

# Employee Enhancement Newsletter

*Helpful Resources from your Employee Assistance Program*

September 2016

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## Communicating With Your Child

Good communication between you and your child is important for developing a positive relationship. As your child gets older, good communication will make it easier for you to talk to him about things like alcohol and drugs. Good communication with your child can start early. Two skills that are helpful for good communication with toddlers and preschoolers are praise and active listening. You will learn more about these skills in this article.

### **Keys to Communicating With Your Child**

- Praise your child when she does something right. The more you praise a behavior, the more likely it is your child will behave the same way again.
- Pay attention to your child when he is talking to you or trying to communicate with you. Giving him your full attention will help you understand what he is telling you. It will also make him feel like you care about what he has to say.
- Set aside time each day to talk and play with your child. Creating a special time lets your child know she is important. It also strengthens the bond between the two of you.

### **Take time to listen to your child.**

When your child is upset, active listening can go a long way in helping your child know that you hear him and understand what he is trying to say. Active listening can also be helpful in calming a situation and preventing a tantrum before it starts!

### **Let your child know when you think she has done something good.**

Praising your child is an important way to encourage good behaviors. Sometimes it can also help to let your child overhear you praising him to someone else like a grandparent, teacher, spouse, or even a toy if no one else is around. When the praise seems sincere and honest, it can reinforce good behavior.

### **Read with your children.**

Reading with your children helps to strengthen their vocabulary, knowledge, and understanding of their world. It also creates opportunities for you and your child to spend time enjoying each other. It is never too early to begin reading to your child, and no book is ever too short.

### **Make time to laugh and be silly.**

So much of parenting is making sure your children are fed, clean, clothed, and doing what they are supposed to be doing. Taking time to just talk or play with your children shows them how much you care about them and want to be with them.

### **Avoid distracted parenting.**

In the rush to get everything done, you may find yourself trying to have an important talk with your child while doing a million other things like cooking dinner, folding laundry, or paying bills. Chances are if you are multitasking, your child may be too. He may be playing or doing something else that keeps him from listening. Stop what you are doing and make the conversation a priority. Walk over to your child and talk to him face-to-face. This will help both of you focus on the issue at hand.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (Updated 2014, May 27). *Communicating with your child*. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://www.cdc.gov/>

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## Online Seminar Reminder

### *Effective Communication with Children*

#### When:

Available on-demand  
starting September 20, 2016

#### Where:

[www.deeroakseap.com](http://www.deeroakseap.com)

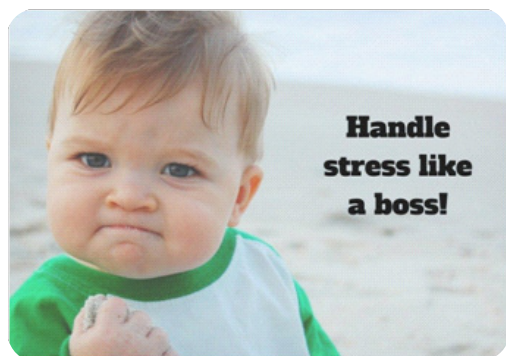
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## Simplify to Reduce Stress



Stress is a feeling you get when faced with a challenge, according to the Office on Women's Health. While everyone responds to stress differently, common signs include changes in eating habits, feeling as if you have no control, forgetfulness, headaches, lack of energy and focus, short temper, trouble sleeping, upset stomach, and aches and pains. Studies show that women experience more physical symptoms of stress than men.

"Women experiencing stress differently from men often has to do with the roles they impose on themselves," explains Susanne Fogger, assistant professor in the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing.

"Ask a woman what her roles are and she may reply: wife, mother, sister, friend, caregiver, cook, cleaner, worker, and so on. Ask a man what his role is and he may mention worker, husband, father — but he may not incorporate as many roles as women often do."

Fogger notes, "Women often have difficulty letting go [of roles] without feeling guilty about not being able to maintain that role."

But letting the pressure of this load continually weigh on the body can lead to trouble.

"Our bodies release the stress hormones cortisol and norepinephrine during stressful events, and these are responsible for the elevation of blood pressure, heart rate, and blood glucose levels," explains Aimee Holland, a women's health nurse practitioner program coordinator at UAB.

"It's not good for the human body to continuously be exposed to stress hormones, because this can lead to depression, anxiety, obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep disorders, and menstrual changes," Holland says.

In fact, "stress is erosive," says Fogger, "in the sense that the longer a person remains under what they perceive as stress, the less their body is able to fight off infection because their natural immune system decreases. Stress is inevitable, and not all stress is bad, but how one handles it makes the difference in being able to stay healthy or getting sick."

- Exercise every day to protect against the negative impacts of stress. If your body's in shape, you'll be better able to tolerate stress.
- Cut out working within 1 to 2 hours of going to bed. Your brain needs time to unwind.
- Eat a balanced diet of nutrient-rich foods and limit the amount of high-glucose, high-carbohydrate foods you eat. And take it easy on the booze. Alcohol is really a depressant, not a way to relax.
- Keep life simple. Eliminate the things in your life that don't match up with or help you achieve your life goals. And remember to surround yourself with good people.

Health-e headlines™

## One Way to Live Longer— and Healthier



Being physically fit during your 30s, 40s, and 50s not only helps extend lifespan, but it also increases your chances of aging healthily, free from chronic illness, investigators at UT Southwestern Medical Center and The Cooper Institute have found.

“We’ve determined that being fit is not just delaying the inevitable, but it is actually lowering the onset of chronic disease in the final years of life,” said Dr. Jarett Berry, assistant professor of internal medicine and senior author of the study in the Archives of Internal Medicine.

Researchers examined the patient data of 18,670 participants in the Cooper Center Longitudinal Study, research that contains more than 250,000 medical records maintained over a 40-year span. These data were linked with the patients’ Medicare claims filed later in life from ages 70 to 85.

Analyses during the latest study showed that when patients increased fitness levels by 20% in their midlife years, they decreased their chances of developing chronic diseases such as congestive heart failure, Alzheimer’s, and colon cancer decades later by 20%.

This positive effect continued until the end of life, with more-fit individuals living their final 5 years of life with fewer chronic diseases. The effects were the same in both men and women.

These data suggest that aerobic activities such as walking, jogging, or running translates not only into more years of life but also into higher quality years, compressing the burden of chronic illness into a shorter amount of time at the end of life.

**Health-e headlines™**

### *To disinfect water...*

Boil for one minute. Add a pinch of salt to each quart after it has cooled, to improve the flat taste. You may use regular (not scented) household chlorine bleach (6 drops per gallon). Stir and let stand covered for 30 minutes. Should taste a little like chlorine.

**Health-e headlines™**

### *Make the most of your grocery shopping*

The average American consumer spends nearly 45 minutes on one grocery shopping trip. Many grocery chains have adopted nutrition guidance programs to make it easier for you to shop for healthy foods.

**Health-e headlines™**

### *An EAP Reminder*

*Life Can Be Hectic. The EAP Can  
Help You Find Your Balance.*

Deer Oaks, your EAP, is always available to you and your household members.

If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks by calling the Helpline.

Counselors are available 24/7 to provide you with immediate care.





## Clinician's Corner..

*Monthly Advice from the Deer Oaks Clinical Team*

### Communicate with Your Kids



“Because I said so!” Have you found yourself using this as a response to your child’s twentieth question in five minutes? Life is stressful enough, and when you add the even more stressful occupation of parenting on top of that, it can be difficult to communicate appropriately with your children. Here are a few general tips to foster better interactions with your kids.

**Be Proactive.** Set the stage for your children to feel comfortable talking with you before conflict or concerns arise. If you can, find even a few moments each day to check in with your kids individually – ask what they are currently excited, nervous, angry, or sad about in their lives. For children who are old enough, try starting a journal with them in which you write notes and entries and they respond to you; writing can be a safer means of communicating than having a verbal conversation.

**Be Clear, Be Positive.** When setting limits and rules, be as clear and specific as possible, and convey your rules to your kids before a conflict arises. Be equally clear about consequences for violating a rule. If you catch yourself giving your children directives that begin with “Don’t” try taking an opposite approach: When you see your child behaving well or following rules, praise them. In general, children are much more likely to be motivated by positive communication than negatives or criticisms. If there is a need to redirect a child, be sure that your mood is not excessively angry; take a break until you can approach your child calmly. Provide them with the rationale for the need for them to change their behavior instead of shaming them for doing something incorrectly.

**Always Be Consistent (ABC).** In general, consistent parenting is what sets the tone for a child’s perception of emotional and physical safety. Even though it seems like your child is constantly pushing your limits, it is often an attempt for them to ensure that those limits are there, that you are predictable in your management of their behaviors. By being clear in your communication of rules, rewards, and consequences, a child establishes a sense of routine and stability. This then sets the stage for even easier communication and emotional well-being for both parent and child.

Looking to up your parenting game further? Visit us online at [www.deeroakseap.com](http://www.deeroakseap.com) or call the Helpline 24/7 to discover more resources for communicating with your kids.

By: Kira Rogers, Psy.D, HSP-P  
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## Everyday Lessons to Teach Kids about Money



We've all heard the quote from Benjamin Franklin, "a penny saved is a penny earned". This expression is even truer in today's volatile economy. Wise financial planning encourages wise spending and saving for the future. Learning smart spending habits can have a profound impact on a young child's life. The financial lessons children learn today will last well into adulthood.

There are many simple ways to incorporate financial lessons into your child's everyday life, following are some suggestions.

**Turn grocery shopping into a teachable moment.** This is a great opportunity to teach kids about comparison shopping. Teach children how to shop by value rather than brand. Remember to always shop with a list. Shopping with a list helps children understand how prior preparation can lead to great savings in the end.

**Give children an allowance.** There are differing opinions on whether or not to give children an allowance. While some may consider it "spoiling" kids, giving children a regular "income" can be a great opportunity to teach them the basics of earning, spending, and saving. Parents can also use an allowance to help children learn the difference between wants and needs.

**Help your child open a small business.** During the warm summer months, lemonade stands are common in many neighborhoods. This is a great way for young entrepreneurs to learn financial skills. The adventure of starting a small business is a great financial and confidence-building lesson for kids. Children learn how to set and achieve goals, understand profit and price, and further develop basic math skills.

**Open a checking/savings account for your child.** Many banks and credit unions offer parents the opportunity to open an account in their child's name. Owning and maintaining an account helps children learn important life skills.

There are many ways to teach children about money. The most important thing parents can do is to communicate with their children about managing money and budgeting. Parents should offer several examples of how money is earned and give children an opportunity to help decide how it is spent. And, most importantly parents need to educate children about the dangers of overspending, borrowing too much, and paying high interest.

### About Money Management International

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