



Healthy, Happy Families
 Texas Cooperative Extension—Rockwall County
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Children & The Internet

Parents who would not permit a stranger into their home to talk with their child unsupervised think nothing of permitting their child to talk with cyber-pals unrestricted. However, unlike in the real world, it is impossible to verify that a cyber-pal is who he says he is. Here are a dozen actions that can help your kids be safe:

1. Install the children's computer in a common family area.
2. Develop and agree upon a list of family computer rules.
3. Balance your children's computer time with activities in the real world.
4. Distinguish between a "friend" and a "cyber-pal".
5. Periodically discuss what information you may share over the Internet.
6. Teach your child to understand and respect Internet property rights. Copying electronically stored material is stealing.
7. Be aware of the quantity of your child's music, software, and games.
8. Keep an up-to-date list of approved online friends.
9. Establish a rule about when your child may meet a cyper-pal in person.
10. Routinely check their computer activity.
11. Watch for signs of secrecy, addiction, and unauthorized e-mail accounts.
12. Use blocking, filtering, or monitoring controls on the computer.

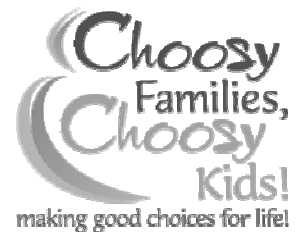


12 Things You Can Do to Protect Your Child

Source—www.parentingpress.com Contact the Extension Office for more information and the "Children and the Internet" brochure.

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Fat and Fiction

The simple "fat is bad" mentality is inaccurate. Although saturated and trans-fats have harmful effects, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated (particularly Omega-3 fats) play an important role in disease prevention and overall good health. Instead of trying to cut out all fat, it's more important to consume fat in moderation and to emphasize healthy fats over unhealthy fats.

Eat More

- *Omega-3 fatty acids:* fatty fish (salmon, trout, albacore tuna, herring, and mackerel), canola oil, flaxseed, and walnuts
- *Monounsaturated fats:* olive oil, avocado, canola oil, nuts, and nut oils

Eat Fewer

- *Omega-6 fatty acids:* corn, safflower, sunflower, and cottonseed oils
- *Saturated fats:* fatty meats and full-fat dairy products
- *Trans-fats:* partially hydrogenated fat, stick margarine, shortening, pastries, and commercially prepared french fries

Source—American Institute for Cancer Research
 NEWSLETTER

- Choose more fruits and vegetables.
- Choose to be together.
- Choose to move.
- Choose face time, play time, and family time.
- Choose to "right size" your servings.
- Choose to be sweet without sugar.
- Choose to be involved.

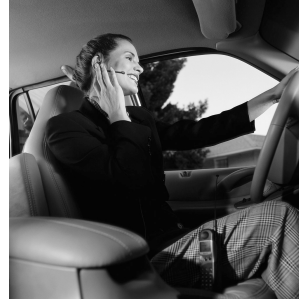
Everyday Driving: Minimize the Risks by Managing the Distractions

A distraction is anything that takes your *eyes, hands, or mind* away from the task at hand—driving.

The best advice is to keep your *eyes* on the road, keep your *hands* on the wheel, and keep your *mind* on the ride. The following tips can help manage distractions:

- Review maps before hitting the road.
- Do your personal grooming at home, not in the car.
- Don't take notes or look up a phone number while driving.
- Before you get behind the wheel, familiarize yourself with the features of your vehicle's equipment.
- Preset radio and climate controls.

- Secure items that may move around when the car is in motion.
- Don't try to retrieve items that fall to the floor while driving. Wait until your vehicle is parked.
- Avoid smoking, eating, drinking, and reading while driving.
- Teach your children the importance of good behavior while sitting in the car. Pull safely off the road and out of traffic to tend to them.
- Recognize that driving requires your full attention. If you find your mind wandering



Distracted drivers are a factor in 25 to 50 percent of all vehicle crashes.

while driving, remind yourself to stay focused on the road.

- Ask a passenger to serve as copilot and help you with activities that may be distracting such as maps and directions.
- Don't use a cell phone while driving. But if you must, use memory dialing or have a passenger dial for you. Don't engage in emotional conversations; keep the conversation short. Always assess the current traffic situation before making or receiving calls. Don't answer or dial the phone when driving in distracting or hazardous conditions.

Visit <http://txtownsafety.tamu.edu> and check out the Resources section.

MyPyramid Steps to a Healthier You

MyPyramid's slogan "Steps to a Healthier You" indicates we can benefit from taking daily small steps to improve our lifestyle. Here are some steps to get started:

1. Eat foods and drink beverages low in "added sugars". Naturally occurring sugars, such as those found in milk and fruits, do not count as added sugars.
2. Vary your fruit choices. Fruits differ in nutrient content.
3. Try a main dish salad for lunch and go light on the salad dressing.
4. Make pudding with fat-free or low-fat milk.
5. Do exercises or pedal a stationary bike while watching television.
6. Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.
7. Popcorn, a whole grain, can be a healthy snack with little or no added salt and butter.
8. Select vegetables with more potassium often; such as sweet potatoes, white potatoes, winter squash, tomato products, spinach, dry beans, and split peas.
9. Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit rather than juice, for the benefits dietary fiber provides.

10. Walking, gardening, pushing a baby stroller, climbing the stairs, or dancing are all good examples of being active. For health benefits, physical activity should add up to at least 30 minutes a day.

On the Internet, go to <http://mypyramid.gov> and calculate your personalized "My Pyramid Plan".

Keeping Comforters Clean and Cozy

Baby, it's cold outside! And, that means your comforters are doing extra duty—and getting extra dirty. Frequent use means frequent laundering. Here's a guide to keeping comforters clean, cozy, and comfortable:

- Check the care instructions for any special requirements for comforters.
- Pretreat heavily-soiled areas with a prewash soil and stain remover.
- Set washer to a high water level, delicate agitation, and normal spin. Add the detergent, partially fill with warm water, and stop the washer.
- Put the comforter into the washer, then squish it down to submerge.
- Turn washer back on, continue filling with water, and complete the wash cycle. Check occasionally to be sure the comforter is completely submerged.
- Tumble dry. Toss a few dry, clean towels in with your comforter to keep it from clumping. Periodically rearrange

the comforter so it dries completely.

- Laundry monthly or more often if someone is severely allergic to dust mites.

Source—*The Soap and Detergent Association*



Childhood Decides

The National Institute of Mental Health asked the following question of 50 parents whose children had become well-adjusted, productive adults: **Based on your personal experiences, what is the best advice you can give new parents about raising children?**

Love abundantly... The most important task is to love and really care about your child. This gives him or her a sense of security, belonging, and support. It smooths out the rough edges of society.

Discipline constructively... Give clear direction and enforce limits on your child's behavior. Emphasize "Do this" instead of "Don't do that".

Spend time with your children... Play with them, talk to them, teach them to develop a family spirit, and give them a sense of belonging.

Give the needs of your mate priority... One parent put it this way: "A husband and wife are able to be successful when they put their marriage first. Don't worry about the children getting 'second best'. Child centered households produce neither happy marriages nor happy children."

Be realistic... Expect to make mistakes. Be aware that outside influences, such as peer pressure, will increase as children mature.

Develop mutual respect... Act in a respectful way toward your children. Say "please" and "thank you" and apologize when you are wrong. Children who are treated with respect will know to treat you and others respectfully.



Really listen... This means giving your children undivided attention, putting aside your beliefs, and trying to understand your children.

Offer guidance... Be brief, don't give speeches, and don't force your opinions on your children.

Foster independence... Gradually allow children more freedom and control over their lives. One parent said, "Once your children are old enough, phase yourself out of the picture, but always be near when they need you."

Teach your children right from wrong... They need to be taught basic values and manners so they will treat others with kindness, respect, and honesty. Set personal examples of moral courage and integrity.

Removing Stains in Clothing

Spots and stains are easier to remove if they're treated quickly—not a few days later. To remove a stain, use a blotting motion; do not rub the stain. Work from the outer edge to the center of the stain. Be patient when following stain removal directions. Retreat stains that are not completely gone; some must be treated several times. Do not dry stained clothes in the dryer or the stains may become permanent.

Check for really dirty areas, such as

cuffs and collars. Pretreat these areas before washing. Make your own pretreatment by using liquid detergent, a paste of granular detergent and water, or use one of the many products on the market. Always check for colorfastness in an inconspicuous area of the garment, such as a seam allowance inside the garment.

Chlorine bleach is a stain remover. Use it only on white and colorfast clothes. Although bleach can also improve the cleaning power of laundry detergents, it

weakens fibers (especially cotton) when used repeatedly. That makes clothes wear out quicker. Do not use bleach on silk, wool, spandex, non-colorfast fabrics, or fabrics with a flame retardant finish.

Oxygen bleach is safe for colored fabrics, and is most effective in brightening colors and whites when used regularly.

The Extension [Stain Removal Guide](#) (L-5199) gives tips on specific stains and removal. Contact our office to get your free copy.

Celebrate National Wear Red Day ~ Friday, February 3, 2006

Join Americans nationwide on Friday, February 3, 2006 to celebrate the third annual National Wear Red Day. Wearing red shows your support for women's heart disease awareness. So, show off a favorite dress, shirt, or tie and help spread **The Heart Truth**: Heart Disease Doesn't Care What You Wear—It's the #1 Killer of Women. Join the national awareness movement by wearing red on February 3rd and encourage your family, friends, and coworkers to do the same.

Risk factors for heart disease are:

- ♥ Smoking
- ♥ High blood pressure
- ♥ High blood cholesterol
- ♥ Overweight / obesity
- ♥ Physical inactivity
- ♥ Diabetes
- ♥ Family history of early coronary heart disease
- ♥ Age (for women, 55 and older)

One in every three women dies of heart disease. One in thirty dies of breast cancer. Find out more about women and heart disease at www.hearttruth.gov



In memory of my sweet mother, Betty Benson, who died from complications of heart surgery on May 3, 2005.

Whole Grains: On a Roll

No matter how you slice it, eating more whole grains is a great way to add variety and health benefits. But what is a “whole grain”?

Whole grains contain all three parts of the plant kernel—the outer layer of bran, the inner germ of the plant, and the largest part of the kernel, called the endosperm. The bran and germ are the most nutritious parts of the grain. The bran provides fiber, B vitamins, iron, and antioxidants. The germ offers B vitamins, vitamin E, minerals, and healthy fats.

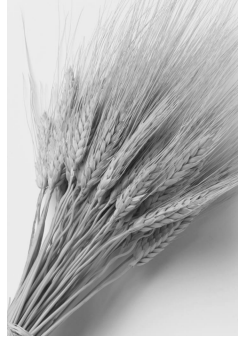
Refined grains are stripped of the nutritious bran and germ during milling, leaving behind the carbohydrate - rich endosperm. White flour and white rice are examples of refined grains.

Enriched grains are refined grains where the food manufacturer has added back some of the vitamins and iron that were lost during refinement. However, the term “enriched”

does not mean that fiber or other nutrients were restored.

Package Labels Hold Kernels of Truth

Finding foods made with whole grains can be challenging because manufacturers may use terms that confuse the customer. The best way to spot whole grain foods is to read product labels. Here are a few tips:



- **Scan the front of the package.** Healthful sounding words, like “multi-grain”, “seven-grain”, and “unbleached wheat flour” are marketing terms and do not mean the product is whole grain.
- **Check the ingredient list.** Foods that are mostly or completely whole grain list the

word “whole” with the first ingredient.

- **Don’t be fooled by color and texture.** Brown-colored bread is often refined white bread with added caramel coloring or molasses to make it look like whole wheat. Look for “whole wheat” in the ingredient list. If the first ingredient is “wheat flour”, that means it’s refined.
- **Check the fiber content.** An excellent source of fiber has at least 5 grams per serving; a good source of fiber has at least 2.5 grams.

Great Whole Grains

Barley	Popcorn
Brown rice	Whole wheat
Oats	Wheat berries

Save on Health Care Dollars

Avoid buying remedies, books, etc.; if they:

- \$ Claim a “secret ingredient”
- \$ Talk about “magical powers”
- \$ Claim to be a cure for aging or incurable diseases like arthritis
- \$ Are advertised by testimonials instead of research
- \$ Are available only by mail
- \$ Claim that hard tasks like losing weight or stopping smoking are easy
- \$ Make claims that seem too good to be true
- \$ Emphasize that natural is better
- \$ Pressure with limited time offers
- \$ Claim to be a revolutionary idea
- \$ Refer to the author’s own case history, but without details

*Americans spent
\$13.7 Billion
dollars on
health care last year!*

Repair Your Credit Rating

Personal and financial information about you is collected and compiled into a credit report that is made available to potential creditors upon request. Generally, credit scoring systems look at the following types of information:



Only time and good credit habits will restore your credit.

- **Have you paid your bill on time?** Your score is likely to be lower if you have paid bills late, had accounts referred to collection agencies, or declared bankruptcy.
- **What is your outstanding debt?** Companies look at how much outstanding debt you have relative to your total credit limits. If what you owe is close to what you could borrow, your score is likely to be lower than if you are only using a small percentage of your credit limits.
- **How long is your credit history?** The longer your credit track record, the higher your score is likely to be, assuming you have made payments on time and maintain low balances.
- **Have you applied for credit recently?** Applying for too much credit over a short period of time can have a negative effect on your credit score.

The Facts About Stroke

A stroke happens when blood cannot flow to a part of the brain. When the brain does not get the oxygen and nutrients it needs from the blood, its cells are damaged or begin to die. If brain cells are only damaged, they sometimes can be repaired. But brain cells that have died cannot be brought back to life. This means that the brain may stop sending signals to other parts of the body that control things like speaking, thinking, and walking.

A “mini stroke” may occur when blockage of the blood vessel has not reached 100%. Though not as immediately harmful as a regular stroke, a mini stroke is still a medical emergency.

Recovery from a stroke is most successful if treatment begins within the first three hours after symptoms appear.

Signs and symptoms of a stroke include, but are not limited to:

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg—especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding.
- Sudden problems seeing from one eye or both eyes.
- Sudden dizziness, loss of balance, or trouble walking.



The warning signs of a stroke may last only a few minutes and then go away. Always pay attention to any stroke symptoms, even if they are fleeting. If you suspect someone may be having a stroke, act **F.A.S.T.**

FACE—Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

ARMS—Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

SPEECH—Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence (example: It’s sunny today.) Are the words slurred? Can the person repeat the sentence correctly?

TIME—If the person shows any of these symptoms, time is important. You must call 9-1-1 immediately!

Juice—Too Much of a Good Thing



Preschoolers who drink too much juice are more likely to be too short and too heavy for their age according to research. As a result, nutrition experts are advising parents to limit juice to one serving of only 3/4 cup per day.

While fruit and juice are part of a healthy eating plan, they should not be substituted for milk and other healthful foods. As

always, a healthy eating plan is based on variety, balance, and moderation.

When shopping for fruit juice, look for “100% juice” on the packaging. Powdered fruit-ades and fruit flavored sodas are not substitutes for the nutrition that is in 100% fruit juice. Sweet drinks not only add calories to the diet, but they can spoil children’s appetite for the foods they need to grow, develop, and stay healthy.

How much fresh fruit and juice each day should you offer your preschooler? Most young children need about 1 to 2 total servings.

The next time you take your child to the doctor, ask if your child’s height and weight is right for his or her age. Remember, never place a child on a weight loss diet unless instructed by a doctor. Instead serve a variety of foods during family meal-times and enjoy regular family activity.

Pause for Thought

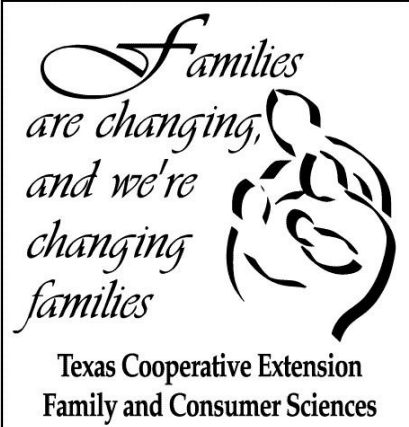
**YEAR BY YEAR
THE COMPLEXITIES
OF THIS SPINNING WORLD
GROW MORE BEWILDERING
AND SO
EACH YEAR WE NEED
ALL THE MORE TO SEEK
PEACE AND COMFORT
IN THE JOYFUL SIMPLICITIES.**

— Women’s Home Companion, December, 1935

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Click to Learn More in 2006

Extension educational outreach to county residents will take a different track for 2006. By offering home study courses and quality researched based fact sheets and publications online, you can download the information from the comfort of your home! The resources will be in PDF so you will need the free Adobe Acrobat Reader to access the information.

After February 1, go to our Rockwall County Extension Web site located at <http://rockwall-co.tamu.edu/> and click the **Publications** link at the top of the home page. Select from these categories: Family, Food, Health, Housing, and Money. Current information to help you and your family will be added each month in the form of Home Study Courses and Fact Sheets.

Also, click on the **Newsletters** link at the

top of the home page. All of the issues from the past three years of this quarterly "Healthy, Happy Families" newsletter will be available for downloading. Also, all of the seasonal recipe sheets that have been included in the newsletters will be available for you to download.

Home Study Course topics to be included during the winter and early spring months will include:

- Cold Weather Cooking
- Living Heart Healthy
- The Skinny on Fad Diets
- Fit It In
- Cooking for 1 or 2
- Family Meals in Minutes

The Home Study Courses are more in depth with a complete packet of facts and

information, recipes and activities for you to do to improve your knowledge and skills on the topic.

Fact sheets will be more condensed — usually two pages of basic information on the different subjects. Many other fact sheets will be added each month under the different publication categories, so be sure and check back after the first of each month.

Don't have Internet access? That's not a problem! Call the Extension Office and we will be happy to share with you an index of what is available and also print you a copy of any of the publications. You can come by and pick up the copies or we can mail them to you.

Remember, these new resources will be ready for you **after February 1** and more topics will be added each month!