

Spring

22

BHS Newsletter

Tulare County
Office of Education

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Spring Positive Life Practices

Warmer weather is upon us! Trees are sprouting new leaves, flowers are blossoming, and we catch a feeling of new beginnings. Spring is an ideal time to instill change. Change old habits, adopt new life practices, and reconnect with what is most meaningful. Listed below are some ideas to inspire you to refresh and prepare.

DONATE

Whether donating clothing and toys or contributing your time for a good cause, donating can boost self-esteem and happiness. When a family serves others, it can help children differentiate between needs and wants and increase gratitude.

LIFE PRACTICES

Is your child skilled at organizing, cleaning, or contributing to the household? Kids of all ages can develop an interest in cleaning and organizing; all it takes is patience, modeling, and praise.



Help your child assemble their bucket of supplies (age-appropriate cleaning products and tools) and a space to store their items for easy access. Create a routine, model your expectations of a clean space, and remember to make cleaning fun (i.e., playing upbeat music while cleaning or making it a game and setting a timer).

RECONNECT WITH FAMILY

Let's help ourselves and our families to unplug from technology. Have a picnic at the park, roast hotdogs and smores in the backyard, host a movie night outside, or an indoor campout in the living room.

DO YOU HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT?

Helping your child prepare for their future is essential. Whether your child wants to get a job, learn to drive, or decide where to go to college, you can use the spring and summer months to prepare. You can support your child by attending local job fairs, helping your child complete a job application, scheduling driving lessons, or joining an interactive virtual tour of college campuses ([Campus Tours - Interactive Virtual Tours and Campus Maps](#)).

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Thinking of Volunteering? Here's why you should...

1. Increase your Social and Communication Skills
2. Explore your Career Goals
3. Network with Organizations and Community Leaders
4. Boost your Self-Confidence
5. Promotes Personal Growth
6. Become Knowledgeable about Community Resources
7. Serving Others Builds Empathy and Gratitude



Parenting Doesn't Come with a Manual!

Five Ways to Strengthen Your Parenting Skills

1. **POSITIVE SELF-TALK** – Give yourself some grace! It may not be easy to have positive things to say about yourself at times. Stop negative thoughts with positive affirmations (i.e., "I am enough," "I am strong," "I can do this," or "I am doing my best"). We practice self-talk all the time; the key is to be mindful about what messages we are sending ourselves. Is what you are thinking to yourself *helpful* or *hurtful*?
2. **RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS** – Children have their moments of frustration. Children often seek praise for their accomplishments and comfort when they face challenges. Here is a Tip: Log on your phone, notepad, or post-it note and write down all the strengths you observed in your child throughout the week, at the end of the week, share the list with your child.
3. **COMMUNICATE WITH LOVE** – When communicating your expectations and needs, be mindful of your words, tone, and body language. Children learn how to communicate and socialize by observing others around them.
4. **SELF-CARE** – Your body depends on you! Make self-care a priority, habit, and routine. Go for a walk, take a bubble bath, have a cup of coffee, listen to relaxing music, take deep breaths, get your creative juices flowing through art. By focusing on the four areas of self-care: physical, social/emotional, mental, and spiritual, you can sustain energy and a positive mood.
5. **SUPPORT SYSTEM** – While many strive to be *super parent*, it is not ideal. It is okay to ask for help. Having a support system (i.e., family, friends, community resources, neighbors, etc.) is beneficial as it provides a safe place for healthy venting, assistance, and empathetic comfort. Remember the saying; "It takes a village to raise a child?", well it is undoubtedly true!



Parents, remember to practice self-care so you can care for others! For some ideas on how to practice self-care, visit [15 Self-Care Strategies for Parents \(verywellfamily.com\)](https://www.verywellfamily.com/15-Self-Care-Strategies-for-Parents/)

Next Stop, Adolescence!



A child's transition from childhood to early adolescence is crucial. It's a great time to teach and encourage healthy living skills to ensure a solid foundation for social, emotional, and academic success in middle school and beyond.

Changes in your preteen's behaviors can happen suddenly or with time. Some changes can include:

- ❖ **Appearing Withdrawn** - They may become more focused on socializing with friends, remaining in their rooms, or fixated on their phones.
- ❖ **Reactive or Sensitive**- Heightened hormone levels change your child's mood and tolerance level. They can become moody, irritable, or easily emotional.
- ❖ **Overly Stressed**- Teenagers typically experience an increase in academic workload and responsibilities, causing increased stress levels and feelings of anxiety. In addition, they often feel pressured to maintain a particular self-image or remain accepted by a preferred social group.

Help your pre-teens transition by preparing them for their upcoming independence and responsibilities.

SOCIAL / INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

- ❖ Encourage your child to explore their interests by joining a sport, band, club, or attending dances and social events.
- ❖ Relationships are important. Encourage your child to build strong, trusting relationships with their friends and with YOU! Discuss with your child what qualities make a desirable and positive friend.
- ❖ Develop a trusting parent-child relationship by maintaining open communication with your child. Remind them that they can express any questions, concerns, or needs. Establishing a trusting relationship is necessary, especially as your child navigates through adolescence and learns to manage their newfound independence as they grow and mature.

MENTAL HEALTH:

- ❖ Check in with your child about how they are feeling emotionally, talk about it, and *listen to learn* before you respond.
- ❖ Reach out to your child's school counselor or social worker for extra support if your child seems to be struggling for more than a few weeks.

ACADEMIC:

- ❖ Understand that taking multiple classes will take more organizational and study skills from your child, so help them create a system, such as daily planners, to-do lists, or phone apps to stay organized and complete tasks.
- ❖ Build study skills by dedicating a certain amount of time after school each day for homework or to study/read.

PHYSICAL HEALTH:

- ❖ Establish a hygiene routine (ex: shower daily, wear deodorant, learn to style own hair, learn how to use feminine hygiene products).
- ❖ Encourage your child to engage in physical activity for at least 20 minutes a day. Go for a walk, play a game of basketball, or hopscotch.
- ❖ Encourage and model good eating habits. Include veggies and fruits in at least one meal and drink plenty of water.



Visit a Farmer's Market



Spring is here! With spring comes the abundance of spring produce. Here in Tulare County, we have access to the freshest produce. Produce such as peas, spinach, asparagus, spring onions, carrots, a variety of lettuce, and strawberries can be found at local Farmer's Markets and produce stands throughout the county. The whole family can shop for fresh produce and cook a meal, an excellent way to spend quality time! If a Farmer's Market or produce stand is not accessible, produce from the grocery store (fresh or frozen) will still make a healthy meal that the whole family can make together.

To find a Farmer's Market near you, visit: [Tulare CA Farmers Market \(americantowns.com\)](http://americantowns.com)

Pasta Primavera with Spring Vegetables (4-6 servings)

Ingredients:

- ¼ pound sugar snap peas (trim off stems)
- ½ pound asparagus (snap off ends)
- ½ pound sliced cherry tomatoes
- 2-3 cups spinach
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¾ cup English peas
- ¼ cup thinly sliced (or diced) spring onion, white part only
- ½ teaspoon salt, more as needed
- Add black pepper, as needed
- 1 box/package (12-16 oz) fettuccine or tagliatelle pasta (can use white or whole wheat pasta)
- 1 jar Alfredo sauce



Instructions:

1. Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil over medium-high heat.
2. While the water is coming to a boil, slice snap peas and asparagus stems into 1/4-inch-thick pieces; leave asparagus tips whole. If using baby spinach, measure 2-3 cups. If using large leaf spinach, roughly chop to make 2-3 cups.
3. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add snap peas, asparagus, English peas and onion. Cook until vegetables are barely tender (but not too soft or mushy), 3 to 4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper; set aside.
4. Drop pasta into boiling water and cook until al dente (according to package directions). Drain well and transfer pasta to a large bowl. Add vegetable mixture. Pour Alfredo sauce over pasta and vegetables, mix well. Serve by itself or with your favorite meat, such as chicken or shrimp. Enjoy!

Check this out, Kids!

Fork Painting: Celebrate spring by creating paintings of chicks or flowers using forks as your paintbrush!



Directions

1. Gather and prepare your materials (paper, paint, fork, googly eyes, and glue).
2. Dip the prongs of the fork into paint.
3. To create tulips set head of fork onto paper with prongs facing towards top of paper. Paint a stem under each tulip to finish the look.
4. To create dandelions or ducks, use the prongs of the fork to create a circle of prongs. Finish the look of a dandelion by adding a stem. Add googly eyes and a paper beak and feet, or simply draw them on to complete your duck.

Tin Can Planter or Wood Chime



Materials:

- Empty Washed Tin Cans
- Paintbrush and Paint
- String and Wire Clothes Hanger
- Hammer/nail or something similar to make holes in can

Directions to Create a Wind Chime:

1. Have fun painting the outside of a metal tin can (use about 4-5 if making a wind chime) and let dry.
2. Poke a hole through the middle of the bottom on your cans.
3. Attach your can to the wire clothes hanger by fishing a string through the hole of the top of your can and secure with a knot.
4. Repeat this process with each can.
5. Hang and enjoy

Directions to Create a Planter:

1. Paint the outside of your tin can and let dry
2. Plant real flowers/plants inside your new planter, water, and enjoy!

"Rock" Kindness

Paint positive messages on rock and let dry. Place them around your neighborhood. These are sure to brighten up someone's day!



Less *Screen* Time, More *You* Time



Have you noticed how much time you spend on your cell phone, tablet, or computer? If it's more than 6 hours a day, then perhaps it's time to break a habit. Your time is precious, and how you spend it should bring health and wellness to your life.

There are many strategies to cut out screen time, but it can feel challenging for many people. Take a moment to go to your settings on your phone and go to the "screen time" button. You will see exactly how much screen time you're consuming and what apps are a part of that; it may shock you. Some steps to consider:

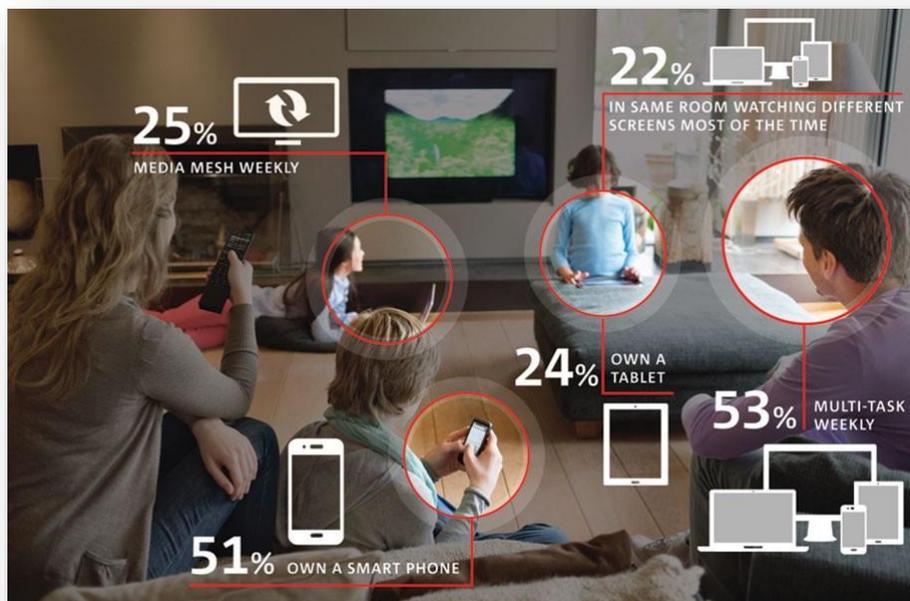
- ❖ Turn off notifications for unnecessary apps (i.e., YouTube Channels, social media alerts, etc.)
- ❖ Consider removing those apps you often visit from your home screen, so more steps are involved in accessing those apps.
- ❖ Set the phone to "DO NOT DISTURB" while driving, working, or at bedtime.
- ❖ Set your phone away from your view (i.e., in your bag or a different room altogether).

Easier said than done but creating better habits takes time. When you limit your screen time, you may notice a change in yourself, such as irritability, feeling restless, change in sleeping patterns, feeling bored, or a strong desire to access your device. These are common, but remember that breaking a habit takes time, and having a plan can help you limit screen time.

Look back at the things you wish you would have spent your time doing, such as a hobby, an activity, spending time with family or friends, and begin to dedicate your attention to fulfilling those needs. Set a weekend aside to do that thing you love, maybe with a friend or significant other. Budget and plan a trip to a place you've always wanted to go to visit. Start learning a language you've wanted to speak that you felt you never had enough time to learn. Use this time to expand on who you are as a person. You deserve these new experiences, and it is available to you if you dedicate the time.

For More Information, Visit:

[How Much Screen Time is Too Much? | Vikram Singh Bisen](#)



RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES



What is GUM?

The **Get up and Move (GUM)** Fitness Program is designed to provide educational opportunities focused on teaching health and fitness to middle school aged children. GUM program believes in sharing resources, knowledge and expertise to improve the Central Valley by promoting lifelong healthy habits to youth.

While a life of fast food and smart phones may be convenient, this modern life also requires that a conscious effort be placed on maintaining good health, or you just won't have it! McDermont X's GUM program does a great job of teaching and inspiring good nutrition, fitness, team work, and the motivation to accomplish it all. With a marriage between professionally designed education and good old-fashioned play time, the GUM program at McDermont X inspires positive change like nothing else can.

Want more information? [McDermont X: GUM Program \(mcdermontfieldhouse.com\)](http://mcdermontfieldhouse.com)

Call us at **559-562-3326** or email events@mcdermontx.com

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE SEQUOIAS



Looking for an afterschool or summer Program for your child?

Visit: [Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias \(bgcsequoias.org\)](http://bgcsequoias.org)

World Autism Awareness Day

April 2, 2022



For information about Autism, visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/signs-autism>

For information about local services to support a child with Autism, visit [Eligibility – Central Valley Regional Center \(cvrc.org\)](http://cvrc.org)

If you feel that you might be suffering from a mental health condition or know someone close to you, please don't hesitate to reach out for help.

- ❖ Tulare County Mental Health Access Line (559) 623-0900
- ❖ **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** (800) 273-8255
- ❖ Tulare County Warm Line (877) 306-2413
- ❖ **24hr Mental Health Crisis Line** (800) 320-1616
- ❖ AOD Substance Use Disorder Treatment Access Line (866) 732-4114 or (800) 735-2922