



Inside this issue:

IS MY TODDLER DELAYED?	1
DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES	2
DID YOU KNOW...?	3
NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING MONTH	4
NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING MONTH	5
COVID-19 AND PREGNANCY	6
MENTAL HEALTH TIPS	7
WELLNESS BINGO PAGE	8
SUMMERTIME AND LEAD	9
TICK INFORMATION	10
CROSSWORD PUZZLE	11
BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST	12

## Are My Toddler's Speech and Language Skills Delayed Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic?

This is a frequently asked question, and the answer is not clear. We do know that millions of babies were born in the last two years amidst lockdowns, mask mandates, parents working from home and many other lifestyle changes. These changes were needed to slow the spread of COVID-19, the question remains: will our little ones pay a price in their developmental skills because of these necessary changes?

**Here are some things we do know:**

**During lockdowns, families were much more isolated:**

- Limited social interactions like play dates could have impacted a child's social language development.
- **Masking covered up an important source of social, emotional and linguistic information**
- Children learn language through auditory and visual cues and when a child, teacher or caregiver is masked those visual cues are missing, which could in turn lead to missed communication opportunities.
- **Kids got more screen time than ever before**
- Studies show that children's screen time nearly doubled during the pandemic because of parents trying to balance working from home and child care.



**There have been a few studies that have found a possible connection between developmental delays in children born during the pandemic**

- Studies showed that babies born during the pandemic scored slightly lower on fine and gross motor skills, verbal and overall cognitive development than those born pre-pandemic (it should be noted that these studies had a small sample size).
- At the same time, there is an increase in the pediatric population as well.
- Increasing numbers of toddlers born during the pandemic who are not meeting communication milestones

**Other signs of delays include:**

- Does not use gestures to communicate, like waving, clapping, or pointing.
- A child is not attempting to imitate gestures, actions, sounds, or words.
- If the child is not trying to copy your words.
- If a child is not starting to combine two words together by 24 months old (like "more milk").
  - A child that does not interact or play as well as other children their age.

**Steps parents can take**

- There is a lot parents can do at home to help their little ones start meeting developmental milestones:
  - a) Start by talking to your little ones!
  - b) Narrate what you are doing during every day routines. This type of talk and repetition will help to build their child's understanding of the world around them.
  - c) Parents can also get face to face with their little ones which will allow them to watch facial expressions and mouth movements which is a very important part of speech development.

**CDC's Developmental Milestones:** <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

# Have questions about Breastfeeding or Infant Child Health?

Seneca County's Maternal Child Health program offers education for infant safety and connection to local resources.

If interested please call **315-539-1920**  
Monday through Friday 8:30-5 pm.



## MILESTONES MATTER: LET'S TALK ABOUT THEM!

### MILESTONES AT 4 MONTHS

- Begins to babble
- Responds to affection



### MILESTONES AT 6 MONTHS

- Likes to play with others
- Responds to own name



### MILESTONES AT 9 MONTHS

- Has favorite toys
- Understands "no"



### MILESTONES AT 1 YEAR

- Tries to say words you say
- Waves "bye-bye"



### MILESTONES AT 2 YEARS

- Begins to run
- Begins to sort shapes, colors



### MILESTONES AT 3 YEARS

- Knows name and age
- Climbs and runs well



Get free milestone checklists for these ages and more at [www.cdc.gov/Milestones](http://www.cdc.gov/Milestones) or by calling 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).



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## Seneca County Children with Special Needs Program

The goal of the program is to work with families to help them meet the medical and non-medical needs of children with special needs.

We Can:

- Connect families with health care providers
- Provide information regarding health insurance
- Make referrals to other County agencies such as Preschool and Early Intervention Programs as well as to other agencies to accommodate the child's needs.



# DID YOU KNOW...



Parents whose children  
are enrolled in  
**Preschool Special Education**  
**classrooms** can be reimbursed for  
driving their children to school !

## Driving your child to Preschool gives you a chance to:

- Participate more actively in your child's preschool program.
- Spend some special time talking, singing and playing with your child while carefully driving in the car
- Interact regularly with your child's school staff
- See and get to know some of the other children and their parents
- Ensure that your child arrives at school on time each day.
- Receive reimbursement for providing your child with transportation to Preschool



Reimbursement is only available for **Preschool** Special Education Classroom Programs.

Reimbursement is at the IRS Standard Mileage rate.

2022 rate is \$0.585 a mile (subject to change every Jan 1st)

Parents will be asked to submit a W-9 form.

### 3 Easy Steps to starting the Reimbursement process:

1. Decide which days and directions you can drive your child to their Preschool Special Education Classroom Program.
2. Contact your School District's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) Chairperson and ask them to add Parent Reimbursement to your child's IEP.
3. Contact Seneca County's Children with Special Needs Program Coordinator to have proper forms sent to you to fill out each month.

### CLAIMING YOUR REIMBURSEMENT:

- You will receive a Parent Transportation Information Packet from the Seneca County Health Department with invoice forms to submit.
- You must complete a monthly invoice listing the days and miles you drove with the child in the car and mail it to the Seneca County Health Department. Invoices must be submitted immediately at the end of each month to: **Seneca County Health Department, 2465 Bonadent Dr., Suite 3 Waterloo, NY 13165**
- After your invoice is verified and processed you should receive a check in the mail. (Payments usually arrive within 4 –6 weeks)

Questions?

Call **315-539-1938** and speak with the Children with Special Needs Program Coordinator



THE PROBLEM

1 IN 4

Only 1 in 4 infants is exclusively breastfed as recommended by the time they are 6 months old.

Low rates of breastfeeding add more than **\$3 billion** a year to medical costs for the mother and child in the United States.



Three quarters (76%) of Black infants are ever breastfed, which is below the national average of 84%.



BREASTFEEDING IS AN INVESTMENT IN HEALTH, NOT JUST A LIFESTYLE DECISION

BENEFITS FOR INFANTS

Infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of:

- Asthma
- Obesity
- Type 1 diabetes
- Severe lower respiratory disease
- Acute otitis media (ear infections)
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Gastrointestinal infections (diarrhea/vomiting)
- Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) for preterm infants



BENEFITS FOR MOTHERS

Breastfeeding can help lower a mother's risk of:

- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes
- Ovarian cancer
- Breast cancer



*Breastfeeding provides unmatched health benefits for babies and mothers. It is the clinical gold standard for infant feeding and nutrition, with breast milk uniquely tailored to meet the health needs of a growing baby. We must do more to create supportive and safe environments for mothers who choose to breastfeed.*

**Dr. Ruth Petersen, Director of CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity**

MOTHERS NEED SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THEIR BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY

**60%** of mothers stop breastfeeding sooner than they planned.

Certain factors make the difference in whether and how long babies are breastfed:

- Hospital practices
- Education and encouragement
- Policies or supports in the workplace
- Access to community supports





## CDC IS INCREASING BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT FOR MOTHERS ACROSS THE NATION



### We collect data to learn how best to improve breastfeeding rates in the United States by:

- Tracking how long infants are breastfed.
- Creating reports that show how well states and hospitals support breastfeeding mothers.



### We promote best practices in health care settings by:

- Supporting the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, a global standard to promote breastfeeding in hospitals.
- Encouraging obstetricians, pediatricians, and nurses to educate new moms about breastfeeding.



### We support mothers at work and in their communities by:

- Partnering with states to help employers support breastfeeding mothers with places to pump and store breast milk, flexible work hours, and maternity leave benefits.
- Promoting access to community supports like peer counseling and supplemental nutrition programs.

## WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The percentage of babies who start out breastfeeding increased from 73% in 2004 to 84% in 2016.

11%

In the United States, the percentage of births in hospitals with recommended maternity care practices that support breastfeeding increased from 3.8% in 2010 to 29.1% in 2020.



2010	<div style="width: 3.8%;"></div>	3.8%
2020	<div style="width: 29.1%;"></div>	29.1%

“Given the importance of breastfeeding on the health of mothers and children, it is critical that we take action to support breastfeeding. Women who choose to breastfeed face numerous barriers—only through the support of family, communities, clinicians, healthcare systems, and employers will we be able to make breastfeeding the easy choice.”

**Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH**  
U.S. Surgeon General

DNPAO August 2021



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:**  
Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity  
[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao)  
[www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/about-breastfeeding](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/about-breastfeeding)

# Protect Yourself, Your Family, and Your Baby: Get the COVID-19 Vaccine!



The COVID-19 vaccine is safe before, during, and after pregnancy. If you're thinking about getting pregnant, trying to get pregnant, are pregnant or breastfeeding, get vaccinated now!

## Why Get Vaccinated?

### If you're pregnant

- Your risk is higher for serious illness, pregnancy complications, and death from COVID-19 than people who are not pregnant.
- COVID-19 vaccines do not cause infection in pregnant people or their babies.
- You are not at higher risk of pregnancy loss (miscarriage) or other problems with pregnancy.

### If you're trying to get pregnant

- COVID-19 vaccines do not affect your ability to get pregnant, even if you're going through fertility treatments.
- Studies have not linked COVID-19 vaccines with problems related to pregnancy, monthly periods, erectile performance, sperm quality, or infertility.



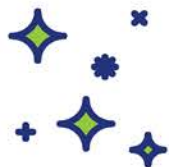
For more information:  
[coronavirus.health.ny.gov/  
pregnancy-covid-19](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/pregnancy-covid-19)







# STRESS LESS TECHNIQUES



Express Yourself



Spend Time Alone



Color, Paint or Draw  
Write in a Journal  
Build Something Awesome  
Make Music or Dance

Read a Book  
Practice Deep Breathing  
Declutter Personal Space  
Unplug and Rest Your Eyes

Get Out in Nature



Practice Healthy Habits

Connect with Others

Star Gaze  
Play Outside  
Go for a Walk  
Sit in the Sun

Get Regular Sleep  
Eat Nutritious Foods  
Move Your Body  
Stick to a Routine



Talk to Friends  
Practice Gratitude  
Video Chat with Family  
Act with Kindness



## The Seneca County Suicide Prevention Coalition would like to remind you

# You are not alone! HELP IS AVAILABLE

### Sudden Loss Support Group

Grief has no timeline. A safe space is available.  
Walk-ins welcome. Registration encouraged (315) 651-0043



## Crisis Hotline

Call **211** Text **741741**



HEALTHY MINDS • HEALTHY SCHOOLS • HEALTHY NEW YORK



# Family Wellness Bingo

Create a <a href="#">calm/relaxing space</a> in your home	Go on a Mindful Nature Walk as a family	Start a Gratitude Jar and add 2 things each day you're grateful for	Create a family <a href="#">mood tracker</a> together	Create <a href="#">mindful stones</a> and place them around your neighborhood
Before bedtime, think about 3 good things that happened today	Try a new recipe together. If it's good, share it with your neighbors	Create a playlist of everyone's favorite uplifting songs and play it when needed	Take a mindful moment as a family and practice deep breathing	Have a family board game night
Pick an uplifting or funny film and have a family movie night	As a family, write kind letters to veterans and elders in your community	<b>Free Space</b>	Call/Video Call a friend or family member who you haven't seen in a while	Create a family <a href="#">wellness board</a>
Get to know each other! Play 21 questions with a family member	Write affirming notes and put them around the home for everyone to see	Take 10 minutes and encourage everyone to journal	Set a goal of 8 glasses of water for the day.	Search the Internet for new dance moves to try and learn. Have a dance party
Try out some yoga or stretch together	Create <a href="#">sensory/calm down jars</a>	Think of 5 people who have positively impacted your family and send them a thank you email or letter	Create <a href="#">soothing bracelets</a> for worried hands or busy minds	Take a reading break together for 20 minutes







# Summertime and Lead

Did you know that summertime brings higher risk of lead exposure???

Did you know that children are most likely to come into contact with lead in the summer months? In New York State and across the US, children's average blood lead levels tend to be higher in the summer months compared to winter. Reasons include...

- Children are playing outside more on porches or in soil that contains lead
- Lead on old painted windows is scraped off or becomes a powder due to friction as the windows are opened and shut
- Dry summer winds stir up lead from the soil into the air and it can also get in the home
- Lead in pipes gets into water more easily in warmer weather

*What can parents and child care providers do to prevent lead poisoning this summer?*

- Wash children's hands and toys often
- Keep your home clean by washing floors, window frames, window sills, and other surfaces weekly. Use a mop or a sponge with a solution of water and an all-purpose cleaner or a cleaner made specifically to clean up lead dust
- Leave shoes at the door so lead dust does not get trekked around the house
- Be aware of lead hazards and keep children away from them
- Healthy food is also important because children will digest more lead if they do not eat enough foods containing calcium and iron. Vitamin C helps them digest more iron, so foods containing Vitamin C should be part of their diet too



**Seneca County**  
Health Department



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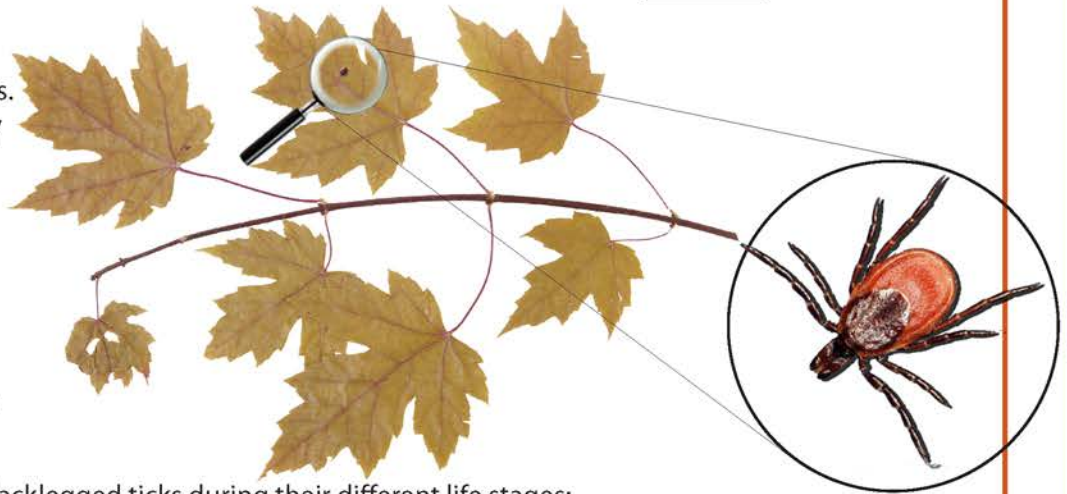


# Don't Let a Tick Make You Sick!



## What is a tick?

Ticks are related to spiders. They have 8 legs. But they don't spin webs and they don't eat insects. All ticks are small, but blacklegged ticks (sometimes called deer ticks) are **very** small. This is a blacklegged tick close-up:



This is the actual size of blacklegged ticks during their different life stages:



They are so tiny, it's easy to mistake them for freckles or dirt. Sometimes they're hard to see at all! Would it be hard to find these on a pet?



## Where do ticks live?

Ticks live in places where there is a lot of tall grass, shrubs, and leaves.

Ticks wait for an animal (like a deer, a mouse, or a dog) or a person to walk by. Then they grab on to the animal or human.

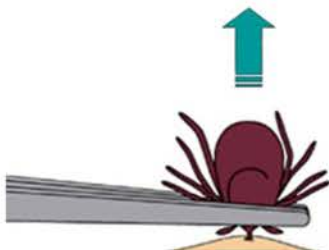
## How do ticks bite us?

After climbing on a person or animal, ticks find a good place to attach themselves. They might hide in your hair, or behind the knee, even in your underwear!

Then, the ticks bite into a person or animal's skin and start drinking their blood. Tick bites don't usually hurt, so you may not even notice it. The tick can stay attached for a few days. When it is full, it will fall off.

## What if I find a tick on me?

If you find a tick on your body, tell your parents or a teacher. They can use tweezers to pull it off. Then they should wash the bite with soap and water or disinfectant.



An adult should use narrow tweezers to pull the tick straight up and out.

## How can I keep ticks away?

You can wear insect repellent and stay out of tall weeds. If you are in a place where ticks live, take a bath or shower after you come inside. Let your parents check you for ticks afterwards.

Also, tell your parents that there are things they can do to keep ticks out of your yard.

## How can I stay healthy?

If a tick bites you and soon after you get a fever, a skin rash, or feel really, really tired, tell your parents. The tick may have given you some germs. See your doctor to find out if you need medicine.

# Test Your Knowledge!

### ACROSS

1. If a tick makes you sick, you may get one of these on your skin.

3. Ticks eat \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Never pull off a tick with your \_\_\_\_\_.

9. If a tick makes you sick, you may feel hot because of a \_\_\_\_\_.

11. Ticks can be so small, you might think they look like \_\_\_\_\_.

12. A place where ticks wait for people or animals.

13. After removing a tick, wash the bite with \_\_\_\_\_ and water.

### DOWN

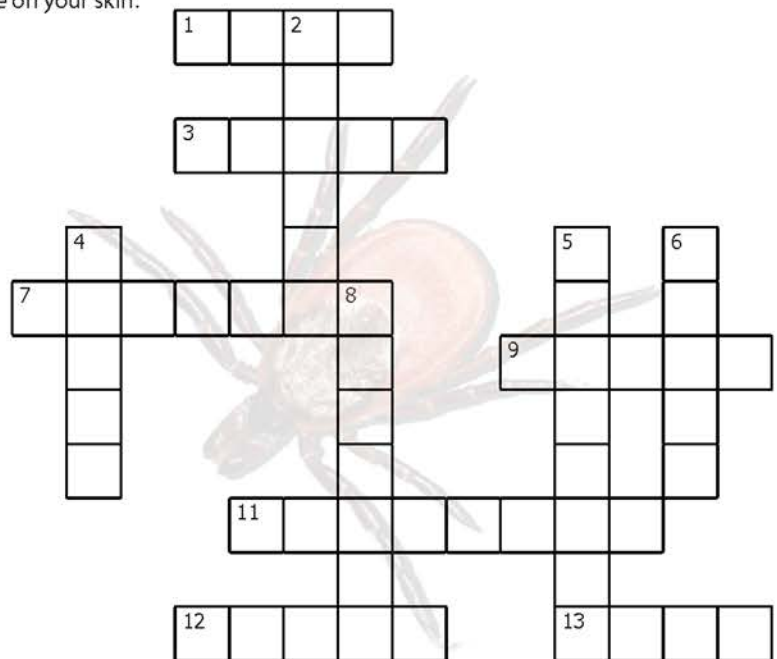
2. Take a bath or \_\_\_\_\_ to help remove ticks.

4. The number of legs a tick has.

5. Tool for removing ticks.

6. When you come indoors, always \_\_\_\_\_ for ticks.

8. Ticks are related to these web spinners.



### Division of Vector-Borne Diseases

For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333

Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348

E-mail: [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov) Web: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)





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Suite 3  
Waterloo, New York 13165

**Public Health**  
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Monday - Friday 8:30a-5:00p  
Phone: (315) 539-1920  
Toll Free: 800-688-7188 x1920  
Fax: (315) 539-9493



For more information,  
visit Seneca County Department of Health online at:  
<https://senecacountyhealthdepartment.com/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/SenecaCountyHealth/>

# BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST

- ✓ SUMMER READING
- ✓ BUY NEW BACKPACK
- ✓ STOCK UP ON SCHOOL SUPPLIES
- ✓ PRACTICE MORNING ROUTINE

**SCHEDULE VACCINATIONS**



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