



A Newsletter for Parents of Young Children

Fall 2019

# The Parent Line

## Wow, is it Back to School already?!

Mornings of the first few weeks of returning to school can be a bit hurried and full of confusion. We have some tips to make this time easier for you and your children.



Set a specific and definite time for going to bed each night and for rising each morning. Also establish routines to ensure a smooth transition into bed, such as setting out the clothes for the next day, brushing their teeth, putting out the breakfast bowls, gathering all the completed homework, and putting books and backpack in a designated place. To aid in assisting your children to relax for the night, include a time to relax and wind down. Put away all electronics. Have them read a book by themselves or with a parent or have a conversation to discuss any topic that is on the children's mind.

The mornings can be well received by the entire family with a little forethought. With the help of an alarm clock for your children, allow them ample time to rise and dress for the day in a relaxed manner. Once dressed, invite your children to the table for a healthy breakfast. Some children prefer breakfast at school with their friends. If that is the case, ensure that your children have all their necessary materials for the school day as they head out the door.

One thing that parents sometimes forget is to make time for themselves in getting their children ready for the school day. It can be as simple as getting up fifteen minutes earlier to dress and have a cup of tea before the children rise for the day.

Despite the best efforts by parents, sometimes things just fall apart during the process of preparing your children for school. It is during these times, that the Parent Line staff invite parents to call (808) 526-1222 or 1-800-816-1222 to problem solve suggestions to meet the individual situations of your home. It should be noted that the Parent Line is Hawai'i's premier resource on child behavior, child development, parenting support, and community resources. All calls are anonymous and confidential. We look forward to assisting as needed.



Enjoy the upcoming school year!

## Spotlight on Safety

### October is Lead Poisoning Prevention Month

Lead is a toxic metal that is dangerous to your family's health. Lead can affect a child's brain development causing slow growth and development, damage to hearing and speech, and problems with learning and behavior. Pregnant or breastfeeding women exposed to lead can also pass on lead to their baby. Lead poisoning is caused by swallowing or breathing in lead from your environment. A child who has been exposed to lead may not look or act sick. However, it only takes a small amount of lead dust to poison a child.

Lead-based paint from homes built before 1978 is the most common source of childhood lead exposure. When lead-based paint cracks and peels, it creates dangerous dust. This can occur during home repairs that disturb lead-based paint like sanding and scraping. Lead dust can also be created when lead-based paint on doors and window frames rub or bump together while opening and closing. Other sources of lead in Hawaii include bare soil, lead fishing sinkers, ammo, and ceramic dishes and pottery made with lead pigments or glazes. Jobs and hobbies involving lead include construction, welding, and plumbing.

#### LEAD POISONING IS PREVENTABLE!

There are things you can do to protect your child from lead.

1. Get tested. Ask your child's doctor for a blood lead test at ages 1 and 2.
2. Wash hands. Wash your child's hands and face before eating and after playing outside. Also wash objects your child puts in their mouth, especially after they fall on the floor.
3. Clean up. Keep your house clean from lead dust by using a vacuum with a "HEPA" or "allergy" filter for carpets and furniture. Use a washable or disposable wet mop for hard floors and soap and water for hard surfaces like walls and windowsills. Take shoes and slippers off before going inside the house.
4. Eat healthy. More lead is absorbed on an empty stomach so provide your child with regular meals and snacks. Give them healthy foods with lots of calcium, iron, and vitamin C such as milk, yogurt, cheese, eggs, lean beef or chicken, pineapples, strawberries, papaya, sweet potatoes, and green leafy vegetables. Avoid foods that are high in fats like French fries, potato chips, bacon, or anything fried.
5. Use cold water. Run your cold water for at least 30 seconds if the faucet has not been used for more than 6 hours. Do not cook, drink, or make your child's formula from the hot water tap.
6. Renovate safely. Work that disturbs old paint should only be done by a lead-safe certified contractor.

For more information, please visit the Hawaii Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program website with the Hawaii State Department of Health at [lead.hawaii.gov](http://lead.hawaii.gov) or call (808) 733-9055.

### October is also Infant Safe Sleep Month

When it comes to safe sleep for your infants, you should always remember the ABCs. A is for sleeping alone, B is for sleeping on their backs, and C is for sleeping in a crib. Cribs can include a playpen or bassinet that is CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission) approved. Infants must be alone in an empty crib with no toys, bumpers, pillows, blankets, etc. They should also sleep flat on a firm surface with a tight fitted sheet and dressed in cool clothing so they do not get too warm. If infants fall asleep in their car seat,

hammock, or stroller, simply move them into a safe sleep environment when able to.

Have any more questions on sleeping safely or would like a copy of the Safe Sleep poster? Call The Parent Line at (808) 526-1222 or toll free 1-800-816-1222 for more information.



### Suggested Readings

School's First Day of School

By: Adam Rex

What is Halloween?

By: Harriet Ziefert

I Like Pumpkins

By: Jerry Smath



A Tree for all Seasons

By: Robin Bernard

First Day Jitters

By: Julie Danneberg

### Special Days to Remember

September 2, 2019 - Labor Day

September 8, 2019 - Grandparents Day



#### October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October 14, 2019 - Columbus Day

October 31, 2019 - Halloween

November 11, 2019 - Veteran's Day

November 28, 2019 - Thanksgiving Day