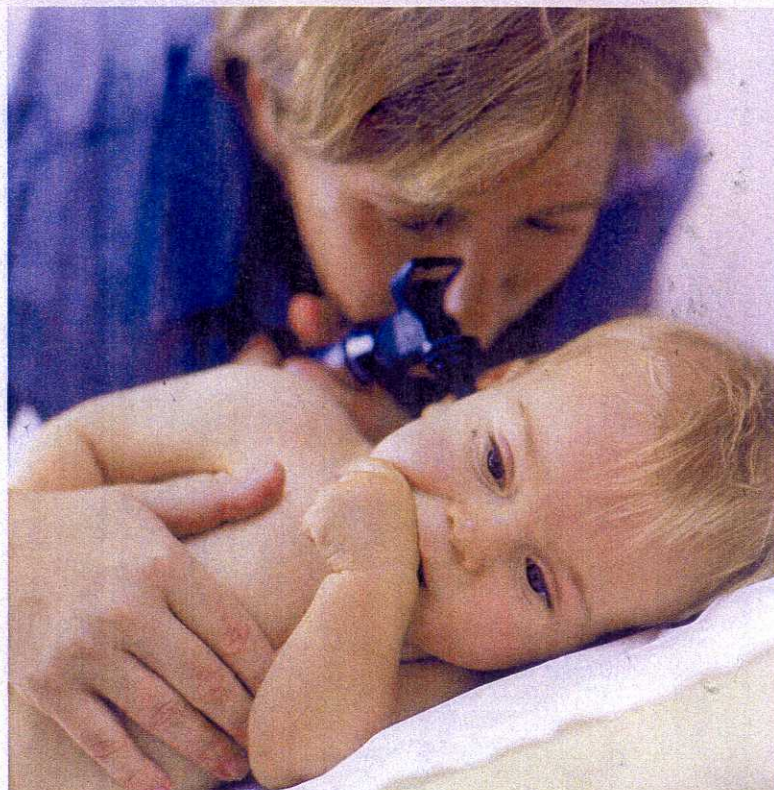


WORKING MOTHER

ECO-CHIC
Organic looks
go glam—more
hip than hemp

family | healthy child



Fight Bad TV Ads

What we've long suspected has been confirmed: Advertisements can have significant negative effects on kids, contributing to obesity, drinking, sex at an early age and more, according to a recent policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The AAP suggests that pediatricians work with parents, schools and community groups to urge Congress to ban junk food ads during kids' television shows, limit commercial advertising to no more than six minutes per hour and fund programs that teach children about advertising's effects, which will help make them more media-savvy. What can you do now?

Limit TV/computer time to no more than two hours a day. "Kids see forty thousand commercials a year on television alone," says Vic Strasburger, MD, a professor of pediatrics at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine.

Promote media literacy by watching and discussing TV programs and ads with your children to help them understand the harmful effects of violence and drugs.

Urge your school to ban ads on current-events channels that are aired in many schools and even on school buses. —KL

Is It an Ear Infection?

If your child has suffered from ear pain, his screams have no doubt dragged you from a deep worknight slumber. Now you can find out if the cause of his distress is an ear infection or something else, such as teething or a cold—and help your pediatrician determine whether an office visit is necessary—with the EarCheck, a new device available online and in major drugstores. The monitor, which looks like an ear thermometer, uses sound waves to measure fluid in the middle ear, a key indicator of an ear infection (for details, go to www.earcheck.com). Where feasible, help minimize your child's risk by following these suggestions from Jerome O. Klein, MD, professor of pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine: **Breastfeed your baby.** Nursing can lower ear infection risk, perhaps by boosting natural immunity. **Reduce exposure.** Smaller-group day care (seven or fewer kids) with good hygiene rules can help prevent infections. **Consider a shot.** The flu vaccine is recommended for children starting at 6 months. The pneumococcal vaccine is also advised, especially for kids with repeated ear infections. —KL

healthy
kids
tip

KEEP A TIDY TOOTHBRUSH To make sure your child is brushing with a healthy toothbrush, says Beverly Largent, DMD, president-elect of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry: **Change the toothbrush** if the bristles no longer stand up or right after your child has recovered from a long illness (not just sniffles). **Take turns.** If your little one won't part with his worn-out (but beloved) Bob the Builder toothbrush, go ahead and let him brush with it—just make sure he cleans his teeth with a new brush afterward. **Dry it completely.** Toothbrushes stored in cabinets stay moist, which can breed bacteria. Keep brushes out in the open to dry. —KL