TOP PRODUCTS YOU CAN'T DO WITHOUT

Check out these award winners and make your life easier!

Tips for Coping With High-Risk Pregnancy

Local Moms' Groups

Family Field Trip: Manhattan Beach
Christopher Gavigan: Environmental Advocate

By Elena Epstein

One of Christopher Gavigan’s favorite activities is walking out to his garden with his kids and picking fresh, organic fruits and vegetables. Creating a healthy world has been Gavigan’s mission for a long time, and as the dad of three young children, he gets to live that mission on a daily basis.

Gavigan is an environmental advocate, author of the bestselling book *Healthy Child Healthy World: Creating a Cleaner, Greener, Safer Home* (Dutton Adult, 2008) and the chief product officer of The Honest Company, which he co-founded with actress Jessica Alba. The company offers an expansive line of non-toxic products ranging from diapers and wipes to cleaning products and bath and skin essentials. I met him at the Santa Monica office of The Honest Company.

What advice do you have for new parents trying to create a healthy home?

Becoming a parent is this great moment of awakening around choices and opportunities for lifestyle improvements, but also a period of confusion. It can be overwhelming and, as parents, we can be very hard on ourselves. It’s important to relax and savor this incredible time. You can start making changes in your daily habits – the type of products you buy, what you eat. But don’t feel like you have to change everything all in one day. Educate yourself and start with one area to improve each day, each week, or each month – whatever works for you.

What should we look for in personal-care products such as lotions and shampoos?

Many cosmetics, lotions, shampoos and sunscreens contain harmful, unregulated chemicals, including phthalates, parabens, sulfates, sodium chloride, and common allergens. Look for all-natural, organic and hypoallergenic formulations. This focus is especially important for pregnant women, newborns and young children.

What other daily routines could cause harm?

As families, we need to take a good look at the products we use to clean our home. Shockingly, in many cases our indoor air quality is worse than the outdoor air quality. By simply switching cleaning products to those made with plant-based ingredients, you’ll decrease your family’s exposure to hundreds of harmful petrochemicals.

How do you explain to young children about the importance of eating healthy when they are surrounded by food coloring and processed food at parties and other events?

First and most importantly, as parents we need to set a good example and be good role models by choosing healthy, fresh, whole-food choices ourselves. Second, start conversations at an early age, talking about how your family chooses and makes decisions. Clearly talk about how other families may not make the same choices, but this is important for us to do. You don’t want to alarm them or be overly charged, but parents will want to share some important facts with them and encourage positive alternatives and choices they can be happy about.

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