

TODAY'S Parent

Celebrating Family Life

Summer Jobs

Earning money can be fun and educational for children of all ages

By Stacy Mintzer Herlihy
TODAY'S PARENT WRITER

School's out. For some children, this means two months at summer camp. For others, it means long days outside perfecting their tans. But for some kids, June and July mean something else: the opportunity to build a résumé and make a little money along the way.

Summer jobs offer many advantages. Younger children can learn to show up to work on time and do unsupervised tasks. Older teens can get a taste of the workplace, explore different careers, gain contacts and add money to a college fund. All children can have the chance to end the summer knowing they've accomplished something.

A summer job may be just the thing to end your child's summer boredom. Before sending your child off to his or her first workplace, get involved in the job-hunting process as much as possible. You may be your child's best job-searching resource.

Any job search should ideally begin before school ends. Employers often look to hire people for summer jobs beginning in April.

One good place to begin a search is on the Internet. Many employers post jobs online. Popular job-search tools include Web sites such as *monster.com*, *career.com*, *craigslist.org*, *careerbuilder.com*, *flipdog.com* and *hotjobs.com*. However, with the exception of *craigslist.org*, which has a listing for part-timers and temporary work, most jobs listed on Web sites are geared primarily for adults. A good place for kids to look for a job is on an individual company's Web site. Many companies have job applications that can be completed online.

Once you've both decided that a summer job would be a good idea, you should help your child focus on



Today's Parent Photo Service photo

When helping your child decide what type of work to do for extra money, consider his or her interests and special skills.

finding a job he or she likes. Think about your child's interests. Does he or she like to read? Consider the local bookstore. Interested in fashion? A local boutique could be the answer.

Good choices for older teens include fast-food restaurants, tourist attractions or camp counseling.

Another excellent way to look for a job is simply to go to an employer in person. Many parents may want to accompany their children as they apply at multiple places.

The mall is not the only place to job search. Libraries sometimes hire assistants for the summer. Museums may look for docents to talk to visitors about exhibits or people to work in the gift shop. Camps also hire older teens to help supervise younger campers. If your child has office skills such as typing or computer literacy, you may want to drop an application off at a temporary agency.

Learning to work for an employer is a useful experience. Children can master skills such as punctuality, office etiquette and teamwork, among others.

If your child prefers a less-structured work setting, consider encouraging him or her to start a business.

This is an especially good idea for younger children. If you have a front yard, let them set up a stand selling

cookies or lemonade. A miniature shop to display their wares can be made from a nice table and a pretty tablecloth. Another good job for a younger child is that of a babysitter or a mother's helper. The best way to find babysitting jobs is to ask neighbors if they need any help.

Several children may want to form a babysitting co-op. Each member will promise to be available a certain number of hours per week for a certain wage per hour. Parents can assist their children by helping them distribute fliers and giving basic lessons in child and baby care.

If your child likes animals, he or she may want to think about becoming a dog walker or pet sitter. Summer is a good time to begin, because many people are on vacation and would prefer to have their animals at home rather than boarding them in a kennel. Call local kennels to find out how much they charge before setting rates of your own.

Older teens can also set up businesses. Is your child an academic star? Think about offering tutoring. Does your son like to work in the yard? Ask neighbors if they need someone to mow their lawns or cut their shrubs.

See SUMMER JOBS inside

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Clean Plates

Try these fun, creative tips to encourage your child to finish his or her meal.

See Inside



Outdoor Play

Having fun outside is essential to a child's physical and mental well-being.

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Thinking "Green"

Parents can help kids learn about taking care of our environment.

See Inside



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Positive Thinking

Being optimistic and having the right attitude can help children lead happier lives.

See Inside

Is Your Child At Risk For Serious Tooth Decay?

By Douglas Glenn Clark

SPECIAL TO TODAY'S PARENT

Parents eager to teach their children proper dental hygiene insist that brushing teeth after each meal will keep the dentition and cavities away.

But clinical studies show that in some cases not even the most disciplined brushing and flossing will eliminate oral problems. In fact, 30% of children are at risk of developing chronic tooth decay in spite of their hygiene plan.

And tooth decay in baby's teeth is on the rise, according to new federal research that points to excessive sugar in child diets. The presence of cavities in toddlers ages 2 to 5 increased to 28% from the 24% derived from a previous study, the study further shows that over 51% of children between ages of 6 and 11 are currently afflicted with the same extent of tooth decay. Experts say this may indicate that this group of children will be more vulnerable to dental problems when they reach their teens.

Researchers say brushing is ineffective because it doesn't remove the cause of all cavities - cariogenic bacteria. Scientists have known since the 1920s that bacteria are the greatest foe to dental health. What they were unable to determine was what type of bacteria actually triggered the cavitation process.

While a couple of bacteria were identified early, several years ago researchers discovered that it was not free-floating bacteria in the oral environment that put teeth at risk, but a bacterial infection called dental caries. We now know that there are many bacteria involved in the dental caries biofilm that causes cavities. While many of these cavity causing bacteria remain to be identified specifically, their characteristics are well known.

Caries - cariogenic bacteria - lives in a thin, sophisticated layer of organic material known as biofilm. Biofilm adheres to the teeth and harbors various bacteria, good and bad. Scientists know that destructive bacteria can live and grow in small numbers even in a normal, healthy oral biofilm. But when tooth decay occurs, it indicates a high level of destructive bacteria.

In the past, when cavities occurred, dentists had no recourse but to drill out the decay and fill it with various materials to replace the tooth. For those blessed with a naturally balanced oral environment, an occasional cavity was an inconvenience, not a crisis.

But for parents with children whose mouths seemed to attract cavities like bees to honey, the incessant cavitation was a dreaded, expensive ritual. And some teen-agers who had endured years of tooth-decay faced an unfortunate remedy - extracting teeth and replacing them with dentures.

The malady was no less distressing to dentists, whose suggestions to improve damaged teeth were often rejected by patients who did not want to spend money on reconstructive procedures that would only be undermined by recurrence of cavities.

Thanks to a technological breakthrough, a new standard of dental care is emerging and it is saving not only the teeth of young and old, but also the relationship between patient and dentist.

Measuring and managing risk of decay

For Peggy and Stephen Whippo, of Albany, Ore., taking their three children to the dentist was the best and worst of times. Their two eldest children, David and Lindsey, both now in their 20s, suffered only one cavity between them throughout their formative years.

But from the time she was a toddler, their youngest daughter Heather developed a new cavity every six months. That changed dramatically about three years ago when the Whippo's dentist introduced them to a new, minimally invasive dental treatment called CariFree.

As a result, Heather, now 18, is free of cavities.

"She had beautiful blue eyes but lousy teeth. Now she has beautiful blue eyes and great teeth," said Peggy Whippo. The CariFree system is the first to give dentists advanced tools to measure and assess types of bacteria on teeth, and then effectively treat the condition. This preventative method is painless and promotes long-term dental health, rather than simply treating symptoms by filling cavities.

Patients are asked a series of questions known as a caries risk assessment. The questions probe the patient's medical history, dental conditions, dietary habits, and so forth. Often, this information alone will suggest who is pre-disposed to bacterial infection.

If the patient has not eaten or brushed for at least one hour the dentist then swabs the surface of the teeth to collect bacteria. The swab is immediately scanned in a device, which determines the level of decay-causing bacteria. It takes only one minute to learn if the patient has a low, moderate, or high risk of developing cavities.

If a moderate to high level of caries causing bacteria is identified, the mouth is probably a highly acidic environment with a low pH count. In this case, the dentist may prescribe CariFree's treatment program, which includes two mouth rinses. The first destroys harmful bacteria, and is used for only two weeks. The second is a maintenance rinse that has a neutralizing pH effect. It helps create an environment in the mouth that does not allow acidic bacteria to flourish. It may be prescribed for one month or used daily to keep a healthy oral environment.

Whippo said it was hard to get Heather to use the mouth rinse. "We'd tried everything, so she didn't have any faith in it. She said, 'Mom, it's a mouth-wash. What are the chances it will work?'" Within a year the cariogenic bacterial count in her mouth had dropped dramatically. I think maybe she's had one cavity since then - that's one in two years," she said.

Prevents restoration failures, builds trust

This treatment may very well change the face of dental care, said B.C. Nelson, D.D.S., of Stayton, Ore., because it allows dentists to properly treat patients who otherwise have had to suffer chronic cavitations.

Aside from the dental benefits, Nelson said CariFree has helped him educate patients, many of whom were unaware that mouth diseases are transmittable, and they can make a person vulnerable to other problems, such as diabetes and heart disease.

"All of a sudden they realize that their mouth affects the health of the whole body, and something as boring as cavities becomes fascinating. They say, 'You mean I'm going to live longer because my teeth are clean,'" said Nelson, who has provided dental care for 17 years.

CariFree may also prevent major restoration failures due to recurrent decay. This builds confidence in patients who in the past may have distrusted restoration work for fear that it was a waste of money. Nelson said many of his patients are now more likely to consider long-term dental strategies that include crowns and other restorative techniques.

But Nelson warns that the bacterial balance of the mouth may change as the result of other medical problems. For example, a person with a clean bill of dental health may suddenly have cavities after a prolonged use of antibiotics.

Why? The antibiotics kill "good" bacteria while allowing the "bad" to thrive. Caries bacteria in the biofilm can be a much more resistant to antibiotics than other common bacteria that are in the mouth.

Since risk factors change over time, Nelson recommends that patients be tested for caries once per year. Researchers call this approach to dental hygiene Caries Management by Risk Assessment, or CAMBRA.

And Whippo even admits her daughter Heather was not always consistent with the treatment. "I'd tell her, 'I have better things to do with my money than pour it into your mouth.' Every other day is about the best as she ever did," said Whippo. "But as far as I'm concerned, that makes CariFree even more impressive." ☐

Douglas Glenn Clark is a freelance writer based in Los Angeles, California. For more information about the CariFree system visit www.carifree.com or call the Oral Biotech patent hotline: (900) 503-0525.

Optimism Is Important For Children- Here's How To Help Them Develop It



way. Resist the temptation to challenge the feeling or problem-solve. Instead, just empathize with your child by saying something like, "Yes, it would make me mad, too."

What would you do? The experience of being in control of your world is known as mastery and is a fundamental component of resilience. It is critical for success and well-being. Children who believe they have control are more likely to feel happy and experience less anxiety.

Give your child, your spouse and yourself a stack of index cards. Have each person write down an ethical dilemma or problem. Take turns choosing a card and sharing how you would handle the situation. It is important not to criticize your child's decision, but it is good to ask questions: What makes that a good decision from your perspective? What do you think would happen next? The goal of the game is not to find the "right" answer, but to give your child the opportunity to practice making decisions and build his or her confidence as well as the ability to think things through and problem-solve.

Take beauty detours. Focusing on the sensations of a positive experience-like the taste of a delicious piece of cake, or the feel of a warm bath-requires paying close attention with your senses and requires that you slow down, so that you can fully appreciate the experience.

Once a week, take a five-minute beauty detour with your child. The goal of the detour is to use the five minutes to notice something beautiful or inspiring that you would not normally have noticed. For example, drive down streets you don't normally take. Stop on the side of the road and notice something beautiful about the trees, house or the sky. ☐

For more information and downloadable content, including easy tips and activities for building optimism from Karen Reivich, Ph.D., visit www.fishfulthinking.com.

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Optimism is a powerful skill that can help children be resilient in the face of problems or adversity and increase their overall happiness. Research shows that children can strengthen their optimism through a set of learned skills.

As part of a commitment to helping children realize their full potential by promoting a healthy lifestyle, the Pepperidge Farm Goldfish brand has partnered with Karen Reivich, Ph.D., an expert in the field of positive psychology in children and mother of four, to encourage optimism in America's youth. The program is called Fishful Thinking and aims to inform parents and teachers about the importance of optimism in childhood development. It offers tips and tools, like the ones below, to help them easily incorporate optimism into children's daily lives in a fun way.

Create collages that illustrate feelings. Being able to identify and describe what you are feeling and what others are feeling is a building block of a healthy emotional life.

Pick a feeling (e.g., happy, angry or frustrated) and work with your child to make a collage that illustrates that feeling. Use pictures from magazines, photos, drawings or words to illustrate what that feeling is like for your child. Paste the pictures on one piece of paper and discuss with your child situations that made him or her feel that