Making Resolutions for Your Family’s Well-being

The new year is a traditional time for resolutions, and it’s an ideal time to consider what we can do differently to improve our family’s overall health and well-being. There are four key areas where even small changes can have a positive impact: nutrition, exercise, sleep and screen time.

And to ensure resolutions really ‘stick’ and become routine, it’s wise to make them SMART! That is: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely. For example, we might resolve to try one new fruit or vegetable twice a month, or stop off at the park once a week to play for 15 minutes.

If you brainstorm with your family and agree on just one SMART resolution for each of these four areas, that’s a big step in the right direction!

Nutrition. Our bodies require quality fuel. Aim for five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Create a ‘healthy-snack zone’ in the refrigerator and keep it stocked. Replace sugary sodas and juices with sparkling water. Eat together: add one more family meal per week to your schedule.

Exercise. Preschoolers need at least two hours of active play and kids and teens need at least an hour every day. Adults need exercise too! Mix it up and have fun with a weekend bike ride, a romp with the dog, a swim session at the local pool, an after-dinner walk or a living room dance party.

Sleep. We all need quality sleep to feel our best, and kids require a lot for healthy growth and development so try inching up bedtime just 15 minutes earlier. Help everyone ease into sleep mode by turning off all devices one hour before bed. Create a calming pre-sleep routine such as a bath or shower and a soothing story.

Screen Time. Set screen-time limits that are right for your family, and help your child choose quality media. Visit HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan for help. Ban screens from kids’ bedrooms and during meals, and establish screen-free household time for cooking, exercise, music, hobbies, games and books. Parents can model good habits with their own devices.

When we make positive changes in these four areas, there’s a bonus benefit: more quality family time. And of course, resolutions aren’t just for the new year. Anytime is a great time to commit to positive changes, including right now!

My Good Growing
Are you looking for more information about child health and safety? Sign up for my Good Growing, Seattle Children’s free email newsletter for parents and caregivers of babies, children and teens. The newsletter is sent six times each year in an easy-to-read format so you can quickly scan to find tips that apply to your family and areas of interest.

Subscribe today at seattlechildrens.org/newsletters.

TO LEARN MORE:
Visit seattlechildrens.org/health-safety/keeping-kids-healthy.
When to Start Gynecology Visits

It’s recommended that teen girls start seeing a gynecologist — a doctor who focuses on female reproductive health — between the ages of 13 and 15, whether or not they are sexually active. Girls don’t need a Pap test or a pelvic exam until they’re 21, so why start visits at a fairly young age? Gynecologists can help teenage girls to understand their bodies and how to care for themselves. They can help a teen understand what is normal, so they can notice any problems such as changes in their menstrual periods. If there are any problems, the doctor can find them early, so they can be treated.

Prevent Oversharing on Social Media

In today’s super-connected digital world, how can we be sure our kids aren’t sharing too much? Protecting their safety, their privacy and their reputations requires parents to be vigilant. It deserves thoughtful teaching and honest, ongoing discussions.

Before they ever enter the digital world, kids must understand this basic rule: If you don’t want the whole world to see it, don’t post it or text it. Even if that photo or message is intended for just one person, it can be shared widely. Imagine your teachers, your grandparents and strangers seeing it. (And it will be out there forever!)

Work with your child to set strict privacy settings, but don’t rely on those settings to keep them safe. Kids themselves must be alert: If you receive a text from an unknown person, do not respond; block the number. Don’t accept friend requests or approve follow requests from anyone you don’t know. Do you want the whole world to know your location? If not, don’t announce it or post photos of it, and be sure your app isn’t automatically reporting your whereabouts.

In addition to protecting their own safety, privacy and reputation, kids must do the same for others: Never text or post or pass along private information or unkind comments about anyone. Don’t post anyone’s picture or tag them without their permission.

Technology and social media are ever-changing, and kids are often more tech-savvy than their elders. So, parents must stay current on which sites and apps kids are using — and understand how they work. More than that, we need to be tuned in to our kids and keep these important conversations going.

TO LEARN MORE:
Visit commonsensemedia.org.
Kid Bits

Quick Tip
Prevent tip-overs: Mount flat-screen TVs to the wall and place box-style TVs on low, stable pieces of furniture. Use anti-tip brackets, wall straps or braces to secure furniture.

Tips to Prevent Plagiocephaly
Plagiocephaly is a flat spot on the back of a baby’s head caused by pressure on the bones of the skull before or after birth. Because infants spend a lot of time sleeping and must be placed on their backs for safety, a flat spot may develop. Although it is often noticeable at 2 to 4 months of age, it is usually not a medical concern. To prevent it, give your baby lots of tummy time during their awake hours, and limit their time in strollers and infant seats when it’s not necessary. By repositioning the head as much as possible, plagiocephaly usually improves between 4 and 7 months of age. Remember, always put a baby to sleep on their back, in a bare crib with a firm, tight-fitting mattress.

TO LEARN MORE:
Visit seattlechildrens.org/conditions/bone-joint-muscle-conditions/positional-plagiocephaly.

It’s OK to Ask About Suicide
Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for people ages 10 to 24. The hopeful news is that there are actions we can all take to help prevent it. While many people fear that asking someone if they are considering suicide will put the idea in their head, that’s not the case. Asking does not increase the risk of suicide and in fact can be the difference between life and death. It offers relief to someone who may be struggling and helps them feel noticed and heard. In our own homes, we can reduce the risk by removing pills and firearms from the house. If someone is in immediate danger of harming themselves, don’t leave them alone; call 911 or take them to an emergency room.

TO LEARN MORE:

Avoid Temper Tantrums
Almost all kids have temper tantrums now and then. While the frequency and intensity may vary, tantrums often happen when a child is overwhelmed, hungry, tired or frustrated — and unable to communicate their feelings. Tantrums are upsetting and tiring for everyone, so it’s worth it to put some effort into preventing them. How? Give your child a feeling of control by offering choices; help them notice and name their feelings; give specific praise when you notice positive behaviors; ensure they are well-rested and fed; be consistent with limits and consequences; make promises only if you’re sure you can keep them. And of course, model calmness yourself when you are frustrated.

TO LEARN MORE:
Visit kidshealth.org/en/parents/tantrums.

Regional Clinic Locations
- Bellevue
- Everett
- Federal Way
- Olympia
- Tri-Cities
- Wenatchee

Primary Care Clinic
- Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic

Main Hospital Numbers
206-987-2000
866-987-2000 (Toll-free)

Online Resources
Visit seattlechildrens.org for the following:
- Child Health Advice
- my Good Growing email newsletter
- Doctor Finder
- Seattle Mama Doc, Teenology 101, Autism and On The Pulse blogs
- Medical condition information
- Health & safety information
- Ways to help Seattle Children’s
- Research Institute information

Heather Cooper is the Editor of Good Growing, which is produced four times a year by the Marketing Communications Department of Seattle Children’s. You can find Good Growing in the January, April, July and October issues of ParentMap and on our website seattlechildrens.org. For permission to reprint articles for non-commercial purposes or to receive Good Growing in an alternate format, call 206-987-5323. The inclusion of any resource or website does not imply endorsement. Your child’s needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon information, please talk with your child’s healthcare provider. © 2019 Seattle Children’s, Seattle, Washington.
Classes and Events

These classes are popular and often fill up several months in advance, so please register early. Scholarships are available. If you would like to ask about a scholarship, call the number provided for the class you’re interested in.

PARENTING CLASSES

Autism 101
This free 90-minute lecture is designed to provide information and support to parents and families of children recently diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. A portion of each session is dedicated to answering questions from the attendees.

Lectures are at Seattle Children’s main campus in Seattle, once per quarter, on a Thursday, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Lectures are also available via live streaming.

View dates or sign up for live streaming at seattlechildrens.org/autism101. Call 206-987-8080 if you have questions.

Autism 200 Series
Autism 200 is a series of free 90-minute classes for parents and caregivers of children with autism who wish to better understand autism spectrum disorder. Each class features a different topic.

Classes are usually offered on the third Thursday of the month, 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Seattle Children’s main campus in Seattle. These classes are also available through live streaming.

View dates and topics, sign up for live streaming or view past Autism 200 lectures at seattlechildrens.org/classes. Call 206-987-8080 if you have questions.

Babysafe
Babysafe is a 4-hour class for new and expectant parents and others who care for babies. Topics include infant development, baby safety, injury prevention and care of common injuries for infants from birth through 12 months of age. Infant CPR is demonstrated and practiced, but this is not a certification class.

This class is offered in Seattle. The fee is $75 and each registration is good for two people from the same family. View dates and locations at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-789-2306 if you have questions.

HeartSaver First Aid, CPR and AED
This video-based class for parents and caregivers covers how to treat bleeding, sprains, broken bones, shock and other first-aid emergencies. Also includes infant, child and adult CPR and AED use. Students receive an American Heart Association HeartSaver Pediatric First Aid, CPR, AED completion card, which is valid for two years.

This class is offered at Seattle Children’s main campus in Seattle for $75 per person. View dates at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-2304 if you have questions.

Youth Mental Health First Aid
This 8-hour class is for adults who regularly interact with adolescents ages 12 to 18. Youth Mental Health First Aid will improve your knowledge of mental health and substance use problems and will teach you how to connect youth with care when needed.

This class is offered at the Sand Point Learning Center in Seattle for $20 per person, which includes class materials and lunch. View dates at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-9878 if you have questions.

CHILD, PRETEEN AND TEEN CLASSES

Better Babysitters
For youth, ages 11 to 14. Students learn about responsible babysitting, basic child development, infant and child care, safety, handling emergencies, age-appropriate toys, business tips and parent expectations.

This class is offered in Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and Federal Way. The cost is $45 per person. View dates and locations at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-9878 if you have questions.

CPR and First Aid for Babysitters
For youth, ages 11 to 15. Topics include pediatric CPR, treatment for choking, and first-aid skills. Students receive an American Heart Association HeartSaver Pediatric First Aid, CPR, AED completion card, which is valid for two years.

This class is offered at Seattle Children’s main campus in Seattle for $75 per person. View dates at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-2304 if you have questions.

For Boys: The Joys and Challenges of Growing Up
This class is for boys, 10 to 12 years old, and a parent or trusted adult. An informal, engaging format is used to present and discuss issues most on the minds of preteens as they begin adolescence: body changes, sex, and other growing up stuff.

This class is offered in Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and Federal Way in partnership with Great Conversations. The cost is $90 per parent/child pair; $70 per extra son. A copy of the book titled “Will Puberty Last My Whole Life?” is included.

View dates and locations at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-789-2306 if you have questions. Content outlines and short videos are available at greatconversations.com.

For Girls: A Heart-to-Heart Talk on Growing Up
This class is for girls, 10 to 12 years old, and a parent or trusted adult. An informal, engaging format is used to present and discuss issues most on the minds of preteens as they begin adolescence: body changes, sex, and other growing up stuff.

This class is offered in Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and Federal Way in partnership with Great Conversations. The cost is $90 per parent/child pair; $70 per extra daughter. A copy of the book titled “Will Puberty Last My Whole Life?” is included.

View dates and locations at seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-789-2306 if you have questions. Content outlines and short videos are available at greatconversations.com.

Events

Free Car Seat Check
WHEN: Saturday, March 23, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
WHERE: Seattle Children’s main campus, 4800 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle
CALL: 206-987-5999
Come learn how to safely secure your child in the car. Child passenger safety experts will check your child in a car seat, booster seat or the seat belt and answer any questions you may have. First come, first served. We do not take reservations.

Free Bike Helmet Fitting and Giveaway Event
WHEN: Saturday, March 30, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: CORE Community Center, 1645 S Walnut St, Burlington
CALL: 206-987-1569
Come get your child properly fit for a new bike helmet. Kids must be 1 to 18 and present to receive a helmet. The person who will be using the helmet must be present for proper fitting. First come, first served. No appointments needed. Learn more at MakeSureTheHelmetFits.org.

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