



Work & Family Matters

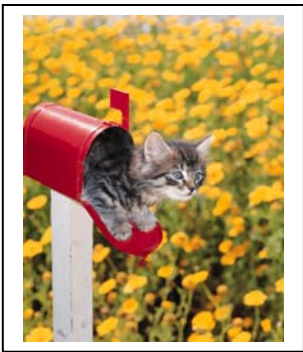
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1.877.682.2472

UAW-Chrysler Family Resource & Referral Program

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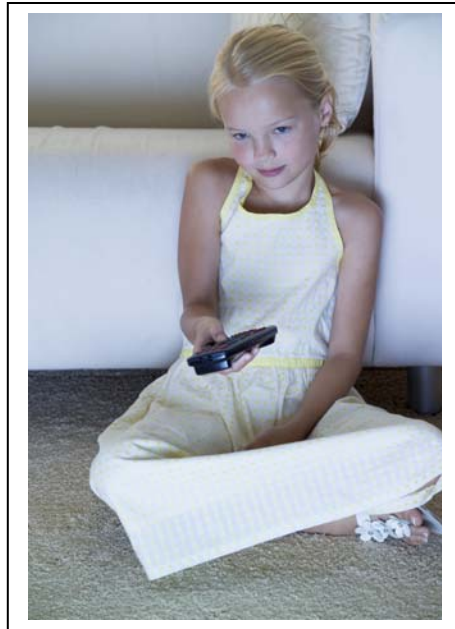


How to Keep Your Cat Happy

Everyone knows that cats can be very particular about their likes and dislikes, and that they frequently have a mind of their own. Here are some tips that can keep the most finicky cat happy and healthy.

1. A clean litter box. Cats do not like dirty litter boxes. Make sure to clean your cat's box daily.

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How TV Affects Your Child

The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended no television viewing for children under the age of 2, and that the TV not even be on as background noise in the home. In fact, the AAP guidelines say that children under the age of 2 should have no "screen time" at all, including TV, DVDs or videotapes, computers, or video games. They say that the first two years of a child's life is a critical time for brain development and that TV can get in the way of exploring, learning, and spending time interacting and playing with parents

and others. Interaction with others promotes developing the skills children need to grow cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally.

Of course, once your child passes the age of 2, TV and DVDs/videotapes in moderation can be a good thing. Preschoolers can get help learning the alphabet, counting, and telling time; grade schoolers can learn about wildlife on nature shows; and there are many DVDs/videotapes geared toward this age group and learning opportunities.

However, at any age, too much TV or "screen time" can be detrimental to a child. Research has found that any child who consistently spends more than four hours a day in front of the TV or computer is more likely to be overweight. And children who consistently view violent events on TV or video games are more likely to view the world as a scary place and worry that something violent may happen to them. And, as they grow, children who view too much violence on TV and in video games become desensitized to the violence they see and don't view it as being as dangerous as it really is in real life.

Consider this: the average American child will witness 200,000 violent acts on TV by the age of 18. TV violence sometimes begs for imitation because violence is often shown and promoted as being a fun and effective way to get what you

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want.

And, as the AAP points out, many violent acts are perpetrated by the “good guys,” whom children have been taught to emulate. Even though children are taught by their parents not to hit or bite, television shows that it is okay to hit, bite, or kick if you are the “good guy.” And on TV, even the “bad guys” aren’t always held responsible or punished for their actions.

The images children absorb can also leave them traumatized and vulnerable. According to research, children ages 2 through 7 are particularly frightened by scary-looking things like “monsters.” And, simply telling children that those things won’t hurt them really won’t console them because children in this age group can’t yet distinguish between fantasy and reality.

Children age 8 to 12 are frightened by the threat of violence, natural disasters, and the victimization of other children, whether those images appear on fictional shows, the news, or reality-based shows. Reasoning with children of this age will help them, so it is important for parents to



Keep Your Kidneys Healthy

March is National Kidney Month. Kidney disease is serious and many people don't know they have it because it is a symptomless disease in the early stages. If you have diabetes or high blood pressure, you could be at risk. It's diagnosed with blood and urine tests.

Kidney disease is most often caused by diabetes or high blood pressure. These diseases damage the blood vessels in the kidneys, so the kidneys are not able to filter the blood as well as they used to. Usually, this

damage happens slowly, over many years. As more and more blood vessels are damaged, the kidneys eventually stop working.

Other risk factors for kidney disease are cardiovascular (heart) disease and a family history of kidney failure. If you have any of these risk factors, you should get tested for kidney disease.

Early kidney disease has no symptoms. That means you can't feel that you have it. In fact, you might feel just fine until your kidneys have almost stopped working. Don't wait for symptoms. Blood and urine tests are the only way to know if you have kidney disease. A blood test measures your GFR and a urine test checks for protein.

Kidney disease can be treated if detected early. The right treatment can help prevent further kidney damage and slow down kidney disease. The earlier kidney disease is found, the sooner you can take medications, called ACE inhibitors or ARBs, and other steps that can keep your kidneys healthy longer.

Kidney disease is progressive. It does not go away. Instead, it usually gets worse over time. Kidney disease can turn into kidney failure, at which point dialysis or a kidney transplant is needed. Kidney disease can also lead to heart disease.

Take the first step. If you are at risk, get your blood and urine checked for kidney disease.

To learn more about kidney disease, go to the [National Kidney Disease Education Program's Protect Your Kidneys](#) page.

How TV Affects Your Child (Continued from page 2)

provide reassuring and honest information to help ease their fears.

And, we all know that today—with many of us having cable TV—the shows are chock full of programs and ads that contain risky behavior such as sex and substance abuse and that those acts are often depicted as being cool, fun, and exciting. Often there is no discussion on these shows about the consequences of drinking alcohol, using drugs, smoking cigarettes, or having premarital sex.

Studies have shown that teens who watch a lot of sexual content on TV are more likely to experiment themselves. The same holds true for things such as cigarette smoking and consuming alcohol.

Because of all these things, it is good for parents to put a limit on how much TV and what kinds of shows their children are viewing. Make sure that you view the shows they are watching yourself so that you can have discussions with them about the content or prohibit them from watching if the shows promote values that you do not agree with.

Adapted from articles on <http://health.msn> and www.aap.org, accessed March 2009.

How to Keep Your Cat Happy (Continued from page 1)

If your cat is not provided with a clean litter box, he or she may search for a substitute—such as a corner of your living room, or in a basket of laundry.

2. Spoiled food. Food that has spoiled not only smells bad, but is very unhealthy for your cat to eat. The length of time you can leave canned food sitting out depends on the temperature in the room. If there is no air conditioning, and the day is hot, don't leave the food out longer than 20 minutes maximum. In the winter, if the heat is on, or the food is in a warm kitchen, the 20 minute rule would also apply. Kittens, who eat more frequently than older cats, should be provided with a fresh tablespoon of food approximately every two to three hours. Dry food can become spoiled as well. If left in a humid room for a long period of time, food may become moldy (especially on the bottom, if you just keep adding fresh food to the top every few days).
3. Over-aggressive petting. If you watch your cat carefully, you will see clues when they are getting tired of being fussed over and petted. Her ears may slant back, her tail will twitch and then wave wildly, and she may even growl (yes, cats can and do growl) at you. Learn to watch for the signs in your cat.
4. Loud noises and commotion. Holidays can be especially stressful for cats—from fireworks on the 4th of July and New Year's Eve to a house full of excited, noisy children eager to open their presents on Christmas, Hanukkah, or a birthday. If your cat runs and hides at these times, do not try to coax him out. Just leave him be until he feels safe enough to reappear on his own.

Written by Linda Demeshko

Family Resource & Referral Program



The UAW-Chrysler **Family Resource & Referral Program** (1.877.682.2472) is a free, confidential benefit available to active UAW-Chrysler employees. This program is designed to help simplify work and life balance issues by either directly providing information, or by connecting employees with appropriate informational resources that will enable informed decisions to be made regarding work/life topics. **Work/life** experts are available 24/7, either on-line or by telephone, to help employees maximize their personal and family effectiveness in addressing such issues as:

- ✓ Child Care & Elder Care
- ✓ Adoption
- ✓ College Searches & Financial Aid
- ✓ Homework Assistance
- ✓ Travel, Shopping
- ✓ Pet Care
- ✓ Relocation