

The TN Child Care Resource & Referral Network employs 15 Family Engagement Quality Coaches who are located statewide. We provide referral, education and training services to parents, families, child care educators and communities.



Helping Children Cope in Uncertain Times

As the world is beginning to emerge from weeks of self-isolation, families are trying to find a new normal. That new normal will be one filled initially with uncertainty. That uncertainty can affect children negatively. But those of us who work with children regularly know that establishing a new routine, practicing kindness, and helping children talk and deal with that uncertainty will help them become stronger after this time has passed.



When thinking about a child's routine, be practical. Instead of filling their day with lots of "to-do's", keep the routines basic and highlight the most needed parts of your child's day.

For younger children, routines are more likely to be followed if they can see a visual schedule or prompt. For example, a family could have an image of a sun to signify that the child gets up, dresses, brushes their teeth, and has breakfast. A second image could be a ball to note that the child has some play time. Extremely young children may only be able to handle a visual schedule of 5-6 six items. Older children may need more items on their schedule and can also contribute to how they would like their daily routines to go.

Next, let us all remember that kindness matters. During this time, people--big and small, are stressed and overwhelmed. Those feelings may lead to others being forgetful or easily agitated. Before beginning an argument or trying to shame others, remember that we all are handling the world the best we can. Showing others kindness by being patient, allowing them extra time to complete tasks, and even gently reminding them of things they may have forgotten can help us all during this time.

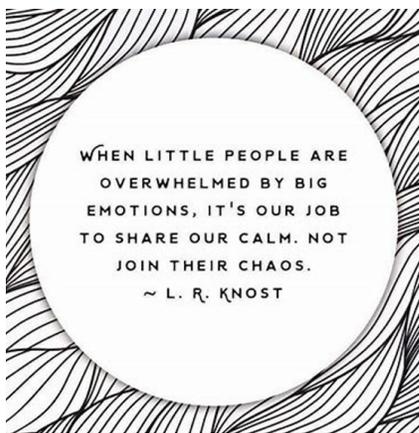
Finally, help children find words or acceptable ways to show you their feelings. You can help children understand their feelings by holding a mirror up to their face and ask them what does "happy" look like. Afterward, describe what their face is doing during "happy". An example of that description could include, "Oh I see that your mouth is curled upward, you are showing your teeth, your eyes are twinkling, and your cheeks are rosy. All of those things together mean you are happy," You can repeat the steps for other emotions like sad, angry, anxious, and scared. You can also make a game of naming "feelings" or emotion words with older children. How many can they list? Then how many can they "show" you and describe?

Finally, according to research from The National Pyramid Model and Conscious Discipline, we know that when children can describe how they are feeling, experience consistency through predictable routines, and also regularly practice kindness toward others, they are more likely to be able to deal with all types of stress in life and develop resiliency. Resiliency can help them overcome difficult situations and strengthen their self-awareness—making your children stronger for the future.

Parenting Tidbit

Did you know that ALL strong families need five things to thrive and succeed? Those five things are called the “Five Protective Factors.” They include Parental Resilience, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, Social-Emotional Competence, Concrete Supports, and Social Connections. If you would like to learn more about the “Protective Factors,” please reach out to us on our Facebook page, Tennessee Families, or contact us at (866) 296-3422.

June is Child Vision Awareness Month



The American Optometric Association recommends the following guidelines for children’s eye exams:

From birth to 2 years – at age 6 to 12 months

From 3 through 5 years – at least once between 3 and 5 years of age

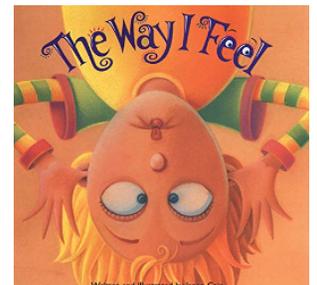
From 6 through 17 years – before 1st grade and annually thereafter

Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind states, “Children’s vision challenges are particularly hard to detect because the child may not know they are seeing the world differently than other children. Infants and children should have eye exams to be sure that they can see both near and far away, make sure their eyes work together to focus on a single object, and that the eyes are disease free.”

The Book Corner

The Way I Feel, by Janan Cain

The Way I Feel, by Janan Cain is a book filled with lots of emotion words. This book highlights the emotions and then gives children examples of when they might feel certain ways. It is an ideal book for children aged 2-8. It is also written in a style that makes it possible for older children to read to younger siblings and family members.



Essential Worker Supplement

COVID-19 Essential Employee Child Care Payment Assistance



Are you an essential worker during this time? Do you still need care for your children? Are you worried about paying for that care while you work? If you answered yes to any of these questions, please check out the following website:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/covid-19/child-care-services-and-covid-19.html>

This is a great resource from the Department of Human Services for essential workers—regardless of income.

CONTACT US

To reach a FEC Coach visit:
www.tnccrr.org

