family
Building the future... right from the start

FAMILYINSIGHTS

FOR OUR FAMILIES

Dental Screening by Age One

Babies need healthy mouths and teeth to eat, sleep and talk, and dental care begins at home. Parents should check their infant's gums and teeth once a month, making sure there are no white spots. All babies need to be taken to the dentist by the time they turn 1, and should be seen at least once a year after that.

Healthy teeth help babies chew and speak clearly, and save space for adult teeth so they come in straight.

Even before your baby's teeth come in, it is important to clean your baby's gums after every feeding with a clean, damp washcloth or a toothbrush with soft bristles made for babies. As soon as the first tooth comes in (usually around 6 to 10 months), begin brushing your baby's teeth twice a day with a small amount of toothpaste containing fluoride, which strengthens teeth. Babies can get cavities, too, and they can be very painful. Holes or dark spots can be a sign of cavities and should be checked by a dentist.

What you feed your baby is equally important to the health of his or her mouth. Choose healthy snacks, such as fruits, vegetables, cheese and yogurt, and make sure your baby drinks tap water because bottled water may not contain fluoride. Limit sugary and starchy foods like candy and cookies, and stick to 100 percent fruit juice. It is recommended that you use water in your baby's sleep time bottle.

I-Smile is a program created by the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Iowa Department of Human Services, the University of Iowa and the Iowa Dental Association to help Iowa's children access dental services. If you need help finding care, contact your local I-Smile coordinator toll-free at 1-866-528-4020 or visit www.ismiledentalhome.iowa.gov.

Fire Safety Tips

A home fire occurs every 76 seconds. More than 450 children 14 and under die from fire and burn injuries each yearhere are some steps to make your home safe from fires and help protect your children from injury.

Smoke Alarm Safety

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area, and in each bedroom.

Escape Planning

- Practice a fire escape plan with at least two ways out of each room.

Playing With Fire

- Teach your child to never touch matches or lighters. Store these items in locked cabinets and do not use these items for fun — children can imitate you.

Cooking Safety

- Make the stove area a "Kid-Free Zone" (3 feet is a good distance). Mark it on the floor with bright tape.

Heating Equipment Safety

- Place space heaters at least 3 feet from anything that can catch fire (curtains, papers). Always turn space heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

From October 6 - 12, recognize National Fire Prevention Week, and focus your attention on promoting fire safety and prevention.

Information adapted from Safe Kids Worldwide http://www.safekids.org

SAFE KIDS LOESS HILLS

Featured Stories

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Staff Spotlight

Amy Hoffmann

Title: Infant Family Specialist

Education: Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Elementary Education

Why did you choose this profession? I love working with children and being around them. I love watching children try to figure things out and then watching their eyes light up when they do.

The most rewarding part of my job at FAMILY: The most rewarding part of FAMILY is knowing that I am helping make a difference in a child's life and their family's life.

What I love about FAMILY: I love that every day is something different - always a different family, different age of kiddoes. I also love the flexibility and the FAMILY team (co-workers) that we have!!

Something interesting about me: I am married with three children. I love spending time with my kids. We enjoy going camping, playing games and having "family movie nights." I love taking pictures and scrapbooking. I also love to cook.

Protecting Your Child from Heatstroke

Heatstroke is the leading cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children. On average, every 10 days a child dies from heatstroke in a vehicle. Young children are particularly at risk, as their bodies heat up three to five times faster than an adult's.

To keep your child safe, remember to **ACT**:

A: Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving your child alone in a car, not even for a minute. And make sure to keep your car locked when you're not in it so kids don't get in on their own.

C: Create reminders by putting something in the back of your car next to your child such as a briefcase, a purse or a cell phone that is needed at your final destination. This is especially important if you're not following your normal routine.

T: Take action. If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations. One call could save a life.

Take the extra step and teach your child not to play in or around cars. Keep your vehicle locked when it is not in use, and store keys out of children's sight and reach. Explain to your child that trunks are for transporting cargo and are not safe places to play. If your child gets locked in a car, get him out as soon as possible and call 911 immediately. Emergency personnel are trained to evaluate and check for signs of heatstroke.

Information adapted from Safe Kids Worldwide: http://www.safekids.org

Dads Are Important From the Start

As a dad, you are so important to your child's development. Research shows conclusively that children whose fathers are involved in their lives have:

- healthier social-emotional development
- less alcohol and drug abuse in the teen years
- lower school drop-out rates
- healthier relationships

Even before your baby is born, you are a positive force in your child's life. When you offer your baby's mother your strength and support while she is pregnant, you set the stage for getting to know your child and begin to form a bond.

Your infant. Men can give tender loving care to infants just as women can. It will feel different to your baby when you hold him, and he will hear that your voice is lower than his mother's. These differences prepare him for other differences he will encounter in life. Your young baby needs your love, care and active involvement in his life from the very start.

Your toddler. You have a great opportunity to play with your active toddler. You'll hear your child's first words, and most often they include "Dada." Dads play differently than moms do; they are more spontaneous and more physical in their play. Mothers are more likely to use toys and props. Both kinds of play are important for healthy brain development.

Your preschooler. As your child moves toward kindergarten, he will need many experiences to help him be ready. Fathers are able to walk along side their children and show them how the world works. You have many interests you can share with your child.

Dad, you are so imporant in your child's life. He doesn't need fancy toys or expensive computer games. He needs you to be his dad and to spend time with him. No one can replace you and the contribution you make to your child's future.

The Importance of Play

Your child loves to play. Every time she does, her brain makes new connections that help her development. When you join in, it builds attachment between you, and playing with others teaches your child cooperation, sharing, empathy and helping. Expressing herself through play also boosts your child's feeling of self-worth, especially when you let her take the lead. Playing helps your child's physical development, too, strengthening both large and small muscles and teaching her hand-eye coordination. As a parent, encourage your child to pretend play and talk about what she's doing - this will help her develop language skills and improve her attention span, memory and ability to focus. Your child will not like it when you tell her to stop playing and transition to another activity. To help her adjust, give warnings at five minutes and again at one minute.

Outdoor Exploration: Discovering and Observing

Birth to 5 months

1. When you take your baby outdoors, notice how she behaves. Is she excited about going for a walk or stroller ride? Or does the motion make her sleepy?
2. If your child is awake, notice how she watches the other children.
3. Let her touch the grass, feel the wind, enjoy the warmth of the sun and hear water in a stream or fountain.

6 to 36 months

1. Ask where your child wants to go. Notice where she plays first, where she spends the most time and what she looks at.
2. Give your child time and space. Let her smell flowers and dirt, touch tree bark and leaves, crawl, walk, climb or run in the grass.
3. If other children are there, notice how your child interacts with them.
4. Play outside as long as your child is interested.

Information adapted from Parents as Teachers

What's in it for us?

- Outdoor play encourages your child to use large muscles to sit up, walk, run, climb, kick and swing.
- Routines teach your child about time. If going outside is always part of your day, your child will anticipate it and learn what comes next in the routine.
- You support your child's emotions and nonverbal cues by allowing plenty of time for her to explore in her own ways.

Bring books

After you have played outdoors, read a book about nature. Ask your older child to point out things that you saw, and ask if there is anything in the book she would like to see next time you play outside. Books can go with you anywhere.

Eat Your Vegetables!

Tips for lifelong veggie-loving

- Start early: introduce 200 foods before age 2.
- Offer steamed vegetables, but mix it up with different textures, too. Cooked green beans are crunchy, while mashed sweet potatoes are smooth. Expose your child to a variety of veggies.
- Offer a vegetable 15-25 times.
- Eat vegetables with your child and show that you enjoy - or are willing to taste - vegetables and other nutritious foods.

Nutrition for small children

According to www.choosemyplate.gov, a toddler's meal should provide protein, grains, fruits, vegetables and dairy.

- Remember that small children need to eat far less food than adults. An adequate serving for a child is one level tablespoon of each food for each year of a child's age.
- As always, be aware of foods that could be potential choking hazards, including nuts, round slices of meats and round fruits or vegetables (such as grapes and cherry tomatoes).

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Making Music With Your Baby

Your baby may not be ready to sing along or dance to a favorite tune. However, music can have a powerful influence on his development. It can also provide an easy way to bond with your baby and create special rituals.

Music can:

- Calm your baby when he is excited or upset, entertain him when he is bored or get him up and moving.
- Help your baby learn to transition from one activity to another. Songs can become a part of any routine, such as picking up toys, leaving the house or going to bed.
- Teach your baby to identify patterns and understand sequences - an early skill for reading, math and memory. He learns to think about what comes next.

Additionally, when your child sings together with others, he is more likely to interact with others and express himself. He will also learn to make eye contact, take and follow the lead in interactions, follow directions and have fun.

Musical activities to do together

Memorize songs. Repeat them again and again. Your child will enjoy hearing familiar tunes and will learn to sing along.

Piggyback. Build on a familiar tune by using your own words. This can be a great way to prepare your child for transitions. Make up words to a tune like *The Farmer in the Dell*: "We're going for a ride! We're going for a ride! Open the door and climb inside, we're going for a ride!"

Listen to music. Play child-friendly songs of all types: pop, classical, R&B, rock. He will appreciate the diversity of sounds. Also teach your child songs from your family's culture to help him gain an identity.

Interact. Dance with your child. Pause and let your child fill in a word in a favorite song. Let your child add the next action in songs like *The Wheels on the Bus*. Combine music and motion.

Information adapted from Parents as Teachers

Upcoming Events

Mondays	Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work 6:30 PM @ FAMILY, Inc. Council Bluffs Offices
Thursdays	Fall & Winter Groups Begin October 3rd 10 am or 6 pm @ FAMILY, Inc. Council Bluffs Offices
October 6	Mercy Hospital Kids Safety Day 1 - 5 PM @ Mercy Hopsital
October 23	Car Seat Check-up Event 3 - 6 PM @ FAMILY, Inc. Council Bluffs Offices

FAMILY, Inc. Vision & Mission

Vision

- All children will learn, grow, and develop to realize their full potential.

Mission

- To assure that children and their families have the resources they need to succeed.
- To provide the information, support and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally during the crucial early years of life.
- To demonstrate private-sector leadership in early childhood services with ongoing engagement of public and private sectors, and broad support from the general public.

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FAMILY, Inc. Offices

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