



— Spring Cleaning With Children —

“What I know for sure is that when you declutter – whether it’s on your home, you head, or your heart – it is astounding what will flow into that space that will enrich you, your life, and your family.” Peter Walsh

As the weather warms and the earth is renewing itself, we also long to clean and freshen our homes and lives. Cleaning with children doesn’t have to be a burden but a teaching tool. Perfection isn’t required, but helping them understand that maintaining a home requires work and effort is a valuable lesson. Here are some ideas for incorporating your children in the tasks around your home.

Have your small children, as young as 18 months, help wipe down baseboards and low window sills with a damp cloth. No chemicals are needed and the damp cloth will help contain dust and allergens. Older children can help wipe windows and walls clean with non-toxic cleaners. Non-toxic cleaners are important for our homes as many environmental allergens are found in common cleaning products. A useful website for finding the best non-toxic cleaning products is www.ewg.org which rates cleaning products for all surfaces and laundry.

Children of all ages will have fun washing their hard, non-porous toys with a bucket of soapy water outside. They can also help scrub outdoor furniture, outdoor toys, balls, pots for plants, etc. Water play is a great sensory playtime and allows children to make a mess in a constructive and appropriate way. Be sure to supervise small children while they are washing toys especially if your cleaning bucket is deep.

School age children can help sort through their own clothing to find clothes and shoes that are too small, stained, or have holes. They can put aside winter clothing that is past season for handing down to siblings or for donations. Re-folding and organizing their drawers will help them see what clothing they have available to wear and make morning routines run smoothly.

Children can also help organize their toys and books. Many children are attached to their toys and books from a sentimental perspective, however, they can put aside toys and books that are broken, missing pieces, or ones they have outgrown. Giving children ownership of their toys and books creates a desire to take care of their personal property. Some children struggle with understanding that their toys, books, and clothing have value until they are required to care for them.

Take the spring cleaning outside and have children of all ages help pick up yard debris, weed garden beds, and mulch the garden. Children love to dig in the dirt and they truly love to help their parents in even the most mundane tasks. Being a part of the family work days and spending time together is a way to bond and solidify relationships.

Decluttering your home will help reduce anxiety in all members of the family by minimizing the visual overstimulation and the never-ending need to maintain “stuff”. Children do not need more toys or things but the opportunity to be bored, which in turn produces creativity. Ready to get cleaning?

News & Events

- World Autism Awareness Day!**
Wear something blue on April 2 in support of understanding and acceptance for people with autism.
- VIVA Pediatric's Richardson office has moved!**
Our new office location is 275 W. Campbell Rd, Suite 400, Richardson, TX 75080
- Lunch Doodle with Mo Willems - Author of Elephant and Piggie Books**
Mo Willems invites you into his studio every day for his LUNCH DOODLE. Learners worldwide can draw, doodle and explore new ways of writing by visiting Mo's studio virtually once a day for the next few weeks.
12 p.m. central time weekdays
<https://youtu.be/k4RfUC6-aKE>
- Stay at Home Story Time with Oliver Jeffers - Author of The Day the Crayons Quit**
A ~20 min. picture book read-aloud with Oliver Jeffers. View replays at: www.oliverjeffers.com/books#/abookaday/ or view live on Instagram weekdays at: www.instagram.com/oliverjeffers/
- Drawing lessons from Dav Pilkey (creator of Captain Underpants, Dog-Man graphic novel series)**
Stay tuned on Friday, April 3rd at 7:00 a.m. central time for a new video from Dav Pilkey! Also various at home activities by visiting: <https://kids.scholastic.com/kids/books/dav-pilkey-at-home/>

Resources

• **VIVA Pediatrics Resources**

In an effort to help our families, we constantly strive to provide them with relevant and helpful resources and information. Visit our resources page online at: www.vivaped.com/resources

For current events visit us on Facebook. www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds

• **Care Starter App**

The Connections App is a complete resource guide for families of kids, teens and adults with special needs. Their goal is to help you find providers, organizations and other resources in your community to help you along your path of care. Download the CareStarter App now! www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp



• **The Parker Lee Project**

The Parker Lee Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with medical needs obtain the necessary supplies & equipment, education, and support they need. While most supplies are covered by insurance, some are not, or not enough supplies are provided. If you have a need for medical supplies or have supplies to donate, please visit their website at www.theparkerleeproject.org

• **Texas Star Kids**

The Texas' Star Kids mandate threatens the lives of our weakest and most vulnerable little citizens. Join us in standing up for those who have no voice. Click this link to sign up: www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids
For more info visit: www.protecttxfragilekids.org

• **Thrive Magazine**

Need Resources for your child with special needs? Thrive Magazine shares resources and stories of other families in the DFW area who are living and thriving with special needs. www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory

• **Recognize a VIVA Star**

Viva Pediatrics has an Employee Rewards and Recognition Program to thank and recognize employees that go "above and beyond". Both employees and patient families are welcome to recognize a VIVA employee! Call one of our offices and let us know if a VIVA employee has gone above and beyond!



Get Healthy with Giggles

Good Hygiene at Home

Teaching your child good hygiene behavior can be difficult especially during stressful times. Here are some tips to help your family maintain their good health while facing long periods of isolation at home.

Wash your hands often. It is recommended that you lather your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds before rinsing with either cool or warm water. Children especially should be encouraged to wash their hands after going to the bathroom and before they eat a meal. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is also a viable hand-disinfecting option.

Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in your home as often as you can. Pay close attention to your home's common areas such as tables, chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets and sinks. It also wouldn't be a bad idea to disinfect your child's hand-held toys on a regular basis as well. You should also launder washable toys when you can especially if your child has a favorite stuffed animal that they carry everywhere with them.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as much as you can. For young kiddos try to make it into a little game of who can go the longest without touching any part of their face. For coughs and sneezes, encourage your little ones to cover up by coughing and sneezing into their elbow or with a tissue.

From our Viva family to yours, we wish you a safe and healthy April.

- Jordyn Ruiz

Food for Thought



Baked Ziti

Ingredients

- 1 pound dry ziti pasta
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 2 (26 ounce) jars spaghetti sauce
- 6 ounces provolone cheese, sliced
- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 6 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

- Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil.
- Add ziti pasta, and cook until al dente, about 8 minutes; drain.
- In a large skillet, brown onion and ground beef over medium heat.
- Add spaghetti sauce, and simmer 15 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F
- Butter a 9x13 inch baking dish.
- Layer as follows: 1/2 of the ziti, Provolone cheese, sour cream, 1/2 sauce mixture, remaining ziti, mozzarella cheese and remaining sauce mixture. Top with grated Parmesan cheese.
- Bake for 30 minutes in the pre-heated oven, or until cheeses are melted.

What is a computer's favorite snack?



Computer Chips!



Just for Giggles!