good sleep schedule. Not getting enough sleep is an important cause of school performance problems, leading to attentional and behavioral problems. So it is important to encourage good sleep habits for children of all ages.

For younger children who are still taking naps and are starting a full day pre-school or kindergarten, the adjustment in their sleep habits can be almost as big as the whole issue of starting school.

If you figure that the average 5 year old needs about 11 hours of sleep in a day, if your child was taking a 1 or 2 hour nap during the day and only sleeping 9 or 10 hours at night, you now have to shift the whole 11 hours to nighttime. Making this shift in sleep routine can be hard, and you will likely have a few days where he is overtired and irritable.

Your first step is going to be having him give up his nap. If he is used to sleeping in, you will also have to begin waking him up earlier. Doing both of these steps around the same time in a cold turkey approach is probably better than a more gradual approach

of shorter naps, etc. Lastly, you will have to get him used to going to bed earlier.

Giving up his nap time and waking him up earlier might not be too hard, but shifting to an earlier bedtime may take some doing. A gradual approach of moving his bedtime 10-15 minutes earlier every few days is usually easier than making a big jump of an hour or two.

Of course, if he is very tired and wants to go to bed earlier, then that would be fine. Once you start giving up naps and/or waking him up earlier, many kids will naturally get tired earlier and want to go to bed at an earlier bedtime.

Keep in mind that 'bedtime' here is defined as the time that your child actually falls asleep. If it takes 10-20 minutes before your child falls asleep once you start your bedtime routine, add that time to his 'bedtime' which will now be earlier.

So that it doesn't make his first day of school any more difficult than it has to be, it is best to get your child on the sleep routine he will have once school starts as soon as possible and at least a few weeks before school starts. During this time, it is best to keep to as strict a routine as possible, with the same bedtime and wake up time each day, even on weekends.



Check the calendar for up-coming events



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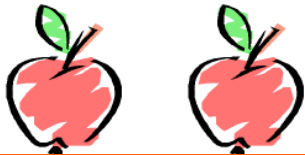
Published by Maggie Ollerhead
And Joan F. Macdonald

Community Partnerships for Children

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

By Maggie Ollerhead -
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School is back in session and there are still a few CPC Scholarships available. If your child is just starting preschool and you are not sure if you qualify for a scholarship, please ask your child's teacher for information or call me at (781) 925-4400 x1120.



How can I tell if my child is adjusting to daycare or preschool?

On the way home, ask your child what was fun or special about the day. Ask which kids she likes playing with. (Don't ignore the negative, though: If she hints that she doesn't like something or someone, encourage her to tell you about it.) If your child isn't forthcoming, don't pester. Just stay open to anything your child wants to say. Take every opportunity to visit the center or school and to have a friendly chat with the adults in charge. Instead of telling them how you think your child is getting along, ask their opinions and show that you're open to suggestions on how you might help your child have the best possible experience.

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE

Do you have a 3, 4, or 5 year old?

If you are a working parent with a preschool aged child, you may be eligible for scholarship assistance in childcare services through **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN**

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for a scholarship parents/guardians must:

- ◆ Be a resident of Hull
- ◆ Have a preschool age child
- ◆ Work either full or part-time
- ◆ Be income eligible based on family size.

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>Yearly Income</u>
2	\$30,378
3	\$37,526
4	\$44,674
5	\$51,822
6	\$58,970

Income Eligibility is determined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts sliding fee scale. Family income should fall at or below state level.

Children may receive a subsidy for full or part-day scholarships at several community programs. If you believe your income falls within these guidelines, kindly contact Maggie Ollerhead at 925-4400 x1120 for a scholarship application.



Hull Family Network

From the HFN Coordinator's Desk.....

By Joan F. MacDonald - jmacdonald@town.hull.ma.us

After the heat wave this summer, it is nice to feel that fall is in the air. Older kids are going back to school, preschools are opening, and the Family Network is up and running in its new location at the Jacobs Elementary School. If you missed the Open House and are not scheduled for a fall group, call and make arrangements to see the new space or come to a drop-in and play. If you need directions to the new location please give us a call at our new phone number, 781-925-4400 x1108. We hope to see everyone soon.

Use rhyming activities to get your child ready for reading

Rhyming teaches children to listen for word and letter sounds, a key pre-reading skill. To teach rhyming to your child:

1. **Get a book of rhymes**, such as *Mother Goose*, and a noisemaker, such as beans in a bandage box.
2. **Read a rhyme** to your child.
3. **Shake the noisemaker** each time you say a rhyming word.
4. **Have your child take** a turn shaking the noisemaker when she hears a rhyming word.



Time to Play?

Experts agree that playing is a child's most important work. It's how children grow and learn. Play teaches social and problem-solving skills. It builds children's imaginations. It helps them develop physically. Unfortunately, children's lives are becoming more and more scheduled as parents feel the pressure to have children experience every activity that may benefit them.

To help your child reap the wonderful benefits of play:

- * Don't overschedule your child. Make sure school-aged children have at least one hour of free playtime each day. Younger children need more since play is their learning time.
- * Show your interest. Children play longer when parents are interested, but don't direct the play. Allow them to freely explore (do assist them to persist through harder tasks).
- * Don't redirect dramatic or negative play. Children use play to let out feelings they can't express in real life. It's good to let them work through these emotions in safe play environments.
- * Stretch your child's imagination by asking open-ended questions like, "What will you be serving at the tea party?"

From the Parent Institute February 2001

Use a Kitchen Timer to Teach Your Child About Sharing

It's not easy for young children to share. They often see their toys and belongings as a physical part of themselves.

One way to encourage a child to begin to share is through this time-sharing strategy.

When children are squabbling over a toy, you play referee. Ask the children to draw straws. The child who selects the longest straw gets to play with the toy first. Set a timer for two minutes. (It can be longer for older children.) Reassure the second child she can play with the toy shortly.

When the buzzer goes off, give the toy to the second child for the same amount of time. (Don't be surprised if the child has forgotten she wanted it!)

Busy Hands = Happy Hands

It's tough keeping preschoolers and toddlers occupied while older siblings do homework. To prevent fights and meltdowns, give your little one an assignment, too! Keep your junk mail over to the side and get it out during homework. While your younger child is busy opening envelopes, her big sister can work in peace.

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

A collaboration of
Hull Family Network
&
Community Partnerships
for Children

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.

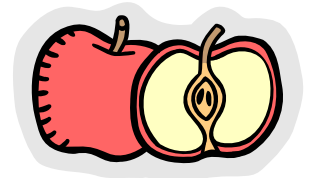
Our programs are free to all residents of the town of Hull who are pregnant or have children through the age of three. Most of our programs are offered at our center which is located at 180 Harborview Road. We are open Monday-Friday 8:30- 2:30, and Tuesday until 7:30 p.m. and are always happy to meet a new family.

Apple Smiles Recipe

*Make a fun snack with this
apple smiles recipe.*

Ingredients:

- ◆ Apples
- ◆ Peanut Butter
- ◆ Miniature Marshmallows



Instructions:

Cut apples into wedges. Smear peanut butter on one side of 2 wedges. Stick a few marshmallows on the peanut butter on one of the apple wedges and top with the other apple wedge - peanut butter side down. When you look at this it looks like a smile (the red part of the apple are the lips and the marshmallows are the teeth!)