

December 2011 Top Tips from School Nursing

Childhood cancer awareness month

December is childhood cancer awareness month. Every day in the UK 10 families are told that their child has cancer.

Are you aware of CLIC Sargent, a national charity supporting children and their families affected by cancer?

Visit their website at www.clicsargent.org.uk



Does your child have Asthma?

The winter weather is setting in and cold air is a known trigger for asthma sufferers with three quarters stating that it makes their symptoms worse.



- This winter, before heading out for the annual snowball fight, be sure your child takes their usual dose of their reliever inhaler (normally the blue one)
- Ensure they wear a scarf over the nose and mouth to warm up the cold air before it is breathed in. (Asthma UK)
- Ensure medications at home and in school are in date
- Be aware of any asthma triggers and inform the school of these and any changes

Asthma UK have excellent free resources for children with asthma empowering them to manage their own asthma with the support of their parents. www.asthma.org.uk

Has your child been off school ill?

Were you unsure about how long to keep them away from school?

Follow the link below for guidance on infectious diseases and their recommended absence periods

www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1274087715902

General health information can be obtained from the NHS Choices website

www.nhs.uk



Anger awareness week



There are lots of things in life that can make us angry. The 1st - 7th of December is National anger awareness week.

The purpose of this week is to raise awareness of the causes of anger and to equip people with simple techniques to help them to manage their anger in a healthy and positive way.

If you find your child becoming stressed this festive season try to:

- Distract them towards another activity. Physical activities will cause the body to produce endorphins; a chemical that lifts mood and can make you feel more peaceful.
- Teach your child to take slow relaxing breathes whilst they think of a place that makes them happy
- Encourage 'talking time' with your child. Allowing them to tell you about how they are feeling and things that are bothering them.



Reference-The British Anger Management Association

Bounce out of bed with breakfast

Breakfast constitutes the most important meal of the day.

After going through the night without food our body needs energy to get us going.

- Skipping breakfast or eating the wrong things can leave us lethargic and unable to concentrate.
- People who eat breakfast have more energy to take part in physical activity, can concentrate better in class and maintain a healthier weight as they consume fewer calories throughout the day.
- Try to eat foods that provide slow releasing energy such as porridge, wheatabix or special k, these all contain whole grains that are broken down slowly by the body and can keep us going until lunch time.
- If you don't have time for breakfast in the morning try to eat a mix grain muffin, fresh fruit or some dry cereals on the way to school.



Reference -Kidshealth.org



Sleep is the best medicine

A good night's sleep is essential for supporting children's growth and development as this is the time when the growth hormone is released. Not getting enough sleep can lead to poor performance and concentration and low immunity to disease.

Achieving good sleep is a skill to be learnt. Try to establish a good bed time routine and environment to promote sleep.

- Bed time should be around the same time each night
- Work around the basis of teatime, quiet play, bath, story, bed
- 4-6 year olds require between 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours a night
- 6-12 year olds require around 12 hours sleep a night
- try to keep the bed room as non-stimulating as possible, avoid TV's, computer and other electronic gaming devices

Reference-The sleep council