

CARE CONNECTION

ISSUE 3 | 2024

BUILDING HEALTHIER LIVES



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Easy exercises for kids

It's a fact of life that children need exercise. Experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say that kids ages 6 to 17 need at least one hour of activity a day. This can be anything fun that gets them moving.

Exercise is not only good for their bodies. It helps them do better in school and strengthens their relationships with friends and family.

Getting your kids to exercise shouldn't be hard. Here are a few ideas you can try.

Jumping

Kids and adults love to jump! It helps build strength and endurance. Plus, there's nothing more fun than seeing who can jump the highest. You can also try these fun jumps:

- **Criss-cross feet:** Jump up and cross one foot over the other. Jump again and switch feet.
- **Hurdle hops:** Jump over a pretend hurdle, either side to side or front to back.
- **Jumping jacks:** Stretch arms and legs to the side when jumping. On second jump return them to the middle.
- **One-foot hops:** Jump on one leg and then switch legs on the next jump.

Exercise games

One great way to get kids to exercise is to make it a game. Here are a few ideas:

- **Corners:** Give each kid a “home corner” in a room. Let them run around until you tell them to “go home.” When they get back to their home, have them do some easy exercises – like jumping jacks or a 30-second plank.
- **Go, back, and hit it:** Have kids line up in lanes. Yell out “go” and have them run forward. Then yell “back” and have them run backwards. Next say “hit it” and have them do an exercise like squats or jumps.
- **Traffic:** This game is a twist on “red light, green light.” Have them stop and start when you say “red light” or “green light.” For “yellow light” have them shuffle to the side. Other ideas are to bunny hop over “speed bumps,” and link arms and run together when you say “carpool.” Use your imagination for fun ideas!
- **Squat relay:** Have kids line up on two sides of the room facing each other. On “go” they run to the middle where they meet and do three squats. Have them give each other a high-five each time. Then they go back to their side and do it again.

Skipping

Skipping is not only fun, it’s great for kids’ balance and coordination. Here are some fun skipping activities:

- **Hopscotch:** This has been a favorite for years. Make a grid on the ground with chalk. Then throw a beanbag onto the squares. Players try to hop, skip, or jump without landing on that square.
- **Skipping rope:** Another long-time favorite. Make it fun by having kids jump for a certain length of time. Or compete to see who can do the most jumps.
- **Obstacle course:** Set up a simple course and have kids race to see who can get through it the fastest.
- **Skipping tag:** It’s like regular tag, but players need to skip to catch each other.

Bear crawl

The bear crawl involves walking on all fours with your belly towards the floor, like a bear! Once your kids master it, they can compete by bear-crawling through the house or in an obstacle course.

Source: Catherine Holecko, “10 Easy Exercises for Kids,” Parents, July 3, 2024, <https://www.parents.com/exercises-for-kids-8642585>.





How to handle your teen's mental health issues

Is your teenager dealing with mental health problems? Anxiety, depression, and other problems are more common than you think. Although moodiness, anger, or being withdrawn may just be a part of growing up, they may also be signs of a more serious problem. It's important to monitor behaviors and know when it is time to seek help.

Here are some signs that your teen may be having mental health difficulties:

- Big changes in sleep, weight, eating, and everyday habits.
- Less interest in things they used to enjoy.
- Avoiding friends, family, and community.
- Canceling plans with friends without a reason.
- Problems in school — especially in subjects they normally do well in.

- Excessive worry and racing thoughts.
- New friend groups that you've never met before.
- Refusing to talk about their problems, even after you've made a safe space for them.
- Obsessing over goals.
- Signs of drug, alcohol, and other substance use.
- Unexplained cuts, bruises, or burns that may be self-inflicted.
- More interest in sexual activity than before.

Keep in mind that having one of these symptoms does not automatically mean your teen is having a mental health crisis. However, if you start noticing one or more, or they don't go away with time, it's time to talk to them about it.

Tips for talking with your teen

Here are some ideas on how to open the door to talking with your teen about their mental health. Keep in mind that you probably won't be able to solve their problems in a single talk. You'll probably need to talk many times. Make a plan to check in with them regularly.

- **Create a safe environment where they can share.** It's hard for some kids to open up to their parents, especially about touchy subjects. Make it clear that you are there to help them and not judge them. Let them know that you understand what they are going through.
- **Listen more than you speak.** This may be hard for parents who see their kids as an extension of themselves. But by listening and hearing them fully you will encourage them to be open with you.
- **Try to avoid putting them on the defensive.** Don't start your talk with a comment like "I notice you've been acting strange recently." Instead address the specific behavior and ask them about it in a gentle way.
- **Don't expect them to open up right away.** Talking about our feelings can be hard. Teens especially may be hiding their feelings from you and themselves. Give them some time to open up and let them know you're there to listen when they want to talk.
- **Remember that shame about mental health still exists.** Many people still feel embarrassed if they need to see a mental health professional. Keep in mind that many normal, healthy people struggle with these issues from time to time. Let your teen know it's OK to feel this way and that there are ways for them to feel better.

Source: Richard J. Chung, "Teen Mental Health: How to Know When Your Child Needs Help," HealthyChildren.org, March 4, 2024, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/Pages/Mental-Health-and-Teens-Watch-for-Danger-Signs.aspx>.



The importance of oral hygiene



Oral hygiene – including daily brushing and flossing – is important for healthy teeth and gums. It’s also important to see your dentist regularly for cleanings and exams. They can also help prevent health problems in the future.

With proper oral hygiene you can prevent cavities, gum disease, and bad breath. It can also help you keep your whole body healthy. For example, infections in your mouth can spread to other parts of your body, including your heart.

Here are some other conditions that are linked to your oral health:

- Cardiovascular disease (disease to your heart and blood vessels)
- Stroke
- Endocarditis (infection of your heart’s inner lining)
- Pneumonia (disease of your lungs)
- Premature birth and low birth weight

If you have one of the following conditions, it may have a negative effect on your oral health:

- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- HIV/AIDS
- Alzheimer’s disease

These are some signs of poor oral hygiene:

- Tooth decay
- Bleeding gums
- Bad breath that won’t go away
- Loose teeth
- Toothache
- Jaw swelling
- Mouth sores
- Gum recession
- Infections of the mouth

How to improve oral hygiene

- Brush your teeth at least two times a day. Use fluoride toothpaste and a soft-bristled toothbrush.
- Floss once a day to clean between teeth.
- Brush your tongue with your toothbrush or a tongue scraper.
- Rinse with an antibacterial mouthwash once a day.
- Visit your dentist regularly for cleanings and exams.
- Avoid smoking and tobacco products. Smoking is a leading cause of gum disease and oral cancer.

Talk to your dentist about other ways to take care of your teeth and mouth.

Source: “Oral Hygiene,” Cleveland Clinic, April 21, 2022,
<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/16914-oral-hygiene>.



10 easy, no-carve pumpkin decorating ideas

Kids love decorating pumpkins, but we all know that knives can be dangerous for little ones. Here are some creative ideas for making a fun jack-o'-lantern without carving!

1. **Paint it:** Acrylic paint is best for decorating pumpkins. Not only is it waterproof and fairly inexpensive, it comes in a variety of colors. Kids can draw their favorite Halloween monster or character. For little kids, cut sponges into Halloween-themed shapes. Then have them stamp the pumpkin with them using paint.
2. **Add buttons:** If you have a button jar in your house, have the kids dig through it for their favorites. They can then glue them in different patterns on their pumpkin.
3. **Arts and crafts:** Do you have a collection of old craft pieces lying around the house? Now is the time to put them to use on your pumpkin. Try gluing googly eyes, feathers, fake flowers, and sequins. Add anything else you have to make your own fancy pumpkin.
4. **Stick to it:** Small kids will love attaching Halloween-themed stickers to your pumpkin. Or be creative and decorate it with tape and other stickers to make a face.
5. **Mold it:** Non-drying clay can be formed into hands, legs, noses, and eyes to bring your pumpkin to life.
6. **Mark it up:** One of the easiest ways to decorate your pumpkin is with markers. Kids can draw a face on the pumpkin, or figures like ghosts, bats, and witches.
7. **Get tacky:** Start by drawing a design or message on your pumpkin. Then take multi-colored thumbtacks to outline and add color to it. Use bright-colored thumbtacks for fun faces and black ones for spooky designs.
8. **Dress your pumpkin up:** Have the kids go on a scavenger hunt for old hats, glasses, scarves, and gloves to dress up your pumpkin. Remember to tape the decorations on it if you're placing it outside.
9. **Make a rainbow pumpkin:** Use multi-colored paints or markers to decorate your pumpkin with the colors of the rainbow. This fun idea is great for the whole autumn season.
10. **Make it shine with glitter:** Use a sponge brush to cover your pumpkin with glue. Then add sparkles and glitter to make the shiniest jack-o'-lantern on your block.

Source: "13 Easy, No-Carve Pumpkin Decorating Ideas" Care.com, October 25, 2023, <https://www.care.com/c/13-easy-no-carve-pumpkin-designs/>.



Earn rewards through Healthy Behaviors

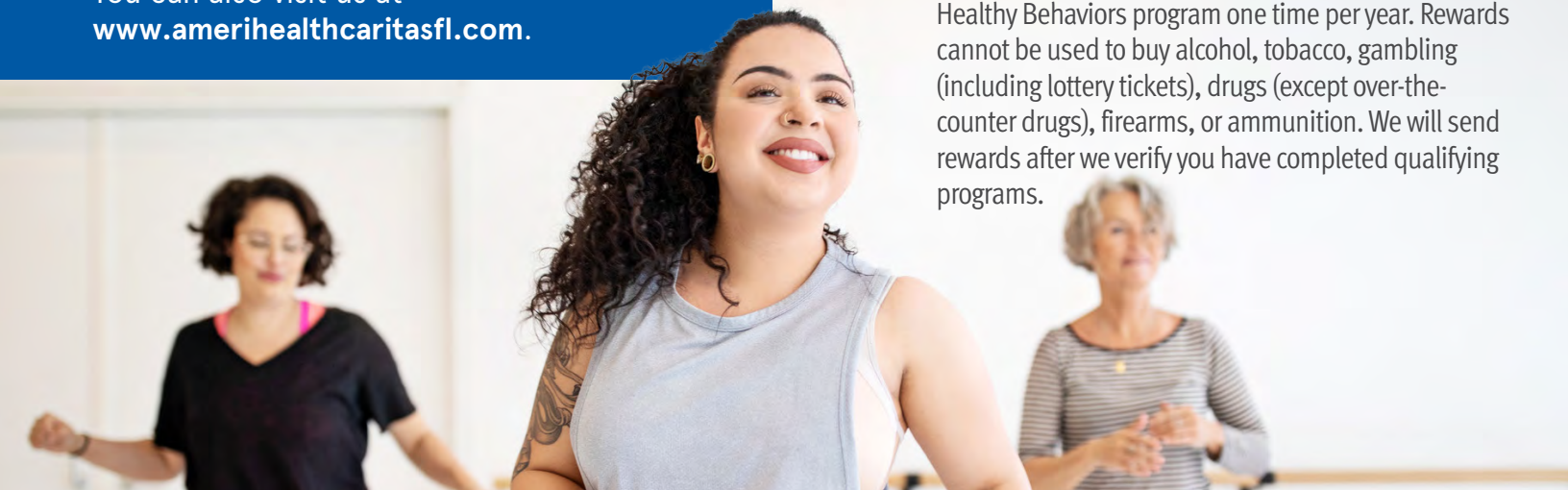
Your health goals are important to us. We want to help you reach them. AmeriHealth Caritas Florida's Healthy Behaviors programs can help you improve your health and earn rewards at the same time. For each Healthy Behaviors program you complete, you'll get a gift card by mail, text, or email.

AmeriHealth Caritas Florida's Healthy Behaviors programs include:*

- Adult access to preventive or ambulatory services
- Behavioral health follow-up
- Maternity program
- Postpartum program
- Child and adolescent well-care visits
- Breast cancer screening
- Cervical cancer screening
- Diabetes testing
- Diabetes eye exam
- Lead screening
- Alcohol and substance use recovery program
- Smoking cessation program
- Weight loss program

Want to learn more? Call Member Services at **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)**. You can also visit us at www.amerihhealthcaritasfl.com.

*You may enroll in more than one Healthy Behaviors program (if you qualify). You can receive a reward of up to \$50 per program, per year. You may only join each Healthy Behaviors program one time per year. Rewards cannot be used to buy alcohol, tobacco, gambling (including lottery tickets), drugs (except over-the-counter drugs), firearms, or ammunition. We will send rewards after we verify you have completed qualifying programs.





Healthy habits to help protect you from the flu

Flu season is coming soon. Although it's a common disease, the flu can be serious for certain people – especially those with asthma, diabetes, or heart disease. Even if you don't have those conditions, you should do your best to avoid it.

The best way you can protect yourself and your family is by getting vaccinated every year. But there are a lot of other ways to avoid getting the flu.

Here are some ways you can protect yourself and others from the flu and other sicknesses:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Keep your distance from others if you are sick.
- If you can, stay home from work, school, or errands if you are sick.
- Always cover your mouth and nose if you're coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands often.
- Try to avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Clean surfaces in your house and workplace.
- Practice good health habits, like getting enough sleep, eating well, and exercising.

If you do get the flu, there are **drugs** you can take that will help you feel better and get well sooner. They're only available by prescription, so talk to your doctor right away if you have flu symptoms.

With good health habits and regular vaccinations, you and your family can avoid getting the flu this season!

Sources:

"Key Facts About Seasonal Flu Vaccine," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 19, 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm>.

"What You Should Know About Flu Antiviral Drugs," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 15, 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/treatment/whatyoushould.htm>.

Annual eligibility review

Once a year, the Department of Children and Families may mail you a letter asking for information to renew your Medicaid eligibility so that you can keep your Medicaid benefits. When you get your renewal letter, it's time to take action! We want to help you get and stay healthy and continue enjoying your AmeriHealth Caritas Florida benefits. If you have questions, please contact the Department of Children and Families at **1-866-762-2237**. You may also be able to view your eligibility status or complete your renewal online. Please visit **www.myaccess.myflfamilies.com** for more information.

Respond quickly to keep your benefits!

There is a limited time to complete and return your information to the Department of Children and Families. If you do not return it on time, you and/or your children are at risk of losing Medicaid coverage.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Are you mobile ready?

Download our app at no cost to you.*

Use our mobile app to view your digital ID card, health history, and other key resources.

To get the mobile app, visit the Google Play store or Apple App Store and search for **AHC mobile**.

Or scan the Apple or Android code to download the app.

*Standard messaging and data fees may apply.



Apple



Android

Need a no-cost smartphone?

As an Amerihealth Caritas Florida member, if you qualify, you can get a smartphone* at no cost to you. This includes monthly data, minutes, and unlimited text messaging.

To find out more and apply for a smartphone, please call Member Services at **1-855-355-9800** (TTY **1-855-358-5856**).

*Limit one per household, must be at least 18 years old to qualify.



Are you pregnant? Let us know



Call **1-855-371-8076** to join **Bright Start®**, a special program for our pregnant members.

REMINDER

Check the member portal to find your PCP's information, see your recent medical history, request a new ID card, and more.

www.amerithealthcaritasfl.com



Is your contact info up to date?



Have you moved or changed your phone number lately? Let us know! To update your contact information, call Member Services at **1-855-355-9800** (TTY **1-855-358-5856**) 24/7/365.

Need a ride to a health care appointment or service?

Call Amerihealth Caritas Florida transportation services toll-free at **1-855-371-3968**.

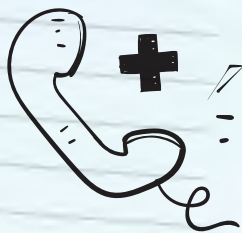


Have you tried telehealth?

Explore the convenience!

Telehealth allows you to connect with a provider outside of their office using a computer, tablet, or smartphone.

Ask your provider if they offer telehealth. Or use **MDLIVE** at no cost to members.



Important phone numbers

You can call for these services 24/7/365.

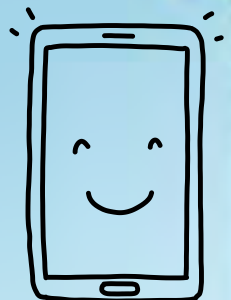
Member Services: **1-855-355-9800**
(TTY **1-855-358-5856**)

24/7 Nurse Call Line:
1-855-398-5615

Transportation Services:
1-855-371-3968

Pharmacy Member Services:
1-855-371-3963

Behavioral Health
Member Services:
1-855-371-3967





Discrimination is against the law

AmeriHealth Caritas Florida complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate, exclude people, or treat them differently based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, creed, religious affiliation, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation.

AmeriHealth Caritas Florida:

- Provides free (no-cost) aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters.
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats).
- Provides free (no-cost) language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters.
 - Information written in other languages.

If you need these services, contact AmeriHealth Caritas Florida at **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)**. We are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you believe that AmeriHealth Caritas Florida has failed to provide these services or has discriminated against you in another way, you or your authorized representative (if we have your written authorization on file) can file a grievance with:

- Grievances and Appeals, P.O. Box 7368, London, KY 40742. Phone: **1-855-371-8078 (TTY 1-855-371-8079)**, or Fax: **1-855-358-5847**.
- You can file a grievance by mail, fax, or phone. If you need help filing a grievance, AmeriHealth Caritas Florida Member Services is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201
1-800-368-1019 (TTY 1-800-537-7697)

Complaint forms are available at:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

www.amerihealthcaritasfl.com

Foreign Language: This information is available for free in other languages. Please contact our customer service number at **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Auxiliary Aids: This information is available for free in other formats. Please contact our customer service number at **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Idioma extranjero: Esta información está disponible en otros idiomas de forma gratuita. Póngase en contacto con nuestro número de servicios al cliente al **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)**, las 24 horas del día, los siete días de la semana.

Ayudas complementarias: Esta información se ofrece en otros formatos sin cargo. Comuníquese con nuestro número de servicio al cliente al **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)** las 24 horas del día, los siete días de la semana.

Lang etranje: Enfòmasyon sa yo disponib gratis nan lòt lang. Tanpri kontakte ekip sèvis kliyan nou an nan **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)**, 24 è sou 24, sèt jou sou sèt.

Èd oksilyè: Enfòmasyon sa yo disponib gratis nan lòt fòma. Tanpri kontakte nimewo sèvis kliyan nou an nan **1-855-355-9800 (TTY 1-855-358-5856)**, 24 sou 24, sèt jou sou sèt.



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