

Healthy Children

June 2019 Parent Newsletter



Tobacco in the Media

Understanding media and its influence is an important skill for your child. Studies have shown that youth who have good media literacy are less likely to use substances that are advertised, such as tobacco or e-cigarettes.

Although we have come a long way with advertising of tobacco products, smoking is still very present in movies. There is no restriction on smoking in movies that are rated for children and teens. This presents challenges, but also a great opportunity for building media literacy.

When smoking is shown on-screen, pause the movie or point it out. Later, have a discussion with your child. Ask questions such as: Why was there smoking

shown? Did it add to the storyline? Who do you think decided to add it to the movie? Try to encourage your child to think critically about who is influencing the presence of smoking in movies, and why they might want to show that specifically to young people.

Helping your child build the skill of questioning media can help them in areas other than avoiding smoking – it can encourage critical thinking in all areas of influence in their life!

➤ **To learn more, or for support in quitting tobacco, visit www.albertaquits.ca or call 1-866-710-QUIT (7848)**

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Tobacco in the Media

Play is the Work of Childhood

Skin cancer is largely preventable, with about 82% of melanomas linked to factors we can change. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) is the main cause of skin cancer but other harmful effects include sunburn, premature skin aging, and eye damage. Choose sun-safety strategies that work: a broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, use shade, clothing, a hat with a wide brim, and sunglasses. For more information visit <http://albertapreventscancer.ca/reduce-your-risk/limit-uv-rays/>



Play is the Work of Childhood

Fred (“Mister”) Rodgers is often quoted for saying “play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.” It is during playful learning that children’s emotional, social, physical, language and cognitive development prospers. Not only does play create real learning opportunities, children also love to play! Below are a few suggestions to help your child learn through both free and guided play.

Free Play is an unstructured, voluntary, child-led activity that allows children to develop their imaginations while exploring the world around them.

- Pretend and role play - when kids have the chance to role play they get to ‘practice’ the social skills needed later in life.
- Get into nature – nature is full of wonder, and there are many things to explore and learn about through



observation. Plus, when kids are outside they move more!

- Let them be bored – when children are bored long enough, they will eventually (maybe after some complaining) connect with their curiosities and guide their own play.

Guided Play is play that children lead but adults support. The child is the leader and adults help to reinforce the experience through props and by interacting in ways that build on the child’s interest and learning.

- Ask questions – when your child is working through a

task (e.g. building a tower) they will look to you for answers. Rather than give them the answer, ask another question in return (e.g. which way is the tower leaning?).

- Follow their lead – children are naturally curious, let your child lead the exploration. Look up questions you don’t know the answer to and share in the learning process.
- Schedule in unstructured time – family schedules are packed these days, so you might have to plan some unstructured time to provide your kids the benefits of learning through play.