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Stop. Breathe. Talk.

Author—Lori Hayungs, Family Life Extension Specialist

Research shows that physical punishment and yelling is harmful.

So what can we do instead?

Stop. Breathe. Talk.

As we wind down our conversations on guidance & discipline it becomes important to just step back and focus on 3 simple steps. At any age, and in any situation, we can help ourselves by remembering to take a moment to stop, take a breath and use a calm voice as we talk to our child about our expectations.

No matter what age our children are, we can stop, breathe and talk. Even a crying infant can be comforted by our slowed breathing and calm reassuring voice. Toddlers can see our calm demeanor and notice our quieter voice. The elementary and middle school child notices that we are role-modeling actions for them to mirror.

Talk doesn't mean lecture. It can be as simple as, "I hear you" or "I see that you are upset right now". Allowing children a safe place to express their strong feelings while we model a calm, cool and collected approach, is the best kind of guidance and discipline we can give our child.

Stop. Breathe. Talk. *(Follow-up to previous blog post)*

Author—Lori Hayungs, Family Life Extension Specialist

I wanted to share this comment I received from a reader. Thank you Mackenzie for allowing me to share your thoughts with our readers.

"I'm a parent of a mostly happy seven month old daughter. I'm also an adult educator who helps parents understand the important difference between reacting (when we let our immediate emotions decide how to react to a child's behavior) and responding (when take a moment to stop and think about how we actually want to respond to our child's behavior).

One simple way to remember this difference is to tell yourself to "Stop. Breathe. Talk." It sounds so simple, right? And most people assume I must get it right every time, but that is NOT true... In my head I know that my daughter feels things intensely (like her momma does) and responds with



the same intensity because she doesn't have the skills to cope appropriately yet. And still, in the heat of an overwhelming moment, I definitely have to take that second to think to myself, "Stop. Breathe. Talk".

"Like last night, my teething daughter was up for the second time in the middle of night (a phase I thought we had finally made it through). I picked her up from her crib and tried to soothe her back to sleep for a few minutes. When she calmed down, I set her back into the crib and headed back to bed. Seconds after I get back under the covers, I hear the crying start again. It's the middle of the night, I'm tired. I start to huff back to her crib irritated. As I walk I'm saying to myself, "Just sleep! Why won't you sleep? I'm so sick of this!" I walk up to her crib... "Wait," I think to myself. "She isn't doing this to you. She is having a hard time and needs her momma to help her through this." So I stop. I walk into the hallway. I take a deep breath. I walk back up to her crib. In a calm voice I say, "I know, sweet girl. Getting teeth is hard work. Mommy is here." I pick her up and rub her back. Her body relaxes and after a few minutes, I set her down in her crib, totally asleep."

"Even as someone who teaches these skills to fellow parents, I know I don't get it right every time. **But in the moments where I remind myself to "Stop. Breathe. Talk", I do better.** That extra second gives me the chance to consider my emotions and reaction, and change it into the kind of response I want to have. "

Consider one of the last frustrating interacting you had with your child. Would it have ended differently if you had chosen to Stop. Breathe. Talk.?

Starting the Finance Conversation with your Aging Parents

Author—Guest Blogger—Sandra McKinnon, Human Sciences Specialist



It is wise to plan ahead and anticipate situations our aging parents may face. As an adult child, it may be emotionally difficult to talk to our parents about death, disability, chronic illness and incapacity, but making financial decisions before a crisis has benefits; there is less emotion, disagreements among siblings may be reduced and you are not making decisions in the middle of financial upheaval

It's a good idea to start the conversation before our parents are 60 years old. If you are an aging parent, start the conversation now with your adult children.

Three ways to start the conversation:

- Raise the issue when an event occurs: a neighbor or friend is in the nursing home or has been hospitalized
- Share your own wishes and then ask your family what they want
- Organize a family meeting

Ideally, in a family meeting, everyone in the immediate family participates, even if joining in by phone or online. It is important to respect your parents' privacy. Parents can decide how much detail they want to share, but the goal is to know their wishes and where the essential papers are should a crisis arise.

As an adult child who happens to be in the field of family finance, I knew it was necessary to start the conversation with my parents about their end-of-life wishes. I also needed to know where the essential papers were located in case of a crisis.



Essential papers include:

- Insurance policies
- Wills
- Durable powers of attorney for finances and health care
- Burial plans
- Where the safety deposit box is, who has the right to open it, and the location of the key

- Where the birth and marriage certificates are kept, along with...
 - ◊ Military service and Social Security records
 - ◊ Usernames/passwords to online accounts
 - ◊ Names of financial advisors
 - ◊ Retirement benefits
 - ◊ And investment and banking accounts

Whew! That is quite a list! It may take a while to have a conversation about, and to gather all these items, but doing so helps adult children know their parents' wishes and what is expected when you have to step into a decision making role.

Call your county ISU extension office and ask for the publication "Legal Issues in Later Life." You could use it to start a family conversation. Whatever you do, get the conversation started today.

Facts about the Date on Your Food Package

For more information visit: stiltasty.com

Words on Wellness

The dates provided on food products can be confusing. This confusion often leads to unnecessary food waste. Manufacturers provide dating to help consumers and retailers decide when food is of the best quality. To determine quality dates, manufacturers consider the length of time the food has been held during distribution and the holding temperature, the characteristics of the food, and the type of packaging used.

For example, fresh beef packaged in a reduced oxygen packaging system will stay fresh longer than meat not packaged this way. The quality may deteriorate after these dates, but the product is still safe to eat if handled properly. Open dating is used on most food, such as meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy. Closed or coded dating is a series of letters and/or numbers that typically appears on shelf-stable products like cans or boxes of food. Common phrases used are the following.



- **'Best if used by/before'** indicates when a product will be of best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- **'Sell by'** tells the store how long to display the product for inventory management. It is not a safety date. You should buy the product before the sell-by date, but you can still store it at home beyond that date as long as you follow safe storage procedures.
- **'Use by'** is the last date recommended for use of the product at peak quality. It is not a safety date.

Spring Cleaning—Your Refrigerator

Author—Justine Hoover, Registered Dietitian & Assistant EFNEP/FNP Coordinator

SPENDSMART
EATSMART

As the weather warms up in March, I like to open up the windows, let in some fresh air, and do some spring cleaning. Since I have two young children at home, my spring cleaning usually happens in fits and starts. To tell the truth, my goal is usually to have the spring cleaning done by early May because I can only find a free hour or two each week to devote to it.

This week we are going to go back to a blog written in January of 2013, "How to Clean and Organize your Refrigerator". My refrigerator desperately needs to be cleaned out, so I think it is going to be my first spring cleaning project. Having a clean refrigerator prevents food waste because you can easily see what you have on hand and what needs to be eaten up soon. Having a clean refrigerator also lowers your risk of food-borne illness because foods are more likely to stay at the appropriate temperature and less likely to spoil.

There is a simple checklist for cleaning your refrigerator (we've included it at the end of this blog newsletter). Here are a few things you can do quickly if you do not have the time for a full refrigerator cleaning.

- Make sure your refrigerator temperature is 40°F or slightly below and your freezer is 0°F or below. Higher temperatures mean faster food spoilage.
- Air circulates constantly in a refrigerator and foods dry out quickly. Everything needs to be wrapped in foil, plastic, or put in airtight containers. Moisture- and vapor-proof materials are best.
- Perishables like dairy, eggs, and meat should be kept in the coldest part of the refrigerator (not the door). Fresh meat should be in a drawer or in a container on a bottom shelf so any juices that leak do not drip on other foods.
- Identify a spot for leftovers and label them. Make a plan to use them. If you know you will not use them within four days, freeze them or throw them away.



Wipe up spills in the refrigerator when they happen to prevent bacteria (germs) and odors from developing. Use hot soapy water to clean up any spill and rinse with clean water.

Making Granola Bars a Healthy Treat

Author—Marlene Geiger, Program Specialist I



Crunchy, chewy, chocolatey, fruity Granola Bars are an American snack and breakfast staple. In fact, granola bars are so popular, they even have their own annual day of celebration in January. Pitched as a healthy food (and they can be), the nutrition label often tells otherwise—most are little more than candy bars in disguise! Many are loaded with sugar/high fructose sugar and short on fiber/protein. The satiety value is low—in a short amount of time, hunger sets in again.

So how can you enjoy your favorite snack without leaving you hungry or wanting more? Here are a couple of ideas to up the granola bar game:

- 1. Look for a better bar.** Check the ingredients and nutrition label. Specifically look for bars that are high in fiber and protein, sweetened with honey or natural syrups, and include nuts, grains, seeds and fruits.
- 2. Make or concoct your own.** There is an abundance of recipes to choose from. Groovy Granola Bars from Oregon State University is an easy recipe to get you started. Not only is it packed with fiber and protein, it also provides half of your daily value for Omega-3's. Change it up with other dried fruits, nuts, seeds and even a few dark chocolate chips. Coconut palm sugar can be used to replace the brown sugar without altering the flavor. However, the American Diabetes Association cautions that coconut palm sugar should be treated the same as brown sugar for those needing to count calories and carbohydrates.

Coconut Palm Sugar (As referenced in the above AnswerLINE blog)

Source—American Diabetes Association

<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/what-can-i-eat/making-healthy-food-choices/coconut-palm-sugar.html#sthash.4py76HUZ.dpuf>

Coconut palm sugar is a sugar substitute that seems to be gaining popularity in the market. It is made from sap that is extracted from the coconut tree. The taste of pure coconut palm sugar is similar to brown sugar. For cooking purposes, it has a very low melt temperature and an extremely high burn temperature so it can be used in baked products in place of sugar.

Manufacturers of coconut palm sugar boast its low glycemic index, claiming it is a better choice for people with diabetes than regular sugar. Glycemic index (GI) is a measure of how a food raises blood glucose (or blood sugar) compared to a reference food (usually glucose or white bread). In the United States, we do not do official GI testing. So, GI numbers for the same food can differ depending on your source.

GI can also vary from person to person. It will change depending on how a food is cooked, and what the food is eaten with. In the case of coconut palm sugar, it is likely to be mixed or prepared with other ingredients that contain carbohydrates.

It is okay for people with diabetes to use coconut palm sugar as a sweetener, but they should not treat it any differently than regular sugar. It provides just as many calories and carbohydrates as regular sugar: about 15 calories and 4 grams of carbohydrate per teaspoon. So, you still need to account for it when planning meals.

Also, note that some coconut palm sugar on the market may be mixed with cane sugar and other ingredients. It is important to check nutrition labels and read the ingredient list on these products.

Groovy Granola Bars

Serving Size: 1 Bar Serves: 12 Cost: Varies

Ingredients:

- Cooking spray
- 1 cup old-fashioned (rolled) oats
- 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1/4 cup ground flaxseed
- 1 cup whole-grain puffed rice cereal
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup nut butter (peanut or almond)
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/4 tsp sea salt

Instructions:

1. Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Combine oats, walnuts, flaxseed, cereal and cranberries in a large mixing bowl.
3. In a small saucepan combine nut butter, sugar, honey, vanilla and sea salt.
4. Heat over medium-low for 3-5 minutes or until bubbling, stirring frequently.
5. Pour sauce over oat mixture and stir until well combined using a spoon or rubber spatula coated with cooking spray.
6. Pour mixture into greased baking dish and press gently until smooth and even.
7. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before slicing into 12 evenly sized bars.
8. Store in a sealed container for up to 1 week or freeze for up to 1 month.

Tips:

- To view this, and other, Oregon State University Linus Pauling Institute Healthy Youth Program recipes visit: <http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/healthyyouth/fresh-grown-cooking-kids-recipes>



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Bar
Servings Per Recipe 12

Amount Per Serving

Calories 190 Calones from Fat 90

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 10g	15%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 100mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 15g	

Protein 5g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 4%

Calcium 2% • Iron 6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2 000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2 000	2 500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2 400mg	2 400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calones per gram

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Blog newsletter available by Email!



We are always looking for ways to conserve resources; if you have email access please sign up to receive the monthly newsletter electronically!

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How to Clean and Organize Your Refrigerator

An organized and clean refrigerator means less searching for food so meal prep and writing a grocery list is faster and less food (and less money!) is wasted. Your risk of foodborne illness is lower because foods will stay colder, raw meats will not drip on to other foods, and there is less risk of spoilage.

Here are the steps:

- Turn off the refrigerator and unplug.
- Remove everything. Discard old or spoiled food.
- Perishable food should be placed in a cooler to keep it cold.
- Remove shelves and drawers; wash with hot soapy water, rinse with clean water, and dry.
- Wipe inside interior and bottom of refrigerator.
- Replace shelves and drawers. As you put back the food, wipe off the jars and containers..

Tips for organizing and proper food storage:

- If the refrigerator has a special drawer for meats, use it to keep raw meat, seafood, and poultry away from other ready-to-eat and perishable foods to prevent cross-contamination. If there is not a special drawer, keep these foods in a pan on a lower shelf to prevent juices from dripping on other food.
- Milk, yogurt, and cottage cheese can all be stored together on a shelf in the refrigerator. Keeping these in the door is not recommended because they are exposed to the warm air when the door is opened and this will cause them to spoil faster.
- Eggs should be stored in their carton on a shelf, not in the door (same reason as above)
- Sauces and condiments can be kept together in the door of the refrigerator. If they are in the door, they are easy to see which reduces the chances that the same thing will be purchased many times over.
- Have a designated shelf for leftovers and make a plan to use them. Freeze them if you aren't going to use in four days. Remove leftovers from plates, serving dishes, pots, or pans and place in clear plastic containers before storing in the refrigerator. Label them. Rotate the oldest leftovers to the front. This will save on space and reduce the chances that leftovers will be pushed to the back of the refrigerator and be forgotten.
- Store bottled or canned beverages in a pantry or cupboard and cool down with ice when needed. This will free up space for foods that must stay cold. Refrigerated juices and opened bottles of juice should be refrigerated. If space is an issue, these can be transferred into smaller, clear containers.
- Use foil, plastic wrap, plastic bags or airtight containers for packaging foods for refrigerator storage. Moisture- and vapor-proof materials are best.
- Wipe the exterior of refrigerator and remove dust and lint from front grill. Clean condenser coils to remove dirt and lint. Follow the same steps for the freezer. For the freezer I also make a list of what is in the freezer so I can put items on my menu list and use them.



Check the temperature of the refrigerator or freezer.

Store food at cool temperatures. From 34°F to 40°F is best. Foods stored at temperatures above 40°F spoil rapidly. Refrigerator/freezer thermometers can be purchased at hardware and big box stores.

From now on...

Wipe up spills in the refrigerator with hot, soapy water when they happen to prevent bacteria (germs) from growing. Clean the refrigerator regularly to reduce food odors and remove spoiled foods immediately so decay cannot pass to other foods.