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Zest Pediatric Network Adds Support Services to Address Top Shortfalls in Early Child Health

New lactation, nutrition, and sleep services will help parents avoid common mistakes and provide better care for their children.

April 22, 2024 - Zest Pediatric Network, the country's first direct pediatric care physician network, now offers integrated lactation, nutrition, and sleep specialist services to better support parents and their children.

"We believe breastfeeding, nutrition, and sleep are critical to the current and future health of children. These are fundamental building blocks of health," says Dr. Andrew Hertz, President of Zest Pediatric Network. "Our experts assist parents in ways that are not typically available in pediatric offices."

Raising kids is complicated. They don't come with instructions and parents cannot do it alone, nor should they have to. National statistics show that parents need these services to take proper care of their children. However, despite this need, the typical pediatric office does not have these services integrated within their care environment.

This matters. For example, although over 80% of mothers initiate breastfeeding after birth, by 3 months of age only 45% of babies are exclusively breastfed. Breastfeeding longevity, and the associated health benefits, increases with lactation support. Additionally, parents report that 30% of children under 3 years have sleep problems. Similarly, up to 35% of parents report their child is a picky eater. Integrating these support services into Zest Pediatrics provides parents seamless assistance in these key areas and reduces these early child health challenges.

Zest is based on the direct pediatric care (DPC) model that provides families an alternative to the often-frustrating experience at a pediatric office. A flat, affordable, monthly fee allows a family unlimited access to their pediatrician. Our doctors take the time to get to know both parent and patient. Visits last as long as needed. Parents and their children always see the same pediatrician. There is no prolonged time spent in waiting rooms. For parents' convenience, care can be provided via texting, sending photos, phone calls or video chat. It is a personal, accessible, and supportive model designed for parents.

“For new parents, learning how to feed a baby can be overwhelming and affect mental health during the vulnerable postpartum period,” says Lauren Lasko, a nurse practitioner and lactation specialist with Zest. “Professional lactation support is integrated into the routine care at Zest, taking pressure off of families to find comprehensive, thoughtful guidance on how to feed their babies.”

Standard professional support services are available to all Zest members and included in their monthly membership.

“We joined Zest to provide nutrition counseling to pregnant mothers and to help parents navigate the myriad of often conflicting guidance on starting solids that is available on the internet,” says Nicole Ryan Suppes, a registered dietitian with Zest. “Parents need help as data demonstrates that almost 50 percent of children start solids prior to the recommended age.”

The Future

Dr. Hertz says that Zest will add other important services soon. “We began by providing professional support services that will give children a strong start. We plan to add parent coaches, psychologists, athletic trainers, and more. We founded Zest to provide comprehensive professional support for our patients.”

About Zest Pediatric Network

Zest Pediatric Network is the first physician-owned direct pediatric care network. The Zest innovative care model is designed for parents. It eliminates many of the frustrations parents have with current health systems. The emphasis is on a personal, accessible, and supportive family experience. A flat, affordable monthly fee provides members with unhurried visits with the same pediatrician and multiple means of providing care – office, texting, video, pictures and even home visits. Zest is the way pediatrics should be.

ZestPeds.com.

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