

Transcription

Production Conversations COVID 19
Episode Parenting in the Pandemic pt 3
Duration 6'47"
Deliver format H264

John:

Jennifer and Liz yeah welcome, thanks a lot. So Liz, this may be a rhetorical question here, but kids are acting out, babies are clingy. What's going on?

Liz:

Well you know, if there's one thing that's more contagious than an epidemic, it's anxiety. And anxiety is really – Bruce Perry says that children are little barometers of our emotions, so a lot of what's going on is that children are picking up what's going on in households right now and one of the first things children do when they feel insecure is they act out and it's really a great strategy to get attention but not the kind of attention that's a negative seeking of attention, but really the reassurance that things are going to be okay. So they're really looking to the adults in their life to remind them that that they're safe and that they're secure. And really having some rhythm and structure to the day even in the midst of lots that's outside of our control can be really helpful because children do so much better when they know what to expect. Actually adults do too, but we know that that when babies know what to expect and when toddlers and school-aged children it really – the flow of the day is a lot better. So we really would encourage you to find simple ways to carve out a new rhythm for your family that looks maybe different than it did when your kids were in school or when you were both working outside the home. But nonetheless, kind of something that everybody knows what's coming next. And really when our kids are misbehaving we really want to take a moment to take a pause, rather than just to react. Because between that space, that pause is really where change can happen. So really taking that pause and saying, "I wonder what's going on right now with my child". And really also that pause allows you to do that moment of reflection for yourself which is, "I really wonder what's going on with me right now too".

John: Jennifer, can families still go to prenatal visits or child-well visits?

Jennifer: Yes actually they can. Some visits may be postponed or they might be offered through Telehealth but many visits are still considered to be essential. One of the last things that we need to have happen on top of this pandemic is to have an outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases like Measles or Mumps or Pertussis like we've had in the past. So it's really important to contact your healthcare provider to find out how they're managing this. I know the State Department of Health has asked healthcare providers to especially focus on the well-child exams in the first couple of years when vaccines are offered. And some of them are setting things up so that they have different days of the week or times of day that they're seeing well children and not well children. They're prioritizing newborn care and obviously prenatal care can't all be done through Telehealth so babies are going to come along and we need to take care of people's prenatal care visits.

John: Thanks. Liz, what resources are available for essential workers that need daycare support?

Liz: Yeah, so Childcare Aware has been designated as the statewide childcare COVID communication response and referral. It's a really big mouthful but essentially if you are looking for childcare, look up the website Childcare Aware. And there's a hotline there that you can call and they'll direct you and they'll let you know what facilities in your area are offering childcare. And most of our schools now also have some type of childcare in place, so check your school website as well for details particularly. And then one other thing I know people are getting really creative with, working with their friends and neighbors to help

negotiate care. And we just want to just encourage people to be really thoughtful and careful in the selecting of people that might be helping you with caring for your child and just making sure that you're making as safe a choice as possible.

John: Jennifer, let's just chat a bit about finances. You know some families now are suddenly finding themselves without a paycheck or really struggling financially. Are there any resources available?

Jennifer: Well this is a very very difficult situation and unprecedented times for people but there are a lot of different assistance programs that have been set up. There's eviction protection, unemployment options that weren't available before, expanded food benefits. There are a whole number of things that – families might even be eligible for programs that they hadn't been eligible for before such as WIC or Apple Health. The big question I think for people is, "how do you find out about this stuff?" and our state has a system called 211. You just dial the numbers 211 on your phone and that gets you to resource specialists that can help direct you to these services. You can also go to their website which will flash on the screen here and there are also some resources at the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County for workers and for businesses that are struggling if people have their own businesses – lots of business assistance there. And then there's a program called Parenthelp123 that also has a phone line that specializes in helping to connect families with young children to helpful resources for basic needs.

John: So Liz, in general, how can Skagit families face the COVID-19 dilemma?

Liz: I really think that if we can summarize anything today it's that we do this by studying ourselves as parents and by reassuring them – our children – that they are safe and that we are with them in this.

John: That's great. Thanks Liz. Thanks Jennifer for sharing all this information. There's a lot of questions but it's good to hear that there's a lot of resources out there as well. Thanks so much.