

Monthly Newsletter

FAMILY TIMES

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Moore Public Schools
MENTAL HEALTH TEAM



Caregiver Corner

by Rendy Janssen, LMFT

Connecting with your child(ren) in meaningful ways has many positive benefits to both children and adults. Connection builds confidence in children and increases their self-esteem. Research shows that children who spend quality time with the adults at home are less likely to have behavioral issues at home and school. As they age, those children are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as using drugs and alcohol.

Ways to build connection with kids:

- Cook together
- Play a quick board game or round of cards
- Ask about highs and lows of everyone's day
- Bedtime stories
- Have a dance party
- Do a craft project
- Build a fort
- Play with them

Source: 10 Minutes of Quality Time,
Bounce Back Parenting

Community Events

by Elizabeth Asplin, CTRS/L

October

- 1st- 10am-10pm: Greek Festival at St. George**
2nd Greek Orthodox Church. Come enjoy Greek
food, music and dancing, \$16, meal included.
- 1st- WINGS Fall Festival and Pumpkin Patch at**
23rd 13700 N Eastern, Edmond. Come enjoy
Inflatables, hayrides, food trucks, a maze,
photo ops and pumpkins of all shapes and
sizes!
- 8th- Haunt the Zoo at the OKC ZooFamily friendly**
30th event where your children can trick or treat.
ZOO Admission plus trick or treat bags.



Mental Health Discussion

By Summer King, LPC & LADC/MH

What is Children's Mental Health?

Mental Health in childhood is described as those children who are able to learn social skills, reach developmental and emotional milestones, know how to cope when there are problems, and can function well at home, in school, and their communities. Mental Health challenges during this time may change the way children learn, behave, or handle their emotions. While all children will go through

different periods of distress and changes many of these are part of the growing process as they learn different ways of dealing with new challenges and adapting to boundaries. If these symptoms are serious and interfere in several areas of a child's life then seeking additional help may be a great first step. If you have concerns about the way your child behaves it is important to seek out additional help from a healthcare professional.



Family Connections

By Elizabeth Asplin, CTRS/L

Go Pumpkin Picking: Venture out to your nearest pumpkin patch or roadside stand and purchase a few pumpkins. You can paint, carve, roast the seeds and even guess how many seeds each pumpkin has.

Flash back movie night: Parents and guardians, we all have those fun Halloween movies we enjoyed as kids. Maybe *It's the Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown*, *Casper* or *The Nightmare Before Christmas*; whatever movie you enjoyed when you were a child, sit down with some popcorn and watch it with your student.

Fall Nature Walk: While the weather is cooling down, take time to enjoy it with your children. Walk in the neighborhood, local park, or travel to one of our amazing state parks. Wherever you are, nature is around you. Look for those trees changing colors, bugs, or birds flying around.



Academic Tools to Support Learning

By Katy Creecy, MSW, LCSW

Caregivers can help children do well in school by building their vocabulary, or the set of words that they know. While connecting with your child through a favorite book or show, pick out an interesting word and ask questions about it ("What do you think that means?") Provide a kid-friendly definition and an example that makes sense in their daily life. Then, have them provide an example. Use the word throughout the week to reinforce its meaning and model its use in conversation.

Source: Reading Rockets

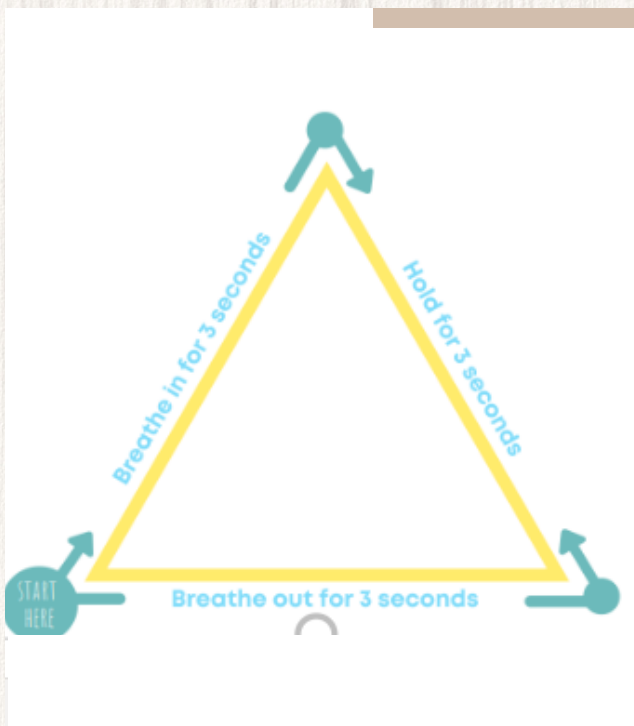
“Knowing that we can be loved exactly as we are gives us all the best opportunity for growing into the healthiest of people.” -Mr. Rogers

D.I.F.Y– Do It For Yourself

by Davene Findlay-Williams, MSW, LCSW

Making Time for Yourself Matters:

Parents need time to re-charge and relax. Sadly, not many of us take time to do so or think it is important. The reality is, the only way to take the best care of your family is to make sure you're taking time to take care of yourself. Can you push through and be a mommy martyr for the next 18 years? Sure. Will it leave you resentful and angry? Most definitely. Try to make time for the top 3 priorities in your life that are unique to you and your growing family. And if you choose things that really do fit your needs (as opposed to what other people want you to do), you will have more space and time for yourself. Next month we will talk about the ideal vs the reality of self-care.



Triangle Breathing

by Elizabeth Asplin, CTRS/L

- Place your finger on the circle at the bottom left of the triangle.
- Breathe in for three counts as you trace the first side of the triangle.
- Hold your breath for three counts as you trace the second side of the triangle.
- Breathe out for three counts as you trace the final side of the triangle.
- You have just completed one deep breath, repeat 3 more times.

RANCH PRETZELS



Ingredients:

- 1 bag (16 ounces) miniature pretzels
- 1/2 cup popcorn oil
- 1 package dry ranch seasoning
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, whisk together popcorn oil, ranch seasoning, and garlic powder.
2. In a large bowl, combine pretzels and oil mixture.
3. Toss until the pretzels are completely coated with the oil mixture.
4. Pour onto a baking dish to dry.
5. Once dry, store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Source: [I Am Baker](#)

EMPOWERING YOU TO EMPOWER THEM

HAVING THE TOUGH CONVERSATIONS
WITH OUR ELEMENTARY-AGED CHILDREN

Happen to miss the first
quarterly district-wide
Parent Night on
September 26th?

Scan or click
the QR code
below to take
you to the
livestreamed
video on our
YouTube
Channel!



Please Put Down Your Smartphone

By Taylor Wright, LPC-NCC

Technology's irresistible pull draws in parents just as much as it does kids. Parents today are more pressed for time than any other generation of parents—and constantly connected. Largely thanks to the smartphone, parents often find it difficult to separate from their hand-held devices. Checking our phone has become both habit and necessity to manage work and family life. But, all this multitasking could also hurt your young child's ability to learn. Children are likely to not only copy our behavior, but they also feel like they have to compete with devices for our attention. In order for our children to learn how to use technology appropriately and the critical skill of unplugging, we first have to practice and demonstrate mindful use of technology ourselves.

Smartphones can be a way to connect with others and make our lives easier, but their overuse can interfere with parent-child interactions. While it may be difficult to keep your phone out of sight completely (especially since most parents also use their phones to take photos and videos of their kids), carving out some boundaries to promote technology use in a healthy way can help.

Here are a few suggestions on how to set boundaries with today's technology:

- **Create regular tech-free times.** A few key times to stay unplugged include: when picking up or dropping off at school, directly after coming home from work as this is a time to reconnect with your family after being away from each other all day, during meals including when dining out, and at bedtime.
- **Designate tech-free outings.** A trip to the farm or the zoo, a playdate in the park, a day at the pool. Most parents love taking pictures of their kids and sharing moments on Facebook, but an activity can go undocumented every once in a while. Putting the phone away allows everyone to enjoy a fun, uninterrupted moments to focus on talking and communicating with each other.
- **Know when you're really busy and need to be plugged in and when you don't.** Often, it feels like there's a work or social emergency and you have to take that call, respond to a message, or check your email — but when you really think about it, it could wait until after you've finished that movie or game with your child.
- **Use media the way you want your children to.** Follow common sense rules around tech like never texting while driving and avoid oversharing on social media. By practicing what you preach instead of the "do as I say not what I do" approach, you emulate the habits you want your children to pick up and show them that there are times for using technology and times when we should be present in the real world.
- **Use technology in an interactive way:** If you are using a phone or other device, use it with your kids—together. Talk about what you see, ask them questions, and otherwise engage them face-to-face.

Source: How and When to Limit Kids' Tech Use, [HealthyChildren.org](#)

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