Healthy head start

The deepest well

MAURICE BURKE-HARRIS, M.D.

Local clinic participates in childhood adversity expert’s national program

By DAVE MASON, NEWS-PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER

In 2013, when his son was 3, Dr. Maurice Burke-Harris was faced with a difficult decision: Should he take antidepressants to combat the depression that had set in after he and his wife lost a baby? It was a decision that he and his wife, Tracey, had to make for their own sake, but it also had implications for their son, Max. As the son of a pediatrician, Max was already at risk for developing depression, and the doctors told the family that the antidepressants might help prevent that from happening.

Dr. Burke-Harris decided to take the medication, and the family saw a significant improvement in his mood. But it wasn’t just Max who benefited from the treatment. Dr. Burke-Harris noticed that his son was more engaged and had a better appetite. He also began to participate in more activities and was less irritable.

Dr. Burke-Harris began to think about how he could use his knowledge and experience to help other families with children who were at risk for developing depression. He started a clinic at the University of California, San Francisco, where he treated children with depression and their families. He also began to speak at conferences and workshops, sharing his story and his insights.

Then, in 2016, Dr. Burke-Harris was invited to participate in a national program called the “Deep Well Project.” The program was created by Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, the founder of the Center for Child Health and Development at the University of California, San Francisco. The program was designed to help pediatricians and other healthcare providers identify and address the effects of childhood trauma in their patients.

Dr. Burke-Harris saw an opportunity to use his own experiences to help other families, and he agreed to participate. He began to work with other pediatricians around the country, helping them understand the impact of childhood trauma and how to address it in their patients.

“I’ve always been interested in the connection between children’s health and the environment they grow up in,” Dr. Burke-Harris said. “I’ve seen firsthand how traumatic experiences can affect a child’s development, and I want to help other professionals understand how to address those issues in their own practices.”

The program has been successful, with hundreds of pediatricians across the country signing up to participate. Dr. Burke-Harris has been able to reach a wider audience, and he has been able to share his own story to help other families understand the impact of childhood trauma.

“I think it’s important for parents to know that childhood trauma is real, and it can have a significant impact on their children’s health and development,” Dr. Burke-Harris said. “But it’s also important for them to know that there is help available, and that they don’t have to go through it alone.”

The program has been so successful that Dr. Burke-Harris is now working to expand it even further. He hopes to reach even more families and help them understand the impact of childhood trauma and how to address it.

So the next time you hear a story about a child who is struggling with depression or anxiety, remember that it’s not just a coincidence. The child may be experiencing the effects of childhood trauma, and it’s important to understand how to address those issues.

How to get the most out of napping

Dr. Cooper suggests taking a 2-hour nap in the afternoon. He recommends setting an alarm for 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the afternoon to ensure a long period of sleep that will help you stay alert throughout the day.

When napping, try to find a quiet, comfortable, and cool environment. Avoid napping in a noisy or bright environment, as this can interfere with your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep. Wear loose-fitting clothes and avoid wearing heavy or tight clothing.

If you’re unable to nap during the day, try to get some rest at night instead. Dr. Cooper suggests getting 7-8 hours of sleep each night to maintain a healthy sleep cycle.

Dr. Cooper also recommends avoiding caffeine, alcohol, and sugary snacks before napping, as these can interfere with your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

Finally, Dr. Cooper suggests setting a sleep schedule to help your body regulate its sleep cycle. This can help improve the quality of your sleep and reduce the risk of sleep disorders.

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"I went to some good schools, and I never learned in my medical training or my residency training that things like childhood trauma could have such a profound and direct effect on health," said Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, a pediatrician who earned a master’s degree in public health at Harvard University in 2002. She went on to study at Harvard Medical School and, after completing her residency, returned to the Center for Child Health and Development at Stanford.

"The Deep Well Project" is one of the many initiatives that Dr. Burke-Harris has undertaken to address the impact of childhood trauma on health. The project was designed to help pediatricians and other healthcare providers identify and address the effects of childhood trauma in their patients.

"We know that when children experience trauma, it can have a profound impact on their health," Dr. Burke-Harris said. "But we also know that there are interventions that can help mitigate those effects and improve children’s health outcomes."
Generations

Peanut allergy? Treatment working and could soon be open to all kids

By ANDY MARS O

TheFresnoBee.com

JACKIE SUGO AND HER HUSBAND, JOSEPH, of Clovis, Calif., have worked to keep him away from anything with peanuts. 

Colton Sugio's peanut allergy was so severe that even a tiny taste could send him to the emergency room. 

On Monday, the Sogio family celebrated when doctors said Colton's allergy is under control. 

Sugio said her husband was attending a regional allergy conference in Kansas City, Mo., last month to discuss the latest treatments for peanut allergies. She heard that one of the presentations was about the SLEP study, which could lead to a new treatment for peanut allergy. 

"We were really excited," Sugio said. "We had been hoping for something like this for a long time." 

Colton Sugio, 8, has had a severe peanut allergy since he was a baby. His parents said he was already using the new treatment and that it was working well. 

"We've been really happy with how it's been going," Sugio said. "He's been able to eat peanut butter and he's been able to have a lot of different foods that he used to be allergic to." 

The SLEP study is the first to show that a new treatment for peanut allergy can be effective in children who have severe allergies. 

"It's a very promising finding," Sugio said. "We're hoping that this will lead to more treatment options for peanut allergy patients." 

The study involves administering small amounts of peanut protein to children who have severe peanut allergies. 

"We're still a long way from having a cure for peanut allergy," Sugio said. "But this is a big step in the right direction." 

Sugio said she was hopeful that this treatment would become available to more children in the future. 

"I think it's really important that we continue to invest in research," Sugio said. "We need to find more effective treatments for peanut allergy so that children can have a normal life."