



November & December 2006

Children can benefit from parents who are positive emotion coaches

Raising a child is said to be one of the most challenging jobs in the world. Learning how to read a child's emotions can be just as challenging.

Adults may often find themselves having difficulty identifying their own emotions, let alone knowing how to read their child's emotions, said Debbie Richardson, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service parenting specialist.

"Imagine how confused a child can be about their own emotions," Richardson said. "Parents often are concerned about their child's feelings, but may not be sure how to respond. Keep in mind that good communication is vital and feelings are important for parents to discuss with their children."

Some children simply may not have the ability to express in words what they are feeling. That may lead to a child expressing his or her emotions through negative behavior such as yelling or fighting. Parents need to be able to talk about anger with their child and help the child express anger in a more positive way. This helps develop emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence involves being aware of one's own feelings and dealing with emotions in a positive way.

"One thing parents need to remember is that they are 'emotion coaches' for their children," she said. "Emotion coaches help their children name and discuss the feelings they may have. The coach also needs to reassure the child that having feelings is completely normal. Also, parents must remember that as emotion coaches they need to model positive emotional expression."

Research indicates that parents can use a variety of ways to become better emotion coaches. One approach is that parents should pretend what it would be like to be in the child's situation and try to imagine what the child might be feeling.

Richardson said parents should not try to solve the problem, but instead try to relate to the child's experience and respect the child's ideas.

"Making the effort to teach your child how to come up with solutions can help them feel more control over the situation," she said. "It also is important to be consistent and patient because emotional coaching occurs over time."

Children who have positive emotion coaches in their lives are better at comforting themselves when they are upset, are better at focusing attention, relate better to other people, are better at understanding people, are better in school situations that require academic performance, can calm down more quickly after something upsetting happens and have fewer infectious illnesses.

"It takes much more than love to become a good parent," Richardson said. "Parents who have the best of intentions, are involved in their child's life and offer a warm atmosphere can still make mistakes when it comes to dealing with their own or their child's feelings of sadness, or being afraid or angry. Parents must be able to turn their love and concern into basic skills that are needed if parents are going to truly be successful as an emotion coach. These skills will help ensure parents are raising an emotionally intelligent child."

Fresh from the Garden

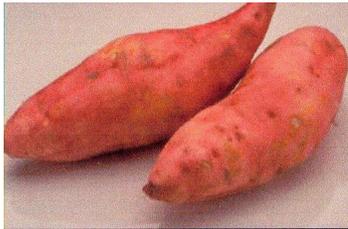
Sweet Potato

Nutritional Facts

Sweet potato is an excellent source of vitamin A; it is a good source of potassium and contains vitamin C, riboflavin, and folic acid. The deeper its color, the high its vitamin A content. Serving Size: 1 medium potato has 130 calories.

Selection

Choose firm specimens without soft spots, cracks, or bruises.



Storing

The sweet potato is more fragile than the potato and should be handled with care. Stored in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place, it will keep from 7 to 10 days. Although the sweet potato should not be stored in the refrigerator when raw, once cooked, it will keep for about a week in the refrigerator; it can also be frozen after being cooked.

Preparing

To prevent the flesh from darkening on contact with air, as soon as the potato is cut, put it in cold water until you are ready to use or cook as soon as possible (the potato should be completely covered with water).

Cooking

The sweet potato may be prepared and cooked like the potato.

To cook a whole unpeeled sweet potato in a microwave oven, prick it several times with a fork, wrap it in a paper towel, and cook it on high for 5 to 7 minutes; halfway through cooking, turn the potato over. Let it cook for 2 minutes before serving.

When baking it whole in the oven, leave it unpeeled, prick it in several spots to prevent it from splitting, and bake it for 45 to 60 minutes, until tender. When boiling sweet potatoes, it is best not to peel them; after boiling for 20 to 30 minutes, the peel will come away easily.

Freezing

1. Choose medium to large sweet potatoes that have been cured for at least one week. Sort according to size and wash.
2. Cook until almost tender in water, steam in a large pressure cooker or the oven. Let stand at room temperature until cool.
3. Peel sweet potatoes and mash. To keep from darkening, mix 2 tablespoons orange or lemon juice with each quart of mashed sweet potatoes.
4. Pack into containers, leaving ½-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

Sweet Potato Pancakes

Makes 24 Pancakes

- ¾ pound sweet potatoes
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 3 ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 ½ c cup milk
- ¼ c butter, melted



1. Place sweet potatoes in a medium saucepan of boiling water, and cook until tender but firm, about 15 minutes. Drain, and immediately immerse in cold water to loosen skins. Drain, remove skins, chop, and mash.
2. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, salt, and nutmeg. Mix mashed sweet potatoes, eggs, milk and butter in a separate medium bowl. Blend sweet potato mixture into the flour mixture to form a batter.
3. Preheat a lightly greased griddle over medium-high heat. Drop batter mixture onto the prepared griddle by heaping tablespoonfuls, and cook until golden brown, turning once with a spatula when the surface begins to bubble.

Red and Green Foods Add Festive & Healthy Flare to Holiday Meals

This holiday season make sure the colors **RED** and **GREEN** go beyond the traditional decorations. Eating a well-balanced diet that contains five or more servings of colorful fruits and vegetables can help maintain good health, said Tommie M. James, Choctaw County Extension Educator, Family Consumer Science.

"You can have a lot of fun incorporating red and green colors into your holiday meal plans," James said. "Deeply hued fruits and vegetables provide a wide range of the vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals your body needs in order to maintain good health. These foods also can help reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease."



You can make festive fruit salads with **RED** ingredients such as raspberries, apples, cherries, red grapes, pomegranates, cranberries, strawberries or watermelon. Salads made with red peppers, radishes, tomatoes and red onions have a lot of nutritional value.

There are many dishes that can be made from colorful **GREEN** fruits and vegetables as well. Asparagus and artichokes can make wonderful dips. A variety of different lettuces can be combined with other ingredients to make vegetable salads. Broccoli, snow peas, zucchini and spinach make healthy side dishes for a meal.



On average, consumers gain seven to ten pounds during the holidays because of eating high-fat, high-sugar meals. Including more fruits and vegetables in meals and snacks can help consumers cut calories and keep off those extra, unwanted pounds. "As the holiday season draws near, be sure to incorporate the **RED** and **GREEN** holiday colors into your meals as well as your decorations," James said. "Not only will your table look more festive, but you'll be eating healthier, too."



Treat yourself with this easy green and red fruit gelatin mold. It's low in sodium and a source of Vitamin C.

Fresh Fruit Parfait Mold

1 ½ cups boiling water
1 pkg. (8 -serving size) strawberry flavor Sugar-free gelatin
1 ½ cup cold water
¾ cup green fruit: green apples or green grapes
¾ cup red fruit: strawberry, raspberries, or cranberries
1 ½ cups thawed low fat whipped topping

1. Stir boiling water into gelatin in large bowl for 2 minutes or until completely dissolved. Stir in cold water.
2. Refrigerate about 1 ¼ hours or until slightly thickened.
3. Reserve 1 ½ cups of the gelatin at room temperature.
4. Stir fruit into remaining gelatin. Spoon into 6 cup mold sprayed with cooking spray. Refrigerate 15 minutes or until set but not firm.
5. Stir whipping topping into reserved gelatin with wire whisk until smooth. Spoon over gelatin in mold.
6. Refrigerate 4 hours or until firm.
7. Store leftover dessert in refrigerator.

Nutrition & Food Preparation Classes

Held every Monday
10:00 a.m.
Choctaw Co. Library, Hugo



Presented by the OSU Cooperative Extension Service and the Community Nutrition Education Program (CNEP).

Choctaw Co. OHCE



Choctaw County OHCE would like invite you to join the Oklahoma Home and Community Education Program, formerly known as Extension Homemakers or FCE groups. OHCE is a program for adults and youth, male and female, to help increase their knowledge or skills and to help provide community service.

The purpose of the Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) is to strengthen individuals, families and communities through education, leadership development and action, in cooperation with affiliated county and local groups. OHCE offers members opportunities for leadership development and participation in community service and program education, leadership and community service.

LOCAL CLUBS & MEETING SCHEDULES

BUCKHORN

2nd Tuesday of the month
Contact Person: Anne Page

BOSWELL

2nd Monday of the month
Contact Person: Mary Duke

HUGO

3rd Monday of the month
Contact Person: Linda Knight

LOV-n-OHCE

Contact Person: Sherry Cheek
cheek-sl@yahoo.com

The Choctaw County OHCE members host a monthly Lunch-n-Learn held the 3rd Thursday of each month, 12:00 noon located at the Choctaw Co. OSU Extension Office, Hugo. At each lunch-n-learn an educational program is provided, examples, gardening, family issues, health awareness and food preparation.

OHCE Schedule

Achievement reports are due Nov. 20th.

December 18th, Thursday

10:00 am

County Council Meeting &
Achievement Awards



12:00 noon

Christmas Party & Gift Exchange

OSU Extension Office, Hugo

"All members need to bring a covered dish"

Pancake Breakfast with Santa Claus

Saturday, December 9th

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Boswell Senior Citizens Center



Children 12 and under: \$1.50
Adults: \$2.00

"Come eat with Santa and give him your wish list."

Sponsored By:
Boswell Extension Homemakers

Family & Consumer Science Newsline is published as one way of communicating educational information to the citizens of Choctaw County:



Choctaw Co. Cooperative Extension Service
415 E. Rena, Hugo, OK, 74743
(580) 326-3359
Location: Hugo Agri-plex Building

County Web Page:

<http://www.county.okstate.edu/choctaw/>

Editor: Tommie M. James
Extension Educator, FCS / 4-H
tommie.james@okstate.edu

**SEASONS
GREETINGS**

