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PSN Family Resource Center NEWSLETTER

Encourage your kids to participate in “prosocial” activities

While having time to recharge is essential for everyone, excessive time at home typically has more drawbacks than benefits. Encouraging kids and teens to participate in prosocial activities, even with the ongoing pandemic, is important to prioritize.

What are prosocial activities?

Prosocial activities involve social skill building and often collaboration with similarly aged kids. While participation in sports is one of the most common forms of social skill development, prosocial activity can also include:

- Clubs (e.g., art, chess, biking, robotics, scouts, etc.)
- Recreational classes
- Day camps or overnight camps
- Creative arts/music/theater
- Volunteer opportunities through a religious or community organization

According to Amanda Heins, PsyD, supervising psychologist, not engaging in these kinds of activities can be detrimental to a child’s mental health, well-being, and overall development.

Why are prosocial activities beneficial for kids’ mental health?

Dr. Heins says prosocial activities “offer natural ways to learn, practice, and strengthen life and social skills. These essential skills can boost mood and overall mental health and well-being.”

Prosocial activities and organized sports can also have positive implications on self-esteem, the ability to collaborate, problem solve, building empathy toward self/others, and resilience.

“With many of these activities, not every day will be perfect,” Dr. Heins explains. “Going through challenging situations (e.g., tough loss in a sport game) helps to build that resilience and growth mindset. All these

learning moments are essential. When you have these key ingredients in place, the sky is the limit in terms of what you can strive for.”

For mental health, Dr. Heins points out symptoms of depression and anxiety often improve with participation in prosocial activities.

“Anxiety and depression often lead people to believe they need to stay home (i.e., avoid) because it is the only ‘safe place’ for the anxiety and depression to live,” she shares. “Unfortunately, excessive isolation and avoidance fuels symptoms. This is why involvement in physically active clubs are essential. These activities directly reframe the parameters of depression and anxiety.”

Physical activity and prosocial skill building, the ultimate package

Prosocial activities that involve a physical component, like sports or clubs, provide additional benefits.

“Physical activity has many benefits for kids. Regular exercise keeps them physically healthy. Organized sports or physically active clubs like biking, rock climbing and adventure racing, allow for practicing of essential social skills and building and sustaining friendships while being physically active. It is the ultimate package deal.”

Research also has shown kids and teens who are physically active tend to sleep better, perform better in school, and can manage stress more effectively.

“Often, the organized sports kids participate in are connected to their school or local community,” she continues. “This adds an additional benefit, as your child will strengthen friendships with peers they also see at school every day. Having healthy friendships in school also creates a natural motivator to attend school daily. Physical activity also has positive implications on mental health, especially anxiety, depression, and ADHD.

What’s Inside:

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Treasuring Childhood: My Firsts!



PSN FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER
Partnering · Supporting · Nurturing

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[Read the full article here.](#)



FREE DIAPERS TO FAMILIES IN NEED!

DIAPER DISTRIBUTION

September 15
3-4:00 pm

FREE diaper distribution!

No registration necessary.

Diapers are first come-first served with limited supplies.

Sizes newborn, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & pull ups.

Kenosha County Job Center
8600 Sheridan Road
Drive up to Entrance B

Contact Alison at 262-605-6545 or alison.haas@kenoshacounty.org for more information.

TRIPLE P—POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAM

Triple P – Positive Parenting Program knows all parents have different needs. That’s why Triple P has many different ways to get your parenting help so you can choose what will best suit you and your family.



Triple P Stepping Stones – Seminar

Stepping Stones is for parents of pre-adolescent children, ages 0-12 who have a disability. Stepping Stones has been shown to work with children with intellectual and physical disabilities who have disruptive behavior. This group is also a great opportunity to connect with other parents.



Session topics include:

September 15—Positive Parenting for Children with a Disability

September 22—Helping Your Child Reach their Potential

September 29—Changing Problem Behavior into Positive Behavior

Each session will run from 11am - 1pm

Registration is required: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYlf-ytqDkjGNbni0jkBwzxBusuNxR9WMrP>

Check out our facebook page for more information: facebook.com/preventionservicesnetwork/

Are you a parent or guardian looking for parenting classes or one-on-one parenting support? Triple P has a variety of levels to suit your family’s needs. Contact Alison at 262-605-6545 or alison.haas@kenoshacounty.org to find out about upcoming sessions and offerings.

Optimal Child Development: 20 Tips for Parents

How can parents help their children develop an authentic sense of self, competence, strong values, and the confidence to be creative? The following suggestions are always relevant, but perhaps amidst the challenges posed by the COVID crisis it is even more important to focus on ways to support children's successes.

1. Success comes in many different forms. Encourage kids to find opportunities to do something positive whenever possible. To be kind, contribute to the community and to the greater good, and benefit others in some way.
2. Show appreciation for children's accomplishments. Convey recognition, reinforcement and pride. Emphasize growth and progress. Help them find a good educational match.
3. Help kids understand the perspectives of other individuals and groups. This includes being respectful of race, religion, sexual orientation, age, feelings, ability levels, and various differences among people—and how these differences can broaden ways of thinking and doing.
4. Demonstrate how to make connections between values and actions. For example, what it means—and what it looks like—to have integrity, and to be honest, patient, altruistic, kind, forgiving, empathic, and grateful.
5. Respect children's privacy. Try not to hover or micro-manage.
6. Listen. Intentionally, and as a way to learn and understand what children have to say. (Or what they may be hesitant to say...)
7. During times of change, risk, or turbulence (such as that caused by the COVID-19 pandemic) be sure to take into account children's personal concerns and feelings. Be available to answer questions, and to offer guidance and coping strategies. Be resourceful and acquire information if need be, and professional counselling if circumstances dictate.
8. Dilemmas and predicaments are inevitable. For example, these might have to do with conflicts, lack of motivation, the complexities of moral issues, or how to deal with emotional upheavals. Ensure that lines of communication are open. Demonstrate problem-solving and calming tactics.
9. Life balance is paramount. Many children struggle while trying to juggle various demands. Kids need ample time to rest, play, unwind, exercise, and just be kids.
10. Expectations should be clear, and well suited to a child's areas of strength and weakness. It's best to offer kids choice—to adopt a flexible range-of options approach to tasks—and to be responsive to children's changing needs, interests, and concerns.

11. The ability to think is integral to personal development. "Reflection contributes to a child's intelligence, achievement, and creativity. Reflection may take many forms, such as mindfulness, review, critical analysis, meditation, or letting ideas percolate... By learning to reflect generously, regularly, and astutely, kids can foster their intelligence and enrich their lives."

12. Give kids realistic feedback about themselves. For instance, if children misbehave or act out, help them understand the consequences or effects (upon them and upon others), and model alternative forms of behavior. Be constructive. Parents can respond to inappropriate behavior without criticizing the child.

13. As children mature and develop reasoning skills (and, later, abstract thinking skills), help them make good choices and smart decisions.

14. Encourage children to value—and tap—connectivity with caring others who can provide support. This might include family members, teachers, coaches, mentors, or friends who can offer guidance and reassurance. There is strength through collaboration and community.

15. Resilience can fuel forward momentum. Help children learn to get around and through challenge or uncertainty by finding creative or concerted ways to make difficult situations tolerable, and by overcoming hurdles. Here are some quotes about resilience to share with kids.

16. Watch for possible complications and obstacles and pay close attention to children's emotional health.

17. The best kinds of learning activities are those that are meaningful, motivational, manageable, and multisensory in nature. (Four memorable M words!) However, be aware that some kids may need more assistance with specific aspects of learning activities such as technology, structure, time management, organization, or pacing.

18. Life has its ups and downs, and ultimately kids have to learn to navigate both. Encourage children's autonomy so they can extend intellectual, social, and emotional independence, physical comfort zones, and horizons.

19. More and more it seems, young people are seizing reins of responsibility—showing that they have the wherewithal to be proactive and competent, thereby realizing progress and attaining success. Kids can and should engage in growth-oriented initiatives such as creative problem-solving, pro-active goal-setting, entrepreneurship, relationship-building, mentorships, and volunteerism.

20. Give children a strong appreciation for curiosity, exploration, the arts, reading, adaptability, and a solid work ethic. These are important because they can enhance intelligence, engagement, and creative expression, and lead to fulfillment.

PSN Family Resource Center

The mission of the PSN Family Resource Center is to provide programs and services that build on family strengths through prevention, education, support and networking in collaboration with other resources in the community.



Meet Our Staff

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www.PSNFamilyResourceCenter.com.



Treasuring Childhood: My Firsts!

Watch your child's language grow! At any age or stage, you can create a treasure chest from an empty shoebox or cardboard box to keep special mementos from throughout your child's life. Keep this page in your child's treasure chest.



My first babbles

My first words

My first books

My first sentence

My first rhyme

My first made-up story