Mommy, my friend dumped me



Dr. Kardos says she still remembers when her friend dumped her back in 7th grade. Guest blogging for Two Peds in a Pod, is child and adolescent counselor Dina Ricciardi with advice to help walk your kids through the experience.

It can happen very quickly, and often without explanation: your son or daughter gets "dumped" by his or her best friend or group of friends. One minute they are inseparable; the next, your child is left out and being ignored, and is completely bewildered as to why or what happened. Welcome to cliques, a typical part of the tween and adolescent landscape. While enduring these shifts in peer relationships can be extremely painful for both of you, there are some things you can do to help your child emerge safely on the other side of the experience.

Do empathize. Make sure your child knows that you understand why they are upset, and that you would be too.

Do take your child's grief seriously. We adults know that

friendships change and shift over time, and that we all survive. However, your child may see this as the worst thing that has ever happened to her, and she may be right.

Don't downplay your child's pain. It's normal for him to feel hurt and rejected, and to question his own actions and the authenticity of the friendship.

Do keep an eye out for bullying or name-calling. If the situation seems to require it, enlist the support of school personnel to monitor things under their watch.

Don't disparage or belittle the offending friend(s). It might feel good in the moment, but it can set the wrong example and make it difficult for your child to reconcile if the opportunity presents itself.

As a parent, it is hard to watch your child suffer. Our instinct is often to try to fix the situation, which we need to resist. Part of adolescence is allowing our children to develop their own identity and to learn relationship skills. Through their peer relationships, they learn sophisticated concepts such as trust, loyalty, empathy, compassion, and tolerance. They also start to encounter difficult emotions such as jealousy. The most important thing we can do as parents is be available to help our children sort out their feelings and to give them a different perspective. We can also help them discover that while peers are important, they can be strong and fine on their own, and do not need other people to give them their identity. This helps them value themselves as individuals. In the process, maybe we parents learn something new also. Buckle in; it can be a bumpy ride!

Dina Ricciardi, LSW, ACSW

Dina Ricciardi is a psychotherapist in private practice treating children, adolescents, and adults in Doylestown, PA. She specializes in eating disorders and pediatric and adult anxiety, and is also trained in Sandtray Therapy. Ricciardi is a Licensed Social Worker and a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers. She can be reached at dina@nourishcounseling.com.

Dr. Lai adds: Help your kids cultivate their interests. As they do their interests, they will look around and find that those kids will become their friends. The hardest part about adolescence is figuring out your own interests, and not those of your peers.

2015 Two Peds in a Pod®

Ouch! Bee and wasp stings



(photo courtesy of WPCLipart.com)

Ouch! Stung on the scalp.

Ouch! Stung on the hand.

Ouch! Stung on the leg.

Ouch! Ouch! Stung TWICE on the lips.

Those nasty, nasty wasps. During the hot days of August, they become more and more territorial and attack anything near their nests. Today, in my yard, wasps mercilessly chased and attacked a fourth grader named Dan.

As everyone knows, you'd rather have something happen to yourself than have something negative happen to a child who is under your watch. As I had rolled out the Slip and Slide, I was relieved not to see any wasps hovering above nests buried in the lawn. I was also falsely reassured by the fact that our lawn had been recently mowed. I reasoned that anything lurking would have already attacked a lawn mower. Unfortunately, I failed to see the basketball sized grey wasp nest dangling insidiously above our heads in a tree. So, when a wayward ball shook the tree, the wasps found Dan.

What will you do in the same situation?

Assess the airway— signs of impending airway compromise include hoarseness, wheezing (whistle like sounds on inhalation or expiration), difficulty swallowing, and inability to talk. Ask if the child feels swelling, itchiness or burning (like hot peppers) in his or her mouth/throat. Watch for labored breathing. If you see the child's ribs jut out with each breath, the child is struggling to pull air into his/her body. If you have Epinephrine (Epi-Pen or Auvi-Q) inject immediately- if you have to, you can inject through clothing. Call 911 immediately.

Calm the panic— being chased by a wasp is frightening and the child is more agitated over the disruption to his/her sense of security than over the pain of the sting. Use pain control /self calming techniques such as having the child breath slowly in through the nose and out through the mouth. Distract the child by having them "squeeze out" the pain out by squeezing your hand.

If the child was stung by a honey bee, if seen, scrape the stinger out with your fingernail or a credit card. Removal of the stinger prevents any venom left in the stinger from entering the site. Some feel scraping, rather than squeezing or pulling a stinger with tweezers lessen the amount of poison excreted. However, one study suggests otherwise. Wasps do not leave their stingers behind. Hence the reason they can sting multiple times. (Confused about the difference between wasps, hornets and yellow jackets? Wasps are members of the family Vespidae, which includes yellow jackets, hornets and paper wasps.) Relieve pain by administering Ibuprofen (trade names Motrin or Advil) or Acetaminophen (trade name Tylenol).

As you would with any break in the skin, to **prevent infection**, wash the affected areas with mild soap and water.

Decrease the swelling and itch. Histamine produces redness, swelling and itch. Counter any histamine release with an oral antihistamine such as Diphenhydramine (trade name Benadryl). Any antihistamine will be helpful, but generally the older ones like Diphenhydramine tend to work the best in these instances. Just be aware that sleepiness is a common side effect.

To decrease overall swelling elevate the affected area.

Soothe the area by spreading on calamine lotion or by applying a topical steroid like hydrocortisone 1%.

And don't forget, ice, ice and more ice. Fifteen minutes of indirect ice (wrap in a towel, for example) on and fifteen minutes off helps relieve both pain and itching.

Even if the child's airway is okay, if the child is particularly swollen, or has numerous bites, a pediatrician may elect to add oral steroids to a child's treatment

It is almost midnight as I write this blog post. Now that I know all of my kids are safely tucked in their beds, and I

know that Dan is fine, I turn my mind to one final matter: Wasps beware — I know that at night you return to your nest. My husband is going outside now with a can of insecticide. Never, never mess with the mother bear…at least on my watch.

Naline Lai, MD with Julie Kardos, MD

2015, updated from 2009, Two Peds in a Pod®

Tender red dots- spotted in the summer



What is it? Pictured below are the toes of one of my best friend's toddler. She is happy, has no fever, and plays nearly everyday in the neighborhood pool. The round shiny pink bumps and dots on her toes appeared yesterday morning and haven't changed much in a day. They don't seem to bother her very much... answer below.

It's Swimming pool pulpitis- a fancy word for a reaction of the pulp (the meaty tip) of fingers or toes. Mostly seen on the finger tips, the pulpitis is usually caused by irritation of the fingers by the rough side of the swimming pool as kids pull themselves in and out. Kids are sometimes annoyed by the dots, but they go away on their own as soon as the kids decide to use the ladder. In this case, this little swimmer irritated her toes, not her fingers, while "monkey walking" along the side of the swimming pool in the water.

Naline Lai, MD with Julie Kardos, MD ©2011,2013, 2015 Two Peds in a Pod®

It's no laughing matter: another tween game in town

The "Real" Laugh Test - YouTube



www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDv Mar 31, 2013 - Uploaded by ashlynn We wanted to know what are real la Find Your Natural Laugh! - Duration

how to find your natural laugh - YouTube



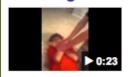
www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDe Jan 4, 2013 - Uploaded by cakelove hi, this is an informative video on he please excuse the nonsense, thank

How to find your true laugh - YouTube



www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVT. Feb 7, 2015 - Uploaded by Mia Coff A tutorial on how you find your true comment for more from us.

true laugh - YouTube



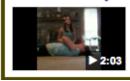
www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Rl
Jul 25, 2011 - Uploaded by mckeN2
In this video we teach you how to g
staring Keaton Jared and Mackenzi

How to - Hear your REAL laugh - YouTub



www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ss5
Jun 13, 2014 - Uploaded by Autumr
How to hear your real laugh. Like a
1:18
Find Your Natural Laugh! - Duration

How to find your natural laugh - YouTube



www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJx Jul 21, 2012 - Uploaded by TheTrur How to find your natural laugh Funny Videos Try Not To Laugh

A snippet from a quick search on youtube for "true laugh"

There's another game in town called "Find your true laugh," but it is no laughing matter. One kid lies down and another kid either sits on the recumbent kid's chest or pushes hard on the recumbent kid's chest with his hands (think CPR chest compressions). As the recumbent kid starts to laugh, his laugh purportedly changes. In this case, in addition to compromising a kid's airway, the force of another person pushing hard on the chest can lead to rib fractures and, as one of our patients discovered painfully, even a fractured sternum. Rib

fractures are acceptable as a side effect of CPR but are not an acceptable side effect of a game.

Tweens in particular seem vulnerable to trying the "Hey, this looks fun, let's try it, " airway blocking games. Explain to your tween that anything that can possibly interfere with breathing can hurt him.

Dr. Kardos tells tween patients:

Your nose is for breathing air. NOT for breathing fumes from glue or markers in order to get high. Called "huffing," this can lead to sudden fatal heart arrhythmias.

Your mouth is also for breathing. Tweens can all recite the dangers of smoking cigarettes, but they can find it amusing to breathe in crushed candy, which can irritate lungs, or to try to swallow a spoonful of cinnamon while taking the "cinnamon challenge." The coughing and vomiting that result from this challenge are evidence of its potential danger.

Air moves through your neck to reach your lungs. Tweens play the "choking game" by strangling themselves in order to get a brief high before passing out. Tell your kids to never tie or loop anything around their necks, for obvious reasons. Kids have died playing this game.

Your lungs are in your chest. To get back to the find your true laugh game: this game involves smushing the chest. Point out that lungs can't expand to hold air if someone is crushing your chest.

Earlier in this summer, Dr Lai turned around at a party to find a pile of tween girls on the rug giggling and trying to push in each other's rib cages. After explaining to the girls why one should never block her airway, one of the girls ferevently nodded and said , "I see, like the bologna game?"

"What bologna game?" asked Dr. Lai

" The one where you take a piece of bologna, cover your mouth and inhale it in."

"Yes, like the bologna game, " said Lai with a sigh.

What will they think of next?

Julie Kardos, MD with Naline Lai, MD ©2015 Two Peds in a Pod®

The natural medicine cabinet in your kitchen



You may not think of your kitchen as a convenient pharmacy, but parents used common kitchen items successfully to treat various maladies long before CVS and Walgreens were invented.

Crisco- May not be healthy to eat, but smeared on skin, it's
an old fashioned but effective treatment for eczema or dry
skin.

Oatmeal— Crush and put into the end of a hosiery sock. Float the sock in the bathtub for a natural way to moisturize skin.

Olive Oil-

- Put a couple drops into the ear three times a day to loosen ear wax (don't put in if your child has a hole in their ear drum eg. myringotomy tubes).
- For cradle cap, rub into your baby's scalp and use your fingernail or a soft brush to loosen the greasy flakes.
- Also use to kill <u>lice</u>. Work the oil through the scalp, tuck hair into a shower cap and wash off in the morning. Although studies are unclear on how well this method works on lice, it certainly is worth a try.

White vinegar-If <u>swimmer's ear</u> is suspected, mix rubbing alcohol one to one with vinegar and drop a couple drops in the ear to stop the swimmer's ear from progressing (don't put in if your child has a hole in their ear drum eg. myringotomy tubes).

Ginger— Boil ginger to make a tea to take the edge off nausea

Honey— Shown to soothe coughs-give a teaspoon of dark (buckwheat, for example) honey three times a day. However, NEVER give honey to a child who is younger than one year of age because it may cause infant botulism

Lemon— An old singer's trick—combine lemon juice with honey in tea to alleviate hoarseness

Salt- Mixed into lukewarm water, gargling with salt water will

help ease sore throat pain

Baking soda:

- Mix with water to make a paste to help soothe itchy skin, from maladies such as <u>poison ivy</u>.
- Can also be mixed with water to make toothpaste if you run out of your usual minty whitener.
- Another use of baking soda: one part baking soda with 4 parts corn starch makes a natural underarm deodorant.

Sugar: Mix sugar into weak tea (or your ginger tea from above) and give small amounts frequently to soothe your **older** child's nausea and help rehydrate after vomiting.

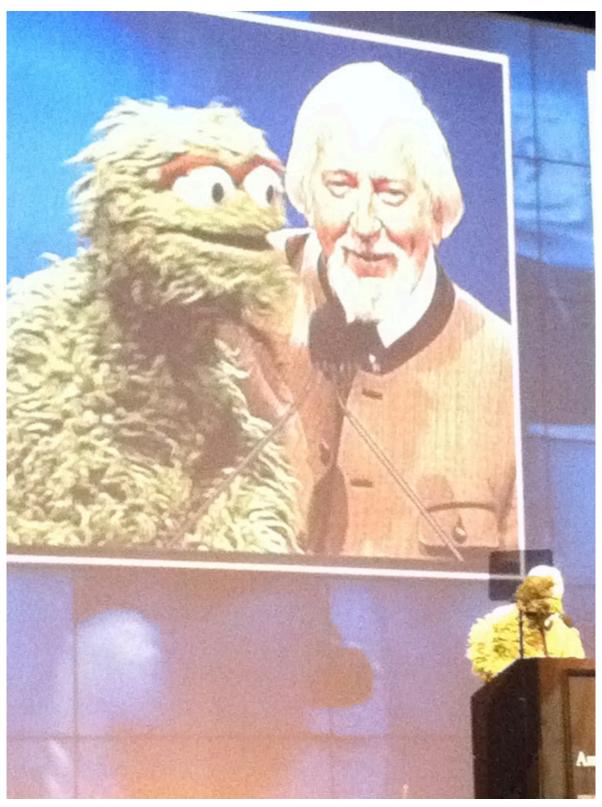
Ice: Ice not only decreases swelling when applied to injuries, it can also be used to combat the itch of bug bites and poison ivy.

Kitchen sink: This is an excellent place to wash any <u>cut</u>, <u>scrape</u>, <u>or bleeding wound</u> under running water with soap. Immediately after a burn, rinse the burned skin under cold water for several minutes to limit the extent of the heat injury. Contrary to popular lore, DO NOT put butter on a burn. You may, however, put butter on your toast. In small amounts.

Naline Lai, MD and Julie Kardos, MD

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Happy Birthday! Two Peds in a Pod turns Six Years Old!



Caroll Spinney, a.k.a. Bird Bird and Oscar the Grouch, addresses the American Academy of Pediatrics National

Conference in 2011 (Dr. Lai's iPhone 3 or 4 captured this "high" quality photo)

Today, as Two Peds in a Pod turns six years old, we think about our favorite six-year-old, Big Bird.

A friend sent me <u>this link</u> to an interview with Caroll Spinney on NPR. Now 81 years old, Caroll Spinney has played Big Bird on *Sesame Street* since the show first aired in 1969. According to the puppeteer, Big Bird has always been six years old.

Spinney wanted Big Bird to forever bubble over with the curiosity and enthusiasm for learning which characterize a six year old's development. In kindergarten or first grade, a six-year-old rapidly gains new skills. They learn how to read at this age if not earlier.

They like to belong to a group and feel included.

Sit in the back of a first grade classroom and listen to the class have a conversation. The teacher may ask the kids, "Who has ever been to the ocean?" and watch all the hands go up. As she calls on each child to tell his story about going to the beach, some kids tell about their beach vacations, some talk about which relative or friend they visited at the beach, and at least one six-year-old will say "I never saw the ocean, but I have a dog!" because they want so desperately to belong to the conversation.

As part of their interest in others, they will join sports teams, scouts, begin religious school or specialized language schools.

Although they may seem interested in everything, be careful not to over schedule. This might be the first year of "all day" school, and even a child who attended an all day childcare or kindergarten can tire out after a full day of learning. Also, as part of their interest in group participation, children may start to form "clubs" as they

play. To ward off future bullying, teach your child," You can't be friends with everyone. You just have to be nice."

Six-year-olds still have a great sense of wonder and imagination.

They believe in Santa Claus and the <u>Tooth Fairy</u>. They also are interested in science and nature, planets and dinosaurs, and how things work. They can simultaneously believe in the very real and concrete and believe in magic.

Six-year-olds ask "Why?"

And they are not shy about it: Why do I have to go to bed? Why does that man have only one leg? Why do helium balloons float? Why do people die? Sometimes the "Why's" can lead into whining, but luckily, six-year-olds can be easily distracted out of their perceived injustices.

Kids at this age tend to concern themselves with body integrity

They may cry over a relatively minor injury such as a paper cut or skinned knee. If you want attention from a room full of six-year-olds, put a Band-Aid on your arm and they will all ask, "Why do you have a Band-Aid?"

We are excited that Two Peds in a Pod® turns six today. Like Big Bird, we hope to forever ask "Why," as well as "How?" and "When?" May your children continue to inspire a sense of wonder and curiosity in your lives, whether they are six months, six years, sixteen, or sixty!

Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD ©2015 Two Peds in a Pod®

Click here to read our very first post from six years ago.

The surprising first signs of dehydration



100 degrees Fahrenheit outside. We're hiking around the Southern Utah desert and one of my kids vomits once. Nope, it's not the stomach bug; that was last vacation. This time one of my kids vomited because of dehydration. Strangely, humans don't always complain of thirst once they start becoming parched, and my kid was no exception.

Right now many kids are at camp running about in high temperatures and soon enough, kids will be called back to school for sport practices. Before they go off, let them know that the first signs of dehydration are usually a vague headache and nausea. Warn them not to depend solely on their sense of thirst to signal them to hydrate. If they "just don't feel right," take a break. Other signs of heat exhaustion and stroke are outlined here http://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/warning.html

For kids who play only for an hour or so, water is a good choice for hydration. For the more competitive players who churn up a sweat or participate in vigorous activity, electrolyte replenishers such as Gatorade® and Powerade® become important, because after 20-30 minutes of sweating, a body can lose salt and sugar as well as water. In fact, my sister, an Emergency Medicine doctor, tells the story of a young woman who played ultimate frisbee all day, and lost a large amount of salt through sweating. Because she also drank large amounts of water, she "diluted" the salt that was still in her blood and had a seizure.

If your child plays an early morning sport, start the hydration process the night before so that they don't wake up already behind on fluids. If your child goes more than six to eight hours without urinating, she needs to drink more.

Avoid caffeine which is found in some sodas, iced tea and many of the energy drinks. Caffeine dehydrates. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children and teens never drink "energy drinks" because of the adverse effects of the stimulants they all contain. Some of the newer highly touted rehydration fluids of the adult world such as coconut water or chocolate milk are fine.

Keep in mind it's not only sports that can dehydrate kids. Years ago I knew of a tuba player who went to the emergency room after marching band practice on a hot August day.

Next vacation we'll definitely buy some water bottles to make sure we don't get dehydrated. Not having enough water can be so dangerous! We'll also take along paper towels and cleaning fluid too.

Naline Lai, MD and Julie Kardos, MD

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When your child's friend moves away



This sign now sits on my friend's lawn. I still remember four years ago when I pulled my big blue minivan up in front of their house after the moving van left. A mommy sat on the stoop with her children. "How old are they? I hollered out. The ages of the children matched my children's and I was delighted. Indeed they became good friends. And now, there's the "For Sale" sign.

It's the end of the school year, and "For Sale" signs dot lawns all over the United States. Chances are, one of them belongs to your child's friend. Just as the child who moves will have to adjust to a new environment, your child will have to adjust to a world without a friend who was part of his daily routine.

Much has been written about how to transition the child who moves into a new environment, but how can you help your child when his close friend moves away?

Your child may experience a sense of loss and feel that he was "left behind." Some children perseverate over the new hole in their world. Others take the change in stride.

In the late 1960's, psychiatrist Elisabeth Kubler-Ross described "the five stages of grief." The stages were initially applied to people suffering from terminal illness, but later they were applied to any type of deep loss such as your child's friend moving. The first stage is denial: "I don't believe he moved." Anger follows in the second stage: "Why me? That's not fair!" Your child may then transition into the third stage and bargain: "If I'm good maybe he will hate it there and come back." The fourth stage is sadness: "I really miss my friend," or, "Why make friends when they end up moving away?" The final stage is acceptance: "Everything is going to be okay. We will remain friends even if he doesn't live here."

Some pass through all stages quickly and some skip stages altogether. The process is personal and chastising your child to "just get over it" will not expedite the process. However, there are ways to smooth the journey:

- Reassure your child that feeling sad or angry is common. Parents need to know that sad children may not show obvious signs of sadness such as crying. Instead, rocky sleep patterns, alterations in eating, disinterest in activities or a drop in the quality of school work can be signs that a child feels sad. If feelings of depression in your child last more than a month or if your child shows a desire to hurt himself, consult your child's health care provider.
- \cdot When you discuss the move with your child, keep in mind your

child's developmental stage. For instance, preschool children are concrete and tend to be okay with things being "out of sight, out of mind." Talking endlessly about the move only conveys to the child that something is wrong. Children around third or fourth grade can take the move hard. They are old enough to feel loss, yet not old enough to understand that friendships can transcend distance. For teens, who are heavily influenced by their peers, a friend's moving away can cause a great deal of disruption. Acknowledge the negative emotions and reassure your child that each day will get better. Reassure him that despite the distance, he is still friends with the child who moved.

- · Prior to the move, don't be surprised if arguments break out between the friends. Anger can be a self defense mechanism employed subconsciously to substitute for sadness.
- · Set a reunion time. Plan a vacation with the family who moved or plan a trip to their new home.
- · After the move, send a care package and write/ help write a letter with your child.
- · Answer a question with a question when you are not sure what a child wants to know. For example if he asks," Will we always be friends?" Counter with "What do you think will happen?"
- · Share stories about how you coped with a best friend moving when you were a child.

Social media and texting can be ways for older kids to stay in touch with a friend who moves away. Be sure to monitor your child, however, because too much time texting, skyping, and posting takes away from time your child needs to spend acclimating to a new routine.

As for my children, when I told one of my kids that I will sign her up for soccer, she squealed with delight, "Oh, that's the league Kelly belongs to."

My heart sank. I said as gently as I could, "She's moving- she won't be here for soccer season."

And so we begin the process...

Naline Lai, MD with Julie Kardos, MD © 2010, rev 2015 Two Peds in a Pod®

Soothe the itch of poison ivy



Recently we've had a parade of itchy children troop through our office. The culprit: poison ivy.

Myth buster: Fortunately, **poison ivy is NOT contagious**. You can catch poison ivy ONLY from the plant, not from another person.

Also, contrary to popular belief, you can not spread poison ivy on yourself through scratching. However, where the poison (oil) has touched your skin, your skin can show a delayed reaction- sometimes up to two weeks later. Different areas of skin can react at different times, thus giving the illusion of a spreading rash.

Some home remedies for the itch :

- Hopping into the shower and rinsing off within fifteen minutes of exposure can curtail the reaction. Warning, a bath immediately after exposure may cause the oils to simply swirl around the bathtub and touch new places on your child.
- Hydrocortisone 1%. This is a mild topical steroid which decreases inflammation. We suggest the ointment- more staying power and unlike the cream will not sting on open areas, use up to four times a day
- Calamine lotion a.k.a. the pink stuff. This is an active ingredient in many of the combination creams.

 Apply as many times as you like.
- Diphenhydramine (brand name Benadryl) take orally up to every six hours. If this makes your child too sleepy, once a day Cetirizine (brand name Zyrtec) also has very good anti itch properties.
- Oatmeal baths Crush oatmeal, place in old hosiery, tie it off and float in the bathtub- this will prevent oat meal from clogging up your bath tub. Alternatively buy the commercial ones (e.g. Aveeno)
- Do not use alcohol or bleach— these items will irritate the rash more than help

The biggest worry with poison ivy rashes is not the itch, but the chance of infection. With each scratch, your child is possibly introducing infection into an open wound. Unfortunately, it is sometimes difficult to tell the difference between an allergic reaction to poison ivy and an Both are red, both can be warm, both can be infection. However, infections cause pain - if there is pain associated with a poison ivy rash, think infection. Allergic reactions cause itchiness— if there is itchiness associated with a rash, think allergic reaction. Because it usually takes time for an infection to "settle in," an infection will not occur immediately after an exposure. Infection usually occurs on the 2nd or 3rd days. If you have any concerns take your child to her doctor.

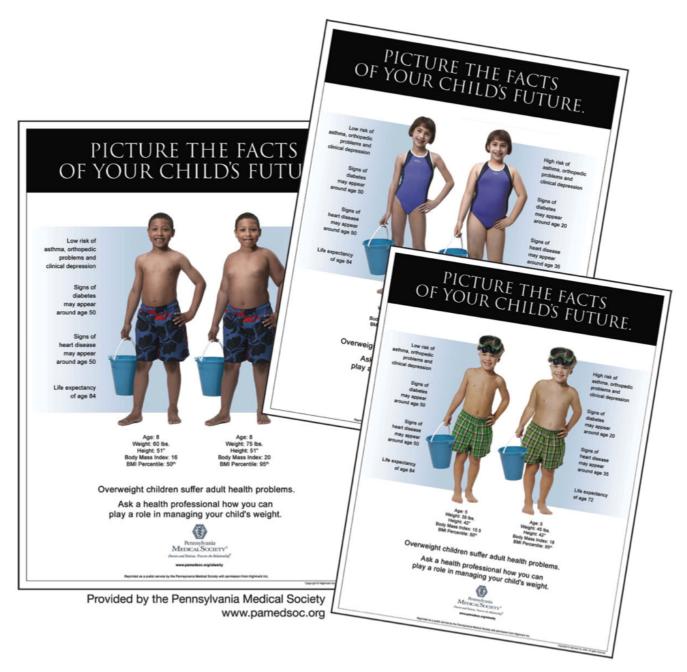
Generally, any poison ivy rash which is in the area of the eye or genitals (difficult to apply topical remedies), appears infected, or is just plain making your child miserable needs medical attention.

When all else fails, comfort yourself with this statistic: up to 85% of people are allergic to poison ivy. If misery loves company, your child certainly has company.

Naline Lai, MD and Julie Kardos, MD

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Would you recognize if your child was overweight?



In these posters put out by the Pennsylvania medical society, the children on the right are considered obese.

Nearly all parents of overweight preschoolers and most parents of obese kids are unaware their children are classified as such , say researchers at New York University and two other medical centers. Click here for Happy Healthy Kids' interview with Dr. Kardos on the subject.

Julie Kardos, MD with Naline Lai, MD ©2015 Two Peds in a Pod®