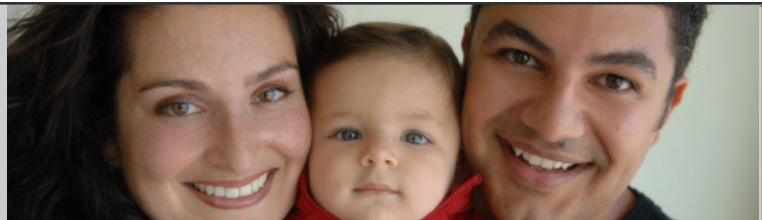




PARENT TRUST
FOR WASHINGTON CHILDREN



Strong Families Begin At Home

Child & Teen Services Newsletter Winter 2010

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**FAMILY HELP
LINE**
1.800.932.HOPE

Parent Trust's statewide, toll-free phone number provides callers with a greater understanding and awareness of child development, guidance, and resources.

If you have any comments, or suggestions for future articles, please contact:

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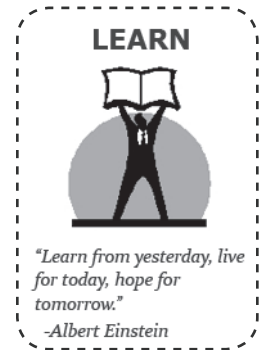
Childhood Stress Symptoms

Stress symptoms are like warning signs or signals. These symptoms can be physical, emotional, behavioral and/or cognitive. When talking to children about this, you can talk about stress in our thoughts, our behaviors, stress in our bodies and stress in our feelings.

Sometimes when adults notice these signs/symptoms, they think of them as simply "attention getting" or "acting out" behaviors. Well--that's true! What's important to realize about stress signs is that children display them when they have exhausted all other resources. Because of this, the acting out or attention-getting behaviors are really coping mechanisms and ways of asking an adult to help.

Here is a list of some common childhood stress signals. This is not a complete list; it's just examples of what to be mindful of in your child. If

CONTINUED PG 4



Jigsaw Puzzles



Jigsaw puzzles are great activities for children of all ages. In addition to being fun they are also great teaching tools. For younger children, puzzles help develop hand-eye coordination as each piece is fit into its correct spot. Cognitive development is supported too, since putting together puzzles involves memory and problem solving. Puzzles can also encourage both autonomy and cooperation, with different children and/or different family members working on different parts of the same puzzle.

Jigsaw puzzles come in all shapes and sizes. Children as young as two years old can try "peg puzzles" with about 4 pieces. 3-4 year olds can start trying interlocking puzzles with 5-7 pieces. You can gradually increase the number of pieces with 5 year olds, starting with about 12 interlocking pieces. As children get much older, there are puzzles with 500 and more pieces! You may want to invest in a puzzle mat for older children. These are roll out, often felt, mats where you assemble your puzzle. When you need to move the puzzle off the table or floor, just roll up the mat. The jigsaw puzzle is stored safely without messing up the work in progress. Puzzle mats usually cost around \$10-\$15.00.

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Parent Trust Reads

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar (and more)

by Roald Dahl
Ages: Teen

This collection of short stories is wickedly funny. Included in this collection are two non-fiction stories about Dahl himself and four fiction stories:

The Boy Who Talked With Animals

A sweet, amazing story of a boy who can communicate with animals and refuses to let a fisherman sell a sea turtle to a restaurant owner who wants to make turtle soup.

The Hitchhiker

A subtly humorous story about a hitchhiker who is really a pickpocket. He shares details of his trade with the journalist who gives him a ride, and even demonstrates a trick or two.

The Swan

A somewhat disturbing story about childhood cruelty and bullying.

The Mildenhall Treasure

A true story about a ploughman who finds a buried treasure while plowing a field.

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar

One of Dahl's greatest stories. A greedy, rich man learns the powers of the yogis to cheat the casinos. However, he finds that his newfound powers have changed him and perhaps changed his goals too.

Craft Stick Boxes

Supplies:

- Craft Sticks—can be purchased at most fabric and office supply stores. Usually about \$5.00 for a box of 1,000. For younger kids you may want to use the wider sticks.
- Glue
- Acrylic Paint



A craft stick box will use about 50 large size craft sticks. If you want the box painted, paint the sticks and let them dry BEFORE you put the box together.

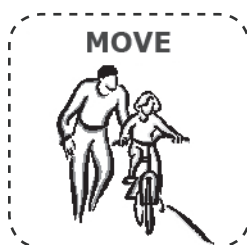
Lay out first layer of sticks to form a square, and glue. Do this by starting with two parallel sticks in vertical direct and then glue two across at each end horizontally. Make sure corners are straight or finished box will be crooked.

Continue gluing alternate layers, two vertical then two horizontal--until box is desired height.

To make bottom of box, lay craft sticks in line across bottom--all same direction. you can add two craft sticks along vertical edge to brace and level the box.

There are many other crafts you can make with craft sticks. Here is a website with lots of craft stick projects: <http://www.artistshelpingchildren.org/popsiclesticksartscraftsideascraftstickskids.html>

Playing Tag



Tag is played all around the world, and there are tons of versions. It can be a great way for kids to get good cardio exercise. Here are a few versions:

How to play:

First, decide who is "it". The person who is "it" chases all the other players, trying to tag as many as possible. A tag is a simple touch of the hand. The players do not want to be tagged, and run away from "it".

CONTINUED PG 4

Create A Family Tree

A Family Tree is a chart that shows the relationships between family members over time. Creating a Family Tree with your children can be a fun way to strengthen family connections. Family Trees don't have to be just blood connections either. Any way you define "family" is fine.

Start with the oldest member of your family that your child knows. Work your way down to the youngest member, and then go back to the oldest and branch back further to members that your child may never have known. But by the time you do this, they'll have seen the way the parent-child-parent-child tiers progress.

Start with Simple Data:

The most basic Family Tree will include full name and birth date of each member on the tree.

Draft a Basic Outline:

There are numerous online tools that will create the Tree for you. But if you want to really create an opportunity for your family to connect without having to lean over one persons' shoulder in front of a screen, consider using a large sheet of paper and pencils/crayons, etc. Lines connecting names denote relationships.

Use Symbols:

Certain symbols have come to represent specific things on Family Trees. These shorthand symbols can help save space when you've got a large tree. You don't have to use these symbols; you can make up your own. In the chart above, you see that males have dotted lines and females solid lines.

B - Born
 M - Married
 D- Died
 married ==

CONNECT

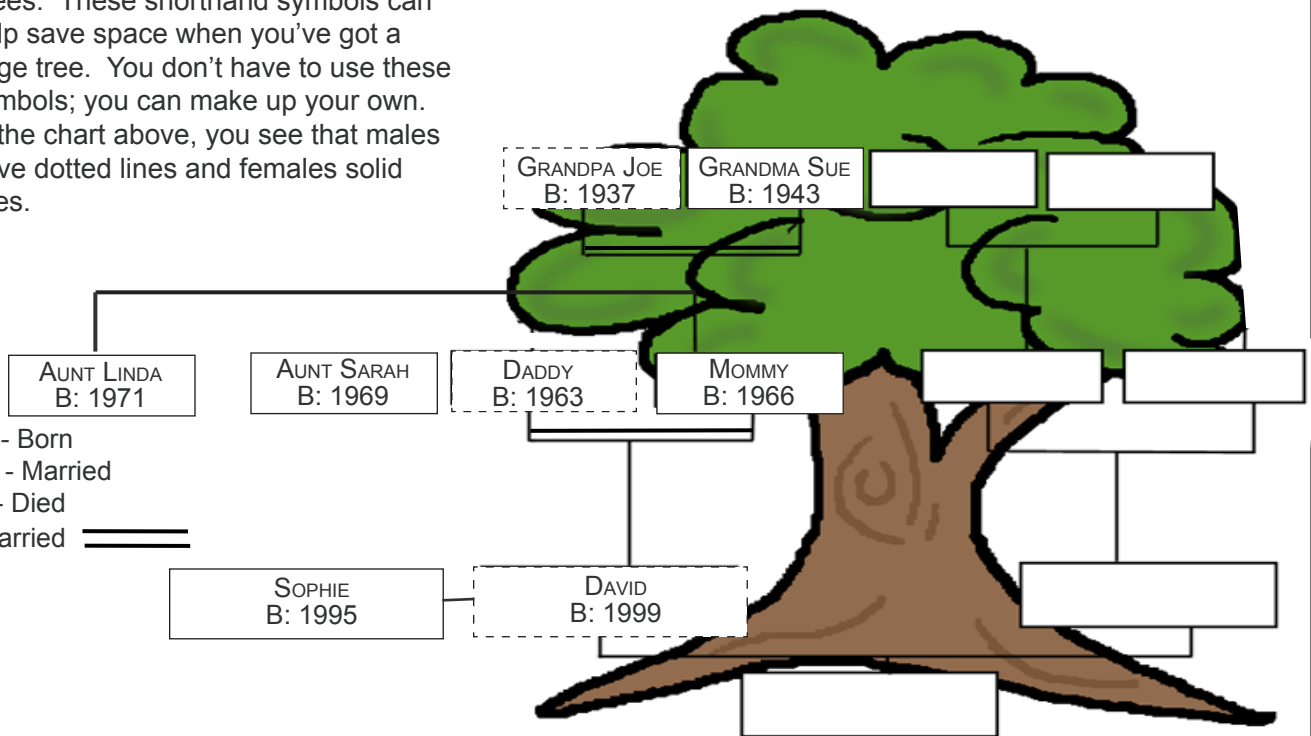


*"We need 4 hugs a day for survival. We need 8 hugs a day for maintenance. We need 12 hugs a day for growth."
 -Virginia Satir*

Create Background Data:

You and your family can decide on what information is important to include on the tree. For example, you might use the following information: Full Name, Birth date (day, month, year), Occupation, Date of death. If your family comes from all over the world, maybe include place of birth. Favorite color? Favorite food? Anything you decide to include will mean a conversation with your children about your family. This conversation creates a connection not just between you and your children, but between your children and their family history as well.

MY FAMILY TREE



For more information about *Parent Trust for Washington Children* and its life changing parent education and family support programs call 1.800.932.HOPE(4673).

Playing Tag CONTINUED PG 2

Freeze tag: Players who are tagged get “frozen”. They must stand in place--exactly where they were tagged. The only thing that can unfreeze them is for another non-frozen player to tag them again.

Bronco tag:

Bronco tag is a complicated game of tag, meant for a very large group of people, like at a party. Everyone partners up. One pair becomes “runner” and the “chaser”. If you have an odd number you can have two people being chased. Everyone else stands with one partner in front/one in back of each other. The partner in back circles the waist of the partner in front. All pairs form a circle, with the inner partner facing the center of the circle. The chaser starts to run from “chaser”. If they are tagged, they become “chaser”. But they can get to “safety” by having a front person of a pair encircle them with their arms. But that means the back person of the pair becomes “chaser” (The original “chaser” becomes “runner”)--and they don’t want to be “chaser”! So they try to keep their front partner from grabbing onto the person being chased. This is a crazy game!

Sock tag:

Everyone sits in a circle. The goal is to keep your socks on, but remove the socks of everyone else! Someone yells, “Go!” Everyone starts trying to pull off other people’s socks, without getting their own removed. Oh--and the rules are that you have to stay on your bottom or knees--no standing or running. Only sitting and crawling. And no tackling. This one’s pretty silly! The last person with a sock still on wins!

Amoeba Tag:

Two people form the original amoeba. They lock arms together and cannot separate. Together they start chasing everyone else. If someone gets tagged, they have to join the amoeba by linking arms with the end that tagged them. The amoeba gets bigger and bigger. Only ends of the amoeba can tag people.

Childhood Stress Symptoms CONTINUED PG 1

you notice these in your child, ask yourself if your child is experiencing stress at home or school.

- Excessive worrying
- Backtalk
- Hair chewing
- Forgetfulness
- Headache
- Stomach ache
- Emotional outbursts like yelling or crying
- Bossiness
- Tired a lot.

Stress symptoms may be an underlying indicator of a larger problem OR the problem itself. If the signals are long-term, you may want to consult with your pediatrician. If the symptoms are sporadic and tend to coincide with changes or challenges occurring for or around a child, you can get tips and ideas from our Family Help Line. Just call 1-800-932-HOPE (4673) and talk to a Parenting Coach. You can also take a look at some stress management tips on our website. Just go to www.parenttrust.org and click on the link for Parenting Tips. You’ll find tips for both you and your child.

