

## TIP SHEET: Separation Anxiety

Ages Affected: 6 months–4 years old

When separated from their parents, children can get worried and scared of new people. This is what we call separation anxiety.

### Signs of Separation Anxiety:

Children react differently to separation and strangers—some are scared, while others show no reaction. Children also act differently when they reunite with their parents—some get upset and cry, while others get angry and ignore their parents.

### Here are a few tips to help you and your child:

- Ease them into it. You don't even have to leave the house to get started. Tell your baby or toddler that you'll be going to another room and you'll be back soon. This will help them understand that although you are gone now you will come back.
- Practice separation. Leave your child with a caregiver for brief periods and short distances at first.
- The more anxious you are about leaving or about others caring for your little one, the more anxious your child will be. Be calm, confident and reassuring. And when you do return, take time to enjoy a warm welcome and extra hugs. Being apart makes reuniting that much sweeter.
- Don't feel guilty. Remind yourself that this is a stage and you both will get through it. You aren't a bad parent for leaving your child in tears. Remind yourself that you are working to raise a healthy, independent adult.
- Tell your child you are leaving and that you will return, then go—don't stall.
- Leave happy, with a smile! Trying to sneak quickly out the door so your baby doesn't cry actually does more harm. Say goodbye and then help your child



become involved in a fun activity that will occupy him as you leave.

- Develop “goodbye” signals. This will comfort your child. Signals can be as simple and as fun as a special wave through the window or a goodbye kiss.
- Things like a favorite blanket or stuffed toy can help comfort small children. In fact, to your child, these items are a symbol of you. They represent comfort, safety, and joy. Allowing your child to attach to a blanket or stuffed toy as a baby will allow him to be better at self-soothing later on.
- Leave your child with a babysitter/caregiver that you and your child trust.
- Praise your child's good behavior. When your child smiles and talks to new people give her praise to encourage this behavior.

## TIP SHEET: **Crying**

Ages Affected: All

**Crying is your baby's way of communicating with you and it is a normal part of his development.**

### What to do when your baby is crying:

Parents often panic and look for things to cheer up their baby. Before rushing to calm down your baby, you should first learn how to deal with your own feelings.

**Here are a few tips and suggestions to help take care of yourself and your crying baby:**

#### For Parents/Caregivers:

- Children cry for several reasons including hunger, anger, fear, anxiety, teething, sickness and so on. Your crying baby is trying to tell you what he needs. Stay calm and ask yourself these questions: Is it a wet diaper? Is it hunger? Is your baby gassy? Is your child tired? Or is your baby over stimulated?
- Stay calm. Don't blame yourself for your crying child. Reduce your stress and show your baby that you are calm. This will comfort your baby.
- Don't get angry with your crying child. Remember that this is your baby's way of communicating with you.
- Sometimes, distracting a crying child will do wonders. For this, you could make a funny face, get out a favorite toy or game, or turn on a lively movie or children's show. Breaking the crying cycle using distraction usually works quite well.
- Most crying children love to be held. If you can, sit with your child in a rocking chair—the back and forth motion of the rocker and the warmth and security of your arms are a great soothing tool. You might even hum or sing softly to your child, creating a sense of comfort and security.
- Your baby could be trying to tell you something very important, so never ignore a crying child. Instead, be comforting and helpful to your baby.

If nothing works, keep stroking your child gently until he falls asleep.

- If you cannot seem to calm your baby or child be sure to take care of yourself. Leave your baby with another adult or in a safe place such as a crib. Walk away for a few minutes and take a few deep breaths, get some fresh air and relax.
- When your baby is calm and awake, play and spend time with her. Your baby will learn that she will get your attention when she is calm, not just when she is crying.

#### Tips to Comfort Your Crying Baby:

- If it is a wet diaper, then change your baby into fresh clothes. Wet diapers can cause discomfort because they feel itchy, wet or hot.
- If it's been awhile since you fed your baby, your baby may be hungry. Try feeding her.
- If your child is crying due to gas then stroke his stomach downwards or carry your baby upwards and go for a walk to ease the discomfort in your child's tummy.
- Babies often cry if they are tired and cannot fall asleep. Carry your baby to a calm room and gently stroke him until he falls asleep.
- For overstimulated, cranky babies, tranquil noise works well. It calms them and helps them to focus and relax. Sources of white noise could be fish tanks, vacuum cleaners, washing machines and fans.

#### How Much Should Your Baby Cry?

Age in Weeks	2	4	6	8	10	12
Approx. Number of Hours/Day	1¾	2 or more	2¾	2	1½	1

## TIP SHEET: **Bedtime Problems**

Ages Affected: 0–5 years old

Your baby needs a certain amount of sleep each day to stay healthy and happy. In fact, some “bad” behavior might be caused by lack of sleep. Just as you might get irritated when you haven’t slept enough, so does your baby!

Bedtime problems start at infancy and do not always end when your child moves from a crib to a bed. As your child gets older, bedtime problems change from crying to whining pleas and refusals.

So how do you get your child to bed through the cries, screams and pleas? How should you respond when you’re awakened in the middle of the night? And how much sleep is enough for your kids?

Here are a few tips:

### **Babies:**

- **One-Two Months:** After the first couple of weeks, infants may sleep for as long as 4 or 5 hours at a time—this is about how long their small bellies can go without food. If babies do sleep most of the night, they may want to eat more frequently during the day.
- **Three Months:** At three months, a baby sleeps about 13 hours in a 24-hour period (4-5 hours of sleep during the day broken into several naps and 8-9 hours at night). About 90 percent of babies this age sleep through the night.
- **Six Months:** At six months your baby should be sleeping through the night on a regular basis. If your baby continues to cry throughout the night, check if she is sick, cold, hungry or wet.

It’s not too early to establish a simple bedtime routine. Any soothing nightly activities, such as a bath, reading a book or singing a song can make up the routine. The goal is for babies to fall asleep on their own, and if they wake up in the middle of the

night, learn to soothe themselves and go back to sleep.

- **Six-Twelve Months:** At six months, an infant may nap about 3 hours during the day and sleep about 9-11 hours at night. At this age, you can begin to change your response to an infant who awakens and cries during the night.

If your baby doesn’t go back to sleep, comfort her without picking her up (talk softly, rub the baby’s back), then leave the room—unless she appears to be sick.

### **Toddlers:**

- From ages 1 to 3, most toddlers sleep about 10-13 hours per night.
- Set regular bedtimes and naptimes. Though most toddlers take naps during the day, you don’t have to force your child to nap. It’s important to schedule some quiet time, even if she does not sleep.
- Continuing his bedtime routine helps your child relax. Just don’t allow rituals to become too long or complicated.
- Active dreaming begins at this age, and for very young children, dreams can be scary. Nightmares are particularly frightening to a toddler. Comfort and hold your child at these times. Let your toddler talk about the dream if she wants to. Stay until your child is calm, then encourage your child to go back to sleep as soon as possible.

### **Preschoolers:**

- Preschoolers sleep about 10-12 hours per night. A preschool child who gets adequate rest at night may no longer need a daytime nap.

## TIP SHEET: Toilet Training

Ages Affected: 2 ½–4 years old

**Potty training is a big step for parents and kids alike and knowing when your child is ready to transition from diapers is important. The secret to success? Patience. Most children usually learn to use the potty somewhere between the ages of 2 ½ and 4 years, and are night trained by 8 years. Toilet training can become a long and frustrating process if you try to start it before your child is ready—you can't force your child to learn.**

### Signs that your child is ready to be potty trained:

This could include: asking to go to the bathroom, ability to control the urge to wet/soil, an interest in the toilet or to not wet themselves.

Once your child is ready to learn, toilet training can take around 3 to 4 weeks. Most children still accidentally wet or soil their pants a year or more after learning, so be patient. Don't worry if your child is faster or slower than others.

### Here are some tips to help teach your child:

- Place a potty chair in the bathroom. Encourage your child to sit on the potty chair with or without a diaper. Make sure your child's feet rest firmly on the floor or a stool.
- Help your child understand how to talk about the bathroom using simple, correct terms. You might dump the contents of a dirty diaper into the potty chair to show its purpose or let your child see family members of his or her sex using the toilet.
- Schedule potty breaks. Have him sit on the potty chair or toilet without a diaper for a few minutes, several times a day. Stay with him and read potty training books or give him a special toy to use while sitting on the potty chair or toilet. Even if he just sits there, praise him for trying and remind him that he can try again later.
- When you notice signs that your child may need to use the toilet such as squirming, squatting or holding the genital area, respond quickly. Help your child become familiar with these signals, stop what she is doing and head to the toilet. Praise your child for telling you when she has to go.
- For boys, it's often best to master urination sitting down, and then move to standing up after bowel training is complete.
- Teach girls to wipe carefully from front to back.
- Dress your child in loose clothing, without fasteners or buttons, so your child can remove items more easily.
- When it's time to flush, let her do the honors. Make sure your child washes her hands after using the toilet.
- Treat mistakes lightly. Accidents happen, especially when your child is tired or upset. When it happens, stay calm. Simply say, "Uh-oh. There was an accident. Let's change you. Pretty soon you'll remember to use the potty chair every time you have to go."
- Consider prizes. Maybe stickers or stars on a chart or an extra trip to the park. Experiment to find what works best for your child. Make sure you are still verbally praising her such as, "How exciting! You're learning to use the toilet just like big kids do!" Be positive even if a trip to the toilet isn't successful.
- After several weeks of successful potty breaks, your child may be ready to trade diapers for training pants or regular underwear. Celebrate this transition.
- Most children master daytime bladder control by age six. Nighttime control may take months or even years. In the meantime, use disposable training pants or plastic mattress covers when your child sleeps.

## TIP SHEET: Whining

Ages Affected: 1 ½–5 years old

Whining is an irritating blend of talking and crying. Often it is very frustrating to have to listen to, but it's important to learn how to deal with it in a calm manner.

### Why do children whine?

Whining is often the only way children can express themselves when they're tired, cranky, hungry, uncomfortable, or just don't want to do something. Although the language skills of 3-and-4-year-olds are rapidly improving, they still don't have the vocabulary to describe all of these feelings.

Try not to give in or react. By not reacting, you are teaching your child that there are better ways of communicating.

### Here are some tips to help control your anger and help deal with your whining child:

- Refuse to let it bother you. Calmly tell your child that you can't understand what she wants when she whines and that you'll listen when she talks in a nicer voice.
- Ignore the whining and definitely do not overreact. It's really easy to lose your cool after several minutes of whining. Turn away when a child whines. Respond as soon as the whining stops. Stay calm and don't look or act irritated. Leave the room, sing or do something to keep yourself distracted from the whining.
- Teach your child what a "nice voice" sounds like. Show your child the difference between an annoying, whiny tone and a normal one. Ask the child to "talk nice" and do not give in until he does. Don't make fun of your child's tone of voice, but show him the difference and then practice together.
- Don't give in and give your child what she wants



while whining. Instruct other caregivers and family members to behave in the same manner. If you give in after any period of time, your child will learn where your breaking point is and whine longer next time.

- Make the answer an automatic "no" when whining is involved. This way your child will learn whining doesn't get your child her way.
- Give praise. You might say, "Thanks for using your normal voice," or "My ears love that voice." This works wonders. Whenever your child asks for something politely, acknowledge it and thank him.
- Decide if his request is reasonable. Even if he says it in a nice voice, you can't always say yes. Sometimes you need to say no, but always explain why to your child. Learning to accept no is an important part of growing up.
- Hang in there. Change isn't going to happen overnight. Continue to be patient with your child and, over time, he will learn that whining is not the way to communicate with you.
- Always set a good example: speak nicely to others and to your child.

## TIP SHEET: Temper Tantrums

Ages Affected: 1 ½–3 years old

**The first time your toddler throws a tantrum can be surprising and embarrassing but you are not alone. Every parent can expect to deal with some temper tantrums in children from ages 1 ½–3. The trick is to deal with them as soon as they start. Temper tantrums are equally common in boys and girls. More than half of young children will have one or more per week.**

### The triggers for temper tantrums:

There are predictable situations that can be expected to trigger temper tantrums, such as bedtime, supertime, getting up, getting dressed, bath time, watching TV, a parent talking on the phone, visitors at the house, family visiting another house, car rides, public places, family activities involving siblings, interactions with peers, and playtime.

All young children from time-to-time will whine, complain, resist, cling, argue, hit, shout, run, and defy their parents. Temper tantrums, although normal, can become upsetting to parents because they are embarrassing, challenging, and difficult to manage.

### Here are a few tips to help deal with your upset child:

- Remain calm and do not argue. Before you take care of the child, you must control your own behavior. Spanking or yelling will make the tantrum worse.
- Think before you act. Count to 10 and then think about the source of the child's frustration and the best way to stop the tantrum.
- Try to intervene before your child is out of control. Get down at her eye level and say, "You are starting to get very angry, calm down."
- Reward children for positive attention not negative attention. During situations when they are prone to temper tantrums, catch them when they are being good and say such things as, "Nice job sharing with your friend."
- Do not ask children to do something when they must do what you say. For example, do not ask, "Would you like to eat now?" Instead, say, "It's supertime now."
- Give your child control over little things by giving choices. This will make her feel like she has power over certain situations. "Which do you want to do first, brush your teeth or put on your pajamas?"
- Removing your child from the place where the tantrum started. Say, "Let's go for a walk."
- Teach children how to make a request without a temper tantrum and then give them what they ask for. Say, "Try asking for that toy nicely and I'll get it for you."
- Make sure that children are well rested and fed in situations where a temper tantrum can start. Say, "Dinner is almost ready, here's a cracker for now."
- Avoid boredom. Say, "You have been working for a long time. Let's do something fun."
- Create a safe environment that children can explore without getting into trouble. Childproof your home or classroom so children can explore safely.
- Increase your tolerance level. Are you available to meet the child's reasonable needs? Evaluate how many times you say, "No." Avoid fighting over minor things.
- Let children know ahead of time when an activity is almost done. Say, "When the timer goes off five minutes from now it will be time to put your dolls away and go to bed."
- Make your child laugh to distract her attention and surprise the child out of the tantrum.

## TIP SHEET: Independent Eating

Ages Affected: 1–2 years old

When children are toddlers, they will begin exploring how to eat on their own. This not only includes learning how to use a fork and spoon, it also means that they realize when they are hungry and full. This is an exciting time for you both—make it fun!

### The signs that they are ready to eat on their own:

Toddlers will start to eat with their fingers and gradually learn to hold utensils between 12-24 months. This is also the time to teach them to enjoy and want healthy foods.

### Here are some tips to help teach your child to eat on his own:

- Give your child small portions and allow her to ask for more if she is still hungry.
- Let him help with the easy stuff like spreading peanut butter or helping you pour milk in a cup. It could get a little messy at first, but it teaches him independence.
- This is also a good time to start to get your child interested in healthy foods. Make healthy food fun. Use cookie cutters to make shapes out of food and give food fun names that she will enjoy.
- If your child doesn't like a certain food, don't give up. It can take up to 10 tries for your child to like a new food.
- Always place your child's bowl, plate, cup, and utensils in the same place on her highchair tray or at the table. This will help her learn faster.



- As you put food on your child's plate, show him where each item is. When he is older, you can start describing food so he learns what he is eating. It's okay to let him gently touch his food to see what he is about to eat.
- Don't forget to praise your child for eating with his utensils. Say "James, that's really good eating, I like how you're using your spoon."
- Have regular meal times so she begins to understand normal meal times. Try to set aside 20-30 minutes to help her eat.

## TIP SHEET: **Sharing**

Ages Affected: 2–4 years old

Around this age children begin to get possessive of their things. They start using words like “gimme” and “mine.” This is the time to teach your child to share with others. Sharing is probably one of the most important lessons you can teach your child.

### The signs that your child should learn to share:

Toddlers begin to learn about what belongs to them and can become very protective over their things. Children will grab, push or refuse to share with other children around them. This is a normal part of their development.

Children learn by example so don't forget, you are their best role model. If your child notices that you share with others, they are more likely to do the same.

### Here are some tips to help teach your child to share with others:

- You must explain to your child why it is important to learn how to share. Remind her that she doesn't like it when other children don't share with her, so she should always share with others.
- Make it fun. Teach your child group games where everyone is playing together, for example, a puzzle.
- Act quickly when you see your child grabbing or pushing others. Take hold of your child's hand and remind them to say please and wait their turn.
- Praise him for good behavior when he shares with others.
- The concept of sharing a toy may not even have occurred to your child. Encourage her to take turns with the toy and reassure her that sharing isn't the same as giving away, and point out that if she shares toys with friends, they will share with her too.



- Teach your child to ask permission in a polite way when he wants to borrow things from others.
- Use the word share to describe what you're doing, and don't forget to teach him that feelings, ideas and stories can be shared too.
- If your child continues to grab things from other kids after being told not to, use quiet time. Tell your child what she has done wrong and explain that it's time for quiet time. Quiet time is when your child sits quietly in a chair or playpen without toys to think about what she has done wrong. Consider using one minute of quiet time for each year of your child's age—i.e., 3 minutes of quiet time for a 3-year-old.



## TIP SHEET: **Interrupting**

Ages Affected: 4 years old

Interrupting is when you are in the middle of a conversation with someone and your child begins talking to you and demanding your attention. All children need lots of attention from their parents, but sometimes you just need a little time for yourself, especially when you are on the phone or talking to another adult.

### Why is my child interrupting me?

Your child isn't being rude when she interrupts—she just doesn't know better. Children do not understand when interrupting is or is not appropriate. Most of the time, they simply want attention or want you to meet one of their needs.

### Here are a few tips to help teach your child to stop interrupting:

- Talk to your child about interrupting. Explain how it is rude and is not good manners.
- Ignore the interruption. This is hard because this might trigger your child to speak louder, but she will soon learn that if she interrupts, she won't get the attention she is looking for.
- If you have a task or a phone call that you know will take ten minutes to complete, distract your child with something to do during that time—read a book, play with dolls, watch television. Set a timer and explain that she isn't to interrupt you (unless it is a true emergency) until the timer goes off.
- Explain why you don't like to be interrupted—as many times as it takes. Tell him that when he interrupts, it prevents you from doing something that you need to get done.



- Explain the rules. Give them two or three easy rules to follow, such as raising his hand and saying, "excuse me" when he really needs to tell you something while you are busy.
- Give rewards. Tell your child what she can earn if she follows the rules of not interrupting when you are on the phone or in the middle of a conversation.
- Talk about consequences. Decide ahead of time how you want to discipline your child. Warn your child what will happen if she keeps interrupting you and tell her that you would prefer that she doesn't do so.

## TIP SHEET: Nightmares and Night Terrors

Ages Affected: 3–5 years old

### What are nightmares?

Nightmares are scary dreams. Most children have them from time to time. Most nightmares happen very late in the sleep period (usually between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m.). Your child may wake up and come to you for comfort. Usually, she will be able to tell you what happened in the dream and why it was scary. Your child may have trouble going back to sleep. Your child might have the same dream again on other nights.

### What are night terrors?

Some children have a different kind of scary dream called a “night terror.” Night terrors happen during deep sleep (usually between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m.). A child having a night terror will often wake up screaming. She may be sweating and breathing fast. Your child’s pupils (the black center of the eye) may look larger than normal. At this point, your child may still be asleep, with open eyes. She will be confused and might not answer when you ask what’s wrong. Your child may be difficult to wake. When your child wakes, she usually won’t remember what happened. Children who have night terrors may also sleepwalk.

### No parent wants to see their child in such distress; here are some tips to help your child deal with their fears and overcome nightmares/night terrors:

- Avoid scary stories, movies, or other stimuli just before bed. Our brains have a tendency to recall the last thing on our mind before we go to sleep, so make sure that the last things that your child experiences or sees before going to sleep are pleasant, happy, and relaxing.
- Talk gently with your child before he goes to sleep, otherwise sing a song or tell a short story, because your child finds your voice very soothing. This routine helps very much after the child wakes up.
- Use a nightlight. This will calm and comfort your child while falling asleep. Make sure the light is not too bright. Bright light can actually interrupt sleep patterns and contribute to nightmares.
- After your child has a nightmare, have her explain it to you. Then walk her through it and help her understand that it’s not real. Also, help her come up with a happy or funny alternative. For example, “Every time you see the monster in your dreams, imagine that he has the hiccups.”
- Sleepwalking can be dangerous. Use toddler gates on staircases and don’t use bunk beds for children who often have nightmares or night terrors.
- When your child wakes you in the middle of the night, it is important to remain calm. If you become anxious or stressed, your child will also sense that, and it will make it more difficult to get her to settle down again.
- Stay with your child until he goes back to sleep peacefully.
- Reassure your child that it was just a dream and that she is safe.
- Establish a regular sleep schedule for your child and make sure he is getting enough sleep. This will also help your child to perform better in school or daytime activities.
- Praise your child for sleeping through the night.

## TIP SHEET: Mealtime Problems

Ages Affected: 2–4 years old

Teaching your child to eat properly with manners and to eat at a regular time each day is something that should be taught at a young age. Eating at regular times will help your child develop in the healthiest manner possible.

### Understanding your child:

Mealtime can be rough if you have not gone over how to eat properly at the dinner table. It is important to have realistic expectations about a family meal. When a preschool age child first begins to eat at a table, there are likely to be spills and messes. This isn't misbehavior; your child is just learning and exploring his world. Try to stay calm and look for opportunities to praise your child.

### Here are some tips for teaching your child to eat at the table:

- Be realistic. Because young children are also easily distracted and find it hard to sit in one place for a long time, 20 to 30 minutes is a good time limit for a main meal.
  - Establish a routine. Try to serve three main meals—morning, afternoon and night. Explain to your child she will only be allowed food at these times.
  - Encourage your child to eat a variety of foods. He will develop preferences for some foods over others, just as adults do.
  - Keep in mind that it often takes 10-15 tries before a child will start to like new foods.
  - Set rules. Decide on two or three easy rules for mealtime and after awhile your child will be able
- to remember your rules. Some possible rules are: sit at the table until you are excused; eat with your fork or spoon; finish your food before you speak so you don't talk with your mouth full of food.
  - Make sure you have everything ready on the table before you call your child to eat. Children can easily get restless and misbehave when they are waiting and hungry.
  - Have your child concentrate on his meal. Remove all toys and other distractions from the table.
  - If your child misbehaves at the table, immediately tell your child to stop and tell and/or show her how she should be behaving.



## TIP SHEET: **Cleaning Up**

Ages Affected: 2–5 years old

**Cleaning up is an important part of your child's development and gives her a sense of responsibility. It also helps to make life a bit less stressful for you!**

### The importance of teaching your child to clean up:

Of course your child is not going to want to clean up after himself, but unless you want to trip over toys all of the time, it is a chore that you must teach your child. If you are constantly picking up after your child at this age, he will learn to always expect it.

### Here are some tips to help teach children to clean up after themselves:

- Start young. If your child is walking, then she is old enough to start learning to put the toys away when playtime is over. Talk your child through it, "Can you put that book on this shelf?" Demonstrate how it's done as well.
- Set a good example. Take care of your own belongings and clean up after yourself.
- When it is almost time to clean up, let him know ahead of time and motivate him by giving him something to look forward to, like an afternoon snack or a trip to the playground.
- Don't just say "clean up." It is easy for your child to be overwhelmed by a big mess, because she doesn't know where to start. Instead, try breaking the job down into little tasks. For example, you could say, "Put away your dolls first and then move to the books."
- Explain why cleaning is necessary. Otherwise your child looks at cleaning up as putting away the fun.
- Make it fun and educational. Create kid-friendly storage. Place removable picture labels on drawers and bins to help kids learn where everything goes. Have your child either draw or cut out of



magazines pictures of specific items (blocks, puzzles, games) that go into each one. Under the picture, write the name of the item. This will also help your child recognize words with objects.

- Make up some songs to sing with your child while you clean up. It makes the job go faster and the peppy music will keep your child in a good mood.
- When her room is finally clean, don't redo what isn't perfect. Lumpy bed sheets? No need to smooth them. Mismatched dollhouse furniture? Ignore it. As long as the job was done properly, just leave it be.
- Reward a job well done. For example, you could keep a chart in the kitchen. As soon as your preschooler finishes his task, give him a sticker to put on the chart.
- Make it a habit. Sometimes you'll be tempted to just put the toys away yourself, especially if bedtime or some other important deadline is approaching. Teach your child to clean up after she is done with the task.
- Over time as your child begins to learn how to clean up, give them direction and allow her to direct herself. Be ready to help if she needs it.

## TIP SHEET: **Going Shopping**

Ages Affected: 1 ½–5 years old

Shopping with your child can be difficult because children get tired and bored easily and will then cry, whine and complain.

### Why does my child misbehave at stores and markets?

Children may whine, touch things without permission, run in aisles, get lost, throw tantrums or demand that you buy them things while at the store. Children usually find shopping boring and something that takes forever, especially when they don't have anything to keep them occupied. This makes children irritable and disruptive so they are more likely to misbehave.

### Here are some tips to make shopping with your child a little easier:

- Try to keep shopping trips with your child short.
  - Go shopping when your child is more likely to behave. You know your child better than anyone else. Timing is a big part of keeping yourself from going crazy when shopping with your little one.
  - Keep your child entertained. Bring something for her to do, to eat, to drink and to enjoy. Take some books or crayons and toys. Small items are best as your child will likely be confined to a smaller space. Bring a snack or, if you will be gone a long time, several snacks, something to drink or even a meal or money to buy some food.
  - Be careful about offering bribes. Instead, reward your child for good behavior.
  - Explain the rules before you go out. Rules can be simple like stay close to Mom and Dad; do what you are asked; walk in stores, don't run; use inside voices; and please ask before you touch something.
  - Decide before you go shopping how you will deal with bad behavior. Tell your child what will happen if the rules are broken.
- Before you leave the house, let your child know what you are shopping for and why you are going shopping. This lets him feel like he is a part of your shopping trip.
  - Make up games. Keep them entertained during longer shopping trips by having them point out different colored and shaped objects or putting items in the grocery cart.
  - Praise your child when he is good during shopping trips.



## TIP SHEET: **Lying**

Ages Affected: 3–4 years old

**Around this age children begin to test you and see if they can get away with not telling you the truth. The first time your child lies to you, usually around 3 years old, it can be quite a shock.**

### Why does my child lie?

While there's something about lying that really gets under the skin of most parents, realize that dishonesty in all of its forms—denial, cheating, boasting, and telling outrageous lies—is normal behavior that every child tries at some point. Children lie for several reasons including attention, to avoid consequences, or because they hear their parents lie.

Children need to learn that no matter what they have done, they must tell the truth. Setting a good example for your child will create a great relationship with her built on trust.

### Here are some tips to help teach your child to tell the truth:

- Set a good example. Do not lie to your child or to others when your child is present.
- Explain why lying is unacceptable. Do not bring this up when you are scolding your child for lying, but rather during a calm conversation with your child.
- Make it clear that lying is not telling the truth.
- Don't overreact when your child lies. The more you react, the less approachable you will be next time. Overreacting may also encourage him to lie again.
- When you catch your child lying, ask her why she is lying. She will most likely deny it or make excuses. Don't give in, simply tell her that you do not want her to lie to you ever again.



- Decide ahead of time what the consequences will be when your child is not telling you the truth, for example, taking away fun activities. Let your child know this is what happens when he lies to you.
- Give him a chance to tell you the truth. If you know he has not cleaned his room, ask him and see if he lies to you. This is good practice for your child to learn that they cannot get away with lying to you.
- Praise your child for telling the truth.

## TIP SHEET: **Bedwetting**

Ages Affected: 2 ½–5 years old

Bedwetting is common among some children after they are potty trained and can last through elementary school. This is something that embarrasses your child especially if they have been punished or teased for bedwetting. It is also a lot of extra work for you, but it is a normal part of your child's development and you will get through it.

### Why is my child doing this?

Some children wet the bed every night, while others wet once or twice a week. They aren't doing it on purpose. Children wet the bed because they have not learned how to control their bladder when sleeping.

### Here are some tips to help teach your child to stop wetting the bed:

- Stay calm and avoid blaming or punishing your child. Remember, your child cannot control the bedwetting. Blaming and punishing your child just makes the problem worse.
- Reassure your child that bedwetting is a common problem with children and that you know that your child will overcome the problem.
- Get his bedroom ready. Make sure your child can get in and out of bed easily, have a nightlight and cover the mattress with a waterproof undersheet.
- Enforce a "no teasing" rule in the family. No one is allowed to tease the child about the bedwetting, including those outside the immediate family. Do not discuss the bedwetting in front of other family members.



- The more teased a child is about bedwetting, the more difficult it will be for the child to overcome the problem. The older a child is, the more ashamed he may be of wetting the bed, and the more important it will be to stay level-headed and calm to prevent shaming the child. Shaming will only result in trauma and may even make bedwetting worse.
- Reduce evening fluid intake. Do not give your child anything to drink up to two hours before bedtime.
- Encourage your child to help clean up. If your child has an accident in bed, have her help clean up by helping change the bed and putting clothes and sheets in the washing machine.

## TIP SHEET: Rudeness and Disrespect

Ages Affected: 2 ½–5 years old

As your child grows up and develops their own personality, they also start to ask for freedom. This is a normal way for your child to explore boundaries, though he may express it by being rude or disrespectful toward mommy, daddy and other adults.

### Why is my child doing this?

Children are often influenced by other kids and other people around them, so they begin picking up the habits and personality traits of others. This means that they learn from others how to be disrespectful and rude to you, other siblings and other people. All parents want their kids to be well behaved, but this might not be the reality at all times. Many kids choose to misbehave especially in public places and away from parents. It is important to keep cool and speak fairly and nicely to your child. Remember, you are his most important role model.

### Here are a few tips to help you teach your child to be respectful:

- Stay very calm while dealing with a rude or disrespectful child. Anger will only give her the reaction she is trying to trigger.
- Listen to your child carefully. If he is upset and angry about something, let him tell you what happened and ask him why he is feeling this way.
- Ignore minor disrespectful behavior such as talking back or sulking. Say, “I will not tolerate being talked to like that” and do not respond until your child is communicating appropriately.
- For behavior that is more offensive or rude, make sure you give one warning clearly stating why the behavior is disrespectful and not acceptable.
- When your child is rude, don’t laugh as this will



give your child positive attention and encourage him to continue being rude.

- Let your child know exactly what behavior is not acceptable by including statements about respectful behavior in your house rules. For example, “no swearing,” “at dinner time, we sit nicely at the table.”
- Remind your child to be polite to others. For example, “When you leave a friend’s house, it’s good to say ‘thank you for having me’. People like it when you do that.” Or, “When I’m talking to someone I expect you to wait until I’ve finished before asking me a question, or if you’re finding it hard to wait you could say ‘excuse me.’”
- Be a good example. If your child hears you using put-downs, making snide comments, using sarcasm, swearing or shouting or sees you rolling your eyes or making faces at people, you are not modeling a respectful attitude. Be polite, courteous, considerate and well-mannered, and you will soon see such an attitude from your child.



## TIP SHEET: **Breastfeeding**

Ages Affected: Birth – Toddlerhood

**Breastfeeding can make you feel closer to your newborn and baby and secures special bonding time for the two of you while also giving him the nutrients he needs.**

**Here are a few tips to help you:**

### **General Tips:**

- Always eat a variety of foods such as fruit, vegetables, whole grains, protein and low fat products. Drink lots of water to satisfy your thirst and limit coffee, tea, cola, energy drinks and other drinks with caffeine. Alcohol passes into breast milk. So, limit beer, wine and other alcoholic drinks.
- Breast milk is all your baby needs for the first six months. You can consider introducing soft solid foods after this age.
- Make enough time for you – get enough sleep and eat well so you have energy. Try getting to bed at a decent hour as often as possible. Taking good care of yourself means taking good care of your baby.

### **Newborns from Birth to 1 Month Old:**

- Newborns are born to breastfeed. With a little help, your baby will follow his natural instincts.
- Newborns have small stomachs, about the size of their fist. They will need to breastfeed 10 or more times within a 24-hour period. You will know if he is getting enough milk if he has at least five wet and three dirty diapers per day, is satisfied after every feeding and is gaining weight. Your baby will be weighed at each doctor's visit. This is the best way to track his weight.
- Experiment with different breastfeeding positions and techniques to find a comfortable position for you and your baby. Try sitting in your favorite chair with arm rests and holding your baby in different

positions until you find one that works for both of you. Always make sure your hand supports his head. If you breastfeed lying down, support his head with a pillow.

- Keep a positive attitude! Use this time to learn how to latch your baby on to your breast. Latch-on is the way the baby attaches to the breast. Following good latch-on practices will ensure your baby gets enough milk and you avoid getting sore nipples.

### **Babies Age 2 Months – 12 Months:**

- It may seem like your baby is hungry all the time. It is okay if your baby wants to nurse more often, even if it is every 30 or 60 minutes, and wants to nurse longer after each feeding. Expect your baby to breastfeed more often when he is growing quickly, around 6 weeks and 3 months of age. It is okay if you find it difficult to find time to meet your baby's increased feeding needs. This is only a temporary adjustment. Try delegating other responsibilities to family members to make more free time for yourself and feeding time.
- Be prepared to be flexible and okay with change. Returning to work can be a hard transition, especially if you are breastfeeding and pumping milk. Stay flexible when you are planning your return to work and managing working and breastfeeding. Your needs will change, and so will your baby's naturally over time.
- Don't forget to read the instructions that come with your breast pump. This is one of the best sources of information. Ask a lactation consultant if you are having any problems.
- Choose a pump that you are comfortable with that fits your needs. A good-quality electric pump or a higher quality pump can mean spending fifteen minutes vs. twenty to thirty minutes pumping milk.

## TIP SHEET: **Breastfeeding**

Ages Affected: Birth – Toddlerhood

- Pump for at least five to ten minutes every day, even if you do not have time for a full session of pumping. Try setting up a pumping schedule to make the most use of your time.
- Start pumping milk to store in the freezer before you leave for work in the morning. You will be more at ease knowing she has milk and you don't have to worry about pumping while you are at work.
- Talk to your employer or supervisor about how you are most comfortable pumping milk while you are at work. Look for a space that is comfortable for you and fits your needs, like a quiet, private space. Ask women who have pumped at work for their recommendations.
- Prepare for your day the night before: organize your baby's bag, prepare bottles of milk, clean your breast pump so it is ready to go and pick your clothes. Choose clothing with loose-fitting blouses to hide any leaks at work. Two-piece clothing options might make pumping easier and more accessible.
- Ask friends, family or the nursery school if they are comfortable taking care of breastfeeding babies. Provide them with specific written and verbal instructions on how to thaw frozen milk so the caretaker can focus on your baby, not the bottle. Be specific on how you want your friend or family member to take care of your baby while you are work: held for all feedings, picked up every time she cries or fusses and what to use when she wants to suck for comfort. You are in charge of making the decisions.
- There are also significant emotional and physical benefits to long-term breastfeeding for your toddler. If your toddler is sick, breast milk may be the only thing he can keep down. You'll feel better too, knowing that you're helping him fight off the illness.
- As your toddler becomes more independent, breastfeeding can be an important source of reassurance and emotional support. The strong connection your child feels with you while breastfeeding will foster independence, not make him overly dependent or clingy as some may have you believe.
- When your baby stops breastfeeding and gets all of his nutrition from sources other than the breast, he's considered weaned. Weaning is a long goodbye — emotional, sometimes painful and freeing feeling for you at the same time. You're the best judge of when it's time to wean your toddler, and you don't have to set a deadline unless you and your child are ready to do so.

### **Toddlers Age 12 Months to 36 Months:**

- Breastfeeding beyond the first year is normal, healthy and common. Even though your toddler is probably getting most of his nutrition from solid foods; breast milk still provides calories, valuable immunities, vitamins and enzymes.

## TIP SHEET: Coping with Depression

*For the parent*

After giving birth to your baby, you may go through a phase where you feel sad and depressed. This phase is known as Postpartum Depression. While many women experience some mild mood changes during or after the birth of a child, 15-20% of women experience more significant symptoms of depression or anxiety. Postpartum depression is temporary and treatable with professional help. The most important part to remember is that it is not your fault that you feel like this, so do not feel guilty about your feelings. Also, don't forget that you are not alone. There are lots of people here in Riverside County who want to help you.

**Here are some tips to help you get through the Postpartum Depression:**

- Be aware of the symptoms: mood changes, irritability, sadness and anxiety. Then talk to your doctor about possible medications and other things she can recommend to help you.
- Don't be afraid to ask others for help when dealing with your child. The daycare in your church or your gym can be great places to start. Your anxiety won't be so overwhelming if you have help from others.
- Get someone to help you with childcare and housework. Eliminate or cut down on daily chores until you are feeling better.
- Build your support system because you need to express your feelings. Reach out to other mothers, family members and friends to share your frustrations along with your joyful moments.
- Physical activity can help you to burn off your frustrations and negativity.
- Eat well. If you have little appetite, fix small, nutritious snacks for yourself throughout the day. Avoid all caffeine and sugary foods and beverages;



- these are associated with worsening symptoms. Increase your intake of foods made up of complex carbohydrates, such as whole-grain breads, cereals and pastas, potatoes and brown rice. Eat more fruits and vegetables. Try a turkey on whole-wheat sandwich.
- Get a hobby. Occupy your time with things you enjoy. Remember that you have a purpose aside from taking care of your child. Allow yourself to be the best mother you can be by growing in different areas and enjoying life.
  - Surround yourself with positivity. If you lock yourself away in sadness, you allow yourself to live a sad life.
  - Get at least 30 minutes of sunlight every day. Lack of sunlight can worsen depression.
  - Enjoy having a child in your house! A child's moments are there to be cherished. Remember, there's beauty and greatness in being a mother.

**TIP SHEET:**

## General Tips Every Parent/Caregiver Should Know

### *For the parent*

Being a parent isn't easy, and we all know children don't come with an instruction manual.

Here are the top 10 tips that every parent should know:

- Prepare ahead of time. Before the baby arrives, parents/caregivers should take a First Aid/Child CPR class.
- Baby proof. Look for electrical outlet covers, drawer and cabinet latches, baby gates and many other required items. Click here to download a checklist of household items to babyproof: <http://www.totsafe.com/checklist.htm>
- Trust your instincts. This is the most important thing you can do as a new parent. People have natural parenting instincts. If your heart is telling you to do something, do it.
- Feed your baby when she is hungry. Many parents try to put their newborn on a feeding schedule and end up feeling frustrated when the baby resists. Newborns operate on instincts. They know when they are hungry and full. Feed them on demand. In their first 2-3 months, obesity is not an issue.
- Ask for help. No one can do everything alone. Anytime you feel overwhelmed or frustrated, seek help from your partner, family and friends. There is nothing wrong with needing help.
- Remember to get your rest. This can make a huge difference between feeling irritable and stressed as opposed to joyful and patient as you care for your child every day.
- Keep a routine with your children. As they get older have a set time for bedtime, for meals, for bath time and so on.
- Praise, praise and praise some more. Make the most of the good things that your child does. The more you praise your child, the better your child will do.
- Remember that beginning at the age of 2, your child will model themselves after you. Whatever you do, your kids will mimic. So don't do anything in front of them that you wouldn't want them to copy.
- Spending time with your children is a great way to be a better parent. When you spend a lot of quality time with them, changes in their personality, friends and habits will be more noticeable.



## TIP SHEET: Coping with Stress

*For the parent*

Being a parent is very stressful at every age of your child's life. It is normal to feel stressed when dealing with the tasks of being a parent, from difficult mealtimes and temper tantrums, to disobedient children.

Here are a few tips to calm yourself down and deal with your own stress:

- Take care of yourself. Eat a healthy diet, drink plenty of water and get fresh air. Sleep when the baby sleeps. If possible, work out a nighttime schedule with other adults in the house that allows everyone to rest and care for the baby.
- Do something you enjoy every day, either with your baby or on your own. Good habits will help you maintain the energy you need to care for your newborn.
- It's normal; all parents get frustrated. Children take a lot of time and energy. Parenting is even harder when you have problems in your own life, such as worries about your job, your bills or your relationships, or problems with alcohol or drugs. To be a good parent, you have to first take care of yourself. That means getting help for your problems.
- When your child is being difficult, sometimes it is best to take a deep breath, center your thoughts and then react to your child. Do not allow yourself to get upset; your child is trying to get you to react this way.
- When you get frustrated, take a break. Everyone needs a break from being a parent once in a while. If you have another adult in your family, take turns getting away. For example, have your partner stay with the children so you can visit friends. Take turns sleeping late on the weekends.
- Many parents lose their temper with their children. It's okay to feel angry, but it's not okay to take it



out on your children. When you're really angry, take a break. For example, take your children for a walk or call a friend to come help you. If you feel angry with your child almost every day or have trouble controlling your temper, get some help by talking to your family doctor. He can offer advice and provide references to help you.

- Show your love. For example, you could tell your children: "I love you. You're special to me." Give lots of hugs and kisses.
- Praise your children. When your children learn something new or behave well, tell them you're proud of them.
- Spend time with your children. Do things together, such as reading, walking, playing and cleaning the house. What children want most is your attention. Bad behavior is usually an attempt to get your attention.
- Provide order in your child's life. Keep a regular schedule of meals, naps and bedtimes. If you have to change the schedule, tell your child about the changes ahead of time.

## TIP SHEET: Home Safety

*For the parent*

As a parent, you always want your child to be safe. Accidents can happen in a matter of seconds, so it is important to prepare for what you can and prevent accidents from occurring in your home. If an accident does happen, don't hesitate to call 911 for emergency help.

### Here are a few tips to keep your child safe at home:

- Place safety latches on all doors and cabinets, especially where cleaning products and medicines are located.
- Secure windows, block stairways and lock doors.
- Dispose of any plastic grocery bags and dry cleaning bags immediately; these can cause suffocation.
- Never leave a child unattended near water, even for just a few seconds. If the phone or doorbell rings while your baby or young child is in the bathtub, pick him up, wrap him in a towel and take him with you.
- For newborns, keep your baby's crib as bare as possible. An infant's nose and mouth can be covered accidentally by soft fluffy pillows, comforters or stuffed animals, restricting her ability to breathe.
- Childproof your home from electric shock by covering unused electrical sockets with plastic covers, repairing damaged appliances or electric cords and keeping electronics out of your child's reach.
- Make sure small household items, such as coins, buttons, jewelry, small balls and pins, are stored away from a child's reach to avoid accidental choking. Don't select toys with many small parts. Look for labeling on toys with small parts that warn they are not safe for children under 3 years old.
- If you have a pool in the backyard, it's important to fence it on all sides and make sure it is high enough so a child can't reach it.
- No matter how well you childproof your home or try to prevent accidents, one of the best things you can do is prepare yourself for an emergency. Keep important numbers near your phone such as poison control, your pediatrician, your work and cell phone numbers, and a neighbor or nearby relative.
- For their general safety, children should be taught their name, your name and to stay with you when you go places together. If they get separated from you, teach them not to wander away and to ask for help from a store clerk with a nametag or uniformed law-enforcement/security officer. Make sure your children understand that they should never look for you on their own or with someone else, even these "helping" adults.




## TIP SHEET: Preparing for a New Baby

*For the parent*

Preparing to bring your new baby in the world can be exciting and overwhelming at the same time. Luckily you have nine months to get everything you need for your little one and there are references in your community to help you.

**Here are a few tips to help you prepare to bring your new little newborn home (and, congratulations!):**

- Stock the nursery and kitchen with baby-care basics including bottles, nipples, lots of diapers and wipes, as well as a digital ear thermometer, nasal aspirator, baby nail clippers and diaper cream.
  - A few more things you will need to get started are a crib or bassinet, sheets (at least two pairs), a waterproof mattress pad, a soft blanket, diapers, wipes, Vaseline, a baby bath tub, soft washcloths, burp rags and a lot of easy-to-remove-and-put-on outfits.
  - Ask friends with young children for recommendations on what to borrow versus what to buy. You will soon learn that everything will start adding up fast, so decide on what you want to borrow and what you want to buy new. You may want new clothes for your baby but you could borrow things like a car seat, stroller or crib.
  - Consider bringing in help like your mom or mother-in-law for a few days after the baby is born—especially if you have other children. This will help you feel less overwhelmed in the beginning and give you a chance to rest a bit.
  - Have a support system of friends and family that can help you if you need it or just to talk and share your new experiences with.
  - Before the baby arrives, try to map out a plan for rest and relief. Begin splitting household chores, talk to friends and family about helping you with other children or other major responsibilities.
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- Becoming a parent changes many aspects of your life, including relationships. It is very normal to experience stress when starting a family because your whole life changes. The key is to talk to the people in your life and share your feelings before and after the arrival.
- Before the baby arrives you should begin to put money aside for supplies and unexpected costs. We all have different financial situations, so any amount is better than none.
- If you already have children, make sure you talk to them about their new brother or sister. It is hard for children to adjust to new siblings so make sure you are spending plenty of time with your other children and showing your love for them and your newborn.
- Take time to learn about postpartum depression. If you feel like you are experiencing any symptoms talk to your doctor as soon as possible.

## TIP SHEET: **Balancing Work and Family**

*For the parent*

Being a parent these days is one of the hardest jobs in the world, so trying to manage a job on top of being a parent is twice as hard. Every parent wants to succeed at work and at home.

Here are some tips to help balance being a great parent while working:

- If possible, stagger your workdays with your parenting partner's schedule so that you can decrease the time your child spends in childcare. Even in a great childcare environment, small children wear out by the end of the day and need time at home with mom or dad.
- Make your health a priority. Between alarm clocks, homework, traffic, deadlines, and dinner, parents may forget to factor in their own well-being.
- Factor in fitness. If exercise looms like a chore you'd rather cross off your to-do list, be a kid again and play with your child; turn up the music and dance or jump rope. Regular activity will reward you with more energy, a better appearance, and a happier mood.
- Get your rest. Scheduling a regular bedtime free of distractions will help you and your child function at your best.
- Reserve regular "me time." While your child is napping or at a school play rehearsal, for example, use the hour to call a friend or curl up and read in a cozy chair instead of doing dishes during downtime. Ask a family member or friend to babysit while you attend a yoga class, sip coffee at a café, or browse the shops in town.
- Organize childcare you're happy with. If you're worrying about your child's health and happiness while you're at work, there's no way you'll be able to do your job properly. If you're lucky enough to have a support network of family and/or friends living



nearby, make an informal agreement that you can call on them to help if your child is ill.

- Do not feel guilty about leaving your child with your spouse or at childcare.
- Get organized ahead of time. Pack yours and your children's bags and get everyone's clothes ready the night before work, school or daycare.
- Cherish the good things about working (besides the obvious financial ones). It could be something as simple and everyday as having a good laugh with coworkers, drinking a coffee without having a small child around, having your boss praise you or simply having five minutes to read your book on the bus.
- Learn to recognize the difference between a true emergency and things that can wait a few hours. It is not always necessary to rush right out and take care of mistakes made by your family members. A true emergency like a sick child is one thing, but remember that some things do not always need to be taken care of right now. Some things, like a forgotten school item, can be taken care of in a few hours.



## TIP SHEET: Power of Positive Parenting

*For the parent*

Being a parent is one of the hardest jobs and there are no easy answers. The most important thing is to raise your child so she is happy, healthy and safe, while also staying positive about your own life and needs.

Here are some tips for being a positive parent:

- Appreciate the value of play. Play with your children whenever you can. Play can prevent discipline problems, it's a great way for children to learn and is very important for building a positive relationship between you and your child.
- Talk with and listen to your child. It's important to make eye contact and use gentle touch when communicating with your child.
- Remember the importance of non-verbal communication, and be sure to hold your child to comfort them.
- Build your child's brain and body. Provide healthy meals and snacks and model good eating habits. Encourage exercise by being active with your child.
- Learn how your child learns and how she may be unique from other children. Know all areas of your child's development—physical, intellectual, social, emotional and moral—and remember there is nothing to be ashamed of if she needs special help to progress at her own best rate.
- Cherish your child's individuality. Praise your children's differences and avoid comparing them or asking why they can't be like someone else.
- Set your household up for success—make it work for the whole family. Model and teach good safety habits and establish routines. Discuss and enforce family rules that work for your household—for example, putting toys away after play.
- Take care of yourself. If you are tired, ill or just worn out, you cannot be an effective parent. Eat healthy, get enough sleep, take occasional breaks from parenting if possible, and enlist the support of family, friends and neighbors when things seem overwhelming. You can also find support through parenting groups.
- Make time for family activities. A sense of belonging is enhanced when families take time to engage in common activities such as having meals together.
- Teach your child right from wrong. A child's understanding of right and wrong develops slowly, from within. Actively teach your children a code of moral conduct and lay the groundwork for him to develop his own morals.

