

CONNECTIONS

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Are your Plastic Food Storage Containers Safe?

Over the last several months Target, Wal-Mart, K-mart, Sears and more have begun to remove all bottles, sippy-cups and other food storage containers containing PVC plastics. PVC is found in many plastic storage containers and plastic cling wrap. In addition another plastic chemical Bisphenol A (BPA) which is also commonly found in many plastic baby bottles, "sport" water bottles, some clear plastic cutlery and clear plastic sippy-cups.

BPA is a chemical that mimics the action of the human hormone estrogen. A Center for Disease Control Study detected BPA in the urine of 95% of the adults sampled. Scientists have measured BPA in the blood of pregnant women, in umbilical cord blood and in the placenta, all at levels demonstrated in animals to alter development. Adverse effects include: early onset of puberty, changes in hormone levels, increased prostate size, decreased sperm production, altered immune function and behavioral effects including



hyperactivity, increased aggressiveness, impaired learning and other changes in behavior.

Early in life exposure to PVC, such as during pregnancy and infancy, is implicated in impaired male sperm quality, reduced testosterone production and genital defects in boys, premature birth, early puberty in girls and higher risks of asthma.

It is recommended that you only use plastics that are labeled with the recycling numbers 1,2,4 and 5 and that you avoid 3,6 & 7 (unless the 7 is labeled as other bio-based). When you are using any plastics, do not heat them in the microwave or add warm/hot food or drinks into them as that will cause the chemicals to leach into the foods. Do not place plastic bottles in a warmer or microwave. Discard plastic containers that have scratches or a cloudy, crackled appearance. Remove all plastic wrap from food before heating it in the microwave.

Information for this article came from The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, one of the 2 articles is available at the Hull Family Network



**Happy Father's Day!!!
Hull Family Network Summer Playgroup Schedule is enclosed; save it for registration day, June 16th**

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Published by Maggie Ollerhead & Joan F. MacDonald

Community Partnerships for Children

Remind Your Child To Stay With You In Busy, Unfamiliar Places

Summer exploring demands a different kind of discipline than you may practice in the safe and familiar confines of your home or yard.

And as your child gets older she may think she's all grown up. But young kids need to stay with or near a parent when they are out. Be sure to:

- ◆ Be hands on. Tell your child when you are in a place that she *must* hold your hand - such as crossing a street or entering a crowd.
- ◆ Be "eyes on." If you are at a playground, teach your child to stay where she can see you and you can see her, at all times.
- ◆ Pick a safe spot or person that your child can go to if lost. A safe person could be a person in uniform or an employee. A safe spot could be on a bench, near a sign, or inside a store - in sight, out of traffic and away from water.

From The Parent Institute May 2008

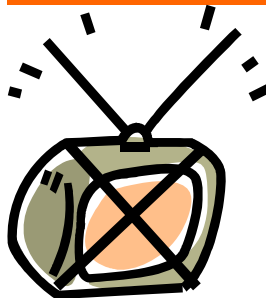


From the CPC Coordinator's Desk.....

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

Thank you to all the families who participated in the monthly Pajama Story Hours and the annual Pizza, Play and Learn. This year, in addition to our regular Pajama Story Hours we added two events that incorporated the Hull Public Schools current curriculum. "Meet Mat Man" was held in April and focused on the writing curriculum used at the Jacob School called "Handwriting Without Tears." In May the children had fun on "Math Night", which incorporated the Everyday Math curriculum. Next year we are planning on adding more of these events to get the children used to learning useful skills while still having fun!

Don't Let The Television Take Over Your Child's Summer



During the school year, you probably structure your child's routine around the time she spends in preschool. But summer's coming. What will occupy the hours your child will not be in school? Guard against filling the time gap with television and other screen-based activities. It is important to limit these activities in summer as well as during the school year because:

- ◆ Too much TV and computer time rob your child of a great summer gift - nice weather and long days she could spend in active play.
- ◆ Extra TV and screen time now creates a bad habit you may struggle to break in the fall.

Keep your preschooler's summer screen time in check with these tips:

- ◆ Allow no more than two hours of total screen time per day. Keep track of how much time your child spends in front of the TV or computer with a timer or a chart.
- ◆ Give your child a job when you are busy instead of sitting her in front of the TV. Have her sort socks, pick up toys or help you put lightweight groceries away.
- ◆ Create an "I'm Bored Box." With your child, make a list of fun activities that she can do all by herself. Activities can include things such as coloring, fortifying items, looking at a book, playing with puppets. Stock all of the items she'll need for the tasks in the box. The next time your child is bored, pull out the box instead of turning on the television!

Hull Family Network

Note from the HFN Coordinator:

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

A giant thank-you for all the heart-felt words of support and praise you gave the Hull Family Network program by taking the time to advocate to our local legislators. We are moving forward with plans for the summer and fall with the expectation that your advocacy will be effective.

Recently, a mother who attends playgroups brought in the article on page one regarding plastics. I was astounded while reading it and I am quickly replacing plastic items in my household with glass and only using wax paper and foil. I wonder about the increase in many medical and learning problems and how much of a role plastic has played in them. I hope that you will take the time to educate yourself further for the sake of your children and your grandchildren's health.

The Hull Family Network is moving to the newly renovated Jacobs Elementary School. We currently do not have an actual moving date, but anticipate it to be near the end of July. During this time, we will need to make some alternative arrangements for playgroups and will keep enrolled participants informed. For those of you who do not attend summer playgroups, we look forward to welcoming you to our new space in September.

The Importance of Fathers

Happy Father's Day to all the dads who take the time and effort to be there for their children. Research strongly supports the importance of involvement by fathers or a father figure in a child's growth and development.

Positive outcomes for children with INVOLVED fathers include being:

- more likely to get A's, enjoy school, participate in extracurricular activities.
- less likely to repeat a grade.
- more ambitious, competent, self-protective & self-reliant.
- more self-confident with respect to their respective male/female identities.
- less susceptible to peer pressure and having higher self-esteem.



There are many websites and organizations out there to support fathers in this most important of all jobs, parenting. Some include: www.fathersresourcecenter.org positive fathering suggestions 800-515-dads.

www.beafanofyourkid.org tips on positive fathering.

www.parentingcoalition.org guidance in making parenthood a priority.

www.damag.com topics for men with kids.

Call the family network for more resources, suggestions for books or a copy of the guide in which this information came from.

More on Plastic Baby Bottles & Sippy Cups

Avoid:

Polycarbonate product

Bottles: Avent; Dr. Brown's; Evenflo (clear); First Years; Playtex Vent Aire; Sassy; Tupperware

Sippy Cups: Gerber Suzy's Zoo & Sippy Snacker; Gerber Soft Starter

Safer Alternatives:

Non-polycarbonate

Bottles: Evenflo glass or pastel polyethylene plastic; Gerber polypropylene opaque plastic; medula breast milk polypropylene storage bottles and polyethylene storage bags; disposable bottle systems with polyethylene plastic inserts (e.g. Playtex nurser or drop-ins)

Sippy Cups: Avent Magic Cup; Evenflo cups (inner lining); first years take & toss; Gerber Color Change; Sport Fun Cup; Playtex Sipster; Big Sipster & Quick Straw

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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
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Hull Family Network
&
Community Partnerships for
Children

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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.

Make a Baseball Wristband

Lead off the season with this homemade hit: a stitched leather bracelet that'll complete your little slugger's uniform. When you head to the craft store for materials, be sure to pick up an inexpensive 1/8-inch hole punch.

CRAFT MATERIALS:

Two 6 1/4 by 3/4-inch strips of leather
White fabric paint template
Red cotton cord Pencil
1/8-inch hole punch Hole-punch
Ruler and craft knife Fabric glue
Red 1/2-inch shank button
Time needed: About 1 Hour



1. Paint one side of each strip of leather and let the paint dry. Lay the hole-punch template over the painted side of one strip and use a pencil to poke through the circles and two Xs on the paper, making marks on the leather.
2. Remove the template. Use a 1/8-inch hole punch to make holes at each of the 30 circle marks.
3. Using a ruler as a guide and a craft knife (a parent's job), cut a slit from X to X.
4. Thread the button onto a 30-inch length of red cord, positioning the button in the middle. Thread both ends of the cord from the top of the strip through an end hole. Then lace the leather, threading the cord ends up through the holes and back down through the slit. Once you've finished, bring both cord ends up through the other end hole. Knot the ends together about an inch from the hole, or to fit your child's wrist.
5. To finish, glue the other leather strip to the back of the bracelet.