



Digital Balance: Your Child's Well-Being During the Holidays

As the holiday season approaches, families everywhere look forward to spending quality time together, with many kids getting extended breaks from school. This often means more screen time, whether it be gaming, surfing the web, or catching up on their favorite shows. As parents, it's crucial to ensure that our kids remain digitally aware and safe during this period of increased online activity.

Digital Awareness and Screen Time - While the digital world offers endless entertainment and learning opportunities, nothing replaces the benefits of physical activity. Encourage your children to interweave online sessions with outdoor play, indoor exercises, or even simple stretches. This promotes physical health and helps combat the sedentary habits.

Mental Health and Screen Time - Excessive digital engagement can sometimes lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, or depression, especially if kids are comparing their lives to what they see online. Ensure regular offline periods where they can engage in hobbies, family activities, or relax.

Recognizing and Addressing Cyberbullying
Equip your children to spot the signs of cyberbullying and ensure they know the importance of speaking up. Encourage open communication, emphasizing that their mental well-being is paramount. Reassure them that they can always approach you about any online issue, creating a safe space for dialogue.

Privacy Settings and Online Interactions

Make sure your child's devices have the appropriate privacy settings activated. This can prevent unsolicited interactions with strangers and protect personal information. Talk candidly with your kids about the difference between online and real-world friends.

Secure Downloads and Safe Browsing - children may not be aware of the dangers lurking behind an innocent-looking download button. Guide them on recognizing secure sites (look for the padlock icon in the address bar) and discuss the risks of downloading from unknown sources.

Online Gaming and In-App Purchases

If your child is an avid gamer, make sure they know the basics of online gaming safety. This includes using an alias instead of their real name, disabling chat features with strangers, and understanding the dangers of in-game purchases. It's easy for kids to unintentionally rack up large bills on games if they have access to your payment details.

By discussing these topics and regularly checking in with your child about their online experiences, you can ensure they are both enjoying the digital world and staying safe. The holidays should be a time of joy, relaxation, and family bonding. With a bit of foresight and open communication, you can ensure it stays that way, even in our increasingly digital age.

News & Events

• Carol of Lights – Grapevine

Free for all ages. 35th Annual Carol of Lights - November 20
Visitors can enjoy live performances and family-friendly activities, such as photos with live reindeer, holiday bounce houses, seasonal crafts, and tasty food vendors, starting at 4:00 pm. Downtown Historic Main Street, 200 S. Main Street, Grapevine, TX 76051. For more information visit <https://gograpevine.com/carol-of-lights-presented-by-texas-health/>

• Texas Taco Festival – Arlington

Free for children under 10. Food & live entertainment festival of the year returns to Texas Live!
November 18th & 19th
Variety of tacos and taco-themed activities! Kids Fun Zone & activities, multiple bands & DJs live on stage and tons of space! Come hungry!
For more information visit www.eventbrite.com/e/texas-taco-festival-tickets-660607343347?aff=erel-expmlt

• Fall Fest - Austin

Annual Fall Festival is a free, family-friendly event open to all ages. Stop by for an evening full of fun and exciting activities such as guided night hikes through the nature preserve, getting an up-close look at the night sky with the planetarium, meeting some of ANSC's nocturnal animal ambassadors, and playing glow in the dark games!
November 4th, 6:00pm to 9:00pm.
2389 Stratford Dr., Austin, TX, 78746.
For more information visit www.thestoryoftexas.com/visit/calendar/education/spooktacular-20231027

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

Gobble Up the Fun This Thanksgiving!

Thanksgiving is a time for gratitude, family, and of course, lots of delicious food! But it's also a perfect opportunity to introduce fun and healthy activities for kids. Here's how you can make this Thanksgiving not only joyful but also beneficial for your little ones' well-being.

Festive Food Art: Get creative in the kitchen by making Thanksgiving-themed snacks. Use healthy ingredients like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to craft turkey-shaped designs or a colorful cornucopia. This activity is not just about eating; it's about learning, creating, and understanding healthy food choices.

Thankful Morning Stretches: Begin the day with some gentle, kid-friendly stretches or yoga. This can be a calm moment to talk about what everyone is thankful for. Stretching promotes physical flexibility and mindfulness, a great combination for growing kids.

Backyard Parade: Who says you need a big city parade to celebrate? Create your own mini-parade in the backyard or down the street. Let kids make and decorate banners, dress up, and enjoy a festive march. This helps in burning off some energy and ignites their imagination.

Harvest Helping Hands: Thanksgiving is all about giving. Encourage your kids to participate in community service or a charitable project. This could be anything from donating food to a local pantry to making cards for those in need. It's a meaningful way to teach empathy and kindness.

Incorporating these healthy, active, and gratitude-filled activities into your Thanksgiving celebration can enrich the holiday experience for your children.

Food for Thought



Glazed Carrots

Ingredients

- 1 ½ lbs carrots peeled and cut into ½ inch thick slices
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley (optional)

Directions:

- Place carrots in a large pan and add 1 ½ cups of water. Bring carrots to a simmer.
- Cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until carrots are tender. Drain off any excess water.
- Add butter, brown sugar, and salt to the pan. Stir to coat the carrots.
- Cook for an additional 4 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until a sauce has formed.
- Sprinkle with parsley if desired, serve, and enjoy!

Enjoy!

Why did the turkey play drums in his band?



Because he already had drumsticks!



Just for Giggles!