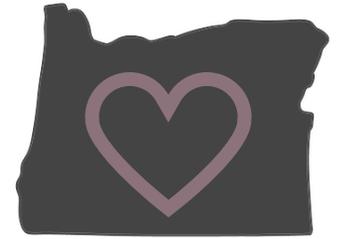


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Parenting Together!



April 2015

INTRODUCTION

In 1983, the United States announced its first *National Child Abuse Prevention Month*. For this month, let's make it a goal to bring families, and communities together to promote the overall well being of children. This means sharing resources and strategies that can prevent child abuse and neglect. How can we do this? We can do this by raising awareness on child abuse while also learning new ways to encourage a happy and healthy child.

STRESS BUSTERS

Managing stress is important for you and your child. When you take a ride on an airplane, safety instructions often tell you that 'in the event of an emergency, you should put your oxygen mask on, and then help your child.' Think about managing stress in your own life this way by taking care of yourself first in order to be a better parent. In fact, research has shown that children whose parents are highly stressed during their first few years of life are more likely to experience long-term consequences. Studies show that the genes involved with child brain development can be impacted by parent stress and that this can be seen years later when the child is a teenager. It's important to first be aware of how your stress can impact your child and then figure out positive ways to cope. Here are some stress busting ideas to get you started!



This series of newsletters is inspired and created just for parents. If you have suggestions, comments or ideas for future newsletters please share on our Facebook (Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative) or Twitter page (@OPECParentingEd).



When the going gets tough...

- **Eat right.** Try low fat carbohydrate-rich meals with fruits and vegetables to give you energy & boost your immune system.
- **Get enough sleep** (7-8 hours) to recharge!
- **Take time for yourself.** Even if it is only minutes, it is important to carve out time to reflect and refresh.
- **Start a new hobby.** Spend time learning something new, and allow yourself to focus on your new activity.
- **Be active.** There are many free online fitness programs that require little to no equipment. Check out fitnessblender.com for hundreds of free workout videos.
- **Engage.** Make time to talk to friends and family members if you are feeling overwhelmed.



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PARENT & CHILD BONDING

When a child is born, parents often feel a strong and immediate bond to their newest and smallest family member. Bonding with your child nurtures your developing relationship. The benefits of a healthy attachment with your child are long-lasting. Research shows that children who grow up in the most difficult conditions (such as poverty) are more likely to succeed in life if they have a secure attachment with their parent. Nurturing a secure and healthy attachment with your growing child is not always as obvious or natural as the bond that takes place when a baby is born. However, parenting classes can provide information about ways to foster this relationship with your child. Interested in enrolling in a parenting class in your area? Find an OPEC Parenting Education Hub near you: <http://health.oregonstate.edu/hallie-ford/oregon-parenting-education/opec-hubs>

MANAGING *Temper Tantrums*

Do you have a toddler in your home? If so, then you are familiar with that moment when you first realize that a full-blown temper tantrum is about to happen. What happens when you are at the grocery store and wandering eyes begin to gaze? This can make an already daunting trip to the grocery store seemingly impossible, but there are ways to curb and manage this stress by understanding why tantrums happen and then figuring out ways to prevent and manage them.

Why Tantrums?

Toddlers may not have the vocabulary skills needed to communicate, and this can be frustrating for them. Children learn quickly. If you have ever 'given in' to a tantrum to stop the behavior, children understand that this is a good way to get what they want.

What can I do to prevent tantrums?

- Plan ahead and avoid the store when your child might be hungry/tired.
- Encourage communication. If your child tells you when he is hungry or tired, praise him for using words to express feelings.
- Stick to routines, so your child knows what to expect and when.

FUN WITH YOUR KIDS

The Freeze Game!



To improve **self-control** or **self-regulation**, use slow and fast songs and have your child dance slow to slow songs and quickly to fast songs. Then, try the opposite! Dance quickly to slow songs and slowly to fast songs.

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Find your local parenting resources at:
<http://orparenting.org/>

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