

# The Baby Buzz



## How To Deal With Device Distractions

Everyone seems to be struggling with staying connected online and with those around us. When is it appropriate to be on your device whether it is a smartphone, tablet or computer?

Everywhere you go you see people looking at the devices rather than with their present company. If this "present company" happens to be a child, it is important to spend "face time" in the flesh. That means looking at them when you are having a conversation.

Eye to eye contact is important even to newborns who are primed to gaze into a mother's eyes seeking social information. This is partly how bonds are formed. Very young children learn about their world largely

through face-to-face interactions, vocalizations, and touching with parents. They also develop language skills this way, according to Brian Alexander.

Eating meals together has been linked to a variety of benefits. Children who have regular sit-down meals with family are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol. They earn better grades in school. These benefits don't occur just because parents and children are munching carrots at the same time. They happen because the family is communicating, according to Dr. Gail Saltz.

While the science of device distraction may just be getting underway, staring at your phone during a meal with your child is **not** a good thing.

### Electronic Devices and Your Child



Be aware of how much time your child spends on electronic devices or in front of the television as compared to quality time spent with a parent or loving care giver.

### Clare/Gladwin County Baby Pantries

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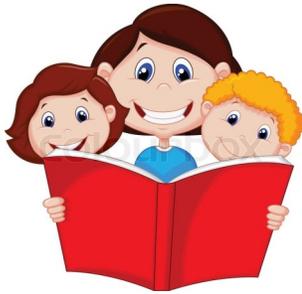
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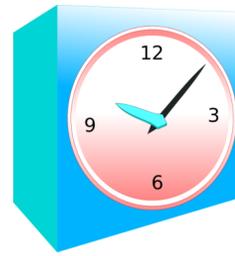
Like Clare  
County Baby  
Pantry or  
Gladwin  
County Baby  
Pantry on  
Face Book!

# Model Great Reading Habits Early and Often

**Read to your young children early and frequently.** It is never too early to start reading to children. Early reading together has a positive influence on many aspects of language development, including communication skills, word knowledge, and later reading ability. Research finds that reading frequency is more important than social economic class in predicting language growth: parents should read to children every day.



**Modeling and talking about reading are also important.** A recent study found that children are more likely to later read outside of school if their parents not only read to them while young but also gave them book recommendations, read themselves where children could see them reading, and had discussions with their children about books. (What you model, you will get.)



**Establish a set reading time each day for you and your children.** Research shows that parents who work full time read less with their children. Having a set routine, such as reading at bath time or bedtime, may help parents to remember to read every day with their children. Establishing routines helps children anticipate reading and understand that reading is important.

**Choose books that match your child's developmental stage and interests.** When choosing books, make sure that they are not too difficult for your child to understand and that the book's topic will be something your child will enjoy. Think about your child's interests and choose books that match those interests.

Read additional articles on reading to your child at <http://www.childtrends.org/tips-on-book-reading-for-parents-of-young-children/#sthash.E9NBcLao.dpuf>

## Nutrition Corner: Vitamin D "The Sunshine Vitamin"



Michigan is a beautiful state, but unfortunately we don't get as much sunshine in the winter months. If you're not getting enough Vitamin D from the sun, you may need to add foods to your diet that are rich in this "Sunshine Vitamin".

This important vitamin can do some surprising things for you. It can protect you against muscular weakness and help make strong bones. It can also help your body absorb the calcium you take into your body, and thus regulate your heartbeat.

A few foods that contain Vitamin D are:

- Salmon, canned (3 ounces [oz]) 530 IU
- Salmon, cooked (3.5 oz) 240-360 IU
- Tuna, canned (3 oz) 200 IU
- Soymilk, fortified (8 oz) 100 IU
- Orange Juice, fortified (8 oz) 100 IU
- Milk, low fat, fortified (8 oz) 98 IU
- Cereal, fortified (1 cup) 40-50 IU
- Eggs (1 large) 20-26 IU
- Swiss Cheese (1 oz) 12 IU

Read the labels if you wonder about the nutrients in the foods you are consuming. The recommendations for Vitamin D are 400 international units (IU) per day if you're under 70 years of age.



# 10 Ways To Get Your Kids Out In Nature

We are fortunate to live in a community that abounds with the wonders of nature all around us. We need to develop activities with our family to take advantage of this benefit. Many children grow up in an urban setting and aren't able to take advantage of nature and all it has to offer us. Check out these activities:

1. **Inspire curiosity by being curious yourself.** Give your child the gift of enthusiasm. When we show awe in nature, our children follow suit. Take the position of a learner—be open to learning new things.
2. **Simply be in nature with no other distractions.** If you are still and quiet, you may observe nature uninterrupted. Early exposure in nature is less about learning facts and more about the senses and joy.
3. **Limit electronic devices while riding in the car.** Talk to your children about the different patterns of clouds or watch for birds. Winter is a great time to spy predatory birds along the road in the bare trees. Even from the car window views of nature are calming and beneficial.
4. **Seek out natural, untouched spaces and return often to them.** Adopt a tree or a field and follow it from season to season. Talk about the changes.
5. **Make time for unstructured outdoor play.** Reduce screen time by exploring nature with no agenda.
6. **Stop thinking about nature time as leisure time.** Time in nature is an essential investment in our children's health and well-being (as well as our own). Changing our mindset will change our priorities. If we view nature time as essential to good health, we will be more likely to engage in it. Nurturing creativity and wonder is part of our responsibility as parents if we want to raise healthy, well-balanced children.
7. **Read about nature with your child.** Ask for nature books that are appropriate for your child's age and interests at your library.
8. **Plan a garden.** Winter is a good time to plan your garden and maybe start some tomato seeds in January or start an herb garden.
9. **Look at the stars.** Winter is a great time to do this with all of our hours of darkness. You don't have to stay up late to check out the night sky. Stargazing offers a deeper, more expansive understanding of the infinite. Allow yourself to think about it, and talk to your children about that wonder.
10. **Get organized.** If your older child is interested, encourage him/her to get involved in the community. Find an outdoor space, like a field or creek, to restore, and encourage your child to become an active participant in protecting it. Just picking up litter (with gloved hands) makes our community better and teaches little ones not to litter. Getting the whole family or neighborhood involved is even better. It will teach teamwork, pride in community, and family togetherness.

Ten tips by Lauren Knight from *The Washington Post*, October 21, 2014.

## Dress for the weather:



When enjoying nature, make sure you and your children dress appropriately. Layers help protect the body and keep it warm. Between sizes? Find help at the Baby Pantry. We will take your winter clothing up to size 6 that is too small. You may pick

up one coat per child per season. You will find hats and mittens there also. Sometimes we have snow pants and boots. So when your child outgrows these items, remember to recycle the clean gently used clothing at the Baby Pantry.



**Support Clare and  
Gladwin County  
Baby Pantries**

**Non-Profit Organizations**

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### **Clare County Baby Pantry**

211 W Spruce Street  
Harrison, MI 48625

Open Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. unless Harrison Community Schools are closed due to inclement weather.

Phone Sue for more information at 989-539-7956.  
Email: ClareCountyBabyPantry@GMail.Com  
Like us on Face Book

### **Gladwin County Baby Pantry**

110 Pearson Street  
Beaverton, MI 48612

Open Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. unless schools are closed.  
Like us on Face Book.

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## **Check Out Your Local Library**

### **Pere Marquette District Library**

185 East Fourth Street  
Clare, MI 48617  
989-386-7576  
Website: [www.pmdl.org](http://www.pmdl.org)

### **Surrey Township Public Library**

105 East Michigan Street  
Farwell, MI 48622  
Phone: 989-588-9782  
Website: [www.stpl.org](http://www.stpl.org)

### **Harrison Community Library**

105 East Main Street  
Harrison, MI 48625  
Phone: 989-539-6711  
Website: [www.harrisonlibrary.net](http://www.harrisonlibrary.net)

### **Gladwin County District Library**

402 James Robertson Drive  
Gladwin, MI 48624  
989-426-8221  
Website: [www.gladwinlibrary.org](http://www.gladwinlibrary.org)

### **Beaverton Branch of GCDL**

128 West Saginaw Street  
Beaverton, MI 48612  
989-435-3981  
Website: [www.gladwinlibrary.org](http://www.gladwinlibrary.org)



Make a weekly visit to your library for story hour. Make books an important part of your family's happy memories. Remember to ask your librarian for nature books.

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