

# Young Child

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY'S MAGAZINE FOR  
FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN



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Reading Fun!**

**Safety First  
This Summer**

**Gardening With  
Your Child**

Summer 2010  
Issue #49 FREE



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Dear Readers,

Summer is here and that means lots of summer fun!!! This issue of the Young Child Magazine will focus on summer activities, summer reading and summer safety. It's important to keep your kids bodies and minds busy so make the most of their time off from school and regular routines by getting outside and enjoying the long days and warm nights.

We've also included information in this issue on gardening with your young child, battling childhood obesity, and ADHD. So as always, we hope you find our magazine content useful on your wonderful journey!

The next issue of the Young Child magazine will be distributed in September 2010. If there are topics you would like to know more about or if you would like to contribute an article to this free local parenting magazine, please email your ideas and thoughts to [loripollaro@yahoo.com](mailto:loripollaro@yahoo.com).

Yours truly,

*Lori Pollaro*

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The Young Child Magazine is published by the YWCA Parent Education Project in partnership with United Way Success By 6, and is free to parents, grandparents, caregivers, and anyone who cares about young children in Chautauqua County.

## Friends of the Magazine

*Thank you for your support*

Judy Metzger

# What is ADHD?

By Tess Kerzner LMSW LMHC, The Resource Center Children's Services Coordinator

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is defined as a pattern of behaviors in which a child shows developmentally inappropriate levels of inattention, impulsivity, or hyperactivity. Usually demonstrated before the age of seven, it is the most common mental health problem of childhood, affecting three- to five-percent of school-aged children, and is considerably more common in boys than in girls.

The behavior of children with ADHD often results in serious disturbances in their relationships with parents, teachers, peers, and siblings, as well as academic problems.

There are three main signs of ADHD. They are inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.

***Learn how to work with  
your child in defining  
rules, consequences, and  
rewards***

## *Symptoms of Inattention:*

- Fails to give attention or focus to details or making careless mistakes
- Has difficulty in sustaining attention to tasks or activities, such as reading or playing a game
- Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- Does not follow through on instruction and fails to finish tasks
- Has difficulties organizing tasks and activities
- Avoids or dislikes tasks that require sustained mental effort
- Loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys, books)
- Is easily distracted by noises, movement, smells, or his/her own thoughts
- Is forgetful in daily activities

## *Symptoms of Hyperactivity:*

- Fidgets with hands or feet, or squirms in seat – “can’t sit still”
- Leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected
- Runs or climbs excessively when it is inappropriate
- Has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly
- Is always “on the go” or acts as if “driven by a motor”
- Talks “non-stop”
- Difficulty falling asleep

## *Symptoms of Impulsivity:*

- Acting without thinking – blurting out answers before questions have been completed, knocking over things when running, or interrupting others
- Has difficulty waiting in line or taking turns

ADHD may be diagnosed if the child has six or more symptoms of either inattention or hyperactivity/impulsivity; and as a result of these symptoms causes problems in social or academic functioning at home and school. These symptoms persist for more than six months and are more present than other children of the same developmental age. Please keep in mind that everyone has symptoms of ADHD occasionally.

## *Treatment of ADHD:*

There is no cure for ADHD, but there are ways you can relieve ADHD symptoms. Medication, Behavioral Modification, and Environmental Modifications are effective ways of treating children with ADHD.

The most commonly used medications for ADHD are called stimulants. This group includes Adderall, DextroStat, Cylert, and Ritalin. Stimulants work very quickly and have very few side effects. They are called stimulants because they give a person enough “mental energy” to focus on what he or she is doing.

Other medications are TCAs or Tri-Cyclic Antidepressants, such as bupropion and clonidine. TCAs are effective at controlling mood swings. They often take longer to start working and have more risks associated with them.

Medication can decrease activity level so that your child can sit still longer, focus longer, follow rules better, and decrease aggression.

You may benefit by asking for help in working with your child. Learning how to work with your child in defining rules, consequences, and rewards to the child's behavior using pictures, symbols, or charts can be helpful. When a child has problems finishing a task you may be able to help the child break down the task into manageable steps. Increase in structure and routine in the home can help a child with organizational skills and predictability.

Change the environment to make it more conducive to learning. Your child's room should be a quiet place, with

little distraction from noise and clutter. Simple things like having your child sit away from a window where there is traffic or noise outside can improve your child's ability to focus. Your child might benefit from lying down or standing at a table to do his work. A child is more likely to stay on task if you are nearby to check on his work or progress. A therapist can set up a program for your child to see what behavioral interventions and environmental changes can help your child. There are many intervention strategies that will help your child.

If you suspect your son or daughter has ADHD or if you have any concerns, talk with your child's doctor to see if further assessment is needed and ask about any therapies and medication that may benefit your child.



# Preventing Childhood Obesity

By Patty Hammond

Adapted from: <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/obesityprevention/>

Childhood obesity occurs when a child is well above the normal weight for his or her age and height. The extra pounds often lead children to develop health problems once confined to adults, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Childhood obesity can also cause children to suffer from depression or low levels of self-esteem. According to the Surgeon General, currently more than 17 percent of the children in the United States are overweight. However, we can prevent childhood obesity and help protect the health of our children now and in the future.

So, exactly what can parents and caregivers do to make sure children maintain a healthful weight and to help those children who are already struggling with excess weight? One of the best strategies is to improve the diet and exercise habits of entire families. Parents are often their children's most important role models and children

who see their parents and other primary caregivers enjoying healthy foods and being physically active are more likely to follow their example.

Understanding and promoting healthy eating and physical activity can help prevent overweight and obesity in children and in adults. It's extremely important to help children be active, to encourage the development of healthy eating habits and to promote healthy choices.

To get started, you can:

- Make sure your children are physically active at least one hour every day and make it a regular part of your child's day.
- Include physical activity in your own daily habits and include your children in those activities.
- Plan fun family and child care activities that include exercise.
- Don't forget to include unconstructive natural play outdoors whenever possible.
- Limit screen time to less than two hours each day and keep TVs and computers out of children's rooms.
- Plan, cook and serve healthy meals.
- Buy healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole grain products.
- To help you to make healthful choices, read the nutrition facts label on food packages.
- Serve children three healthy meals each day.
- Instead of soda pop or other sweet drinks, give children fat-free or low fat milk and encourage them to drink water.
- Limit the amount of sugar and saturated fat in the foods you serve.
- Ensure your child eats a healthy breakfast everyday. Instead of sugared cereals, serve whole-grain cereal with low-fat or fat-free milk, oatmeal, whole-grain toast, or a hard-boiled egg and a piece of fruit.
- Eat together as a family. Turn off the TV, sit at the table and enjoy talking together.
- Serve appropriate food portions and teach your children to eat only what they need at each meal.



# Fireworks Safety Tips

*Submitted by: Irene E Wheeler – SNI Head Start Education Specialist*

*Resource: [www.helpkeepkidssafe.org/pt\\_tips\\_out.html](http://www.helpkeepkidssafe.org/pt_tips_out.html)*

- Make sure your child gets enough sleep. Most children under age 5 need to sleep for 11 hours or more per day, children age 5 to 10 need 10 hours of sleep or more per day, and children over age 10 need at least 9 hours per day.

If you are changing your child's routine, help them understand why you are making changes. Children need support and encouragement from their parents and caregivers. This is especially important when you are changing their routines, even when the changes are to improve their health. Children may see some changes as punishment, so make sure the whole family is making changes together. Let your children help shop for healthy foods, prepare healthy meals, set the table, and take part in family talk at mealtimes. Encourage them to choose and lead family activities. Change can be a source of stress for children. You can also ease that stress by making sure they know that you love them.

Working together, we can ensure our children are healthy and have bright, happy futures.

The American traditions of parades, cookouts, and fireworks help us celebrate the summer season, especially our nation's birthday on the Fourth of July. However, fireworks can turn a joyful celebration into a painful memory when children and adults are injured while incorrectly using fireworks. Although most fireworks can be relatively safe with proper and careful usage, some fireworks, such as illegal fireworks, present substantial risks that can result in death, blinding, amputation and severe burns.

**Possession of consumer fireworks of any kind is ILLEGAL in New York State.** This includes firecrackers, Roman candles, and sparklers. Only professionals with proper permits, licensing and training should possess and display fireworks in New York State.

If your family is around fireworks, here are some recommendations from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Do not allow young children to play with fireworks under any circumstances.
- Sparklers burn at very high temperatures and can easily ignite clothing. Children cannot understand the danger involved and cannot act appropriately in case of emergency.
- Older children should only be permitted to use fireworks under close adult supervision.
- Do not allow any running or horseplay.
- Light fireworks outdoors in a clear area away from houses, dry leaves or grass and flammable materials.
- Keep a bucket of water nearby for emergencies and for pouring on fireworks that don't go off.
- Do not try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Douse and soak them with water and throw them away.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never ignite fireworks in a container, especially a glass or metal container.
- Keep unused fireworks away from firing areas.
- Store fireworks in a dry, cool place. Check instructions for special storage directions.

# Reading Over the Summer is Necessary - Let's Make it Fun!

by Valle Blair, Children's Librarian, James Prendergast Library

Reading over the summer is an important activity for every child. It keeps them from losing skills over the break and helps them be prepared for the beginning of the next year. The many literacy related activities that are a part of summer reading and summer programs are of great benefit to the children who participate. Summer reading programs encourage children to spend a significant amount of time with books. Here are some comments from the experts:

“Summer Reading at New York Libraries gives teachers and parents a proven learning tool that engages and excites youngsters as it raises literacy levels. This is a critically important experience that keeps children learning, and engaged in the wonderful act of reading, even when the school year is over.” - *State Education Commissioner David Steiner*

“Public libraries, through their summer reading programs, put books in the hands of children. This is the best antidote for the ‘summer slide’ in children’s reading achievement. Access to books and library programs over the summer results in more reading which, in turn, results in improved reading skills.” - *Assistant Commissioner for Libraries and New York’s State Librarian Bernard A. Margolis*

But we want to make this a fun time for our children so they will enjoy reading and want to read. Let them read what they want even if it is not up to the level they should be reading at in school. Their teachers will make sure they get their leveled reading. We want them to learn to enjoy reading and to read for fun. Because –  
“The more you read, the better your get at it; the better you get at it, the more you like it; and the more you like it, the more you do it.” - *Jim Trelease, The Read-Aloud Handbook*

And if you can read, you can do anything!

**For more book suggestions and information about reading with your child, visit the James Prendergast Library Children’s Room on line at [www.prendergastlibrary.org/childrensroom/](http://www.prendergastlibrary.org/childrensroom/)**

**You can also connect with the Children’s Room on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/pages/The-Childrens-Room-James-Prendergast-Library/](http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Childrens-Room-James-Prendergast-Library/)**



# Picture Books Every Child Should Know

From the New York Public Library's Kid's Page

Here are some ideas that will help you keep your child reading over the summer.

1. Get your child a library card at your local public library. It's free for life when materials are returned on time and in good condition.
2. Have your child sign up for Summer Reading at the local public library and enjoy the free programs of story times and fun activities.
3. Read with your child every day. Even if they can already read themselves. Up until middle school or later, children are better listeners than readers. Reading aloud allows them to hear how sentences flow and stories are constructed.
4. Take a basket of books for reading breaks to the park, beach, and on vacation. Take advantage of 'waiting' time to share books.
5. Read on your own and let your child see your reading. Talk to your child about what you are reading. Families who share reading experiences raise children who read well.
6. Visit the library every week and bring the whole family.
7. Use closed captioning on your TV shows so children see the words as they hear them.
8. Keep a list of the books that everyone has read over the summer. Share your favorites with each other. Your public library's summer reading program may include a form just for the purpose of recording what you read.

"Free voluntary reading is one of the most powerful tools we have in language education." - *Stephen Krashen, The Power of Reading*

In New York State, over 1.5 million kids registered for summer reading last year. Visit your local public library and encourage your child be a part of the crowd!

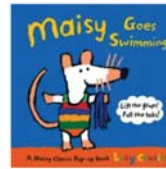
Here are some water themed picture books for Summer Reading: Make a Splash – READ!



## [Come Along, Daisy!](#)

by Jane Simmons

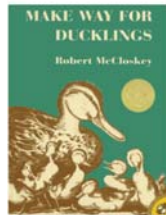
Daisy the duckling becomes so engrossed in playing with dragonflies and lily pads that she temporarily loses her mother.



## [Maisy Goes Swimming](#)

by Lucy Cousins

The reader helps Maisy the mouse undress and put on her bathing suit for a dip in the pool.



## [Make Way for Ducklings](#)

by Robert McCloskey

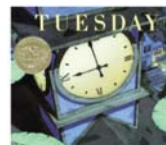
Mr. and Mrs. Mallard found a quiet place to raise their babies then took them to the pond in the Boston Public Garden where there were peanuts to eat.



## [Swimmy](#)

by Leo Lionni

Swimmy, the only black fish of the entire school, devises for himself and his adopted brothers and sisters a safer way to live in the sea.



## [Tuesday](#)

by David Wiesner

Frogs rise on their lily pads, float through the air, and explore the nearby houses while their inhabitants sleep.



## [Where the Wild Things Are](#)

by Maurice Sendak

After Max is sent to bed for misbehaving, he escapes by imagining that he sails away to a wild land full of monsters.

# Gas Grill Safety Tips

Submitted by: Irene E Wheeler – SNI Head Start Education Specialist

Resource: [www.helpkeepkidssafe.org/pt\\_tips\\_out.html](http://www.helpkeepkidssafe.org/pt_tips_out.html)

Each year thousands of people pull out their gas grills at the start of barbecuing season. But before firing up the grill, there are several safety precautions to keep in mind. You should explain to children how dangerous grills can be if they get too close. Grills get extremely hot and can severely burn a child. By following these guidelines, you'll help prevent possible gas explosions or fires.



Many accidents occur after the grill has been unused over a period of time, or after a grill's gas container has been refilled and reattached.

## Safety Checks Each Time You Use the Grill

- Check tube for blockage by insects, spiders, or food drippings. Clear blockage, either with a pipe cleaner or with a wire. Push any blockages through the tube to the main part of the burner.
- Check the grill's hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes, and leaks. Make sure there aren't sharp bends in the hose or tubing.
- Make sure hoses are as far away from the hot surface as possible. Make sure to keep hoses away from areas where grease could drip on them. If you can't move hoses, have a heat shield installed.
- Check connectors. If scratched or nicked, have them replaced; these conditions cause leaks.

Check for gas leaks whenever you reconnect the grill to the gas container, or if you smell gas.

1. To check for leaks, open the gas supply valve fully and apply a soapy solution (one part water, one part liquid detergent) with a brush at connection points. If bubbles appear, there is a leak.
2. Turn off the gas and tighten the connection clockwise. (If it is the tank connection, tighten counterclockwise.)
3. If a leak is detected, don't attempt to light the grill until the leak has been stopped. If you are using the grill, turn off the gas.
4. If this does not stop the leak, close the container

valve and take the grill to your propane gas dealer or a qualified appliance repair person.

5. Make sure there are no lighted cigarettes, matches, or open flames near a leaking grill.

NEVER USE A GRILL INDOORS. And use the grill at least ten feet away from your house or any building. DO NOT USE THE GRILL in a garage, breezeway, carport, porch, or under a surface that will burn.

Do not attempt to repair the container valve or appliance yourself. See your propane gas dealer or a qualified appliance repair person. Always follow the instructions that accompany the grill.

## Propane Gas Container Tips

- Always store containers upright and never store a spare gas container under or near the grill or indoors. Never store or use flammable liquids, like gasoline, near the grill.
- Transport the container in a secure, upright position. Never keep a filled container in a hot car or car trunk. Heat will cause the gas pressure to increase which may open the relief valve and allow gas to escape.
- Unless you have the (preferred) bar-coded container and are filling it at a facility that fills such containers, have the container refilled only by your propane gas dealer or by a qualified service station operator. DO NOT FILL THE CONTAINER YOURSELF.

When Connecting a propane container, remove the plug from the container valve. Thread the container connector securely into the container valve outlet (turn counter clockwise). Tighten, but do not use excessive force. After connected, check for leaks.

When disconnecting a container, turn off the gas burner and container valve. Disconnect the container (turn clockwise). Place the container valve plug securely into the container valve outlet.

Happy Grilling!

# Riding Lawnmower Safety Tips

Submitted by: Irene E Wheeler – SNI Head Start Education Specialist

Resource: [www.helpkeepkidssafe.org/pt\\_tips\\_out.html](http://www.helpkeepkidssafe.org/pt_tips_out.html)

Although many thousands of homeowners have driven these mowers and tractors for years without mishap, others haven't been as fortunate. Hazards most often associated with riding equipment are blade contact and loss of stability.

Fatal accidents have several common patterns: the machine tips over, the victim falls under or is run over by the machine (accidents involving young children fall in this category), or the victim is thrown from or falls off the machine. The risk of an accident with a ride-on mower is almost twice the chance of a mishap with a walk-behind rotary mower.

A riding lawnmower is capable of amputating hands and feet and throwing objects that are hit by the blade. Failure to observe the following safety instructions could result in serious injury or death to the operator and/or bystander.

- Read, understand, and follow the safety and operating instructions that are in the manual and on the unit.
- Allow only responsible adults who are familiar with proper operating procedures to operate the machine.
- Clear the mowing area of objects such as rocks, toys, wire, etc., which could be picked up and thrown by the blade.
- Be sure the area is clear of other people before mowing. Stop the mower if anyone enters the area.
- **Never carry passengers.**
- Do not mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary. Bring the machine to a full stop before shifting to reverse. Always look behind before and while operating in reverse.
- Be aware of the discharge direction and do not point it at anyone.
- Slow down before turning.
- Never leave a running machine unattended. Always turn off the blades, set the parking brake, stop the engine, and remove the keys before dismounting.
- Turn off blades and attachments when not mowing.
- Stop the engine before removing the grass catcher or unclogging the chute.
- Mow only in daylight or good artificial light.

- Do not operate the machine while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Watch for traffic when operating near or crossing roadways.

Slopes require extra caution. If you cannot back up the slope or if you feel uneasy on it, do not mow it. Mow up and down slopes, not across. Watch for holes, ruts or bumps. Uneven terrain could cause the mower to overturn. Tall grass can hide obstacles. Choose a low enough gear so that you will not have to stop or shift while on the slope. Keep all movement on slopes slow and gradual.

Do not turn on slopes unless unavoidable; then, with the blades disengaged, turn slowly and gradually downhill. Do not mow near drop-offs, ditches, or embankments. Do not mow on wet grass as reduced traction could cause sliding.

Tragic accidents can occur if the operator is not alert to the presence of children. Children are often attracted to the mower and the mowing activity. Never assume that children will remain where you last saw them.

- Keep small children out of the mowing area, preferably indoors under the watchful care of an adult other than the operator.
- Be alert and turn the mower off if children enter the area.
- Before and when operating in reverse, look behind and down for small children.
- Never carry children. They may fall off and be seriously injured or interfere with safe mower operation.
- Never allow children to operate the mower.



# Gardening With Your Child

*Submitted by Sarah Hatfield, Environmental Educator*

*Audubon Center and Sanctuary*

When I was a little kid I used to dig to China. Well, not literally, but that was the goal. With a little shovel and my little hands, I would dig a hole. Eventually my little brother would get interested and out would come the Tonka trucks and the toy backhoes and we would both dig. The hole never actually got very deep. But it was fun and kept us busy, to my mother's delight.

Digging in the dirt isn't quite instinctual, but it is satisfying and entertaining. There is the immediate sense of accomplishment, which all children desire, especially younger ones. They thrill to "make" something and then show it off. Even the pile of dirt is an accomplishment and older children may create dirt castles and whole villages.

An advantage of dirt over a sandbox is that it is an insight in the "underworld." When digging through the dirt, children encounter worms, centipedes, potato bugs (roly-poly's, sow bugs, isopods, whatever you call them), millipedes, beetles, beetle larva, plant roots, rocks, old pottery, seeds, and the occasional toad or salamander. While your child might not be able to quite grasp that the wispy, feather root in his hole comes from the tree across the street, it will stick in his brain and emerge again when he learns about plant parts.

A child that digs in the dirt is well on their way to being a helper in the garden. However, as much as we love the little buggers, they can wreak havoc on our carefully tended plants. Work with the child to show her how you plant things and the steps you take. Then sacrifice a corner of the garden to her. You might even want to

give her a separate fence, so she has her very own space. Kid-size tools come in handy here.

A young child mimics mom and dad. If mom is using a shovel, daughter wants a shovel. The same goes for watering cans, hoes, hats, and gloves. Get her a set of kid-sized tools that she can use. And give her real seeds (although hardy ones like peas, sunflowers, beans, and spinach). She can plant things, and possibly grow things.

Offer her some help, but if she refuses, let her do it herself. Trial and error is the best way to learn some things. If she offers to help you, find a task for her. Give her specific instructions and show her with your hands what to do. Talk and demonstrate a few times so she understands. Mostly, don't get upset if something goes wrong. They are just plants, and chances are, there are more of them.

There are also numerous things that you can do in your adult garden to make it kid-friendly. Rather than planting all the tomatoes in a row, make a circle, divide it into "pizza slices" and plant the pizza ingredients in it. Tomatoes in one slice, peppers in another, onions in another, oregano, basil, or even broccoli or other toppings in another. Then on "pizza" night, you and your child can go harvest the ingredients from the garden!

Also, growing pole beans into a tent can make a magical place to encourage kids to help – they can go inside and harvest beans! If you make it wide enough, an old



# Choosing a Summer Day Camp

by Courtney Anderson, YWCA ECE Director

stump can serve as a table and it can be a clubhouse. Just remind your child to be gentle on the beans; they are the playhouse walls, after all.

Carrots are a wonderful thing to plant. The child can see the tops growing and get such a kick out of pulling up a carrot! It reinforces some basic biology concepts as well as connects them to their food.



Gardening is a constant lesson and fun learning opportunity. Your child won't know they are learning, but they are developing motor skills, solving problems, learning plant biology and ecology, having fun, spending time outdoors, and staying active. Don't have garden space? No worries! Use containers to grow things on front steps or windowsills. Visit a friend's garden. Borrow a piece of land from a neighbor or relative.

It may not be the prettiest garden in the world, but your child will love it. Even if they dig a huge hole, or build castles, or just end up with weeds, they are still learning and getting all the benefits of being outside. You might find that gardening is just as rewarding for you, too!

Summer is right around the corner! Have you thought of your child being involved in a Summer Day Camp Program? These types of programs can and should be exciting, stimulating, therapeutic, creative and, of course, fun!

As a parent or guardian, when you are looking for a summer day camp program you should explore things such as the program being licensed, either by the county or by the state. The importance of licensing is based on safety because of several regulations that have to be followed throughout the entire program.

Other important things to consider while looking for a summer day camp:

- Camp staff experience & qualifications, especially the camp director and/or supervisor of the camp
- Hours of camp operation – if it meets the needs of you and your child and/or your child's schedule
- Availability of camp activities and camp schedule
- Camp field trip itinerary
- All paperwork and/or permission slips that need to be filled out

Mostly, it is important as a parent or guardian that you feel comfortable where you are leaving your child during the day, during the summer months.

Whether your child is headed off to day camp only for the purpose of recreation and fun or if it is a matter of necessity because of your schedule (work, school, etc.), it is truly important to seek out your summer day camp options to meet the needs of both you and your child.

Happy Summer!

# Finding Quality Child Care

By Lorinda Quinn, Technical Assistance Provider, Chautauqua Child Care Council

A program of Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.

Finding someone to care for your child can be a challenging task. It is important to find a provider who will give the love and attention your child needs and deserves in a safe, clean, and nurturing environment. You want someone with the knowledge of how children grow and develop and who will provide your child with fun and educational activities to encourage their development.



When looking at your child care options, there are six simple steps that will help:

1. **LOOK:** Visit more than one child care setting to help you decide which choice is best for your family.
2. **CHECK:** Is the setting safe for children? Does the program promote good health & safety practices?
3. **COUNT:** Are the number of children and adults consistent with the number on the provider's license?
4. **ASK:** Do the providers in the program have training in several areas including CPR & First Aid? Are they able to administer medication? Do they have a plan for substitutes that are familiar with the program and the children?
5. **BE INFORMED:** Visit websites that promote quality care and use checklists to help with the decision making.
6. **STAY INVOLVED:** Partner with your child care provider by having regular meetings, asking questions, volunteering, joining special events and field trips.

Some things that you may find in a quality program/provider are:

## Education/Certifications

- Provider participates in regular trainings
- CPR/First Aid Certified
- Years of experience

- Program is accredited

## Communication

- Open Door Policy (with parents/guardians)
- Daily communication about child's day
- Relates to child at his/her level

## Environment

- Safe, clean play area (toys)
- Adequate equipment & materials
- Appropriate adult-child ratios
- Nutritious meals served

## Relationships

- Loving & responsive caregiver
- Respects child's individuality
- Positive & cooperative approach to discipline

## Daily Routines

- Balanced day that includes play time, story time, outdoor time and rest time
- Child-directed activities versus adult-directed activities
- Individual children's schedules followed
- Enhancing children's development

If you are having trouble finding quality child care, there is help! Chautauqua Child Care Council has a toll-free number that you can call to receive referrals for registered/licensed programs and providers in your area. You can then interview the providers/ programs to find out which one will work best for you.

As a parent, you are the expert on your child. You know what your child's and family's needs are. The final decision is yours to make.

For free referrals to registered/licensed providers in your area, call 1-800-424-4532, M-W-F 8:30am-4:30pm or T-TH 8:30am-6:00pm.

*(Article based on information from Child Care Aware, [www.Childcareaware.org](http://www.Childcareaware.org))*

# Coach, Cheerleader, MOM

Tracey Barron

As a mother of three young children I am in constant motion. I am off running to hockey practice and then gymnastics and then a change of scenery again with the change of seasons. Many wonder why it is that my family is constantly involved and the answer is simple, sports make a child well rounded and not to mention keep them active.



In today's society, youth have lost their way. Childhood obesity is on the rise and with modern technology the need to do simple tasks are at your fingertips. Video gaming has even been inclusive of "working out" in the confines of your own home. Please do not misunderstand me, I am not against video games but I am against the amount of time abused using them.

Sports have a realm of positives and negatives. However, the positives outnumber the negatives by a long shot! Yes, there are expectations for any athlete and they are demanding at times. There are days that I wish we did not have to go, yet we press forward. The many hours of dedication allow my children to grow in all facets of their life. With a sport a child's skill grows not only in the sport but in life.

They learn how to manage time, how to communicate and how to be a team player. It allows an individual to develop problem solving skills learned through tactical drills. It is important for a child of any age to learn that there are consequences in life as well as appreciate the effort and hard work they put forth and see the outcome in a game situation. Physically and mentally the fresh air and motivation allow their brain to develop as well as keep the body physically fit. Athletics also allows a child to develop socially.

They make friends on their teams with the new found confidence the sport provides. It also shows compassion and understanding. I have seen it with all my kids and their teams. They encourage each other and praise one another. Unfortunately that is not the case all the time, but 95% it is. I have also noticed that the children become more socially aware and accepting of others. There is something

magical when you watch your child cheer on another and give them a high five after a goal not otherwise expected from a child that has limitations.

I can sit here and give you statistics on how athletes excel in academics or how many calories are burned doing one activity. That is all true, but my main motivation is that I had children to watch them grow into healthy well rounded adults. I have inner peace just watching my children playing in the fresh air or with a group of friends. Most of all the little bit of time it takes me to taxi them to practice will provide my children life lessons while being playful kids and that is well worth it!

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