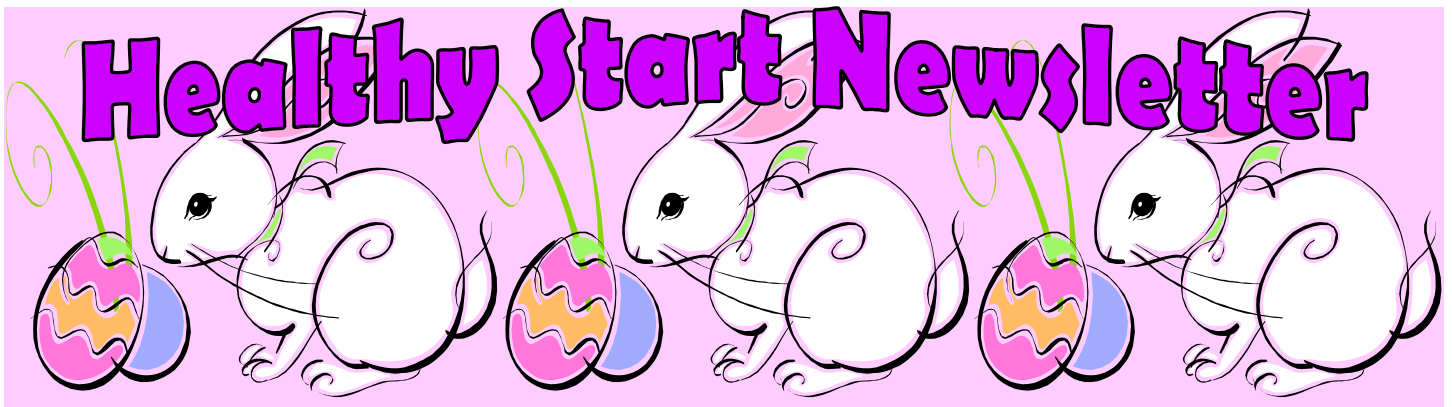


# Healthy Start Newsletter



## Dog Bite Prevention

April 2010

May 17–23, 2009 is National Dog Bite Prevention Week

4.5 million Americans are bitten by dogs each year, and one in five dog bites results in injuries that require medical attention. There are ways to make dog bites less likely and to help prevent children from being bitten by dogs. In 2006, more than 31,000 people underwent reconstructive surgery as a result of being bitten by dogs.

### Who is most at risk?

- **Children:** Among children, the rate of dog bite-related injuries is highest for those ages 5 to 9 years, and children are more likely than adults to receive medical attention for dog bites than adults. Recent research shows that the rate of dog-bite related injuries among children seems to be decreasing.
- **Adult Males:** Among adults, males are more likely than females to be bitten.
- **People with dogs in their homes:** Among children and adults, having a dog in the household is associated with a higher incidence of dog bites. As the number of dogs in the home increases, so does the incidence of dog bites. Adults with two or more dogs in the household are five times more likely to be bitten than those living without dogs at home.

### How can dog bites be prevented?

Dog bites are a largely preventable public health problem, and adults and children can learn to reduce their chances of being bitten.

Before you bring a dog into your household:

- Consult with a professional (e.g., veterinarian, animal behaviorist, or responsible breeder) to learn what breeds of dogs are the best fit for your household.
- Dogs with histories of aggression are not suitable for households with children.
- Be sensitive to cues that a child is fearful or apprehensive about a dog. If a child seems frightened by dogs, wait before bringing a dog into your household.
- Spend time with a dog before buying or adopting it. Use caution when bringing a dog into a household with an infant or toddler.

### If you decide to bring a dog into your home:

- Spay/neuter your dog (this often reduces aggressive tendencies).
- Never leave infants or young children alone with a dog.
- Don't play aggressive games with your dog (e.g., wrestling).
- Properly socialize and train any dog entering your household. Teach the dog submissive behaviors (e.g., rolling over to expose the abdomen and giving up food without growling).

Immediately seek professional advice (e.g., from veterinarians, animal behaviorists, or responsible breeders) if the dog develops aggressive or undesirable behaviors.

### Safety Tips for Children

To help prevent children from being bitten by dogs, teach the following basic safety tips and review them regularly:

- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog.
- Do not run from a dog or scream.
- Remain motionless (e.g., "be still like a tree") when approached by an unfamiliar dog.
- If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still (e.g., "be still like a log").
- Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.
- Immediately report stray dogs or dogs displaying unusual behavior to an adult.
- Avoid direct eye contact with a dog.
- Do not disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies.
- Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first.
- If bitten, immediately report the bite to an adult.

For more information about dog safety, visit the Center for Disease Control website (<http://www.cdc.gov>) or the American Kennel Club website (<http://www.akc.org>).



# Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program

Your child may qualify for free or low cost health insurance through KCHIP. If you have a child younger than age 19.....call today to see if you qualify!



- 1-877-KCHIP-18
- 1-877-KCHIP-19 for the deaf and hard of hearing
- 1-800-662-5397 for Spanish language services

## National Infant Immunization Week

**Love them. Protect them. Immunize them.**

April 24—May 1, 2010

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is an annual observance to highlight the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and celebrate the achievements of immunization programs and their partners in promoting healthy communities. Since 1994, NIIW has served as a call to action for parents, caregivers and healthcare providers to ensure that infants are fully immunized against 14 vaccine-preventable diseases. This year NIIW will be held April 24-May 1, 2010.

NIIW provides an opportunity to:

- Highlight the importance and benefits of childhood immunizations, especially to parents.
- Educate parents and caregivers about the importance of vaccination in protecting their children from birth against vaccine-preventable diseases.
- Focus attention on our immunization achievements and celebrate the accomplishments made possible through successful collaboration.
- Revitalize efforts to protect children against vaccine-preventable diseases and give them a healthy start in life.
- Encourage better communication between parents and healthcare providers.
- Remind parents and caregivers they need to make and keep needed immunization appointments.
- Provide parents and caregivers with a toll-free number, 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), to locate a facility that offers immunizations (Vaccines for Children's program) for their child.

### Parents and Caregivers

- Keep an immunization record and update it after every doctor visit.
- Ask your doctor whether your child is up-to-date on her immunizations.
- Write an article or editorial for the local newspaper. Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/> for sample articles.
- Work with local health departments, clinics, and hospitals to promote neighborhood clinics.
- Distribute immunization material to social service agencies and other community agencies that serve children, such as foster homes, refugee centers, homeless shelters, day care programs, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals. Encourage agencies to share this information with parents of children 24 months and younger through website postings, newsletters and bulletin boards.

Please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/> for additional resources on planning an NIIW event and to download English and Spanish-language NIIW campaign materials including print ads, radio PSAs, sample op-ed articles, and other public relations and planning tools.

# *Child Development - 0 to 1 year old*

Cognitive development for your baby means the learning process of memory, language, thinking and reasoning. Your baby is learning to recognize the sound of your voice. She is also learning to focus her vision from the periphery or the corner of her eyes to the center. Language development is more than uttering sounds (“babble”), or mama/dada.

Listening, understanding, and knowing the names of people and things are all components of language development. During this stage, your baby is also developing bonds of love and trust with you. The way you cuddle, hold and play with your baby will set the basis for how he will interact with you and others.

## Positive Parenting

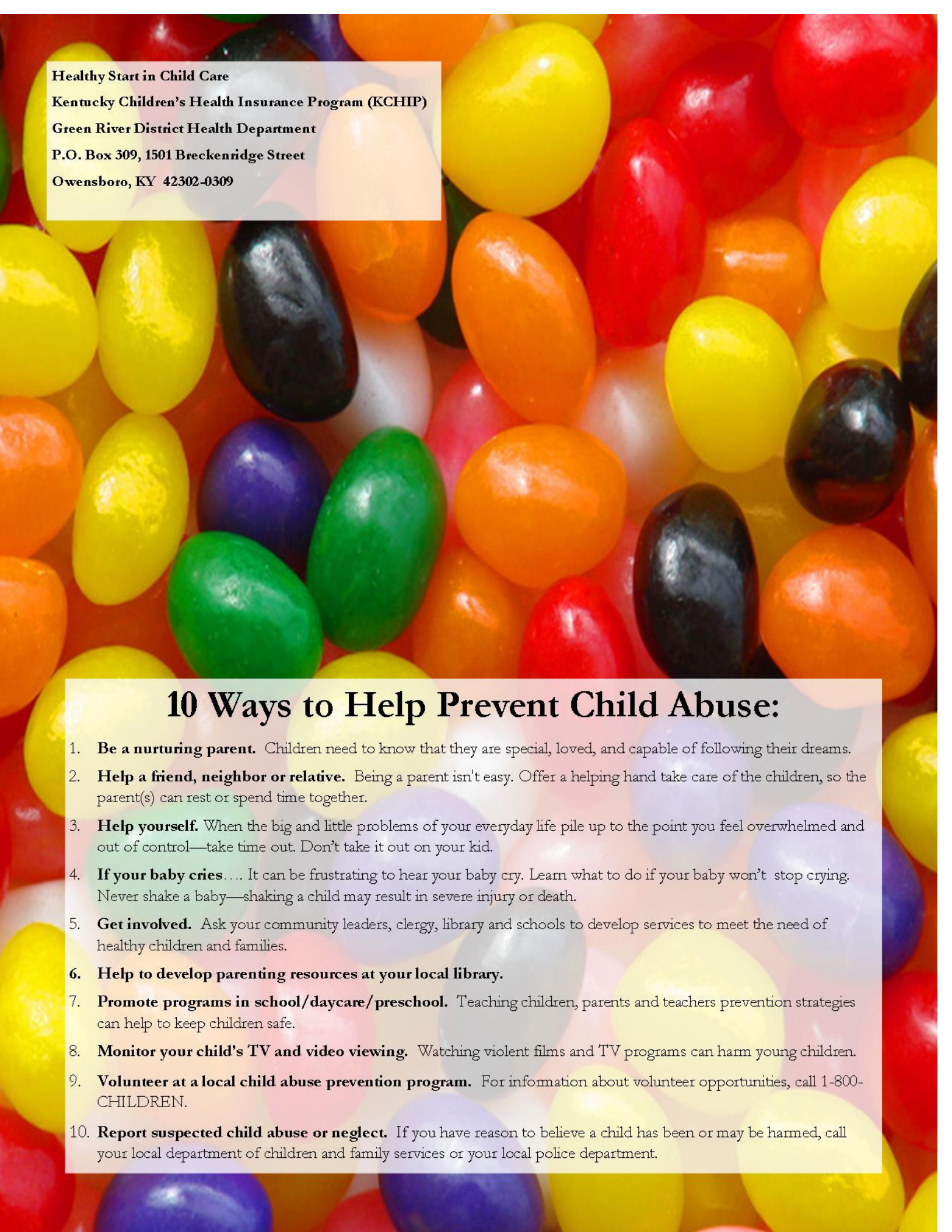
- Talk to your baby. It is soothing to hear your voice.
- When your baby makes sounds, answer him by repeating and adding words. This will help him learn to use language.
- Read to your baby. This helps her develop and understand language and sounds.
- Sing to your baby.
- Play music. This helps your baby develop a love for music and math.
- Praise your baby and give him lots of loving attention.
- Spend time cuddling and holding your baby. This helps her feel cared for and secure.
- The best time to play with your baby is when he’s alert and relaxed. Watch your baby closely for signs of being tired or fussy so that you can take a break.
- Parenting can be hard work! Take care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally. It is easier to enjoy your new baby and be a positive, loving parent when you are feeling good yourself.

## Child Safety First

Now that your newborn is at home, it is time to make sure that your home is a safe place. Look around your home for household items that might present a possible danger to your baby. As a parent, it is your responsibility to ensure that you create a safe environment for your baby. It is also important that you take the necessary steps to make sure that you are mentally and emotionally ready for your new baby. Here are a few tips to keep your baby safe during her first year of life.

- It is important that you never shake your newborn baby. Newborn babies have very weak neck muscles that are not yet able to support their heads. If you shake your baby you can damage his brain and delay normal development.
- To prevent SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), it is recommended that you always put your baby to sleep on her back. For more information on SIDS, visit <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/sids.cfm>.
- Place your baby in a car safety seat every time he rides in the car. The safest place for his safety seat is in the back seat of the car. Children who are less than one year OR are less than 20 pounds should be placed in a rear-facing car seat.
- To prevent your baby from choking, cut her food into small bites. Don’t allow your baby to play with anything that may cover her face or is easy for her to swallow.
- Never carry hot liquids or food near your baby or while holding him.
- Immunizations (shots) are important to protect your child’s health and safety. Because children are susceptible to many potentially serious diseases, it is important that your child receive the proper immunizations. Please consult your local health care provider to ensure that your child is up-to-date on her childhood immunizations. You may visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.htm#Printable>, to obtain a copy of the recommended immunization schedule for U.S. children.

For more information on child development, visit the Center for Disease Control website—<http://www.cdc.gov>.



Healthy Start in Child Care

Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program (KCHIP)

Green River District Health Department

P.O. Box 309, 1501 Breckenridge Street

Owensboro, KY 42302-0309

## 10 Ways to Help Prevent Child Abuse:

1. **Be a nurturing parent.** Children need to know that they are special, loved, and capable of following their dreams.
2. **Help a friend, neighbor or relative.** Being a parent isn't easy. Offer a helping hand take care of the children, so the parent(s) can rest or spend time together.
3. **Help yourself.** When the big and little problems of your everyday life pile up to the point you feel overwhelmed and out of control—take time out. Don't take it out on your kid.
4. **If your baby cries . . .** It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry. Learn what to do if your baby won't stop crying. Never shake a baby—shaking a child may result in severe injury or death.
5. **Get involved.** Ask your community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the need of healthy children and families.
6. **Help to develop parenting resources at your local library.**
7. **Promote programs in school/daycare/preschool.** Teaching children, parents and teachers prevention strategies can help to keep children safe.
8. **Monitor your child's TV and video viewing.** Watching violent films and TV programs can harm young children.
9. **Volunteer at a local child abuse prevention program.** For information about volunteer opportunities, call 1-800-CHILDREN.
10. **Report suspected child abuse or neglect.** If you have reason to believe a child has been or may be harmed, call your local department of children and family services or your local police department.