

# Parenting Matters

Quarterly Newsletter

July 2009

For Colorado Parents

## About Time-Outs

Ever try to hang a picture with a wrench? In a well-stocked tool kit, there is more than one tool for the job. Many parents, however, will use the same discipline tool over and over again. According to Jody Johnston Pawel, LSW and founder of *The Family Network* “**time-out is just one tool**—and it really isn’t a “discipline” tool; it’s an effective anger-management tool.” When facing a challenging behavior it may be appropriate to use the time-out tool. With a bit of planning, clear rules and an ability to stay neutral, parents may use the time-out tool with more success.

Children should be told in advance that the **time-out** is one way to handle inappropriate behaviors. Having a location in mind for the time-out makes it clear to the child they will use that space to calm down and gain control. Be careful of forcing a child to sit in a chair or corner, as it may shift the power to who’s in control.

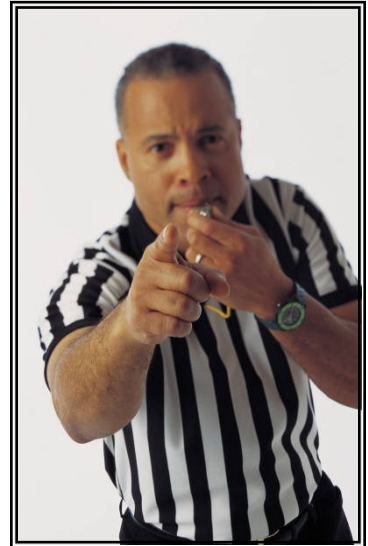
Using a sports analogy helps explain that coaches, referees and even players can call a **time-out** when there is a need to review the game plan, rest, get water or someone breaks a rule. Not seen as a punishment or a threat, time-outs in sport “are used for learning, to make the players successful at the game”, states *Parenting Now!*, developers of parent education curricula and materials in Eugene, Oregon. They recommend you use three types of time-outs that avoid power

struggles and are based on the definition of time-outs used in a **game of sport**:

1. Let’s take a break, get refreshed, and re-group
2. We broke the rule, the game is stopped, there’s a penalty...or we don’t get to play for a bit while we’re reminded of the rule.
3. We’re out of the game, at least for awhile.

*Parenting Now!* ([www.parentingnow.net](http://www.parentingnow.net)) suggests parents use a time-out when you see a situation worsening, such as when an activity has lost its appeal, everyone’s tired or over-stimulated, or just needs a break. Another example is when parents call **time-out** for an infraction. Your child has forgotten not to hit, grab or throw sand. This is a time-out for remembering the rules of the game. Lastly, when you know your own and your child’s limit, you may suggest all players take a break, thereby staying “on the child’s side”.

By Bridget S. Ohi, Editor



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Available in Spanish by request

## Parenting Matters

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Questions or comments?

Call us at (800) 457-2736

PARENTING MATTERS, PREVENTION WORKS

### The Health Benefits of Locally Grown Produce

By Stephanie Tarry, MS, RD, Nutrition Educator  
Colorado State University Extension, Larimer County

Have you had your 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables today? Or yesterday? If not, summer is the perfect time to make a personal goal to get at least 2 cups of fruit and 2 1/2 cups of vegetables each day. Farmers' markets are in full swing with local produce coming in weekly. If you had the foresight to plant a garden this year, you are probably harvesting delicious, healthy produce-so eat some every day!

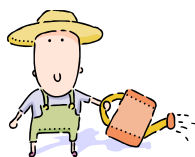
Research shows that locally grown fresh produce is picked riper, has less travel time, and therefore has more nutrition to offer than fresh produce from other states or countries. Research also shows that children exposed to growing produce (either in their classroom, home or by visiting a farm) are more likely to eat a variety of produce daily than children who don't have the same experience.

Why do we care? Fruits and vegetables are an excellent source of fiber and essential vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C, vitamin A, folic acid, potassium and disease fighting antioxidants and phytochemicals. National and international data show that people who eat the recommended amounts of produce per day have a lower risk of developing heart disease, certain cancers, Type II diabetes, and obesity than those who do not include a variety of produce in their eating plans. This is especially true if this "produce habit" was started at a young age and continued into adulthood. But it's never too late to start!

While it may be too late to plant tomatoes and zucchini, there are some quick-growing and cooler season crops you can start now, such as lettuce, spinach, cabbage and broccoli. Some crops, like lettuce, herbs and some varieties of peppers, can be grown indoors in a sunny window all year. In addition, gardening increases your physical activity.

Support local agriculture and be a part of the National Farmers' Market Week, August 2-8th. Buy the freshest produce at your local Farmers' Market.

For more information on nutrition, eating healthy or gardening, call your local Colorado State University Extension Office, or visit [www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu) to view CSU Fact Sheets on a variety of topics.



### Good Nutrition and Daily Exercise Make for Fun Family Times

The summer is a perfect time to bring the family together and find activities that don't cost money to enjoy! Help your children build a healthy lifestyle by planning physical activities together.

- Play catch or throw a Frisbee
- Organize broad games like tag, hide-and-seek and Red Rover
- Take the family hiking, or on nature trails
- Play at your local park or playground
- Ride bikes, scooters or skate boards
- Visit a beach, river or lake
- Walk the dog



### Are you "in tune" to your teen's social networking?

Many teens say their parents are unaware of the wide-ranging access they have to risky behaviors once they are in front of a computer screen. And while these popular sites (YouTube, Facebook and MySpace) offer some positive opportunities for staying in touch and learning new things, they also expose teens to drug use, promiscuity, and people they've never met offline.

Establish clear rules about what your kids can watch online, who they can talk to, and what they can download. Be sure to check the computer history to see where they've been going.

Source: National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign



# CFERT RESOURCES

The CFERT Clearinghouse and Lending Library offers books, curricula, videos, audio recordings, pamphlets, brochures, and PIP Tips. To access resources, go to <http://cfert.colostate.edu> Chryste Weitzel (970) 491-3904 or [chryste.weitzel@colostate.edu](mailto:chryste.weitzel@colostate.edu)

## Check out:

### ***Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers:***

*the Acclaimed Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Diseases, and Coping*

By: Robert M. Sapolsky. Ph. D. 2004

Now in a third edition, Robert M. Sapolsky's acclaimed and successful *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* features new chapters on how stress affects sleep and addiction, as well as new insights into anxiety and personality disorder and the impact of spirituality on managing stress.

As Sapolsky explains, most of us do not lie awake at night worrying about whether we have leprosy or malaria. Instead, the diseases we fear-and the ones that plague us now-are illnesses brought on by the slow accumulation of damage, such as heart disease and cancer.

When we worry or experience stress, our body turns on the same physiological responses that an animal's does, but we do not resolve conflict in the same way-through fighting or fleeing. Over time, this activation of a stress response makes us literally sick.

Combining cutting-edge research with a healthy dose of good humor and practical advice, *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* explains how prolonged stress causes or intensifies a range of physical and mental afflictions, including depression, ulcers, colitis, heart disease, and more. It also provides essential guidance to controlling our stress responses. This new edition promises to be the most comprehensive and engaging one yet.

Robert M. Sapolsky's is a professor of biology and neurology at Stanford University and a research associate with the Institute of Primate Research, National Museum of Kenya.

Reviewed by: Chryste Weitzel, CFERT Project

## COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR TEENAGER

Parent-child communication is important at all times and can be particularly challenging when your child becomes an adolescent. When children are small, parents must assume responsibility for organizing their children's lives. When a child becomes a teenager, a parent's role as a consultant helps the child develop and practice their own decision making abilities.

**First, just as when your child was small, it is best to let the teenager learn the lesson of natural consequences.** If the child spends a week's worth of lunch money on Monday, let him figure out how he is going to eat lunch the rest of the week. Resist the temptation to bail him out. **Secondly, refrain from giving advice, even when your teenager asks for it.** Reframe the situation so that the young person has to think about alternatives and select a solution. Some parents find that the less advice offered, the more their teen talks with them.

3. **Be available to your teenager**, but don't press for a discussion. Try not to ask too many questions.
4. **Allow your teenager to establish some distance** from the family. Teenagers work hard to establish their own identities. If you push too hard, they will pull away.
5. **Take care of yourself.** Focus some time on yourself and on adult activities and friends. You are a model for adult-like behaviors. Do something worthwhile; your teenager will notice.
6. **Allow your teenager to "brood and mood" some.** Home is a place where it is safe to vent, sort ideas out and make sense of the changes in their lives.
7. **Expect inconsistency.** Your adolescent is struggling somewhere between childhood and adulthood.
8. **Give your teenager time and space to be alone.** Privacy is important to teens .

**Lastly, let your adolescent do their own worrying.** They need to develop their own competencies and sense of responsibility.

Kathy Wolfe, Extension Agent 4-H Youth Development: Larimer County

### Early Conversations

It's difficult to talk to your child about drugs and alcohol if you don't generally talk to your children about other topics as well.

**Rule Number 1:** Talk to your kids. Also if you start talking about "no use" when kids are little, it is easier to have the conversations when they are bigger.

**Rule Number 2:** Listen to your kids. It may be easier to ask their opinion about what they think about other kids who use alcohol and drugs rather than directly ask them about their own use.

**Rule Number 3:** Kids listen to you. Some parents use a technique of talking to one another in earshot of their son or daughter and purposefully allow the child to overhear their concern about the consequences of alcohol and drug use, i.e., Mr. Smith lost his job because he kept showing up late to work because he was drinking heavily the night before. Often times youth will tune in to a greater degree to adult conversations they think they're not suppose to hear.

SOURCE: Department of Health and Human Services: Division of Behavioral Health

### Two Minutes for Fun

Dave Riley, U of Minnesota Extension

Some parents think they must set special times aside to play with baby or teach him new things. That's fine, but sometimes you don't have time in big blocks. Children are happy with lots of little bits of your time and attention. They learn to amuse themselves, with your help. It takes less than 2 minutes to:

- Give your child a hug and a kiss
- Tweak his toes
- Play Pat-a-cake or Peek-a-Boo
- Show baby his nose or chin, or your nose
- Admire baby's shoes
- Show baby a picture or two in a book
- Tickle his tummy at bath time
- Lift baby up over your head
- Point out a pretty leaf or flower
- Give baby a big smile



## PARENTING MATTERS, PREVENTION WORKS



Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Colorado counties cooperating. Cooperative Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.



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