

Parent-to-parent tips Mom may not have told you

By VIRGINIA JUSTICE

Every family has that one child – the one who always has their clothes off almost as soon as you put them on. My particular child would take pajamas off and be stark naked in her crib in the morning. I was concerned that she would freeze at night as we had our thermostat set for 62 degrees to save energy. At my wits end, I called my mother.

Once done laughing, she told me to be thankful not to find the walls painted with the contents of her diaper, as my younger brother had once done. Then she suggested I put her

in footed pajamas that zip up the front – but backwards so she could not reach the zipper. Typically these pajamas are roomy enough that you can reverse them with the footies pointed the wrong direction.



This trick works like a charm.

My children were pacifier babies; our doctor once said he thought a pacifier was a much easier habit to break than thumb sucking. But, inevitably, a pacifier drops and gets dirty. I have seen mothers pick their child's up wipe it or lick it off then give it back to the child. I am not a germaphobe, but – ICK! I decided to always carry spares with me. I wanted the extras to be clean so I put two (or more) into a zipper bag that I dropped into my purse. I kept another bag marked "dirty" for any dropped pacifiers so I could wash them later.

For teething babies, Mom suggested wetting one half of a clean washcloth, putting it in a plastic bag and allowing it to freeze. Once frozen, the baby can teethe on the frozen cloth, the combination of the rough fabric and cold soothes sore gums.

Hungry children in a car can be extremely distracting. Cheerios are an awesome snack for little ones, but a dumped bag or bowl all over the floor of the car is no fun. One day I was working on a sewing project using elastic cord when a thought struck me. Why not string the Cheerios into a necklace, tie the ends and let the girls wear them around their necks and eat at their leisure. This trick did not completely eliminate crumbs on the car floor, but certainly reduced the mess. Mixing Fruit Loops with Cheerios can be an extra treat. Elastic cord breaks easily when tugged so I did



Parenting Tip

not have to worry that it would catch on something and strangle my child.

I found we all were less stressed if I planned for outings. If we were going somewhere where they would need to play quietly I would put crayons or washable markers coloring books, small puzzles and other quiet toys in zip bags and carry them all in a tote bag wherever we were going. Our church did something similar by creating "quiet bags" stored in the pews, with crayons, coloring pages and other activities to keep children occupied during services. One thing I do not recommend putting into quiet bags are stickers, as I found they end up stuck to windows, car seats and siblings.

Zipper plastic disposable bags were a lifesaver for our family; I kept empty ones in the glove box for our child who got carsick on winding roads. I used them to store a set of clean clothes in the trunk in case of accidents and, when needed, swapped them for the dirty clothes, which I sealed up in the same bag. Zip bags come in handy for snacks, crayons and more. Food service stores like Cash and Carry sell two-gallon sized zip bags, which I found fit most large wood puzzles and books. Bagged items can be loaded into plastic boxes with lids for easy, organized storage.

Pendleton home economist Virginia Justice and her husband have two college-aged daughters.

We're here to help

umchs.com/programs/wic



...Is Family Support

Call 541-667-2545 for more information