



Parents as Teachers™

Affiliate

Parents as Teachers

Columbia Public Schools
A Newsletter for Parents of Preschoolers

June, July, August 2015
1818 West Worley, Columbia MO 65203
www.cpsk12.org/pat
(573)214-3955

Dear Parents,

I'm delighted to begin my 25th year with Parents as Teachers. You might be interested to know that I too was a parent in the PAT program following the birth of my firstborn, Christopher. It was twenty six years ago that I eagerly awaited the arrival of Miss Peggy to our home each month as we met to discuss and observe the wonder of my son's development as well as my development as a new parent. Although my background was in Education and Counseling, I benefited greatly from the additional information, support and resources my parent educator was able to provide. As Christopher approached his second birthday I was asked by my parent educator if I would consider applying for a position with PAT. Without hesitation, I made the application and was hired as a Parent Educator for the Lebanon Public School district.

Towards the end of my first year as a Parent Educator, I gave birth to my second child, Collin. Additionally, my husband took a new job that brought us to Columbia. Having had the great fortune of working for PAT, I knew that as soon as we got settled in our new town, I would want to resume my work with Columbia's program. Luckily I was given a job with the Columbia Public Schools PAT program.

I have visited families for the past 25 years and will be starting my 12th year as the Coordinator for the Columbia PAT program. Over the years I have had the pleasure of working with and learning from hundreds of committed parents, families and fellow parent educators. I am continually impressed by the parents in PAT who want the best for their children, are eager to do the hard work that parenting requires as well as recognizing what a tremendous influence they can have on their child's success in school and life.

I take great pride in the work that the PAT Staff does, the hard work that you as parents have committed to and look forward to future years of working with and learning from you.

All the best in your parenting journey,
Belinda Masters
Coordinator, Parents as Teachers

Upcoming Hearing & Vision Screenings

For children ages 6 months to 5 years - PAT Office, 1818 W Worley

Upcoming Dates:

- Wednesday, June 10th, from 9:30-11:30 am
- Thursday, July 9th, from 4:30-6:30 pm
- No screening in August

No appointment is necessary. Please sign in upon arrival, as screening slots are available on a first come-first served basis. We appreciate your patience. The wait time varies depending on the number of families participating. This service is offered to families at no charge.

- Hearing Screenings courtesy of the MU School of Health Professions
- Vision Screenings courtesy of Saving Sights

Notices

- ⇒ PAT Office closed July 4th, Independence Day
- ⇒ Playroom closed from June 3rd thru June 12th

Free Screening

Each child will be screened in the areas of health, vision, hearing and overall development. During the screening parent and child will work with a screening specialist. The screener will summarize the results, provide parents a written report and make suggestions for additional activities. Referrals for further evaluation will be made as needed.
Call now to schedule an appointment!

<i>Infants/Toddlers:</i> (6 months—3 Years)	<i>Preschoolers</i> (3,4 & 5 year olds)
<i>Columbia Public Schools</i> <i>Parents as Teachers</i> <i>Call: 214-3955</i>	<i>Columbia Public Schools</i> <i>Early Childhood Department</i> <i>Call: 214-3585</i>

Parenting

1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Fit-Tastic (www.fittastic.org)

The Columbia Parents as Teachers program is pleased to join with Boone County Health and Human Services and other area agencies to promote healthy lifestyles for families by using the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Fit-Tastic approach. The information in this curriculum is geared toward people two years old through adulthood. We invite you to take the Healthy Lifestyle Quiz and then check your answers on the next page. Implementing just one of the 5 different habits can make a big difference in your health and well-being. I'd like to encourage you to visit their website and ask your parent educator for more handouts specific to developing the 5 habits for you and your family. Special thanks to Children's Mercy Hospital and Clinics for developing such a wonderful set of materials.

FIT-TASTIC HEALTHY LIFESTYLES QUIZ: CHECK IT OUT!

1. **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:** On a typical day, how many minutes do you (does your child) spend in active play/exercise (breathing harder or sweating)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 15 min	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 min	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 min	<input type="checkbox"/> 45 min	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 min (1 hour)	<input type="checkbox"/> 90 min (1 1/2 hours or more)
<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A				

2. **SCREEN TIME:** On a typical day, how many hours are you (is your child) in front of a screen (TV, computer, video game, cell phone)?

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 hour or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 1.5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5 hours
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> 4.5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 or more hours	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

3. **MILK AND YOGURT:** On a typical day, how many times do you (does your child) drink milk (check one)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Once/day or less (1 cup or less)	<input type="checkbox"/> Twice/day (2 cups)	<input type="checkbox"/> Three times/day (3 cups)
<input type="checkbox"/> Many times/day (4 cups or more)	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

4. **WATER AND BEVERAGES:** On a typical day, how many times do you (does your child) drink plain water (check one)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Once/day or less (1 cup or less)	<input type="checkbox"/> Twice/day (2 cups)	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Times/day (3 cups)
<input type="checkbox"/> Many times/day (4 cups or more)	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

A. What other beverages do you (does your child) drink in a typical day? Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Juice (100%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Diet pop/soda or unsweetened coffee tea	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Soda, fruitade or sports drink (such as Kool-aid, Capri Sun, Sunny Delight, Gatorade, Powerade, sweetened tea)		

B. On a typical day, how many times do you (does your child) drink sodas, fruitades or sports drinks (check one):

<input type="checkbox"/> Once/day or less (1 cup or less)	<input type="checkbox"/> Twice/day (2 cup)	<input type="checkbox"/> Three times/day (3 cups)
<input type="checkbox"/> Many times/day (4 cups or more)	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

5. **FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:** On a typical day, how many times do you (does your child) usually eat fruits or vegetables?

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 or more	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
------------------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------



CHOOSE HEALTH HABITS FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE!

HEALTHY HABIT	BENEFITS	TIPS
 <p>1 HOUR OR MORE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</p>	<p>Be active 60 minutes or more each day. Staying active can help you keep your energy up and reach or stay at a healthy weight.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You don't have to get 60 minutes in all at once. Break it up into shorter chunks throughout the day. • Anything that makes you breathe harder and your heart beat faster is a good activity. • Plan active family time like going to the park or the zoo. • Be active with a friend
 <p>2 HOURS MAXIMUM OF SCREEN TIME</p>	<p>Less time spent watching TV, playing video games or texting means more time being active. Keep screen time to less than two hours a day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start by cutting out 15 minutes a day each week to get down to less than 2 hours. • Come up with fun activities to do as a family instead of screen time. • Start a family game night or go to a nearby park or playground. • Make screen time a reward, not a daily routine.
 <p>3 SERVINGS OF LOW OR NONFAT MILK OR YOGURT</p>	<p>Drinking milk helps make bones and teeth strong. Serve low or nonfat milk or yogurt to have with meals. Include three servings each day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve milk to drink at each meal. • Keep milk ice cold. Kids are more likely to drink it. • Use nonfat fruit flavored yogurt as dip for fruit. • Make your own smoothies by blending your favorite frozen fruit with yogurt and nonfat milk. • Layer fruit and yogurt in a tall glass to make your own parfait! Top with a sprinkle of whole grain cereal.
 <p>4 SERVINGS OF WATER, NOT SUGARY DRINKS</p>	<p>Water is best to keep your body running well and for when you are thirsty. Drink at least four glasses of water for a day. Be sure to check the label on flavored waters. Many are full of added sugars.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve water between meals instead of sugary drinks. • Fill reusable water bottles to bring in the car or on the go. • Drink a cup when you brush your teeth in the morning. • Keep a pitcher of water in the fridge • Put in a slice of orange, lemon or lime to add flavor.
 <p>5 SERVINGS OR MORE OF FRUIT & VEGETABLES</p>	<p>Fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables are full of important vitamins, minerals, water and fiber that help keep your body healthy! Be sure to include five or more servings each day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep fruits and vegetables in sight in the refrigerator or on the counter. • Plan your meals to include fruits and vegetables. Use them to fill half your plate. • Wash and cut fruits and vegetables ahead of time for a quick snack. • Keep canned frozen, and dried fruit on hand.

When Children Cry

Few things are more distressing than seeing (and/or hearing) a child cry.



The natural response for parents and other adults is to hug the child and say: "Hush. Don't cry. Everything will be all right."

Yet this can be exactly the wrong response because the words don't allow children to possess their own emotions.

The message they hear is: "Stop crying. There is nothing to cry about."

This makes the little one cry even more since her inner self needs to prove there is something to cry about.

One mom suggested a better reaction in such a situation. Parents and other adults can respond to a crying child by saying, "It's okay to cry. I know it hurts (or that you feel badly). Cry until it stops hurting."

She said she found this reply worked better. When her children were given "permission" to cry, it was often all that was needed to stop the flow of tears.

And even if it didn't, the children felt they had a right to their own emotions, the freedom to release them, and they were consoled.

In helping a child deal with a hurt, or hurt feelings, the importance of having a right to his or her own feelings cannot be overstressed.

Even the youngest children pick up unspoken ideas from parents and other adults.

When they sense that what they are feeling needs to be suppressed, the message is also given that these emotions are unacceptable and unimportant.

Phrases from the past, such as "crying is for babies" and "be a big boy/girl" are, unfortunately sometimes still used.

Not only does this show little empathy for the child's problem, it also does nothing to encourage his or her self-esteem.



If children are to grow up seeing themselves as worthwhile people, they need to know at an early age that feelings are neither good or bad, they just are, as a result of something that's happened. What's necessary is to express them and deal with them.

So, when your little one is crying, whether it's because she fell as she was learning to walk or wasn't chosen to play in a game, stop for a moment before you begin to offer comfort.

Then remember that the best way we can help these children handle their emotions is to surround them with love and acceptance and to tell them, "It's okay to cry until it stops hurting."

~Growing Together

Fragile—Do Not Shake!

We're all familiar with warnings on packages of fragile objects that warn us not to shake, or handle them roughly. It might be wise if similar warning labels were applied to the head of infants.

According to current injury statistics, there has been an increase in the number of injuries to the brains and spinal cords of children, particularly those under six months of age.

In reviewing these cases, investigators have found that the injury is caused by a whiplash-type motion that frequently occurs when an infant is held under the arms and shaken.

There have been so many of these cases that a special name has been applied to the signs and symptoms: the "shaken baby syndrome."

An even more severe injury results if the infant's head strikes an object like a mattress, wall or crib edge. The damaging results in these cases are called the "shaken syndrome."

**F
R
A
G**

Regardless of the name applied, these are serious events that can result in permanent brain damage or even death.

These injuries most often occur when a parent or caretaker becomes angry at a young child's behavior and shakes him to make him "stop" or "pay attention."

**I
L
L**

Injuries can also occur when a child is jiggled too vigorously or playfully thrown into the air and then caught. The sudden stop of the fall causes the whiplash type injury.

So, when you look at your baby, imagine a sign on his or her forehead that says "Fragile — do not shake, jiggle or throw into the air."

E

If you feel yourself becoming frustrated, take time out to count to ten and calm yourself before handling the baby. Ask a neighbor or friend to sit with the baby for a short period of time while you take a walk around the block or call a friend or relative on the phone for a short conversation.

Although most infants are quite sturdy, they can be severely injured by excessively vigorous play or handling.

~Growing Together

Count 'em Up

On a rainy day—or on any other day when there's nothing to do—put together a list of questions that kids can answer with a number. For instance:

- ◆ How many windows are there in our home?
- ◆ How many shoes are there in your closet?
- ◆ How many beans (buttons, coins, pebbles) are in this jar? (NOT for kids under two)
- ◆ How many tiles are there on the bathroom floor?
- ◆ How many socks are in your drawer?
- ◆ How many pillows are there in our home?
- ◆ How many hats or caps are there in our home?
- ◆ How far is it, in feet, from the front door to the refrigerator door?

Make up your own questions and adjust the difficulty to fit your audience. Provide a tape measure—or other appropriate tool—when needed.

~Growing Together

Thank You

We so appreciate donors who have provided books, supplies and materials – either “in kind” or through gift cards or monetary donations. Your gifts truly make a difference.

Russell PTA

Duckie Bishop

Talia Jackson



Raising Responsible Kids

Children need adults to care for them. In the beginning, parents must do everything for them. But as they grow, adults need to teach them, and then let go so they can grow.

Allowing children to try, perhaps to fail, and then try again is one way to help them grow. Here are some others:

EXPERIMENT A LITTLE: Much of a child's self-esteem comes from her belief that a parent values her ideas and goals.

Allow your child to experience-with blocks, playthings, arts and crafts, and recyclables-even if it means making a mess every now and then.

Little fingers learn to manipulate items, turning whims into reality. What a great start for creativity and an I-can-do-it attitude!

ANSWER QUESTIONS: Children who can do many tasks well usually understand the workings of the tools they use. Someone has answered their questions along the way.

Be a parent who answers a child's countless questions. Explain, explain, explain. If she knows how the toilet works, for instance, she'll be more likely to use it correctly.

LET HER TRY: As you work with your child on a task, stop and ask yourself: “Could she try this?” For instance, as you wrap a gift for a friend's party, allow your child to choose the gift tag, peel off the price label, or hold the paper down as you tape.

Monitor yourself. Could your child be helping here instead of just watching you do it?

DON'T INTERFERE: When your child is trying to plant a seed in the back yard and all appears to be a disaster, don't take over the project.

More important than a perfectly planted seed is the feeling of accomplishment, of having done a task on her own.

ADMIT MISTAKES: When a parent admits his or her own failures, a child realizes that everyone struggles to do things correctly.

Adults know failure is a part of success. Teach your child to overcome frustration by acknowledging setbacks as you encounter them.

“Uh-oh. I put the newspapers in the wrong recycle bin.” Now you have a chance to show calm in the face of adversity.

Show her how you try to solve the problem by talking about your problem-solving technique: “Now I'll have to go get them from the wrong bin and put them where they belong.”

While children mature at different rates, most are helped (or harmed!) by what parents do and say.

By our very words and actions we may encourage or discourage our children to take on increasing responsibilities.

~Growing Together



Get Out and About this Summer!

Talk about free fun. If you've not begun to take your kids out and about to explore all that Columbia has to offer in terms of public parks, trails and nature areas...you need to make this a summertime goal for your family.

Did you know there are at least dozen park trails in the area? They have parking and public restrooms. Some are made of concrete (perfect for strollers and tricycles). Others are made of gravel, dirt or limestone.

Columbia has hundreds of acres of nature areas. There are about 7 different nature sanctuaries to explore. You'll see native flowers, grasses, trees and spot some beautiful birds and other wildlife. What child isn't fascinated by critters?

And then there are what the parks and recreation department calls "destination trails". These 8 trails connect people to each other and to nature. Many of them run through areas beside creeks and scenic spots. They range from a little over one mile to nearly nine miles in length.

Finally, there are more than 30 neighborhood parks scattered all around Columbia, stretching from Smiley Lane Park in the North part of town to Cosmo-Bethel Park in the South. In the far west there is Louisville Park and in the eastern part of the city you'll find Eastport Park.

With so many options to explore, I encourage you to select one new place to visit each week. Doing this will keep you and your little ones busy for the entire summer! I guarantee you and your children will be glad you did.

To learn more visit: GoColumbiaMO.com and download the Go Co Mo Trails mobile app (available on iTunes and Google Play).

~Masters, 2015

Free Fun

- ⇒ **Make some happy faces to put on the refrigerator.**
- ⇒ **Tape a big piece of paper on toddler's door to draw on.**
- ⇒ **Sort toys. Repair or dispose of broken ones.**
- ⇒ **Call ahead to make a visit to a fire station.**
- ⇒ **Go for a walk. Count all the dogs you see.**
- ⇒ **Find four things that will float in the bathtub.**
- ⇒ **Draw a face on a paper bag. Cut out a hole for the mouth. See how many cotton balls you can throw into the bag.**
- ⇒ **Go to the library and look for a book that shows you how to make something simple.**
- ⇒ **Learn how to shake hands correctly.**
- ⇒ **Is your home child-proofed for safety?**
- ⇒ **Look for the color pink in your home.**
- ⇒ **Count all the feet at your house. (Don't forget Fluffy and Bowser.)**
- ⇒ **Find out everyone's favorite song. Sing one or two.**
- ⇒ **Invite a friend over for a picnic.**
- ⇒ **Make a birthday card for someone who's having a birthday.**
- ⇒ **Read a book in a rocking chair or outside under a tree.**
- ⇒ **Use a sock as a puppet and tell your favorite story.**

