

Comments from Comprehensive Services

February 2021

February is National Children's Dental Health Month

8 Bad Brushing Habits to Break in 2021

Keeping Your Toothbrush for Too Long- Change your toothbrush every 3-4 months to keep your teeth clean.

Not Brushing Long Enough- Brush for a full 2 minutes, twice each day; set a timer to do a thorough job.

Using Too Much Toothpaste- For children under 2, just a smear will do; for those over 2, a pea size is just right! Model and help your child.

Brushing Too Hard- Be gentle with your teeth; too much pressure may damage your gums.

Brushing Right after Eating- Wait at least 60 minutes before brushing. Drink water or chew sugarless gum to help clean your mouth while you are waiting.

Storing Your Brush Improperly- When you are done, keep your toothbrush upright and let it air dry in the open. A closed container allows germs to grow.

Using a Brush with Hard Bristles- Soft bristles are best, especially where your gums and teeth meet.

Improper Brushing Technique- Try this for a thorough brush: First, place your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gums. Then, gently move the brush back and forth in short (tooth-wide) strokes. Next, brush the outer surfaces, the inner surfaces, and the chewing surfaces of the teeth. Finally, to clean the inside surfaces of the front teeth, tilt the brush vertically and make several up-and-down strokes. And don't forget to brush your tongue!



Create a Heart Healthy Eating Plan

1. Eat a variety of fresh, frozen and canned vegetables and fruits without high-calorie sauces or added salt and sugars.
2. Choose fiber-rich whole grains for most grain servings.
3. Choose poultry and fish without skin; look for the leanest cuts of meat and prepare them in healthy and delicious ways.
4. Eat a variety of fish at least twice a week, especially salmon, trout and herring.
5. Select fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) dairy products.
6. Limit saturated fat and trans fat; avoid foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.
7. Cut back on beverages and foods with added sugars.
8. Choose foods with less sodium and prepare foods with little or no salt.
9. If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means no more than one drink per day if you're a woman and no more than two drinks per day if you're a man.
10. Follow the American Heart Association recommendations when you eat out, and keep an eye on your portion sizes.



What is an Individualized Education Program or Plan (IEP)?

Simply, and IEP is a written plan that spells out the special education instruction, supports, and services children 3 years of age and older need to make progress and thrive in school. It supports children who learn and think differently and is designed to meet the child's unique needs.

The process begins with an evaluation that identifies the child's strengths and developmental needs. These results allow families and schools to create a program of services and supports tailored to meet the child's needs. With an IEP, the child receives individualized instruction that focuses on improving specific skills. This helps the child to build skills, boost their self-esteem, and thrive at school.

The Sarasota County School's FDLRS/Child Find Program is responsible for screening, evaluating and determining if a child would benefit from an IEP.

What to expect at an IEP meeting

Parents and their support persons (including the child's teacher and Children First's Special Needs Coordinator) as well as the School District Exceptional Student Education (ESE) liaison and service providers (i.e.: Speech/Language, Occupational and/or Physical Therapist) meet to review of the basic IEP information (names, dates, etc.) and share the programs for which the child is being considered. Parents will receive a copy of the Parent Rights/Procedural Safeguards which explain the rights to protect the student and how to resolve disputes if they arise.

The team reviews the evaluation results which are broken down into service areas such as communication, curriculum and learning, and social emotional/behavior, etc. They develop annual goals and outline the services needed to achieve the goals, including the service provider and location of the service.

The ESE liaison will take notes throughout the meeting, which will include any additional comments made throughout the meeting that are not within the IEP document.

Once the team agrees with all the information in the IEP it will be signed by all members. Parents/guardians will be asked to complete a Sarasota County School Board registration. Once all is signed, the IEP can be implemented.

The team will meet yearly to review the IEP goals and progress and make updates where needed.



What is Self-Compassion? A Simple Practice

Self-compassion is the practice of non-judgmental kindness towards ourselves. Self-compassion involves responding to our own perceived failures, shortcomings, or inadequacies with warmth and understanding rather than self-criticism or harshness. People who practice self-compassion do not deny the reality that life carries with it painful experiences, but rather they approach this with acceptance, sympathy, and kindness. Another core component of self-compassion is understanding that suffering is part of the shared human experience. That is, one is not isolated when faced with life's difficulties. Recognizing this shared experience can buffer us against the anxiety felt with isolation. Additionally, self-compassion is based in mindfulness. As such, the feelings of emotions are neither suppressed nor exaggerated, but exist in equilibrium. Mindfulness is a non-judgmental, receptive mind state in which one observes thoughts and feelings as they are, without trying to suppress or deny them. We cannot ignore our pain and feel compassion for it at the same time. At the same time, mindfulness requires that we not be “over-identified” with thoughts and feelings, so that we are caught up and swept away by negative reactivity. Now that you have the foundation for what it means to practice self-compassion, try this simple exercise to get started:

Exercise: How would you treat a friend?

Please take out a sheet of paper and answer the following questions:

1. First, think about times when a close friend feels really bad about him or herself or is really struggling in some way. How would you respond to your friend in this situation (especially when you're at your best)? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you typically talk to your friends.
2. Now think about times when you feel bad about yourself or are struggling. How do you typically respond to yourself in these situations? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you talk to yourself.
3. Did you notice a difference? If so, ask yourself why. What factors or fears come into play that lead you to treat yourself and others so differently?
4. Please write down how you think things might change if you responded to yourself in the way you typically respond to a close friend when you're suffering.

Why not try treating yourself like a good friend and see what happens?

Exercise adapted from: <https://self-compassion.org/exercise-1-treat-friend/>

