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On the cover: Ryan Terry is an active 4-year-old today, thanks to the brain surgery he had at K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital when he was 3. Turn to page 4 for his whole story.

A Message to Our Readers

Spring is in the air, and with it comes April showers, May flowers, and a wealth of opportunities to get outside and get active. This issue is focused on helping you and your family do just that — and do it safely.

You will find a step-by-step guide to running your first 5K by fall on page 13, just in time to train for Jersey Shore’s third annual 5K race on September 16. Or run one earlier, on May 19, when Meridian kicks off its Heart and Sole Cup at Ocean. Pages 14 and 15 are jam-packed with tips for keeping your kids injury-free, with expert advice on avoiding sprains, strains, and shin splints, plus important playground safety pointers.

Our 100-plus pediatric specialists are looking out for you, too, providing in-depth expertise and consultation. Take 4-year-old Ryan Terry, for one. He survived brain surgery thanks to Thomas Steineke, M.D. (page 4). And on page 6, you can read about how Azam Soroush, M.D., helped teenager Ryan Pecora learn to effectively manage his Crohn’s disease.

As we start preparing for summer, have your kids turn to page 10, where they can help Picatso, a member of the Pawsitive Action Team, create his very own summer reading list. We’ll print the suggestions in our next issue. Until then, stay healthy.

Sincerely,

Steven G. Littleson, FACHE
President, Jersey Shore University Medical Center and K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital

What’s New at MeridianMomtourage.com?

To find out what local expectant and experienced moms are talking about and browse our physician directory, visit MeridianMomtourage.com today. Or scan this icon with your smartphone to access it now. Download the free mobile scanning app by going to http://gettag/mobi on your smartphone.
OMG: Bullies Turn to Texting

Cell phones may be the new tools of choice for school yard bullies. More kids and teens are being victimized by text message. About 24 percent of youths ages 10 to 15 said they had been harassed by text in a new survey, up from 14 percent the year before. Bullies sent rude or threatening comments, spread rumors, or made unwanted sexual advances.

Researchers say texts are becoming the main form of communication for kids and teens. "If your child or teen texts, have a conversation about what’s appropriate and what’s not," says Samia Ayoub, M.D., chief of the Department of Pediatrics at Bayshore Community Hospital. "Role-play potential responses to bullying so that he or she knows how to react."

Keep Kids Safe from Window Falls

It’s a horrifying statistic: More than 5,000 U.S. children are injured each year in falls from windows.

Fortunately, the number has been decreasing in recent years, according to a new report. About 10 cases each year are fatal. Children who are age 4 or younger, who fall from three stories or higher, or who land on hard surfaces are more likely to sustain serious or life-threatening injuries.

“To keep your little ones out of harm’s way, use window guards or locks,” says Nasir Ahmed, M.D., a trauma surgeon at Jersey Shore University Medical Center. "Move furniture away from windows. Place bushes or plant beds, not concrete, under windows outside to cushion falls."

Energy Drinks Send More Americans to the Emergency Department

One popular energy drink claims to give you wings. But you might get a quick trip to the hospital instead. Emergency Department visits due to these beverages increased tenfold between 2005 and 2009.

“Energy drinks can contribute to abnormal heart rhythms, dehydration, and life-threatening injuries,” says Steven Kairys, M.D., medical director for K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital. "That’s especially true when they’re combined with alcohol.”

About 11 percent of these emergencies occur in children ages 12 to 17, and 45 percent are in young adults ages 18 to 25.

“These drinks contain more caffeine and other stimulants than most kids or teens should consume,” says Dr. Kairys. “Steer your children toward water instead.”

In the News

Siblings Noah, 10, and Jillian Schaad, 12, like being active. Whether it’s swimming (Jillian) or playing baseball (Noah), they both know the importance of drinking water — not energy drinks.

Energy Drinks Send More Americans to the Emergency Department

Texting has become a main form of communication for many teens, like Monmouth Regional High School freshmen Sydney Lucas and Joshua Bailey.

Fast-Forward

Is bullying happening at your child’s elementary school? Turn to page 12 to learn what signs to watch for.
Four-year-old Ryan Terry loves playing with his toy trains at his grandmother’s house. He’s able to do that, and much more, thanks to the experts at K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital, who performed brain surgery on him when he was 3.

Toddler Thrives After Brain Surgery

“Ryan has come a long way. He’s smart and funny and has a great personality.”

– Mary Margaret Buklarewicz

Like most toddlers, 3-year-old Ryan Terry was sometimes a little wobbly on his feet. But then his grandmother, Mary Margaret Buklarewicz, who lives with the family and helps take care of Ryan, noticed something odd. Ryan was keeping his neck stiff all the time, hunching his shoulders, and tripping up to eight times a day.

She took him to his pediatrician and later to Roopal Karia, M.D., a pediatric neurologist at K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center. Dr. Karia insisted that Ryan go to Jersey Shore for an MRI. The scan revealed a tumor at the end of his brain stem. Without surgery to remove the growth, his family was told, Ryan would lose the ability to walk.

“We were a mess,” recalls Mary Margaret. Ryan’s tumor was diagnosed as a neurofibroma, a noncancerous growth on his nerve tissue caused by neurofibromatosis, a genetic condition. Affected parents have a 50 percent chance of passing it on to their children. Ryan’s mother, Alison Buklarewicz, has the condition, too, but she has never had a neurofibroma near her brain, so her symptoms had been different.

Even though Ryan’s family was knowledgeable about his diagnosis, and
even though Alison has gone through half a dozen procedures to remove tumors from her body, preparing Ryan for brain surgery was emotionally stressful. The compassion and skill of Meridian's experts helped the family cope.

Expert Pediatric Surgeons
Because Ryan's tumor was in such a difficult location, several doctors discussed his case to determine the best way to approach the removal. Thomas Steineke, M.D., a pediatric neurosurgeon affiliated with K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital, proposed removing the tumor via the back of Ryan's neck. The physician team agreed that this approach — which would be less invasive — was the best course of action.

“Traditionally this type of tumor would have been removed through a complex operation with significant dissection that requires an extended amount of recovery time,” Dr. Steineke explains. “We were able to remove the tumor from a dangerous location through a small tube. This is one of the first times a tumor in this location has been removed with this type of minimally invasive technique."

Dr. Steineke is just one of the many Meridian experts devoted to treating children. K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital has a team of pediatric specialists on call day and night, and surgeons are equipped to help kids. This expertise means better outcomes for patients — and less anxiety for family members in the waiting room.

'Tremendous' Staff, Positive Outcome
Ryan’s procedure went well: Dr. Steineke was able to remove the entire tumor. “Dr. Steineke’s a godsend,” Mary Margaret says. “He’s a brain surgeon, but he’s very, very down to earth.”

Like his mother, Ryan will need to be monitored for the rest of his life, and there’s a 10 percent chance the tumor will grow back in the same spot in his brain. Still, Mary Margaret says, “Ryan has come a long way.”

He now goes to preschool three days a week. Twice a week Mary Margaret takes him to occupational and physical therapy. He is learning to walk up and down stairs and recently mastered jumping, getting both feet off the ground to the delight of his therapist and grandmother.

“Physically, he’s behind other kids,” Mary Margaret says, “but mentally, he’s fine. He’s smart and funny and has a great personality.”

The Mickey Mouse fan, who is now 4, also has a bright future, thanks to Dr. Steineke and Meridian’s staff of experts.

“We had a great experience with everyone there,” Mary Margaret says. “The nurses are absolutely phenomenal, and everyone working there is tremendous. They are very caring, loving people.”

Our Specialists Are Here for You
Did you know K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital has more than 100 pediatric specialists ready to help your child? Call 1-800-DOCTORS® to request a FREE listing of our specialists.

Dress Your Feet for Success — And Comfort
Are you a slave to fashion-forward footwear? You might be doing damage to more than just your pocketbook. For women, ill-fitting and irritating shoes could contribute to health issues.

“During the average day, your feet will endure several hundred tons of pressure,” says Carmela Rocchetti, M.D., an internist at Jersey Shore University Medical Center. “The right shoes can make all the difference.”

Follow these tips from Dr. Rocchetti when shopping:

• **Skip stilettos.** Heels higher than 2 inches overload the ball of your foot, causing pain and numbness. They can also contribute to instability, falls, and ankle injuries.
• **Keep it natural.** Choose boots and shoes made of leather instead of synthetic materials. They allow air to flow in and keep feet dry. For sandals and flip-flops, leather prevents blisters.
• **Take care of your toes.** Pointy shoes can pinch your toes and aggravate hammertoe, a painful bend in your toe joints. Seek out styles with deep, roomy toe boxes. Comfortable shoes don’t have to be boring. Stylish “comfort” or “performance” pumps blend the support of an athletic shoe with the look of a dress shoe.

What’s your favorite summer footwear suggestion that’s both stylish and comfortable? Share it with other local moms today. Join the conversation at MeridianMomtourage.com.
Team Approach Helps Busy Teen Manage Crohn’s Disease

After five years of treating Ryan Pecora for Crohn’s disease, Azam Soroush, M.D., got an interesting comment from her young patient in December 2011. “I feel like I don't even have Crohn's anymore,” Ryan, 19, told Dr. Soroush.

Ryan was first diagnosed with Crohn’s, a type of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), in 2004, after experiencing abdominal pain, diarrhea, and fatigue. “He was always sick, moody, grouchy, and tired,” says his mom, Deborah, who was diagnosed with Crohn’s in her 20s. “He was a wrestler and at tournaments, in between matches, he’d be asleep on the bleachers.”

Other symptoms of Crohn’s may include rectal bleeding, fever, weight loss, joint pain, and mouth ulcers. While it can’t be cured, its symptoms can be controlled through medications and proper diet.

Even after he was first diagnosed and placed on medication, he continued to experience symptoms and would run out of energy quickly while trying to play sports. Worried about her son’s weight loss and low energy, Deborah took Ryan to see Dr. Soroush, a pediatric gastroenterologist at K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center, in summer 2007. Dr. Soroush admitted Ryan to the hospital and began treatment with different medications.

The IBD team at K. Hovnanian Children’s Hospital, which consists of doctors, nutritionists, nurses, and social workers, addresses each patient’s unique symptoms and educates the patient and families about how to live with the disease.

“I already knew a lot about the disease, but Dr. Soroush was very good about explaining what Ryan had to do with his medications and what foods to avoid,” Deborah says.

Dr. Soroush calls Ryan her poster child for living with and managing Crohn’s disease. “With any inflammatory bowel disease, it’s important to have a team approach,” Dr. Soroush says. “The family and patient are important parts of that team. In Ryan’s case, they’ve been really good with follow-up and medication compliance.”

Today, Ryan follows through with his daily medication regimen and is feeling better than he ever has. He works about 30 hours a week and is back to playing sports. His struggle with fatigue is a thing of the past.

Providing Your Children with the Care They Need

Ryan Pecora, now a senior at Manchester High School, is feeling better than ever, after Dr. Soroush helped teach him how to manage his Crohn’s disease. Today, Ryan stays very busy with school, work, and playing varsity volleyball.

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KIDmazing
ACTIVE, AMAZING YOU!

An Amazing Maze!

Picatso is looking for the fastest way to get from Star A to Star B in this maze shaped like one of his bicycle wheels. Can you show him the way?

Finished?
Check your answers on the last page of KidMazing!
Play the Finger Game

Did you know your ring finger (that is the one next to your pinky) and your middle finger muscles have tendons that are linked? That means they can only move together.

It’s true! Try this trick to find out.

1. Place the fingertips of your right hand facing down on a table.
2. Curl your middle finger under your hand.
3. Try to lift up your pointer finger.
4. Try to lift up your pinky.
5. Try to lift up your ring finger.

A-ha, impossible!

Smoking Is Gross!

You’ve probably heard that smoking is bad for you. It hurts your lungs and can cause cancer. Hopscotch has five other reasons not to smoke:

1. **It’s unpopular.** You might believe that smoking will help you look cool and fit in. But most kids, teens, and grown-ups choose not to smoke.
2. **Smoking really stinks.** It makes your breath, hair, and clothes smell really bad. And it can turn your teeth and fingers yellow.
3. **It hurts you in sports.** Smoking keeps enough oxygen from getting to your muscles. You’re not able to run as far or as fast as you normally would.
4. **Smoking hurts you in music.** Smoking makes it harder to breathe, so it’s harder to play a wind instrument. It can also ruin your singing voice.
5. **Smoking is expensive.** A pack of cigarettes can cost between $5 and $10. If you smoke two packs a week, that really adds up!

Make the Choice to Really Be Cool

You might think it’s OK to try smoking just once. But the harm to your body begins with your very first cigarette. And people who start smoking when they’re young find it hardest to quit. So the really awesome choice is never to smoke. The best way to show how cool you are is by playing it smart.
Why I Want to Be a Nurse

Clair McKittrick, a senior at Freehold Township High School, has always been interested in medicine. So she joined our hospital’s Medical Explorers Club to learn more about it. Here’s what she has to say.

“I have had a lifelong dream of pursuing a medical career. I was already volunteering at Jersey Shore when I joined the Medical Explorers Club. Soon after I started, we were given a trauma lecture by Molly, who was a head trauma nurse and also an EMT.

“It inspired me to join the Tinton Falls North First Aid Squad and sign up for EMT classes. On June 10, 2010, I became a certified EMT-B.

“I’ve learned so much from my experience with Medical Explorers. And now I know exactly what I want to be when I grow up: My dream is to become a nurse.”

What’s an EMT?

EMT stands for emergency medical technician. When there is an accident or someone becomes very sick, EMTs respond to the 911 call. They get to the scene right away to give medical care.

Clair is an EMT-B. The B stands for Basic. That means she’s an entry-level EMT. Way to go, Clair!

Learn More About Medical Explorers!

Are you interested in medicine, like Clair? Once you’re 14, you can join Medical Explorers, too! The club meets once a month, and you get to meet doctors and nurses and get tours. If you’re interested in Medical Explorers, ask your parents to call 732-776-3434 to get more information.
What Should We Put on Picatso’s Summer Reading List?

Picatso loves to read. But when the school year ends, he’s not always sure what to read next. There are so many choices at the library — and that’s why he needs your help!

Send in your suggestions for Picatso’s summer reading list. Don’t forget to include the title and the author of each book.

Ask your mom or dad to e-mail your book suggestions to kidviews@meridianhealth.com by Friday, May 4. We’ll print a list of our top picks in the summer issue — just in time for you and Picatso to get reading!

If one of your book ideas is included, we will also print your first name, town, and age. And to thank you for your great ideas, we’ll send you a beach towel!

Parents: Please put “Picatso’s Summer Reading List” in the e-mail subject line. Be sure to include your home address in the e-mail so we can send you the beach towel.

Picatso’s Summer Reading List
- Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
- Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
- The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff

Your Bright Ideas

You sent us lots of great entries for Doctor Bernard’s ‘Tail’ of Mystery. Read one of them below!

One chilly day, Doctor Bernard was sitting in his office. He loves to read and write in that room because it is full of books. Suddenly, he saw something out of the corner of his eye. It had gray fur, round ears, and bright black eyes. It also had a long tail that curled around behind its back. It was a mouse!

Doctor Bernard followed the little animal. It went behind a bookcase. Doctor Bernard moved the bookcase and saw a little hole in the wall. “So that’s where it came from!” he said. “I guess mice love to chew holes.”

He sat back down and picked up his pen to write more of this story. “Hey!” he exclaimed. “Something stole words out of my story!”

Now, what do you think it was?
Answer: mouse

By: Jake, 6 years old, Matawan

How did you do?
Check your answers here!
Local Mom Benefits from Compassionate Cancer Care

While on vacation in Maine in summer 2011, Barbara got a phone call she was afraid of: It told her she had uterine cancer.

Those results came from a biopsy taken just before she and her family had left their Fair Haven home for Maine. Additional lab work at Riverview Medical Center later revealed early-stage ovarian cancer as well.

As a part-time nurse at Riverview and a substitute school nurse, Barbara knew many local doctors and nurses — and knew those at Riverview were experts in what they did. So when she received the diagnosis, she didn’t have to look far for treatment.

In August she was referred to Michael Manuel, M.D., a surgeon and gynecologic oncologist affiliated with Meridian Cancer Care. After reviewing Barbara’s medical information, Dr. Manuel, who focuses on minimally invasive cancer surgery, recommended a total laparoscopic hysterectomy.

In September, Dr. Manuel performed the minimally invasive procedure at Riverview. It is done through a few dime-sized incisions in the abdomen. Because it’s done with smaller incisions, the recovery is faster than it would be following a traditional open surgery.

The procedure was the right fit for Barbara and a success. But beyond that, Barbara says, Dr. Manuel helped her and her family through the emotional challenges that come with a cancer diagnosis.

“He was so kind and so compassionate,” says Barbara, 53. “He allowed me to verbalize all of my concerns. He is a wonderful human being and an excellent surgeon.”

Dr. Manuel credits the staff and facilities at Riverview, where patients are provided with the latest in comprehensive cancer care.

“Within the Meridian system, I can provide high-quality gynecology cancer services, including surgery and chemotherapy, allowing patients to be treated near home,” Dr. Manuel says.

Barbara was feeling fully recovered by the middle of October, and she and her family returned to Maine for Christmas. Her outlook for 2012 was a brighter and healthier one. “I really feel like I’m back to life,” she says.

Visit MeridianCancerCareNJ.com to watch a video in which Barbara tells more of her story. While there, check out more inspiring videos from cancer patients who have been helped through Meridian Cancer Care.

Barbara, a Fair Haven resident, is back to enjoying biking and spending time with her husband of 24 years and her 8-year-old son after Riverview doctors treated her uterine and ovarian cancer.
Sticks and Stones Start Young: Bullying in Elementary School

On a sitcom, a bully might be a tough 12th-grader who stuffs a puny freshman into a locker. But bullying starts long before high school. In fact, 21 percent of U.S. elementary schools cite bullying as a disciplinary problem they face. If your child has been bullied — or has been the bully — he or she may not tell you. Learn the signs of bullying, to help keep kids safe.

What Does Bullying Look Like?
“Bullying is aggressive behavior that’s repeated and on purpose,” says Ramon Solhkhah, M.D., chair of Psychiatry at Jersey Shore University Medical Center and part of Meridian Neuroscience. “Kids who seem weak are usually the target.”

To a child in elementary school, weakness may mean:

- **Size:** Bigger kids often pick on smaller kids.

What Can Parents Do?
You can help your child stay safe by following these tips:

- **Teach your child to not react to a bully’s demands.** Practice how your child will answer assertively when a bully confronts him.

- **Foster friendships.** Children with a strong group of friends seem less vulnerable.

- **Document any bullying and address it with school officials.** Don’t contact a bully’s parents directly — that may worsen the problem.

- **Other unexplained changes in behavior or mood.** Parents should also watch for evidence that their child is bullying others, such as:
  - Frequent getting into verbal or physical fights
  - Coming home with new money or with items you didn’t purchase
  - Being sent to the principal’s office often
  - Hanging out with others who are bullies

GIVING BACK: A POSITIVE ALTERNATIVE TO BULLYING
Volunteering is one healthy way to keep kids active. Junior volunteers at Meridian can give back by working with patients or by helping behind the scenes. To find out more, call 1-800-DOCTORS.
Christie Rampone, shown here at a meet-and-greet, knows the importance of stretching before a run. Get more running tips from Christie by visiting her blog at MeridianMomtourage.com.

Finish Line by Fall: Running Your First 5K

A 5K race — that’s 3.1 miles — may sound daunting. But it can be a realistic fitness goal, even if you’ve never run a step. With the right preparation, you can conquer this course in five to 10 weeks of training. These tips from Jason Wong, D.O., of Southern Ocean Medical Center, will help you to stay motivated.

Stock Up with the Right Gear
Before you start training for any sport, you need the right equipment. Luckily, running is a relatively inexpensive sport. For safe and comfortable training, be sure to have:

- **Running shoes that fit well.** Go to a specialty running store for help picking the best pair for your feet.
- **Absorbent socks.** Unlike cotton socks, these keep your feet dry and reduce friction, protecting you from blisters.

A safe running route. “A route that’s clear, smooth, even, and relatively soft will keep you striding injury-free,” says Dr. Wong. “A rubber track or dirt path is best.”

Safe, Smart Training
Look for a training program from a reliable source online. A good program starts slowly and builds over time. Less experienced runners might start with a routine that alternates shorter spurts of jogging with walking. As you become more comfortable with the routine, you can gradually increase your running segments until you’re jogging the whole time.

“Do not increase your time or mileage by more than 10 percent per week to reduce your risk for injury,” says Dr. Wong. “And do 20 to 30 minutes of other aerobic activities on the days you’re not running. This will help you build endurance.”

Be sure to leave at least one or two rest days per week. Your body needs time to recover.

Race-Day Rules
Before the big day arrives, run or drive along the course so that you’re familiar with its twists and turns. Keep these other tips in mind to have your best race-day experience:

- Eat a light carbohydrate snack an hour and a half before your run. Drink plenty of water before and during the race.
- Don’t go faster than your training pace. At your first race, your main goal is to cross the finish line.

Train for the Heart and Sole Cup
Our first-ever series of 5K races, the Heart and Sole Cup, kicks off on May 19 at Ocean Medical Center in Brick. Not quite ready? Start training for Jersey Shore’s 5K on September 16. To register, visit www.MeridianHealth.com/HeartandSoleCup.
You can’t prevent every bump, scrape, and bruise during childhood. But you can help reduce your child’s risk for sports injuries such as strains, sprains, and shin splints.

“Make sure your young athlete warms up properly before any game or practice and cools down after,” says Patrick Buddle, M.D., medical director of rehabilitation at Jersey Shore University Medical Center. “Eating a healthy diet and staying in shape can also keep growing bones, joints, and muscles safe.”

When injury does strike, use this guide from Dr. Buddle to know what to do. Fast treatment helps children return to the activities they enjoy.

Sprains

**Situation:** Your child falls, twists, or gets hit on the knee, wrist, elbow, or ankle.

**Symptoms:** He or she may feel a pop or tear when the sprain, an injury to a ligament that connects and stabilizes joints, occurs. Pain, swelling, and bruising often develop afterward.

**Smart start:** Use the RICE method — rest, ice, compression with an elastic bandage, and elevation.

**Signs to beware:** If the swelling and pain are intense, if the joint is locked or unstable, or if your child can’t bear weight, take your child to the Emergency Department.

Strains

**Situation:** Your child twists, pulls, or over stresses a muscle, such as when throwing a pitch or kicking a soccer ball.

**Symptoms:** Strains are stretches or tears in muscles or tendons, which connect muscles to bones. They cause pain, limited motion, swelling, cramping, and muscle weakness.

**Smart start:** Reduce swelling and pain with ice and rest.

**Signs to beware:** If your child has pain in the neck or back, if numbness or weakness runs down an arm or leg, or if there are changes in skin color, see a doctor.

Shin Splints

**Symptoms:** Your young runner or dancer repeatedly stresses his or her legs by increasing the time spent training.

**Signs:** Shin splints occur when muscles, tendons, or the thin layer of tissue covering the shinbone become swollen and inflamed over time. Pain strikes the front, lower leg.

**Smart start:** Encourage two to four weeks of rest, followed by a gradual return to activity.

**Signs to beware:** If your child’s pain doesn’t subside after some time off, call a doctor. This could be a sign of stress fracture, a small crack in the bone that often requires crutches to heal.

FREE RESOURCE FOR BUSY MOMS

Are you receiving Your Health-e Child yet? Sign up today to get the next issue, which will include an article about ligaments and tendons. Visit [www.MeridianHealth.com/enewletters](http://www.MeridianHealth.com/enewletters) to sign up.
Play It Safe on the Playground

Playgrounds are great places for children to make friends, stay fit, gain coordination, and just plain be kids. Even so, they can pose dangers to children. Beyond everyday cuts and bruises, about 45 percent of playground-related injuries are severe. The toll includes broken bones, internal injuries, and concussions.

“Most playground injuries take place on climbing equipment and swings,” says Bradley Pulver, M.D., medical director, Emergency Services, for Ocean Medical Center and Ocean Care Center.

Happily, following these safety guidelines can reduce your child’s accident risk.

On the Playground

“Adult supervision is a key component of playground injury prevention,” says Dr. Pulver. “Not only can adults ensure proper use of equipment, they can also tend to any injuries that occur.”

Parents, teachers, babysitters, and other adult caregivers should also take these steps:

- Avoid taking children to playgrounds that have concrete, asphalt, or other hard surfaces under equipment. Instead, look for playgrounds that have shock-absorbing material.
- Keep children on age-appropriate equipment.
- Don’t let children crowd the exit areas of slides. Make sure there’s enough space for kids to exit merry-go-rounds.
- Steer children away from swing seats made of wood or metal. Plastic or rubber is better.

- Keep children away from any equipment that could trap a child’s head.
- Make sure you can clearly see your children at all times when they’re playing.
- Report hazards such as tree stumps, rocks, and exposed concrete footings.

Safety at Home

These strategies can help keep kids safe on home playground sets:

- Assemble playground equipment correctly. Install it on a level surface and anchor it firmly.
- Place caps on all screws and bolts to prevent cuts and scrapes. Check periodically for loose bolts and broken components.
- Install energy-absorbent mats or loose fill materials such as shredded rubber, sand, or wood chips at least 9 inches deep below equipment.
- To prevent strangulation, don’t attach jump ropes, pet leashes, clotheslines, and the like to equipment.

“Close supervision by an attentive adult who is monitoring and enforcing safe use of equipment is the most important factor in preventing playground injuries,” says Dr. Pulver.

GET FREE HEALTH REMINDER STICKERS!

Did you miss the winter issue of Meridian KidViews? If so, you also missed our health reminder stickers — including fun ones for kids! Call 1-800-DOCTORS to request your free copy.
Spring 2012

Upcoming Events
at Meridian Health

Call 1-800-DOCTORS for details or to register for any of these events.

Tackling Stroke
Join experts from Meridian Neuroscience for an evening of lifesaving information on risk factors, prevention, and detection. Meridian Neuroscience spokesperson Harry Carson, former New York Giants football legend and Hall of Famer, will be the keynote speaker. AngioScreen stroke screening will be available at a reduced cost. AngioScreen registration is required in addition to the event.
May 3
Neptune High School Performing Arts Center
55 Neptune Blvd., Neptune

Children’s Group Counseling
Meridian Behavioral Health offers intensive therapy in age-specific groups for children facing emotional or behavioral difficulties. Call 732-869-2759 for registration, schedules, and fees.

Paint the Town Pink!
It is time for Paint the Town Pink! We are excited to welcome even more Pink Partners and towns than ever to this annual occasion that raises awareness of the importance of annual mammography in our community. Visit PaintTheTownPink.com for a complete list of participating locations and events.
May 4 – 12

To Your Heart: Joan Hamburg’s Exclusive Broadcast with Meridian Health
Join Meridian Women’s Heart Connection as Joan Hamburg, host of The Joan Hamburg Show on WOR NewsTalk Radio 710, interviews a panel of Meridian CardioVascular Network physicians. The interview will be broadcast on WOR. Tickets are $50 and include access to the radio broadcast taping and dinner. Proceeds benefit the Women’s Philanthropic Fund. To register, please call 1-800-560-9990.
May 15, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Robert B. Meyner Reception Center
PNC Arts Center, Holmdel

Car Seat Safety Check
Sponsored by the New Jersey State Police and the Trauma Center at Jersey Shore University Medical Center. No registration necessary.
First Tuesday of each month
3:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Jersey Shore University Medical Center

Train for Your First 5K!
See page 13.