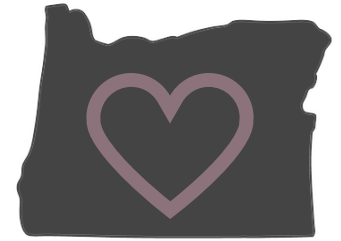


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Parenting Together!




February 2015

INTRODUCTION

February 14th is Valentine's Day, so for this newsletter we will focus on LOVE and how healthy relationships with your child and partner can positively influence many areas of your life. This includes your ability to be the best parent that you can be to your child!

This series of newsletters is inspired and created just for parents. If you have suggestions, comments or ideas for future newsletters please share on our Facebook (Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative) or Twitter page (@OPECParentingEd).

TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT VALENTINE'S DAY

On, or before February 14th, we start to see traditional paper heart cutouts, red roses and chocolate, chocolate, chocolate! Let's consider Valentine's Day, a unique opportunity to talk to children about love and healthy ways to express emotions towards the most important people in their lives (parents, grandparents, siblings, teachers and friends). Here are a few tips to help you navigate the holiday: 

Happy Valentine's Day!

- If your child is in school, his/her teacher may have some class rules to share when it comes to Valentine's Day. Talk to your child's teacher before sharing Valentine's cards, candy, etc.
- You don't have to spend a lot of money! Consider sharing homemade Valentines with family and friends.
- Making Valentines together can be a fun activity to do with your child and encourage creativity. Schedule a time and be sure to start early!
- Have a conversation about why you might share Valentines with family, friends and classmates, and encourage them to see the kindness in giving.


Did my heart
love it now?



Find us on Facebook (Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative) & Twitter (@OPECParentingEd)!



COMPASSIONATE LOVE

What is compassionate love? For parents, compassionate love is unconditional, and it is seen and felt every day when you respond to your child's needs before your own. Sometimes when difficult or stressful situations arise, it can be hard to respond to the challenge in a compassionate way. Researchers at the University of California, Davis, found that compassionate love can help to buffer challenging or stressful situations, and help you to avoid harsher parenting techniques. Here are some tips to remember next time you are in a stressful or challenging situation with your child: 

SCHEDULE TIME FOR . . . YOU!

Schedule some time this month for yourself or to spend with your partner. If you are single, try to schedule an hour or two each week to pick up an old hobby or learn something new. It is important to take care of yourself and allow for some alone time. This will help you to get the most out of your time with your children! For couples, research shows that couples who spend a similar amount of time together after having a baby (compared to before baby) were less likely to experience a decline in the quality of their marriage. This is important because the quality of your relationship can impact your child's emotional, social and cognitive development. So go ahead and schedule a date night, it is good for you and for your children!

FUN WITH YOUR KIDS - *Get Baking!*

A Recipe for Sugar Cookies!

Ingredients (~24 cookies):

1 cup butter or 1 cup margarine
1 cup sugar
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 3/4 cups flour

Directions:

Cream butter and sugar. Add egg and vanilla. Mix all dry ingredients and add slowly to butter cream mixture until incorporated. Roll out on lightly floured board to desired thickness. Cutout hearts and bake at 400 degrees for 7- 10 minutes. Should be light in color with light browning on the edges.

- When you feel yourself getting stressed, focus on intentional kindness and tolerance for your child.
- Try to think of challenges as learning opportunities for both you and your child.
- Schedule time to reflect on situations that have been stressful for you in the past, and visualize how you plan to deal with similar events in the future.

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Find your local parenting resources at:
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