What’s up, Doc?
Anxiety and COVID-19
by Beth Earthman, ARNP and Brittany LeGarde, PNP-PC

With the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, families have had many changes in their lives. Social distancing has been recommended. The governor of Washington has required school to close. Children are now at home for weeks to months. This can add a lot of stress in the home, especially as places of recreation are forced to close as well. Many children are very aware of COVID-19 due to the news, radio stations, social media or listening to parents and friends.

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. Children and teens can react more strongly to stress than adults. Isolating at home can cause both anxiety and depression in teens and children. Here are some signs and symptoms of anxiety in children:

- Excessive or increased worrying about their health or health of loved ones and friends. Obsessing over getting sick.
- Irritability.
- Becoming withdrawn.
- Somatic complaints such as stomachaches, headaches. These complaints have no physical cause.
- Difficulty falling asleep or waking frequently at night.
- Excessive need for reassurance or comfort.
- Outbursts of anger or crying.
- Change in appetite, not eating or overeating to cope with anxiety.

What you can do to help your child/teen with anxiety:

- #1 Communicate with your child! Ask them if they are feeling anxious about the recent outbreak. Be honest about what is going on. Make sure to have accurate information. Answer their questions.

For the rest of this edition’s “What’s Up, Doc?” feature story, please visit our webpage at peacehealth.org/Whatcom/pediatrics.
Teddy’s Tips – Age Appropriate Chores Your Kids Can Do

From www.everydayfamily.com (By Sharon Rowley)

Spring is a time for cleaning! And what better way to get that done than to have the kiddos help with chores around the house. Here are a few age appropriate chores your child(ren) can do:

**Ages 2-5**
- Clean up toys, books, etc.
- Dust furniture
- Dress themselves
- Put clothes in the hamper
- Help set the table for meals
- Feed pets

**Ages 6-11**
- Make beds
- Clean up bedrooms
- Sort and start laundry
- Fold and put away laundry
- Load and empty the dishwasher
- Wipe down the table

**Ages 12 and up**
- Prepare a family dinner
- Vacuum
- Mop Floors
- Clean bathrooms
- Wash the car
- Do their own laundry

As you introduce each chore, include time for a 4-step progression:
1. Teach the chore.
2. Do the chore with your child.
3. Actively supervise the chore.
4. Inspect the chore once it’s finished.

Get ready for some DAD JOKES!

Today, my son asked, “Can I have a book mark?” I burst into tears. Eleven years old and he still doesn’t know my name is Brian.

I ordered a chicken and an egg from Amazon. I’ll let you know.

Did you know the first French fries weren’t actually cooked in France? They were cooked in Greece.

I’m reading a book about anti-gravity. It’s impossible to put down.

Sara Cortez has been working for PeaceHealth since 1999 and at the front desk in pediatrics since 2008. She enjoys weekly walks with a lady’s church group and spending time with her baby nephew, Finley, and his sister, Kira. She is very proud of her son, Austin, who is a plumber.

For the past 15 years, Michele Pagano has nursed at PeaceHealth pediatrics. She has a teenage daughter, one dog, two rabbits and has been married to her husband for more than 30 years. She’s vice president of the Bellingham Figure Skating Club and enjoys ice skating with her daughter, reading and playing scrabble.