



sunshine health™

# WHOLE you

2023 Winter Bulletin



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# Welcome!

Soon we will say goodbye to 2023 and hello to 2024. A whole new year is ahead of us.

So it's a pleasure to bring you a new edition of Whole You, a newsletter from Sunshine Health.

In this issue, we're bringing you plenty of useful articles to share with your child. You'll learn about how healthy teeth can keep all of you healthy. We'll look at things like mosquito bite prevention and information about benefits available to your child. We'll have some fun, too, with free gift ideas, a tasty hot chocolate recipe and tips on bringing laughter into the holiday season.



Did you miss our last issue? Take a look at our [Summer 2023 Newsletter \(PDF\)](#). We hope you enjoy this latest edition and that it helps you take care of yourself and your child.

# A Healthy Smile Means a Healthy You

## ***Taking care of your child's teeth does more than result in a great smile.***

Taking care of your child's teeth does more than result in a great smile. Of course, it can keep away bad breath, gum disease and tooth decay. But did you know that the way you take care of your teeth can affect the health of your whole body? When your child's mouth isn't healthy, it can increase their risk for stroke and heart disease.

### **TWICE A DAY, EVERY DAY.**

The good news — brushing your teeth is one of the best and easiest ways to keep your mouth healthy. Make sure your child brushes their teeth twice a day, and that they get all the sides of their teeth and tongue. This will get rid of germs and leftover food. Use a toothbrush with soft bristles. Brush for two minutes each time, using gentle, circular strokes.

To keep their toothbrush clean, don't lay it on a sink counter or in a closed space where germs can grow. Keep it in a toothbrush holder or small jar or vase. Get a new toothbrush every three to four months and right away after they have been sick.

Flossing is an important step, too. It helps clean between your child's teeth, where cavities usually start. Instruct your child to slide the floss between their teeth and gently move it between each tooth all the way to their gum line.

### **SCHEDULE REGULAR VISITS TO THE DENTIST.**

Regular visits to your dentist will include an exam and cleaning to get rid of plaque that can build up in any spaces you miss when brushing and flossing. Your dentist will check for any tooth decay and gum disease as well as signs of other health issues like vitamin deficiencies and even diabetes. And they'll make sure any dental work is still holding up and doing its job.

### **HAVE A TOOTH-HEALTHY DIET.**

Certain foods and drinks are great for your teeth — others are not so great. Drinking water is great. It washes away food and germs during the day. Foods that have lots of calcium and protein are also good choices — like carrots, almonds and cheese. On the other hand, chewy, sticky, sugary foods and sweet drinks can damage the enamel surface of your teeth. They can cause decay, so avoid them when you can, and when you can't, rinse your mouth with water or brush your teeth. If you chew gum, choose sugar free.



# Add More Laughter into Your Life This Holiday Season

## *Did you know that laughter is considered the best medicine because it energizes your heart and lungs?*

It also increases the release of endorphins in your brain, which relieve pain and stress in the body. Laughing also releases neuropeptides, which benefits the immune system. It's important to keep yourself and your loved ones laughing. Here are a few ways you can ensure you and your family laugh a little more each day.

### **READ FUNNY BOOKS**

Is reading something you and your child enjoy? If so, spend the afternoon at your local bookstore or online to buy a fun book. Everyone's sense of humor may be different, but reading a fun novel together will not only tickle the funny bone, but it can also be a great bonding activity.

### **FIND EXCUSES**

Some days are more entertaining than others. When you encounter a dull and uneventful day, find excuses to laugh with the people you love. Do or say something amusing on purpose. Most people love a good laugh.

### **BE OBSERVANT**

Instead of focusing on your smartphone and things that happen online, take the time to observe the world around you and encourage your loved ones to do the same. When you focus on the real world, you are sure to see amusing things.



### **STEER CLEAR OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media is full of negative news stories that can get you and your family down. For that reason, try to limit the time you and your child spend on social media. Instead of checking your social media feed as soon as you wake up, talk to your family members. Share amusing anecdotes with your loved ones and ask them what funny things have happened in their lives lately.

Source: [KidsFirst of Florida](#)

## Talk to Us: NAMI's New Teen and Young Adult Helpline

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is proud to introduce the Teen & Young Adult (T&YA) HelpLine: A free nationwide peer-support service providing information, resource referrals, and support to teens and young adults.

NAMI's T&YA HelpLine Specialists are experienced and well-trained young adults who understand what the youth in your family is going through. They care and want to help your child find a way forward. The Specialists are here to provide resources and guidance so no one needs to go through their mental health journey alone.



Reach out by phone, text or chat:

- **Text “Friend” to 62640**
- **Chat at [nami.org/talktous](https://nami.org/talktous)**
- **Call 1-800-950-6264**  
Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Eastern

*The NAMI T&YA HelpLine is not a hot line, crisis line or suicide prevention line. If you or someone you know is experiencing a crisis, please [chat](#), call or text [988](#). The NAMI T&YA HelpLine does not provide mental health counseling, advice, personal advocacy or referrals to individual mental health providers or lawyers. The NAMI T&YA HelpLine does not provide individual casework, legal representation or any type of individual advocacy.*

# Snowman Soup, Anyone?

*We don't get many winter days in Florida. But, when a cold snap does come, this fun recipe is sure to warm things up.*

## INGREDIENTS

- Milk — dairy or whatever kind you like
- Sugar
- Chocolate chips
- Large marshmallows — not the mini kind
- Gel icing in a tube — black and orange if you have them
- Whipped cream



## DIRECTIONS

- 1** Make hot chocolate. Pour the milk into a mug without filling it all the way to the top. Add a small spoonful of sugar and a small handful of chocolate chips to the milk. Stir to dissolve the sugar. Microwave the milk for 1 minute. Stir. Then microwave for 1 more minute. Stir until the chocolate chips have melted.
- 2** Draw a snowman face on the marshmallows. Use the gel icing to draw a snowman face on each of your marshmallows. Simple black dots can form the “coal” eyes and mouth, and you can use orange icing to make a carrot nose.
- 3** Top the hot chocolate with whipped cream, drop in two or three snowman marshmallows; and enjoy.

***Wishing you a winter season that's merry and bright.***

Source: [Mashed](#)

# Gifts from the Heart

## *You don't have to spend a lot of money to show someone you care.*

In fact, some of the most thoughtful and meaningful gifts can be things you create. They're often much nicer than something you just grab at the mall. Here are some ideas that you can do or even encourage your child to do for other loved ones this holiday season:

- **Share memories.** If you and a loved one have done lots of fun things together, write down some of your best memories or make a little box filled with mementos of those times, like ticket stubs and pictures. You could even attach a note to each item that says how you got it or why you saved it.



- **Make a game.** Create a “winter bingo” game. On four cards or more, draw a block of 25 squares. In each square, write or draw something that makes winter special. Make sure each card has the pictures or words in a different order. You could also create a family “guess who” game, making cards with fun facts or sayings from each family member.
- **Make hand warmers or heating pads.** Get two pieces of fabric. Put them on top of each other and cut them together into a simple shape, like a circle or square. You can make them small, for handwarmers, or large, for a heating pad to help with back pain. Choose what side will be the outside of each fabric. Then flip each fabric so the outside is now on the inside. Sew the pieces together about a quarter inch from the outside edge. Leave a two-inch opening. Flip the fabric right side out again. Using a funnel, fill the pouch with dry, uncooked rice, and sew the opening shut. To heat them, microwave for about one minute.
- **Make a happiness jar.** Pick a jar. It can be a pretty mason jar or any used jar — just wash off the label. Cut small strips of paper and write encouraging notes on each piece. It could be things you like about that person, good thoughts or any ideas you think the person would like. Put the notes in the jar then decorate the jar with ribbon.
- **Give your time.** Are you good at organizing? Cleaning? Cooking? Or would your loved one just want you to come over and read to them or go for a walk? Make a coupon and give them the gift of something you're really good at.

Sources: [Real Simple](#), [The Stress-Free Christmas](#), [Family Balance Sheet](#)



## Get Connected with Care Management

Does your child have special or complex medical needs? Sunshine Health offers Care Management services that may be able to help. If you or your child needs assistance with finding resources, specialists, or other support, they could be paired with a Care Manager to give them specialized attention. They can help you find resources to improve their health.

If you think that Care Management may be able to help your child, call Member Services at [1-855-463-4100](tel:1-855-463-4100) for more information and ask to speak to a Care Manager.

## Find Help with our Community Resources Database

***Do you need help finding food, housing or another resource? It's just a few clicks away.***

***The [Sunshine Health Community Resource Database](#) makes it easy to access free and reduced-cost programs and services in your area.***

The tool connects you to community-based organizations that offer different types of support. Finding help is easy with our free, online tool. Search our network of more than 5,000 partners throughout Florida.

Just enter your ZIP code. Then you can search for help with these topics:

- Food
- Goods
- Health
- Care
- Work
- Housing
- Transit
- Money
- Education
- Legal



Sunshine Health provides free aids and services to people with disabilities, such as qualified sign language interpreters, written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic and other formats), and free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as qualified interpreters and information written in other languages. This information is available for free in other languages. Please contact Member Services at [1-855-463-4100](tel:1-855-463-4100) (TTY [1-800-955-8770](tel:1-800-955-8770)) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Esta información está disponible en otros idiomas de manera gratuita. Comuníquese con nuestro número de servicio al cliente al [1-855-463-4100](tel:1-855-463-4100) (TTY [1-800-955-8770](tel:1-800-955-8770)) de lunes a viernes, de 8 a.m. a 8 p.m.

Si oumenm, oubyen yon moun w ap ede, gen kesyon nou ta renmen poze sou Sunshine Health, ou gen tout dwa pou w jwenn èd ak enfòmasyon nan lang manman w san sa pa koute w anyen. Pou w pale avèk yon entèprèt, sonnen nimewo [1-855-463-4100](tel:1-855-463-4100) (TTY [1-800-955-8770](tel:1-800-955-8770)).

Nếu quý vị, hay người mà quý vị đang giúp đỡ, có câu hỏi về Sunshine Health, quý vị sẽ có quyền được giúp và có thêm thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ của mình miễn phí. Để nói chuyện với một thông dịch viên, xin gọi [1-855-463-4100](tel:1-855-463-4100) (TTY [1-800-955-8770](tel:1-800-955-8770)).