

# EARLY LEARNING PARENTS' PAGES

THE OFFICAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

Be Mine

Love Bug

Love You

XOXO

Friend

A look inside this issue:

February is Heart Month: Help Your Child Stay Healthy

Read Across America Day

Winter Activities

Stop Bullying Day

Children's Dental Health Month & Valentine's Day

FEBRUARY 2ND IS GROUNDHOG DAY



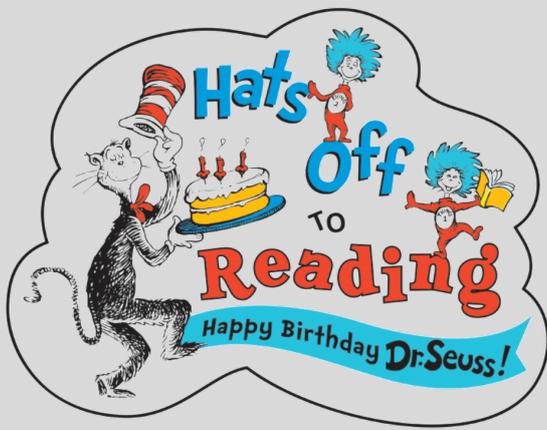
## FEBRUARY IS HEART MONTH: HELP YOUR CHILD STAY HEALTHY

**The American Academy of Pediatrics** ranks heart disease as the number one killer of men and women in the United States. Risk factors for heart disease include smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes, high blood level of cholesterol, physical inactivity, obesity, and family history of early on-set heart disease. Knowing your family's history is important to understanding your child's health risks. Be sure to let your child's doctor know of your family's health history and keep the doctor updated if a health concern becomes apparent in a parent, parents' siblings or a grandparent. If your child's family health history is unknown, let your child's doctor know and the doctor will watch your child's development carefully during routine checkups.

You can protect your child from future heart problems by offering **heart-healthy meals** and snacks and making sure they get **plenty of exercise** and **sleep**. A **healthy lifestyle** benefits all family members and ensures your child's healthy development. Children learn healthy habits from their families. You are a role model for your child as they develop **healthy eating habits and stay active** every day. When possible include your child in planning meals and snacks and ask them to help you choose **healthy food** when shopping. Invite your child to go on walks or ride bikes together. Encourage your child to play outside and play active games with them that include lots of physical activity.

It is not too late for you and your child to make some **healthy new year's resolutions** that focus on forming good health habits. If your family's new year's resolutions include eating a heart-healthy diet, staying active and getting plenty of sleep every day, your family is on the way to a healthy life.

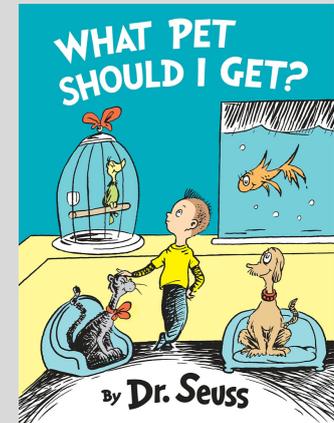
For more information on heart healthy practices please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/prevention.htm>



# READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

Hang on to your hats! It's time to gear up for the National Education Association's "[Read Across America Day](#)". On Monday, March 2, 2020, tip your hat to Dr. Seuss, celebrate his birthday, and his newly discovered book, *What Pet Should I Get?*.

Celebrate with your child by reading some of the great books written by Dr. Seuss. Read *Green Eggs and Ham*. Then have fun in the kitchen by making *Green Eggs and Ham* for breakfast. Go to [Seussville](#) for more activities you can do with your child on this special day. Check with your child's teacher to see if they are having school-wide events to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday.

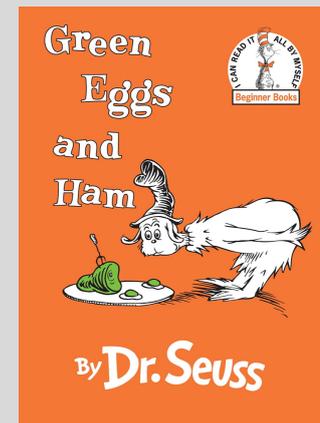


Explore the resources and find activities on the [Read Across America 2019 - 2020 Calendar](#).

For more information you can visit:

<https://www.seussville.com/parents/> and

<https://www.readacrossamerica.org/2019-2020-calendar/>.



## WINTER ACTIVITIES

Winter in Florida may bring some cooler weather and often brings rain. If you are at home with your child on a rainy or cold day, you may need some [ideas for activities](#) you will both enjoy. Here are some activities to do at home with your child that helps them learn new skills as you have fun together.

**Make a paper chain:** Teaching your child time measurement skills may be as simple as using a paper chain to count down to a special event or a special day. In anticipation of birthdays, holidays, weekends or trips, making a paper chain with the number of links that correspond to the number of days until the event helps your child understand the concept of time. Cut 1-inch by 5-inch strips from construction paper or paper grocery bags. Show your child how to loop the paper strips around each other and help them tape, glue or staple the ends together. Hang the paper chain somewhere your child can see it and help them remove one link of the chain each day and count the remaining links. This lets your child know how many days they have until the special day.



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# STOP BULLYING DAY

February 9 is National Stop Bullying Day. On this day take time to talk with your child about bullying. Most people think that bullying does not happen to young children, but [recent research](#) shows that the behaviors that later become bullying begin with some children as young as 3 years old.

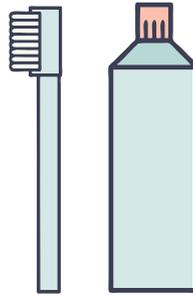
Young children are learning [appropriate social behaviors](#) as they interact with other children their age in settings such as child care centers, family child care homes, recreational centers, church groups and sports groups. As a parent, you can begin teaching your child the [social and emotional skills necessary to forming friendships](#) such as sharing, listening, [kindness](#) and empathy as early as possible. Allow your child to watch television or online programs such as Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood or Sesame Street but do not allow them to watch programs that show [aggressive behaviors](#) or violence. Talk with your child about [appropriate ways to express their emotions](#) and what to do if they are upset or scared.

Be proactive in stopping bullying by talking with your child about any problems they are having with friends or other children in their class or play groups. Check in with your child's teacher if you notice any changes in their behavior or if they complain about going to school. Make sure to talk with them about their friends and how they treat others at school or in play groups. The best way a parent can help their child avoid bullying or being a bully is to be a good role model by treating other people with kindness and empathy.

For more information on bullying please visit <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/blog/bullying-early-childhood>



## CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH & VALENTINE'S DAY



February is Children's Dental Health Month. You can practice [healthy dental care](#) starting at birth to prevent or reduce tooth decay and set a foundation for [healthy dental habits](#) with your child.

### [Children Birth to Twelve Months of Age:](#)



Clean your baby's gums after feedings, using a wet washcloth to gently massage the gums. Once your baby's teeth come in, you should use a soft toothbrush to brush the teeth, with no toothpaste. Continue to massage the gums with a wet washcloth where there are no teeth.



To stop the transmission of infectious bacteria that causes tooth decay avoid sharing utensils and cleaning bottle nipples and pacifiers with your mouth.



Around your baby's first birthday schedule their first dental appointment.

# CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH & VALENTINE'S DAY CONTINUED

## Children Twelve to Eighteen Months of Age:



Check the inside of your child's mouth and teeth for small white or brown spots, which may be a sign of tooth decay. If you see these spots make a dental appointment immediately.



If your child has not seen a dentist, schedule a dental appointment for them.

## Children Eighteen Months to Five Years of Age:



At age two, children can begin to use a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste. Continue to use a soft toothbrush to brush your child's teeth. Teach your child to spit the toothpaste out and not swallow it.



You can begin to teach your child how to brush their teeth.

Your child should see the dentist, at least twice a year.

February 14, 2020 is Valentine's Day, where love is celebrated most often with a lot of sweets and candy. Be sure your child brushes extra carefully after eating sweets to reduce the risk of tooth decay.

The **Molar Express** provides the following dental services to Medicaid-eligible Florida residents' birth through 20.



**Diagnostic:** Examinations, digital x-rays, biopsies

**Preventative:** Prophylaxis (cleanings), fluoride treatments, sealants

**Restorative:** Composite and amalgam restorations, stainless steel crowns

**Surgical:** Extractions and emergency treatment

**Education:** Presentations for schools, community groups, and health fairs.

For more **information** about these services in your area contact your **local Department of Health**.



## Special Dates in February

African American History Month

2- Ground Hog Day

14- Valentine's Day

Children's Dental Health Month

7- Wear Red Day

17- President's Day

National Heart Month

9- Stop Bullying Day

29- Leap Day

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Brush



Floss



Rinse



Smile