



Patient Newsletter

Partnering with Families through Childhood Milestones



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Dear Leann,

Looking at the foot of snow that surrounds our parking lot, it's hard to believe that spring is just around the corner. My family and I love playing in the winter snow and reading by a warm fire, still I know we are all ready for a change of the weather!

I want you to know that I am going out of state on Wednesday, March 4 returning to the office on Tuesday, March 10. In my absence our receptionist Karen will be in the office during regular business hours to handle administrative issues. The fine pediatricians also associated with Jordan Hospital and their medical staff will be available to answer any of your medical questions and see your child, if needed, while I am away. Call Karen during business hours at 508-747-8277 if you need to reach the back-up doctor or the answering service after hours at 508-747-8229. Prescription refills and referrals will be fulfilled upon my return.

I look forward to seeing you all in warmer weather!

Sincerely,



Terence R. McAllister, MD FAAP
Medical Director



TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT THE ECONOMY

Raising children can be very difficult when you have concerns about



not having enough money to take care of your family. You may become anxious, depressed or develop other emotional problems. Often this makes it even more difficult for parents and other caregivers to take care of their own health and their children's health.

The American Academy of Pediatrics cares about you and your family's health and well-being and has written the following tips to help you cope with life during tough economic times.

Take care of yourself. Remember that children depend on the adults around them to feel secure, so it's important that you take care of yourself. If you are worried or upset, your children will be too. Even very young children can tell when something is wrong.

Limit TV and other media time. When children overhear news coverage or adults talking about America's money problems, like job cuts and people losing their homes, they may become worried, especially because they don't really understand what is happening. Try to limit your own exposure to the media (especially when you are with children).

Choose your words carefully. Comments like "We just lost your college savings", "I might lose my job", or "We can't afford that!" can be very upsetting to children. In times of uncertainty, try to focus on what you do know and offer reassuring words. For example, "We have enough money to pay for food and our house, but we may need to spend less on eating out," or "We saved money for times like these."

It's important to talk with your children because they can sense stress and become anxious or upset if no one communicates with them. All they need is a very basic explanation of why people are upset or worried and what impact it will have on them personally.

Be sensitive to each child's needs. It's important to talk at each child's level. What and how much information you share depends on the age and developmental level of your children. In general, older children will want and benefit from more detailed information; younger children and those children with developmental delays or intellectual disabilities will benefit from simpler and briefer information. But for all children, start with asking them what they may already have heard or offer a simple explanation at first. Then ask your children if they have any more questions.

Children who already had problems with anxiety or other emotional problems may be particularly upset or worried about the economic situation and benefit from more direct advice and additional reassurance. Talk with your pediatrician or mental health provider about how to provide additional support. Children dealing with other challenges, such as the serious health problem of a family member, the recent death of a friend or family member, or a recent move or divorce, may find it even more difficult to deal with the current financial crisis.

Let your pediatrician know if you think your children are showing signs of stress. It is natural for children to be concerned if their family has money problems, yet if they are reminded that they do not need to solve these problems, they will feel better. See tips above on how to talk with your children. Also, watch your children closely for changes in their behavior, mood,

friendships, or school performance, and talk to your children's primary care clinician or other mental health professional as needed.

Plan family meetings. Family meetings are a very effective way for families to encourage healthy communication. It can be a time when family members learn how to get along with each other better. Parents can also use the time to share family values and cultural beliefs.

Additional Resources for Parents

[Dollars and Sense: Talking to Your Children about the Economy](#)

[How to Budget in a Recession](#)

[Preparing Your Kids for a Recession: Six Strategies for Talking About Money and Investing](#)

AAP Resources

[Children, Teens, and Resiliency](#)

[Holding Family Meetings](#)

This was created by the American Academy of Pediatrics. For more information, see: <http://www.aap.org/disasters/economy.cfm>.



HEALTHY EATING HABITS

It is important for parents to help their children develop healthy habits around food and eating so that they eat a good diet, and so they continue to make healthy choices about food as they get older. Below are a few suggestions for families to try and implement:

- Eat breakfast or at least "something" every morning (anything is better than nothing)
- Do not join the "clean plate" club; if a child is encouraged to eat beyond his natural cue of feeling satisfied, he can start to lose the sensitivity to these cues, which can lead to weight gain
- Sit down for dinner together as a family; put games away and switch the TV off.; enjoy talking to each other about the day
- Do not become a restaurant by cooking different food for every member of the family; offer the same balanced meal to the whole family
- If your child refuses to eat, save the meal and offer it later if they get hungry; if a child eats less in one meal they will be hungrier later and eat more for their next snack/meal
- It is okay to offer "treats" (e.g. cookies, chips, and "junky" foods) in small portions; explain that they are not the best foods but are okay once in a while
- Do not use food as a bribe, reward or punishment
- Treat all family members the same around healthy eating; all family members can benefit from healthful eating regardless of body size; it is not okay for one child to get cookies while the other child is given veggies with dip

Free

Do you have concerns about your child's speech and language skills? The Speech/Language Department at Jordan Hospital Outpatient Rehabilitation Center is Offering Free Speech and Language Screenings.

WHO: Children Ages 3 - 6 Years Old

WHERE: 10 Cordage Park Circle, Suite 225, Plymouth, MA 02360

WHEN: Screenings will take place by appointment Monday - Friday now through June

CONTACT: 508-830-2182 for more information or to schedule an appointment for your child

Free Speech and Language Screenings**[Forward email](#)****✉ SafeUnsubscribe®**

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