

# TELL US YOUR STORY



When 15-year-old Brady Wells went to a routine checkup with his allergy doctor, his mother had no idea what her son and their family were about to face.

Brady had just finished his baseball season at the end of June 2009, and in mid-July, he went to his doctor's office.

## **The checkup was anything but routine. X-rays showed Brady's heart was very enlarged.**

His allergy doctor said he had no idea how Brady could have been playing baseball with the state of his heart. The doctor sent Brady and his parents to Children's Hospital in St. Louis to see a heart transplant specialist for a week of tests – and ultimately for a new heart.

Brady had been a SoonerCare (Oklahoma's Medicaid) member since shortly after his birth. When Brady was born, his mother said his doctors and family knew Brady had serious heart problems. Valerie Wells, Brady's mother, said that for "83 roller coaster days," Brady's family didn't know if he would survive and be able to come home from the hospital.

"I had insurance at the time," she said, "but I was unable to work due to his illness so he went on SoonerCare."

"We couldn't have gotten through everything we faced without SoonerCare," she said. "SoonerCare even helped us stay at the Ronald McDonald House near the hospital for seven weeks while we waited for an available heart."

Brady has a new heart and is back to playing baseball.

Brady's mother shared their story as part of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority's "Tell Us Your Story" campaign. SoonerCare asks members to share how SoonerCare made a difference in their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

SoonerCare provides quality health care for 1 in 4 Oklahomans. If you are one of the more than 700,000 SoonerCare members or a former member, go to <http://www.okhca.org/tell-us-your-story.aspx> and add your story.

Oklahomans can apply for SoonerCare online at [www.mysooner.org](http://www.mysooner.org). For more information about SoonerCare or any of OHCA's programs, call the SoonerCare Helpline at 800-987-7767 or visit [www.okhca.org](http://www.okhca.org).



# Back-to-School Checklist

Don't forget a thing! This comprehensive back-to-school checklist will help make sure all your i's are dotted and t's crossed before your child's first day.

## First Steps

- Find out what day classes start and what time your child should arrive
- Enroll your child (if she/he is not already registered from the previous year)
- Fill out emergency contact sheets and any other required forms

## Check Medical Requirements

- Make sure your child has all required immunizations
- Schedule a physical exam for your child if needed to participate in school activities
- Get your child's vision checked before school starts if she/he is due for an exam
- Notify the principal's office, the school nurse, and your child's teachers about any health problems or medications

## Stock Up on School Supplies

- Check the school website or call for a list of required supplies
- Find out whether students will store supplies at school or bring them home each day
- Buy a backpack or bag to carry daily items
- Review the school dress code
- Buy school uniforms and gym clothes, if necessary

## Learn About the School

- Find out whether the teacher prefers to communicate by phone, email, or written note
- Know what your child is expected to learn in their grade level
- Note the phone numbers for checking school closures or reporting absences
- Find out the procedure for taking your child out of school early
- Read the school handbook and make sure your child understands the rules
- Review the school's federal "report card"

## Plan Healthy Meals

- Have nutritious food on hand for breakfast and after-school snacks

- Find out how much school breakfasts and lunches cost
- Find out whether snacks and drinks are available at school or can be brought from home
- Ask where to obtain weekly school lunch menus and plan accordingly.
- Alert school staff if your child has a severe food allergy

## Arrange Transportation

- Practice getting to school with your child
  - BUS: Make sure they know where and when to be picked up before and after school
  - BICYCLE: Review road safety and make sure your child has a helmet
  - ON FOOT: Walk the route together and review pedestrian safety guidelines
- Arrange a carpool if necessary and introduce your child to the other adults and children
- Compile contact information of parents who can pick up your child in an emergency

## Make After-School Plans

- Arrange child care or after-school activities
- Choose extracurricular activities carefully to avoid overscheduling
- Make sure your child knows where to go after school each day

## Help Your Child Prepare for School

- Discuss your child's feelings about starting school and talk over any concerns
- Talk with your child about his daily school schedule
- Talk about peer pressure with your child
- Have your child memorize your home address, and home and work phone numbers
- Tour the school with your child so he/she can find their classrooms, the restrooms and cafeteria
- Arrange a time for you and your child to meet their new teachers

## Lay the Ground Rules

- Establish a firm bedtime before school starts
- Determine where and when your child will do homework
- Figure out a plan for balancing homework and play time
- Set rules for the time spent on TV, video games, and computer use for non-school projects

# Can't Take the Heat...Neither Can Your Little Ones



Together, we can reduce the number of these needless and tragic deaths, and near misses by remembering a few tips.

**Did you know** that a child's body heats up **five times** faster than an adult's? Remember it only takes a few short minutes before a child can become dangerously overheated so imagine how hot your child could get if left in a car for even a few minutes. In just 10 minutes, a car's temperature can increase 20 degrees – and it continues to rise. **Never** leave infants or toddlers in a parked vehicle, even with partially opened windows.

We are aware that parents always have a lot going on and a lot of thoughts running through their head. Take that and top that off with running late for work, spilling hot coffee on you, and needing to be prepared for something at work-you may in an instant of overwhelming thoughts jump out of your car and forget the precious cargo that has been asleep in the back. You say that won't happen to you but it can.

Since 1998, more than 500 children across the U.S. have died as a result of hyperthermia (also known as heat stroke). For every child who dies after being left alone in a hot car, hundreds more are near misses - those rescued before death. Do you think those parents thought they would have forgotten their baby in the back?



- Make a habit of looking in the vehicle, front and back, before locking the door and walking away.
- Put your purse or briefcase in the back seat or better yet your cell phone so you always have to look in the back of the car before you leave. You will always remember your purse or cell phone.
- When you put your child in the car seat place a teddy bear, a toy, or the diaper bag, on the passenger seat as a reminder the child is in the car. Then when you get the child out, put the teddy bear, toy or diaper bag in the car seat so when putting the child back in the car seat, that item can again be placed up in the passenger seat so you start a routine to help remind you.
- When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car, do not overlook any children who have fallen asleep.
- You can set a cell phone or BlackBerry reminder to drop off or pick up the child at daycare or school.
- Set your computer Outlook program to ask, "Did you drop off your child today?"
- Have a plan with the childcare provider to call if your child doesn't arrive as expected.
- Although these are simple tips, they are tips that could save your child's life.



Almost 40 percent of children are overweight, and more than 16 percent are considered obese, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. It is important, therefore, that children learn how to incorporate physical activity into their daily

schedules. That can set them up for a lifetime of healthful attitudes and behaviors related to fitness. Here are some fun ways to sneak in exercise for your kids while they are just having fun:

**Capture the Flag:** Split a group into two teams, each team having a flag or other marker at the team's base. The object of the game is to run to the other team's base, capture their flag then make it safely back to your own territory without getting tagged. If you are tagged, you go to jail. You can be sprung from jail by a member your own team running into your territory, tagging them and running back.

**Red Rover:** Divide everyone into two teams, each forming a long line, holding hands, and facing the other team. The teams take turns calling out, "Red Rover, Red Rover, let (insert child's name) come over!" That child leaves their team's line, runs as fast as they can toward the other line and tries to break through the held hands. If they break through, they get to take someone back to their team. If they don't, they join the new team. When a team only has one person left, that person tries to break through the other team. If they do not, then their team loses.

**Outdoor Chores:** By handling outdoor chores with your kids, you get to cross things off your to-do list as you exercise together. Gardening is a simple way to get the entire family active, especially if you have a large garden. Weeding and tending the garden can burn calories when you keep yourself moving. Mowing, picking up sticks, washing cars and sweeping driveways and patios also burn calories. When you're done with your own yard, help your neighbors out with their outdoor chores.

**Fitness Challenge:** Fitness challenges are another way to involve your kids during your summer workouts. A family Olympics-style challenge works well to keep the family in shape. Organize a variety of challenges, such as a ball toss, obstacle course, races and jumping contests. For every day workouts, challenge your kids to see how many of a particular

exercise they can do. For example, if you're doing crunches for your workout, have the kids see how many crunches they can do.

**Get Off the Couch on Commercials:** Have your child get up during commercials or have them take a 3 minute break every 30 minutes of video game playing. During this break, have them do things like jumping jacks, toe touches, sit-ups and pushups; run around the couch 5 times; do the "Macarena" dance or anything that involves a physical activity.



## SoonerRide Benefits Changes Began July 1st

- SoonerCare members who must stay away from home for a medical need may receive payment for meals and overnight lodging. All requests for meals and overnight lodging services must be approved in advance by SoonerCare. Members may be approved for overnight stays as long as 14 days. Stays longer than 14 days must be reviewed further and approved by SoonerCare.
- SoonerRide may not be used for emergency room visits. Use ambulance service for any emergency transportation need.
- Rule changes make the SoonerRide program easier to understand. SoonerRide can transport SoonerCare members up to 45 miles from their home. A larger area is allowed for specialty providers if no services are available within 45 miles from the member's home.
- The rules have been changed to explain penalties for misusing SoonerCare benefits making the penalties for member fraud and abuse stronger.

If you have questions about how these changes may affect you as a SoonerCare member, please call the Care Management Unit at (877) 252-6002.

This newsletter is for SoonerCare Choice members. It will tell you about any changes or updates to your SoonerCare benefits. It will also give you other useful news to help keep you healthy. However, if you have specific questions about your health, please talk to your doctor.

**Disclaimer: Clinical, legal and other comments are offered for general information only. Please talk to your doctor about specific health concerns.**

## SoonerCare Helpline

800-987-7767 or 711(TDD)

## SoonerRide

877-404-4500 or 711(TDD)

## SoonerCare provider list

800-987-7767

Si usted quiere leer este artículo en español, visite la pagina web del OHCA al <http://www.okhca.org/sooner-care-companion>.

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## Brush up on Dental Health



### Keeping your child's teeth healthy

Experts suggest that parents take their children to the dentist for the first time as soon as your child's first tooth breaks through his or her gums.

Parents can begin making their child comfortable with the process much earlier:

- Take a damp face cloth with just a small amount of toothpaste on it and gently rub it over your child's gums-just getting your children used to having someone clean their gums can be the first step.
- When you see your child's teeth begin to come in, use a soft toothbrush and gently brush to keep those teeth healthy. Eventually, you will know when you child can take over their teeth brushing routine themselves without help, however do a quick teeth check after their brushing.

According to the Center for Disease Control, more than 19 percent of children ages 2-19 have untreated cavities. Don't let your child be in those statistics - instead remember a child's complete preventive dental routine should include: some type of fluoride mouth wash daily, twice-daily brushing, wise food choices, and if possible regular dental checks from a dentist.

Healthy teeth are important to your body's overall health. Healthy teeth help keep your whole body healthy. Simple steps will keep your child's teeth and gums healthy but also healthy overall.

SoonerCare offers dental checkups to members until they are 19 years old.



## Fruit Juice

Fruit juice should be used sparingly and only offered in a cup with meals or at snack time but **not** in bottles or sippy cups. Fruit juice has lots of sugar, which can cause cavities and other dental problems for your child.

If you are going to give juice at a certain time, here is one helpful tip: water down the juice, and use half water and half juice. This will not only cut down on the sugar but also still keep the sweet fruity taste.

If your child falls asleep with a bottle, be sure to use **only** water. Juice or milk that stays in a child's mouth can decay on the teeth.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Your Medical Home will begin providing an around-the-clock help line beginning Sep.1, 2012.

Ask your doctor this fall for the phone number, they will be providing to you, in case you have any questions after their regular office hours. A licensed medical professional will be available by phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

SoonerCare's Patient Advice Line (800-530-3002) will quit operating once the Medical Homes begin this service.

This is another step that we are taking to make our Medical Homes more patient-centered and accessible for you and your family to improve your overall quality of care!

## When you move....

Did you move recently? Notices and letters from SoonerCare will not be forwarded to your new address. We need a current address to send you letters or other news about your health benefits. If you applied online, you can change your address online. You can also call the SoonerCare Helpline for help if you applied online. The SoonerCare Helpline number is 800-987-7767 or 711 (TDD). If you applied through an OKDHS County Office, contact a social worker at the OKDHS office for help.

## What is third-hand smoke, and why is it a concern?

Third-hand smoke is when the nicotine and other toxic chemicals from your cigarette are left on indoor surfaces. This toxic mix contains cancer causing substances which pose numerous health hazards to children and adults.

Third-hand smoke will get on hair, skin, clothes, furniture, drapes, walls, bedding, carpets, vehicles, in dust and on other surfaces, even long after the smoking has stopped. Infants, children and nonsmoking adults are at risk of tobacco-related health problems when they inhale, eat or touch substances containing third-hand smoke.

Third-hand smoke residue will build up on surfaces over time and become resistant to daily normal cleaning. Third-hand smoke doesn't go away after airing out rooms, opening windows, using fans or air conditioners. Even confining smoking to only certain areas of a home doesn't reduce the problem. Third-hand smoke remains long after smoking has stopped.

The only way to protect nonsmokers from third-hand smoke is to create a smoke-free environment away from areas where smoking takes place. It's easy to designate a smoke-free area but it's hard to clean an environment from third-hand smoke after it's been exposed so find that smoke-free place for you and start protecting your children and yourself today!

Amy Rather, 31 | Smoked 5 years | Smokefree 3 years

**"I made it one minute. I made it ten minutes. And then all of the sudden, I made it an hour. I made it two. And then, I made it a whole day. I said, I can do this."**



If you are a SoonerCare member, talk to your doctor about the benefits available for quitting.

Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline  
1-800-QUIT NOW  
OKhelpline.com

Free quit coaching  
and free patches, gum  
or lozenges available.

## SoonerCare members receive free Durable Medical Equipment through new reuse program

The Oklahoma Durable Medical Equipment Reuse Program (OKDMERP) began in April. Through a partnership with Oklahoma ABLE Tech and the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, this program allows Oklahomans to obtain slightly used DME free of charge after its been donated. OKDMERP retrieves donated items, sanitizes and refurbishes the equipment to its original working condition, and then redistributes it to local residents.

Katie Woodward, program manager of OKDMERP said, "This program allows people, regardless of their income, age, or disability, to gain independence." Since the program began OKDMERP has reassigned 29 devices, and these donations have made a marked difference in the lives of Oklahomans."

Betty Lawrence, an Oklahoma City resident, said "if it weren't for them, I wouldn't be able to lie down. I haven't been in a bed for over two years. I'd been sleeping in a recliner until they brought me a hospital bed."

Dorothy Daughtry of Norman shares her experience with the program.

"After my stroke, I found it hard to get help. [OKDMERP] helped me to get the things I needed but couldn't afford," said Daughtry.

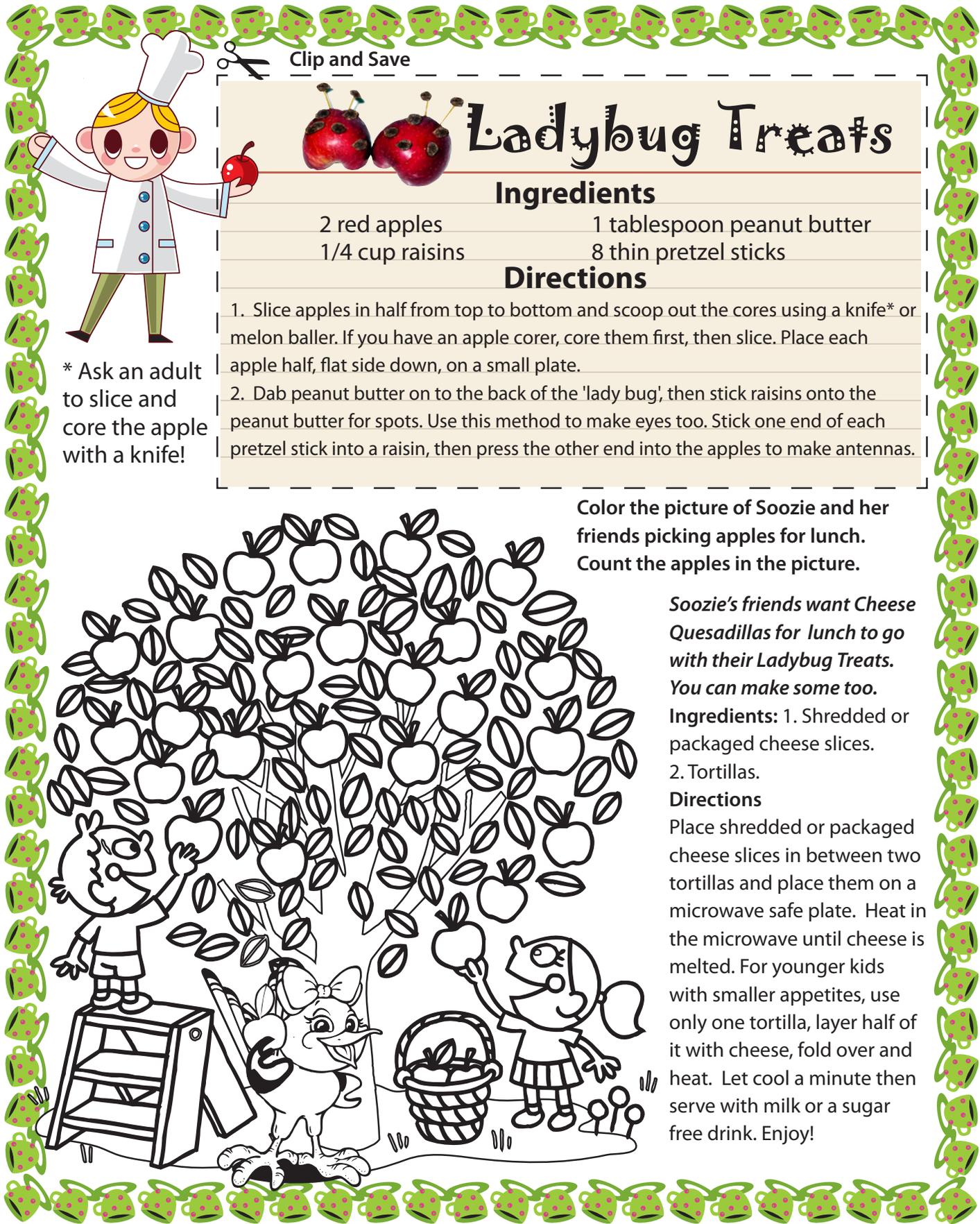
While SoonerCare members have priority, all Oklahomans with disabilities and/or health conditions are eligible to participate in the program regardless of age or income.

Program inventory will change based on donations but should include a range of devices to meet a variety of needs.

Devices that can be donated or found will include: communication devices, CPAPs, gait trainers, nebulizers, quad canes, shower chairs, walkers, bath benches, commodes, patient lifts, standers, hospital beds, wheelchairs, and scooters.

The hope is through this new partnership with OHCA, Oklahomans will gain increased access to used DME thereby helping persons with disabilities or chronic health conditions to learn, work or live more independently.

If you are interested in donating an item or you are looking for equipment, please contact Katie Woodward at 405-523-4810 or by email at [katie.woodward@okstate.edu](mailto:katie.woodward@okstate.edu). For more information visit: [www.okstate.abletech.edu/DME\\_Reuse](http://www.okstate.abletech.edu/DME_Reuse).



Clip and Save



\* Ask an adult to slice and core the apple with a knife!



# Ladybug Treats

## Ingredients

2 red apples

1 tablespoon peanut butter

1/4 cup raisins

8 thin pretzel sticks

## Directions

1. Slice apples in half from top to bottom and scoop out the cores using a knife\* or melon baller. If you have an apple corer, core them first, then slice. Place each apple half, flat side down, on a small plate.
2. Dab peanut butter on to the back of the 'lady bug', then stick raisins onto the peanut butter for spots. Use this method to make eyes too. Stick one end of each pretzel stick into a raisin, then press the other end into the apples to make antennas.

Color the picture of Soozie and her friends picking apples for lunch. Count the apples in the picture.



*Soozie's friends want Cheese Quesadillas for lunch to go with their Ladybug Treats. You can make some too.*

**Ingredients:** 1. Shredded or packaged cheese slices.  
2. Tortillas.

**Directions**  
Place shredded or packaged cheese slices in between two tortillas and place them on a microwave safe plate. Heat in the microwave until cheese is melted. For younger kids with smaller appetites, use only one tortilla, layer half of it with cheese, fold over and heat. Let cool a minute then serve with milk or a sugar free drink. Enjoy!



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Lets Move

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