Monthly Newsletter Courtesy of your

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Happy and Healthy Childhood Summer

The 2016-17 school year has closed and it is time for summer fun – family vacations, camps, and day trips! It is also a wonderful time of opportunity for parents to share positive life skills with their children for a happy and healthy lifestyle.

Childhood Obesity – Awareness and Tips

Childhood obesity has exploded in North America – up 400% in the United States since 1960s. Obesity increases the risk of health problems, such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control for parents:

- Any increase in physical activity can help – a bike ride, playing at the park, or family walk after dinner.
- Limit screen time – time spent on the computer, watching television, or playing video games – to prompt other activities.
- Serve more vegetables, fruits, and whole grain foods, and fewer prepared foods.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep, because there is a connection between sleep and hormones that affect metabolism.

Involve Children in Healthy Food Choices

Here is a brilliant way to get your child to eat healthy snacks and lunches: Experts say that the more you can get your child to participate in the planning and shopping for and preparation of his or her meals, the more likely the meal will be eaten. Sit down with a list of options in each of the main food groups – fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat dairy. Allow your child to pick favorites in each category. The technique teaches balanced meal planning, organizational skills, and commitment. Your child is less likely to pick over the lunch, will understand nutritional needs better, and will take responsibility for choices. There is less of a chance the snack and lunch will end up in the trash.

Encourage Children to Explore New Interests

Children learn about themselves and discover how their behaviors and words have a positive influence on their relationships with others when they are encouraged to participate within organized groups that are interesting and safe.

Here are a few super fun activities that may enhance your child's cognitive, emotional, and social development:

- Join a non-profit theatre – try acting, playing an instrument, creating props, or sewing costumes
- Start a book club – discover skills beyond reading, like organization and debate
- Enroll in dance class – build physical strength and endurance with kinesthetic learning
- Color the world – commit to formal painting, drawing, and other art classes, visit art museums

Teach the "Two-Minute" Rule

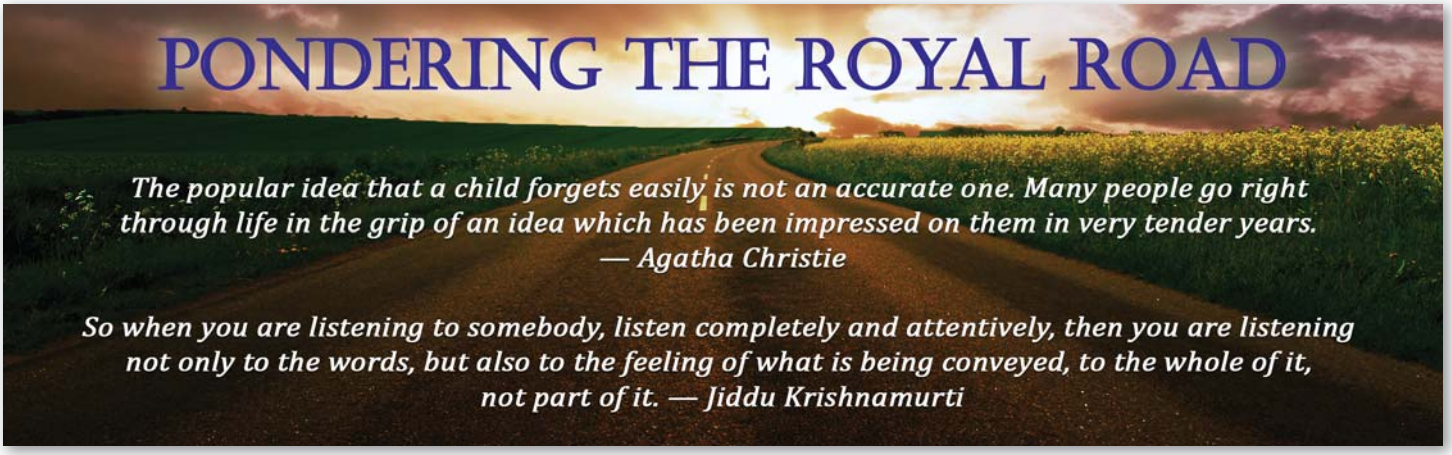
David Allen wrote the bestselling book "Getting Things Done," and offered a productivity tool called the two-minute rule. Borrow the basics of Allen's two-minute rule and five day challenge for your teenager (make any necessary age appropriate adjustments to match your child's developmental level): Be mindful as you go about your day, and recognize how many tasks and chores confront you. Consider how much time the task will take. If you estimate any task will take less than two minutes, do it immediately.

You can better reinforce the positivity of their successes by keeping a diary for them to look back on. They will be amazed by their many achievements and value the interest you take in their maturity. Praise their successes at getting things done!

Pool Safety This Summer

According to the Centers of Disease Control, two in every ten people who die from drowning in the United States are children 14 years of age and younger. Children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates, with most occurring in home swimming pools. Reduce risk of drowning accidents by formal swim lessons for children, fenced pools from open access, and close supervision.

Do not become complacent about water safety. Complacency consists of two things: lack of experience with the tragic event and denial that it can happen to you. Prevent complacency by reminding children to be cautious and having an adult stay aware. Pool lifeguards are crucial, but drowning incidents, although rare, have occurred even under their watchful eye.



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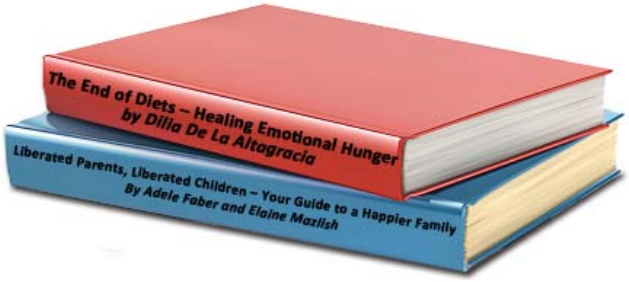

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