



MAY 2008



Family Time Work Time

A BALANCING ACT

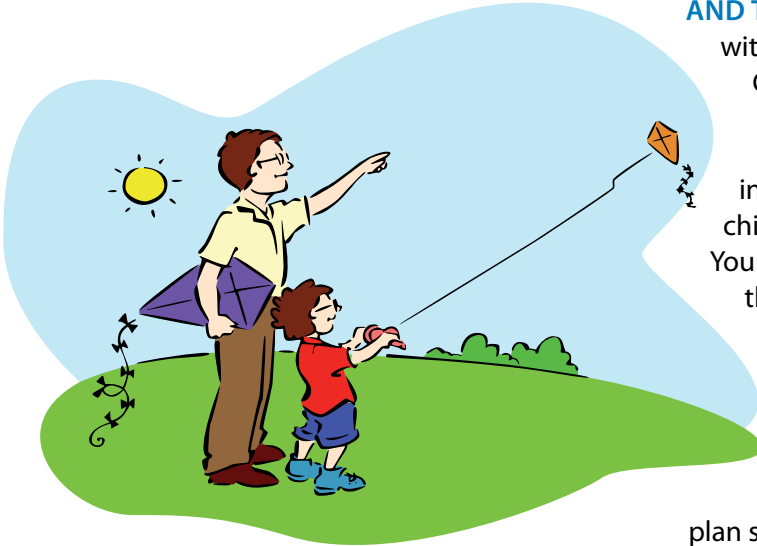
Building Strong Families

Get Out of the House and Enjoy the Outdoors!

WHEN THE WEATHER IS NICE, TURN OFF THE TELEVISION AND THE COMPUTER.

Get out of the house and go outdoors with your child. Enjoy the fresh air and sunshine together. Children benefit from playing in the yard and going for walks. Whether you live in the city or in the country, your child will learn about nature and things going on in your neighborhood. Play ball together. This is fun with children of all ages. If your child is older, go for bike rides. You can have a picnic in the yard at meal times. Go out in the evening sometimes. Once it gets dark, look at the stars in the sky and other lights that might be in your neighborhood.

These are good times to talk with each other. For example, you can tell your child stories about when you were little, talk about the day he was born, or plan some things to do together in the next few weeks. This builds communication with your child that will last a lifetime. Play and have fun together. Those memories will last forever.



Tips for Keeping Cool

ON HOT SUMMER DAYS, active children need more water to drink than usual to keep from becoming dehydrated. Children often get involved in their play and forget they are thirsty. It's up to adults to provide cool drinking water and to remind children to stop and take a drink. This should happen about every half hour on really hot days.

Make sure there is a shady place for your child to play out of the sun sometimes. This can be under a tree or some bushes, or it can be on your deck, porch, or patio.

Attach a sprinkler to your hose for your child to cool off on a hot day. This is safer than wading pools and can provide a fun way to keep cool. You can enjoy it with your child!



Think About Safety

WHEN SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS WITH YOUR CHILD, it is important to think about safety. Here are some guidelines for keeping your child safe:



“Touch Supervision” around water

Most drowning accidents occur with children under age four. Young children must be closely supervised around water at all times. For infants and toddlers, an adult needs to always be no more than an arm’s length away around any source of water. It is called touch supervision. Even if your child has water skills and feels comfortable around water, do not be lulled into feeling she is safe around water. Those skills will not keep your child “drown proof” or safe. This is not only around swimming and wading pools, but also bath tubs, toilets, pails of water, ponds, creeks, rivers, and lakes.

Boating

Your child should wear a U. S. Coast Guard approved life vest, also known as a PFD (personal flotation device), on boats and around docks and swift or deep water.

Riding bikes

Make sure to start the “helmet habit” early. Children should always wear a properly fitted helmet when riding a bicycle or scooter. When roller blading or skateboarding, children need helmets and protective pads.

Time in the sun

Protect your child from the sun’s rays by using sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or higher. Provide a shady area where your child can get out of the sun at times. Always have drinking water available.

Play equipment

You need to supervise young children when they use play equipment such as swings, slides, and climbers. Check the equipment first to make sure it is in good repair with no sharp edges. To prevent burns make sure slides are cool.

Lawn mowers

Keep your child away from lawn mowers.

Grills, barbecues, and bonfires

Closely supervise your child around fire. Keep lighter fluid out of children’s reach.

Safe travel

Always use seat belts and approved car seats whenever your child rides in a vehicle. Young children should always ride in the backseat to avoid air-bag injuries.

Insect bites

Reduce the risk of insect bites and stings by having your child wear light-colored clothing and shoes. Never use insect repellent on infants and use it sparingly on older children.


Poisonous plants and berries

Teach your child not to pick or eat anything without first checking with you or another adult. Know what plants are in your yard.

Family Time/Work Time: May 2008

Dr. James E. Van Horn, Better Kid Care Program Director

Supported by funds from the Office of Child Development and Early Learning, a joint office of the Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare. Developed by the Better Kid Care Program, 253 Easterly Parkway, State College, PA; Phone 1-800-452-9106. Website: www.betterkidcare.psu.edu.

PENNSTATE
 College of Agricultural Sciences
Cooperative Extension

Developed by:

Nancy Wilson, Penn State Better Kid Care Program, Penn State University

Resources: Nancy Wilson, April 2008, *Get Out of the House and Enjoy the Outdoors!* Better Kid Care Program, Penn State University; *Summer Safety Tips*, 2001, Better Kid Care Program, Penn State University; *Safe Summer Fun*, Parents Count, 1998, Better Kid Care Program, Penn State University

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its work force.

Copyright © 2008 The Pennsylvania State University