



PARENTING POSTS

A newsletter for parents of second-grade students

Getting Ready for Summer

Soon your second grader will be home for summer vacation. Here are a few tips to help you and your family have a happy and safe summer.

Water Safety Tips

Swimming and wading pools soon will be popular sites for your second grader. The following are some sound and simple rules to follow while your child is using the pool:

- Never leave your child unattended in or near the water, even if they are wearing a personal flotation device. Use a tag-team approach to be sure the adult watching the swimming area is aware that it is now their responsibility to keep the swimmers safe. When one adult needs a break, they should enlist the help of another adult and give that person the necessary instructions as the watcher “tags out” of watching the swimmers.
- An adult who knows CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and other water safety skills should be present.
- Teach your child what to do in case of an emergency.
- Make sure everyone understands and follows the pool rules.
- Register your child for swimming lessons. Practice swimming together, and, be encouraging as your child improves their swimming skills.
- Make sure your children follow the “buddy system:” Nobody swims alone.
- If your child swallows water or becomes frightened, remain calm, offer assistance if needed and encourage him or her to try swimming again. Try to remain in the water until he or she can leave the pool feeling positive about the experience.
- Water toys are not personal flotation devices. Use approved, fitted lifejackets for children when they are playing in and around water.

I’m Thirsty

Dehydration is the excessive loss of fluids from the body. It happens when the total amount of fluids lost through sweating, urination, diarrhea and/or vomiting is greater than the fluids taken in. Children can become dehydrated easily while playing a sport or participating in any type of physical activity. Dehydration can make a child more susceptible to a heat-related illness, such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion or heat stroke. A dehydrated child needs fluid replacement immediately.



Make sure your children follow the “buddy system:” Nobody swims alone.



Stress Less Activity

Stress is part of everyone’s life. Even young children! Try this activity with your child to help reduce stress and enjoy time together.

Watching water run in a fountain, a river or from the garden hose can be very relaxing. Try using water color paints, brushes, water and paper for calming activity indoors during a spring rain, or, outdoors so spills won’t matter.

Signs of **dehydration** may include:

- Thirst; dry or sticky mouth; headache; muscle cramping; irritability; extreme fatigue; weakness; dizziness; decreased performance

Signs of **heat exhaustion** may include:

- Nausea; feeling faint or dizzy; heavy sweating; rapid, weak heartbeat; dark-colored urine; cool, moist, pale skin; cramps; headache; fatigue

How to prevent dehydration in children:

- Drink 12 ounces of fluid (such as water) 30 minutes **before** the activity begins.
- Children less than 90 pounds should drink 5 ounces every 20 minutes **during** the activity. Children more than 90 pounds should drink 9 ounces every 20 minutes **during** the activity.
- Have mandatory fluid breaks; don't wait for the child to tell you he/she is thirsty.
- Children should drink fluids **after** physical activity to make up for fluid loss.

EASY TIP: A child's gulp equals ½ ounce of fluid, so, generally, your child should drink about **10 gulps for every 20 minutes** of play.

(I'm Thirsty is based on Safe Kids Worldwide at www.safekids.org.)

Be sure to keep plenty of fresh water available. Artificially colored and flavored drinks contain lots of empty calories with little or no nutrition.



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I'm Hungry

When you hear this statement, try these quick and easy ideas that can be made with or by your children:

- Fruit kabobs – Slide fresh fruit pieces onto pretzel sticks. Freeze for an extra-cool treat on hot days.
- Meal on a skewer – Try cubes of cheese, ham, other meats, pineapple chunks or pickles on a pretzel stick.
- Pudding pops – Mix instant pudding according to package directions. Pour mixture into plastic drinking cups or Popsicle molds. Insert a Popsicle stick and freeze.
- Add fresh fruit pieces to breakfast cereal.
- Try cream cheese and jam on waffles instead of syrup.
- Ice cream sandwiches – Spread softened ice cream between graham crackers. Wrap and freeze.
- Top a favorite yogurt with fresh fruit. Add granola and cinnamon, if desired. Try frozen yogurt with fresh fruit and nuts.
- Pair string cheese and crunchy apple pieces for fruit and dairy nutrition.

Being a Parent

You may have heard that life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent our attitude about what happens to us.

You and your child are going to have arguments, crabby times and different ideas about what is important. What's your reaction? Reminding your children how stupid they are? Losing your temper and walking away? When you are very frustrated, keeping your role as your child's first and most influential teacher in mind is hard. But if life is really 10 percent what happens and 90 percent attitude, we can solve most of our problems.

Provide rules for your children that are fair, firm and friendly. Be sure the rules are appropriate for their ages, are used consistently and you explain to them often. Teaching is your most important role.

Children need parents who believe the children can make decisions, who permit choices within their limits and who encourage them when they are successful and when they are not. Children must be taught how to solve problems and that they can learn from the adults in their lives.

Reading books, attending workshops and talking to other parents are great ways to get new ideas that can help parent and child grow together.



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