



# HAPPY

## homeroom

A Newsletter for the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters  
Parent Edition

January 2018 Volume 1, Issue 31

### Cold or Flu??

Cold	Flu
Slow onset	Sudden onset
No (mild) fever	High fever
Not very tired	Exhausted
No headache	Headache
Normal appetite	Decreased appetite
No muscle ache	Achy muscles
No chills	Chills

### Upcoming Events: January

Viewing of the Trumpeter Swans—Heber Springs	All month
Family Fun Day: Creative Construction Zone—Pine Bluff	13th
Eagle Awareness Weekend—Morrliton	13-14th
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	15th
National Puzzle Day	29th

For more events in your area:  
<http://www.arkansas.com/events/>



## Too Young for Technology?



Technology is everywhere, on our phones, our computers, our tablets, and our televisions. It is almost impossible these days for kids to not have some access to media. However, all this technology is not always for the best, especially for young children.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under the age of 2 have no screen time—no TV, no iPads, no computers, no phones. There are several reasons for this. Research has found that some of the negative effects of screen time on young children include health issues, poor language skills, and poor academic achievement. Technology does not provide the give and receive interaction that babies need in order to develop their brains.

When parents respond to their child's cues, it helps the brain develop. TV does not respond when the baby smiles or cries, or does something new and exciting. Also, babies do not learn language by sitting in front

of technology passively absorbing what is being said; they learn language skills by being involved in conversation and having people respond to their sounds and gestures.

For older children, between the ages of 3-8, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting screen time to no more than two hours per day. Excessive screen time at this age has been linked to learning problems, attention issues, sleeping and eating disorders, as well as obesity.

When children are sitting in front of the television or computer instead of playing outside, they are less active and more likely to be heavier and develop unnecessary health problems.

Also, children that have too much screen time tend to do poorer in school as they do not devote as much attention to their homework or spend time engaged in learning experiences as those not parked on the couch.

In addition, sitting in front of any sort of lit screen too close to going to bed has been shown to disrupt sleep patterns (for people of all ages) and make it harder to get the necessary sleep that children between these ages need to be successful in school. It is advised to shut off all screens and partake in quiet activities at least an hour before going to bed, such as reading, taking a bath, playing a board game, etc.

Lastly, screen time disrupts family bonds. When parents or children spend too much time looking at their screens, they are not spending as much time talking, sharing, or getting involved in each other's lives. This is a negative consequence for all parties. Turn off the screens during family meals and other family time and tune into your children. You will be surprised at how much you learn.

(Sources: Television and Children—University of Michigan, ACH-Parenting magazine)



## Keep Your Kids Healthy This Winter



No one likes being sick, especially kids. Usually when one kid gets sick, it's a domino effect for the rest of the family. Here are some tips for keeping your whole family healthy this winter:

### 1. WASH YOUR HANDS

Teach your children to wash their hands before and after meals, after coughing or sneezing, after using the restroom, and when they come home from school or play. Kids with proper hygiene miss less school each year than kids without.

### 2. EAT WELL

Make sure your child gets

well-balanced meals in order to get the vitamins and minerals they need to stay healthy. Make sure to include iron-rich foods (lean red meat, beans, green vegetables) to strengthen the immune system and fight off infection. Also, eating foods like yogurt with probiotics help keep your immune system balanced.

In addition, multivitamins containing vitamin A, C, and zinc are helpful.

### 3. SLEEP

Young children need 10-13 hours of sleep each night, while

older children and adults need at least 7 hours to avoid getting run-down and weakening the immune system.

### 4. DRINK WATER

Water is essential for helping flush out toxins and help the nervous system work better. Babies need breastmilk or formula while water and juices low in sugar are best for older children.

### 5. AVOID SMOKERS

Secondhand smoke increases the risk of kids getting sick.

(Source: kidshealth.org, everydayfamily.com, motherandbaby.com, relaxkids.com)



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### More Winter Stories to Warm Up To:

- \* *Winter Wonderland* by Jill Esbaum (National Geographic Kids)
- \* *Winter* by Nuria Roca
- \* *The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder* by Mark Cassino
- \* *Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin
- \* *Snow* by Cynthia Rylant
- \* *Sleep, Big Bear, Sleep!* by Maureen Wright
- \* *Hibernation* by Margaret Hall
- \* *Five Little Penguins Slipping on the Ice* by Steve Metzger
- \* *Max and Ruby's Winter Adventure* by Rosemary Wells
- \* *Fancy Nancy: There's No Day Like A Snow Day* by Jane O'Connor
- \* *Curious George in the Snow* by H.A. Rey and Margret Rey

## Activities to Beat the Winter Blues

Being stuck inside doesn't have to be a bad thing. In fact, it could be tons of fun! Check out some of the great ideas below to beat the winter blues!

### **1. Get Moving:**

- ✎ Use masking tape or duct tape to create a hopscotch court in a hallway. 
- ✎ Play Keep It Up with a blown up balloon. The goal is to not let the balloon hit the ground.
- ✎ Young children might enjoy imitating the motions and sounds of animals. You can guess who they are and they can guess who you are.
- ✎ Get sliding. Have kids put on socks and slide on non-carpeted floors. You can turn on music so they can slide dance. They get exercise and you may get cleaner floors!
- ✎ Rent a kids' exercise video from the library. Do it together.

### **2. Get Crafty:**

- ✎ Make sock puppets. Take those lone socks without partners and put them to good use. Use markers, yarn, buttons, and whatever else you can find to create your own unique puppets. Then, put on a show!
- ✎ Make an arts and crafts box with an array of materials from magazines to glitter to crayons. Whenever your child is feeling bored, they can pull it out and make something new.

- ✎ Have a doodle war. Get a large pad of paper and some markers.



Your child starts out drawing a single item on the paper, then you add an item and keep passing it back and forth. Keep going until you run out of ideas and see what you have created.

- ✎ Let kids redecorate. If you have a plain lampshade or placemat, provide some paints and let your kids put their own special creative mark on it. Or use a large poster and make a frame to add new art to your walls.

- ✎ Trace your child's outline on a large sheet of paper. Have your child add clothes, facial features, etc.

### **3. Get Playful:**

- ✎ Have an indoor campout or build a fort. Use blankets, sheets, furniture, etc. to make a cozy winter den inside your house. You can make s'mores in the oven, sing songs, pretend to star gaze, etc. Or have an indoor picnic on the floor with summertime foods.

- ✎ Act out your child's favorite story. Read the story and figure out what costumes or props you might need to act out the story. You or your child can narrate the action and act out the story.



- ✎ Set up shop. Have your child go around the house and look for items to put in


their "store" such as canned food, boxes from the kitchen, books, clothes, etc. Have them create price tags, set up a small table for the items. They can make a store sign. Use fake money and old grocery bags for purchasing.

- ✎ Make your own music. Make a guitar by stretching a few rubber bands over the open mouth of a coffee can or other round container. Make shakers from a water or soda bottle filled with rice, dry beans or corn. Tape the lid down to prevent spilling.

- ✎ Make your own songs using your new music instruments. Pick a topic such as ice cream or the weather and be creative!

### **4. Get Out There:**

- ✎ Take a field trip. Visit a museum, a food factory that gives tours, the pet store, the book store, anywhere your child has never been before is a fun experience.

- ✎ Winter is the perfect opportunity to go outside and look at the stars. Have your child recreate the constellations with a white crayon and black paper. Or, make a star projector out of an old carton or tub with holes punched in the lid and a flashlight inside. 

(Sources: Sheknows.com, Montessori for Everyone, Parenthood.com)