

"New"...Exciting and Scary

5,2,1 Almost None

Old Habits Die Hard

Middleton Pediatrics  
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January 2012

# Happy 1st Birthday Middleton Pediatrics!

## "New"...Exciting and Scary

Things that are new have a way of bringing lots of excitement with them. A new year, a new job, even a new hairdo or pair of shoes—all of these things have a way of making us excited about what's ahead. We feel anticipation. We dream about what might be. We feel/hope that better days are coming.

New things can also be scary. There is so much uncertainty about what might happen, and our fears kick in with scenarios of "What if...". Any change can make us feel uncomfortable; big changes can do this in big ways.

While the new year will often bring some excitement as well as some fear, perhaps nothing brings this combination of emotions as much as a new birth. When a child comes into the world, it is as if everything else stops and all of life changes in an instant; it is truly both an exciting and scary event for all involved.

Not too long ago, there were many reasons that one really should be scared about birth, as having a new baby was a much more dangerous event than it is today. At the start of the 20th century, for every 1,000 births, approximately 8 women would die from pregnan-

cy-related complications. Even more astounding was that 100 of these infants (10%!) would die prior to their first birthday. Today, the statistics for mothers has improved by 99%; for infants, by 90%. The dramatic improvement of perinatal medicine during the 20th century is one of recent history's greatest success stories. Much of this success can be attributed to better knowledge of the potential complications, better infection control, and more hospital (as opposed to home) births. Here in Central Florida, we are blessed with so many excellent obstetricians and hospitals, and our community is healthier because of them.

Birthdays are a wonderful time to celebrate the life of a child, looking back thankfully over the previous year and looking ahead to the coming year. This is especially true of a child's first birthday (despite the fact that the infant is probably somewhat oblivious to the meaning of the festivities, wondering why so many people are circling around, staring, and inviting him to dive into a previously forbidden ball of sugar and flour placed in front of him). The birthday allows us to reflect over the events of the previous year; grateful for the struggles

overcome (sleepless nights, first illnesses, more sleepless nights, etc.) and the memories created. This celebration also brings a renewed sense of excitement and probably some new fears as we wonder what might the next year bring.

New businesses are similar to new births. The beginning is full of excitement and can also be quite scary; lots of anticipation and dreams, but also lots of "what if" scenarios and fears of embarking on a journey that is largely unknown. And like births of previous centuries, the "mortality rate" for businesses can be quite high.

This month, Middleton Pediatrics celebrates its first birthday. We do so with a great sense of gratitude for the past year as well as a lot of excitement about some new things ahead. We are so grateful for the families and individuals that have helped so much with making our first year enjoyable and fulfilling even beyond what we had hoped and dreamed.

We wish for 2012 to be a great year for your family and your child's health, and we thank you for letting us be a part of it.

### Caring Well

Session 5: Immunizations and Your Child's Health  
Thursday, January 26th 6:00pm-7:30pm

Michael Middleton, M.D.

And

Federico Laham, M.D.

Pediatric Infectious Disease Specialist

Space is fairly limited. Please RSVP to [kelli@middletonpediatrics.com](mailto:kelli@middletonpediatrics.com)

## 5, 2, 1, Almost None: Formula for a Healthy 2012

Every January millions of Americans make New Year's resolutions to change habits and welcome in a healthier, happier year. A large percentage of these resolutions are pledging to get fit or lose weight. Maintaining a healthy weight and creating a healthy lifestyle are important goals at any time of year, but are difficult for many of us to put into action. According to the 2010 census 26% of Floridians are obese, including 14% of children under age 5 and climbing to 18% by age 11.

So how can we change our lifestyle for the long-run and teach our children to form healthy habits? Nemours has developed a program, **5-2-1-Almost None**, focused on preventing childhood obesity and promoting healthy lifestyles that the entire family can adopt. This simple formula reminds us to have **5** fruits or vegetables a day, limit screen time to **2** hours or less (TV, video games and recreational computer use), include **1** hour a day of activity, and drink **Almost No** sugary drinks (twice a week or less).

It's easy to find advertisements for the latest diet fad or exercise equipment guaranteeing quick results. These gimmicks are expensive and short-term solutions at best, and at worst can be dangerous. The simple plan to eat less and exercise more may seem daunting when you look at the big picture. Instead, it may be helpful to look at each day individually and set small goals that are easy to attain. Here are some tips for implementing these ideas into your family's lifestyle.

5 \*Serve at least one fruit or vegetable at every meal and snack. \*Be creative. Add fruits and vegetables to pancakes, cereal, oatmeal, scrambled eggs, pasta, tacos, and sandwiches. \*Keep offering-it can take a kid 10 times or more before they enjoy certain foods. \*Most frozen, canned, and dried fruits or vegetables can be as nutritious as fresh produce. Try to choose products without

added sugars, salt, sauces, or seasonings.

2 \*Be a role model and limit your own screen time. \*Keep the TV in a central location and out of your child's bedroom. \*Turn off the TV during dinner and take time to talk about your day. \*Encourage reading and activity. \*Give your kids a screen time "allowance." This will help them to think about what they really want to watch, rather than surfing mindlessly. \*Ask kids to help make dinner. \*Turn on some music and dance or sing along.

1 \*Activity does not have to come from group/organized sports. Anything that elevates your heart rate counts. \*It's not necessary to carve out a full hour at once-squeeze in 10 minute bursts of activity throughout the day. \*Be active together-find a playground or hiking trails nearby. \*Insert physical activity into the things you already do-park farther away from store entrances, and take the stairs instead of the elevator. \*Set up a safe area in your home where active play is okay-rainy weather and extreme heat are not excuses to sit on the couch all day!

**Almost None** \*Sugary drinks should be treated like all other desserts and saved for special occasions. \*Water and low-fat milk are the best options, so eliminate other choices from the house. \*If flavor is an issue, add citrus slices to water. \*Limit 100% juice to a ½ cup per day. \*Avoid diet sodas and juices as well-artificial sweeteners have not been found to be harmful but are still a missed opportunity to teach your child about what their body needs.

Universal to all parts of this formula, like many other aspects of our children's lives, is the need to be a great role model. Since children are much more likely to repeat what they see, it's important that we resolve to make these same choices on a regular basis, not just in January. For more information and ideas, visit <http://www.nemours.org/service/preventive/nhps/521an.html>

## Old Habits Die Hard

The New Year is often a time of new beginnings, resolutions, and a fresh start to the new year. Sometimes this may be small, easy changes such as cutting fast food out of your family's diet or vowing to set aside more quality family time. Other times it can mean taking initiative to break old habits.

A habit is a repeated pattern of behavior. Most of the time the person is unaware of the behavior. It is often a sign of anxiety or worry, and in children can be a form of self-comfort or simply a result of boredom.

The most common habits in childhood are nail biting, thumb sucking, hair twirling, and nose picking. Most of the time, habits are only a phase in a child's normal development and are not harmful. Habits like thumb sucking may carry into childhood from infancy, and with nail biting there may be a genetic or familial correlation.

Much of the time, habits will disappear by the time the child reaches school age. If you feel it is time for your child to break the habit or your child is having trouble doing it on their own, try the following techniques:

-Calmly point out why you don't like the behavior. This helps young children increase awareness of the problem.

-Don't scold, lecture, punish, or ridicule when the child engages in the habit.

-Involve your child in habit breaking process. Ask if they want to stop and what they think they can do to stop.

-Suggest alternative behaviors. This helps increase awareness of the habit and serves as a reminder.

-Reward and praise self-control. Be consistent in rewarding good behavior.

Complications may be physical such as ingrown nails in nail biters or dental problems with thumb suckers. Habits can also negatively affect social relationships and daily functioning, or be a sign of a behavioral issue such as OCD. While most habits don't cause major complications and will usually disappear as a child gets older, talk to your pediatrician if you have concerns about your child's habit.

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/five\\_habits.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/five_habits.html)

If you don't like something  
change it; if you can't  
change it, change the way  
you think about it.

-Mary Engelbreit

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