

- Go Outside
- Opioids
- Reading is Fundamental

The Healthy Mentality

A mental health newsletter courtesy of North Central West Virginia Community Action

June 2018

Go Outside

June is here and summer has begun. The kids are out of school and now there is a lot of time on their hands. What a great time to explore the great outside. There are articles and research out there, informing us how much more time kids are spending indoors in front of a tv/phone/tablet/etc. screen. With the increased time inside, children and their families are missing out on the wonders and benefits that the outdoors can bring. Not only can spending time outdoors be fun and provide bonding time for your family, there are health/mental health benefits to it as well. Encouraging children to go outside, play, and experience the natural world are ways to help reverse childhood obesity rates. Going outside can also strengthen children's development. The following list is from "Supporting Outdoor Play and Exploration for Infants and Toddlers" by Early Head Start National Resource Center at ZERO TO THREE.



- Increased creativity and imagination;
- Development of a sense of wonder (wonder is an important motivator for lifelong learning);
- Increased social interactions between children;
- Enhanced opportunities to make decisions, solve problems, and collaborate with peers, which also promote language and communication skills;
- Improved awareness, reasoning, and observation skills; and
- Positive effects on children's ability to focus and pay attention.

For the complete paper, please go to <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/docs/ehs-ta-paper-14-outdoor-play.pdf>

If you are struggling to find ways to entertain your little one while you are outside, here are some ideas from "Fun and Learning for Parents and Children: An Activities Handbook" created by Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families by Trans-Management Systems Corporation. For the complete handbook, please go to: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/fun-learning-parents-children-activities-handbook#Outside>

Talk about all the things you and your children see in the sky, near the house or apartment

- Colors Bright Sun
- Moon Houses
- Neighbors Cars
- Shapes Dark clouds
- Stars Snow



Help your children find animals and insects.

- Tell your children the names of the animals and insects they see and hear.
- Ask your children where they think the animals live, how the insects build their homes, where they get their food.

Help your children dig and plant a garden.

- Talk about each tool you are using and what it does.
- Look at seed packages and vegetables in the grocery store. Then, decide what to plant: rad-

ishes, carrots, and other things that grow fast and that you and your child like are best.

- Remind your children to water the growing plants.

Look up toward the sky at different times of the day with your children.

- Talk about the ways that trees bend and what the clouds look like.
- Look for changes over time--how are the leaves different in the fall from the spring? Are there more or less birds in the sky now than there were last

Opioids: The opioid epidemic in West Virginia has gained national attention. It is difficult to find someone who has not been affected by it, whether it may be personal or work related. We often hear about it, but what are they and how much do we know? The following information has provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) **Opioid Overdose Tool Kit** and **Easy to Read Drug Facts** by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIH). The tool kit and factorial sheet can be found at: <https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA16-4742/SMA16-4742.pdf> and https://easyread.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/EasyToRead_WhatIsAddiction_FINAL_012017.pdf

What are Opioids?

Opioids include illicit drugs such as heroin and prescription medications used to treat pain such as morphine, codeine, methadone, oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, hydromorphone, and buprenorphine .

What Happens when someone takes an opioid?

A variety of effects can occur after a person takes opioids, ranging from pleasure to nausea and vomiting, from severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) to overdose, in which breathing and heartbeat slow or even stop.

Do You or a Loved One Have a Drug Use Problem?

Here are some questions to ask yourself or someone you know. If the answer to some or all of these questions is yes, you might have an addiction.

- Do you think a lot about drugs?
- Did you ever try to stop or cut down on your drug use but couldn't?
- Have you ever thought you couldn't fit in or have a good time without drugs?
- Do you ever use drugs because you are upset or angry at other people?
- Have you ever used a drug without knowing what it was or what it would do to you?
- Have you ever taken one drug to get over the effects of another?
- Have you ever made mistakes at a job/school because you were using drugs?
- Does the thought of running out of drugs really scare you?
- Have you ever stolen drugs or stolen stuff to pay for drugs?
- Have you ever been arrested or in the hospital because of your drug use?
- Have you ever overdosed on drugs?
- Has using drugs hurt your relationships with other people?

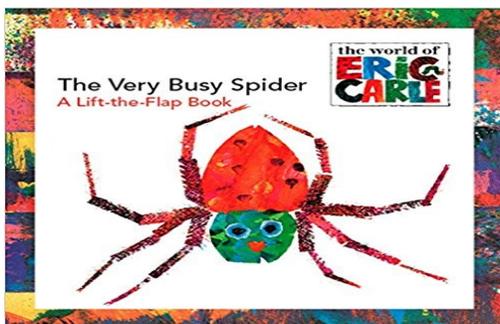
If you feel you may have a drug use problem, speak to you doctor.

HELP4WV offers a 24/7 call, chat, and text line that provides immediate help for any West Virginian struggling with an addiction or mental health issue.
1-844-Help4WV

Reading is FundaMENTAL:

Books can be a great way to connect with your child while learning valuable life skills. This month's suggestion is:

The Very Busy Spider By Eric Carle



The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle introduces your little one to the different animals that live on the farm. These animals ask the spider if she would like to participate with them in the different activities. You can use this book to help your child learn animal recognition and also give you ideas about activities to do outside. As the book progresses, the very busy spider stays focused on her task and in the end accomplishes her task.