



Growing Together

Newsletter for
parents of preschool children

Parenting

Signs of stress

In times of stress, a child may behave in ways similar to how she acts when she's not feeling well. She may be whiny, clingy, and demanding. She may be more easily frustrated and upset by little things. She may tire easily and move slower than her usual pace. And it may seem that nothing suits her!

This is true in simple situations such as when a child is overtired or hungry, as well as in more obviously stressful situations such as getting lost or hurting herself.

It's something parents should keep in mind in a highly stressful life-event such as a family separation or a death in the family.

Whatever the situation, stress drains energy and doesn't leave a child with enough to cope as well as she usually does.

A warm bath and quiet story before bedtime, a shared snack, a private lunch for just the two of you, or a whispered "I love you" can do wonders for frayed nerves.

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Child's Day

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Social Skills

Childhood friendships

During the first three years of life, a young child forms secure attachments with parents and other family members.

Once a child reaches three years old, however, attachments to other children outside the family become an important part of social development. But first Youngster has to learn how to interact appropriately with them.



Although children at this age can develop genuine friendships, these encounters are quite different from friendships among older children or adults. For example, two 3-year-olds may be laughing together at one moment and struggling with one another for the same toy the next moment.

Just as suddenly, they may revert to some form of cooperative play, such as pulling their two trucks across the floor together.

Adults can do a number of things to foster friendly, cooperative play among children of this age:

1. Provide the children with toys that are developmentally appropriate for their ages. Any child will quickly lose interest if a task is either too easy or too difficult.

2. Have a sufficient number of toys available so that each child has at least one toy with which to play. Having only one toy to be shared by several children will most likely result in a squabble.

3. Make sure that toys are in good condition. Trying to pull a truck which has a wheel missing can be a highly frustrating experience for a young children.

It is generally through play that childhood friendships are formed. Although such friendships during the preschool years are often short-lived, their importance in the overall social development of the child should not be underestimated. □

Nosebleeds

Bleeding from the nose happens to every child. It is usually caused by one of the “four I’s”: injury, infection, irritation, or inheritance.

Injury may be caused by a fall or a blow from a playmate. It may also be caused by the child himself who picks or rubs too vigorously or puts an object into the nostril.

Objects in the nose are frequently overlooked but should be suspected when the child has repeated mild bleeding, drainage, or a bad odor from one nostril.

Other injuries can occur from breathing dry air which causes the sensitive nasal lining to shrink, crack, and break one of the small, surface blood vessels.

Infection usually takes the form of a cold which inflames the lining of the nose, resulting in an increase of blood circulating through it. Then a very minor injury will cause bleeding.

Another infection which can cause a nosebleed is impetigo. This is a skin infection which starts under the nose and gradually works its way up into the nostril, causing the nosebleed.

Irritation to the lining of the nose may be caused by dust, mold, or pollen. It causes the same type of inflammation as a cold. It can lead to a bloody nose, particularly if the child sneezes or blows his nose too hard.

Inheritance plays a part in some nosebleeds, particularly those caused by nasal blood vessels located near the surface of the skin.

Nasal allergy and certain types of blood clotting diseases are also inherited and frequently are first suspected when bleeding from the nose occurs.

Nosebleeds can usually be handled by the “three P’s”: prevention, pressure, and posture.

Prevention of accident-induced bleeding is almost impossible. Self-inflicted, dry air, and irritant types of problems, however, are preventable.

Daytime nose picking and rubbing can be stopped by gentle reminders and nail clipping. Night-time nosebleeds usually occur during sleep and can be prevented by covering the hands with lightweight mittens.

Dryness in the air can be counteracted by the use of a humidifier. If one is not available, a pan of water near the heat vents or radiators will help. Irritation from dust and mold can be prevented by vigorous household cleaning.

Pressure on the nose by holding it between the thumb and first finger will stop most nosebleeds since the bleeding occurs from the front of the nose. Pressure must be held for at least five minutes.

Posture is very important when treating a nosebleed. The child should be in an upright or semi-reclining position. This decreases pressure in the nasal blood vessels and prevents blood from running back into the throat.

If the bleeding is not stopped by the pressure method in five to 10 minutes, or if it occurs repeatedly, particularly from both nostrils, your doctor should be consulted. □

Help toddler cope with a new baby

While parenting are tending to the needs of a newborn, older sisters and brothers may feel abandoned. When friends arrive with gifts for the baby, siblings may feel left out.

You may expect two possible behaviors from toddlers when there’s a new baby in the house: regression and hostility.

How can parents cope with these responses?

Regressing means going back to infantile behavior such as wanting to nurse, refusing to use the toilet, or eating erratically.

It is often just as well to give toddler the opportunity to regress a little if she wants to. The period will usually be brief—a few days or a week.

Ignore as much as possible any negative behavior. It’s the toddler’s way of expressing resentment.

At the same time, watch carefully to make sure the toddler doesn’t try to harm the baby. □

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