

Teach preschoolers skills to shape responsible future

Don't leave young children out of the back-to-school preparations - get a head start on giving them responsibilities that will teach them important skills for the future, said a developmental pediatrician at Baylor College of Medicine (www.bcm.edu).

"Teaching simple independent living skills at a young age can help a child learn how to take care of themselves on their own," said Dr. Adiaha Spinks-Franklin, assistant professor of pediatrics at Baylor and a physician in the Meyer Center for Developmental Pediatrics at Texas Children's Hospital. "Many parents do not realize that there are simple chores young children are capable of completing."

As the child grows older, he or she can accomplish bigger tasks, ultimately paving the way for a responsible self-sustaining adulthood, she said.

Some of the skills parents can help their children learn and at what age include:

Age 2

"Generally at age 2, a parent can show their child how to clean up," said Spinks-Franklin.

If a child drops a piece of paper, show them how to pick it up and put it in the trash, she said. When they play, have them put their toys away with adult assistance so that next time, the child can do it themselves.

"This is a very simple way to teach the child responsibility," she said. "From an early age, the child should learn age-appropriate responsibility for action. If you play, you clean up after yourself."

Age 3

Many parents also do not realize that at age 3, a child can help with laundry, Spinks-Franklin said.

"They can help put away laundry and eventually learn how to match socks," said Spinks-Franklin. "Again, the key word is keeping the chore simple."

Age 4

At four years, a child is perfectly capable of making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, pouring their own bowl of cereal and even using the toaster, Spinks-Franklin said. "With adult supervision, these are perfectly appropriate tasks to give your child."

Also, let them pick out their clothes, she said. "A parent may need to help button or zip clothes and tie shoes but give the child some responsibility in the dressing process."

Other skills they can learn include bathing, brushing their teeth and helping clean up their room. A 4-year-old can help sort laundry by colors - whites versus darks.

Age 5

At age 5, when the child is approaching elementary school, they can help set the table.

"Now this does not mean they can carry around the fine china," said Spinks-Franklin. "But a parent can show them where the silverware goes on the table, for example, or how to sort the silverware in the drawer."

Teach both boys and girls

Spinks-Franklin emphasized the importance of teaching these skills to both boys and girls versus reserving the household chores for girls. "Remember, these will build

responsibility across the board.

"If a parent does not start teaching these skills at a young age, and perhaps waits until adolescence, the child may resist," said Spinks-Franklin. "The child should be able to start helping wash and dry dishes at age 8, sweep the floor and clean their rooms by 9, and by middle school iron their clothes and clean the bathroom."

Allowing to problem solve

It is important for a child to learn how to problem solve, think critically and learn from their own mistakes, said Spinks-Franklin. "This can be taught at an early age as well," she said. "For example, if you are telling them not to jump on the couch, and they continue to jump anyway and fall, try not to rush to rescue them if they are not seriously hurt. The child will learn that they can fall if they jump from the couch. If later in middle school, the child does not complete their homework assignment and gets a zero on the assignment, do not make excuses for them. Step back and let them learn from the consequences of their actions. Our goal is for our children to grow into healthy, independent, responsible adults."

Parents are reminded to check backpack weight and fitting

When children start piling their new school supplies into their backpacks, parents should be aware of how much weight they are carrying, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine (www.bcm.edu).

"Carrying a heavy backpack can be an issue, and parents should be sure children are carrying no more than 10 to 15 percent of their body weight in their backpacks," said Dr. Rubin Bashir, assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at Baylor. "For example, a 100 pound child should not carry a backpack that weighs more than

School Activities and Menus

Colby Public Schools

Activities: Monday and Tuesday: staff development. **Wednesday:** staff workday; 7:30 p.m. football area supervisors meeting at Colby High School. **Thursday:** first day of school. **Friday:** last day of school. **Friday:** last day students can add or drop first semester classes; 6 p.m. volleyball sports drink scrimmage at Colby High School gym; 8 p.m. football video scrimmage. **Saturday:** 8:30 a.m. girls junior varsity tennis at Trego Community High School, 9 a.m. girls C-team volleyball at Phillipsburg High School.

Sacred Heart

Activities: Thursday: first day of school.

Menus: Thursday: tacos with lettuce, tomatoes and cheese, salsa, apple, biscuits. **Friday:** pizza, green beans, salad, watermelon, bread sticks.

Heartland

Activities: Monday: 9 a.m. new teacher orientation. **Tuesday:**

9 a.m. teacher orientation; 6 p.m. parent/student orientation and potluck. **Wednesday:** 9 a.m. teacher orientation. **Thursday:** first day of school. **Friday:** 9 a.m. high school volleyball at Healy.

Golden Plains

Activities: Monday: back to school night, teacher inservice/workday. **Tuesday:** teacher workday. **Wednesday:** first day of school. **Friday:** 5-6 p.m. volleyball scrimmage; 6:15-7:15 football scrimmage; barbecue follows. **Saturday:** 9 a.m. high school volleyball, Healy.

Brewster

Activities: Tuesday: 7 p.m. league meeting at Oakley. **Friday:** no school.

Colby Community College

Activities: Saturday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Youth Outdoor Day, campus; 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. athletic department physicals and orthopedic exams, Health Science Building; 5 p.m. The Band Perry/Craig

Morgan, Imperial, Neb. Chase County Fair; 6 to 11 p.m. Duck Soup Tournament, Colby City Recreation Fields. **Sunday:** 1 to 9 p.m. Duck Soup Tournament, city recreation fields.

Friday: 1 p.m. men's basketball golf tournament, Meadow Lake Country Club; 3 p.m. volleyball at Subway tournament, North Platte, Neb.

Saturday: 10:30 a.m. volleyball at Subway tournament, North Platte; noon - baseball vs. Garden City; 9 p.m. "The Mama's Boys," Student Union Multipurpose Room.

Triplains

Activities: Monday: no school. **Tuesday:** 7 p.m. league meeting at Oakley.

Is your school missing from this list? Send us your calendar and menus. E-mail colby.society@nwkansas.com or mail Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

Senior Progress Center

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 10:30 a.m. shuffle board. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. Wii game. **Wednesday:** cupcakes day. **Thursday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. pinochle. **Friday:** 10 a.m. exercise, 10:30 a.m. pool game.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** smothered steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, seasoned carrots, mixed fruit. **Tuesday:** tuna salad, vegetable soup, pears, crackers, cinnamon roll. **Wednesday:** macaroni and cheese with smokies, peas, gelatin with bananas,

Thursday: oven-fried chicken, mashed potatoes with gravy, cook's choice vegetable, apricots. **Friday:** ground beef stroganoff, green beans, cucumber/tomato salad, strawberry shortcake.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older and guests to lunch at the senior center. A contribution of \$3 per meal is suggested for seniors, \$5.25 for others.

Make reservations at (784) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

high on children's backs at home.


- Use backpacks with a waist strap to help carry the load
- Consider purchasing a rolling backpack.
- Keep an extra copy of books

Geese used as prison alarm

SAO PAULO (AP) - An overcrowded prison in northeastern Brazil has added a new layer of security against escapes: two geese. Sobral prison warden Wellington Picanco tells the G1 news

website the geese make a lot of noise when they sense "strange movements."

He says the geese roaming the prison grounds also will alert guards to outbreaks violence.



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