

Information for Parents and Caregivers

Keeping our children healthy is not just about making sure they eat well, exercise and get enough sleep. Their mental health is just as important to make sure they grow into healthy, caring and happy adults.

What can parents and caregivers do?

Before you have a baby:

- During pregnancy, make sure to eat well, don't smoke, drink alcohol or use illegal drugs. Check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter or prescription medications.
- Try to reduce the stress in your life and get plenty of sleep.
- Consider breastfeeding your baby. Breast milk contains special things that are good for your baby's brain. Breastfeeding also makes you feel extra close to your child.

Parents/caregivers of infants and toddlers:

- Play with, talk and read to your child as often as you can.
- Give them lots of hugs and kisses.

Parents/caregivers of preschool and elementary aged children:

- Try to find some time each day that you can spend alone with your child to play or read together.
- Notice the things your child has worked hard to finish or has tried to do; stress what has gone well instead of what they might have done wrong.

Parents/caregivers of 'tweens and teens:

- Listen without judging.
- Give them a chance to make some of their own decisions—and also be clear about rules and results if those rules are broken.
- Be aware of any big changes in their eating, sleeping, grades, interests or moods that last two weeks or more. Ask how they are feeling; tell them you care and if needed, talk to someone you trust, like a doctor, counselor or teacher so they can get the help they need to feel better.

Remember...

- All children need to know they are loved for who they are. Stay involved and show you care.
- If you notice that your child is having problems with their emotions or actions, call the Parent Helpline at 541-485-5211 to get some help.
- Parenting is a hard job, so to be the best, take care of yourself! Take time to relax, do things you enjoy, and get support from others.

For more parenting tips and resources, visit our website at:

www.mindyourmindproject.org



because mental
wellness matters