

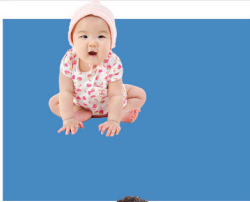
BRIGHT FUTURES

3rd
edition

FAMILY POCKET GUIDE

RAISING HEALTHY INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND ADOLESCENTS

*Content based on Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health
Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents, 4th Edition*



FAMILY VOICES[®]





WHAT IS BRIGHT FUTURES?

Bright Futures is a vision and a philosophy of children's health care. It is also a set of up-to-date guidelines, offering a practical, strength-based approach to children's health and well-being, birth through adolescence.

Bright Futures is dedicated to the principle that every child deserves to be as healthy as possible. The best health care involves a trusting relationship between a child and family, a health care provider, and their community.

Bright Futures For Families

Families' roles are essential in the health of their children. What families do every day plays a huge role in the health and well-being of children, including those with special health care needs. Partnership with health care providers is invaluable. When families and health care providers work together, sharing their knowledge and experience, children—and their families—thrive.

BRIGHT FUTURES FAMILY POCKET GUIDE, 3RD EDITION

Raising Healthy Infants, Children, And Adolescents

Based on *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition ¹



FAMILY VOICES®



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For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov).

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INTRODUCTION

Bright Futures has long been an important initiative of the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). It is designed to promote children's current and future health. The centerpiece of this initiative is *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, first published in 1994. The 4th and most recent edition of the *Bright Futures Guidelines* was published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in 2017 (<https://brightfutures.aap.org>).

The Purposes of Bright Futures Are to

- Increase health care providers' knowledge, skills, and practice.
- Promote social, developmental, and health outcomes for children.
- Foster partnerships among families, health care providers, and communities.
- Increase family knowledge about, skills for, and participation in promoting children's health and prevention activities.
- Address the developing needs of children and youth with special health care needs through identification and delivery of resources and related services.

*"Children and youth with special health care needs are those who have or are at risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally."*²

Bright Futures For Families

The Family Pocket Guide

The importance of families as equal partners in promoting the health of their children is central to Bright Futures. Family representatives served alongside their professional partners as writers and reviewers of the *Bright Futures Guidelines*. This 3rd edition of the Family Pocket Guide, as were the previous editions, has been written for and by families to help families and providers partner more effectively in the health care of children.

The Family Pocket Guide is a quick reference for families that highlights

- Timely, up-to-date information that is culturally responsive.
- Support for the roles you play every day in the health and well-being of your child.
- Information about the importance of well-child visits for all children, including children and youth with special health care needs and their families.
- Encouragement to speak up, be listened to, and take an active role in your child's care as an equal partner and expert.
- Ideas and strategies about ways to form partnerships with others (eg, families, professionals, community service providers) to improve policies, care, services, and support for all children and families.
- An overall framework for children's health and insight into the many people who contribute to it.
- Relevant information about child development and building resilience—the ability to bounce back and withstand challenges.



The Evidence Base For Bright Futures

The *Bright Futures Guidelines* includes many recommendations for families. In its development, the authors included the most accurate and up-to-date standards and evidence. Because scientifically designed studies are not available for every aspect of children’s preventive services, it is most appropriate to refer to Bright Futures as “evidence-informed.” This Family Pocket Guide is based on these recommendations.

If you ever have a question about whether a specific aspect of care or a recommendation applies to your child, don’t hesitate to ask your health care provider. If you are overwhelmed by the recommendation(s), talk about this with your health care provider. They may

- Clarify the recommendation(s).
- Know of resources that can support you.
- Be able to refer you to community partners that might help.
- Discuss with you suggestions about how to make the recommendation(s) more doable.

Each recommendation has a scientific basis and rationale. Though most apply to all children, there are always instances when something may differ for your child. Health care providers and families will want to work together so that all recommendations take into account your child’s unique needs, the environment, and your community.



How to Use this Family Pocket Guide

The guide is divided into 4 age groups or stages of development:

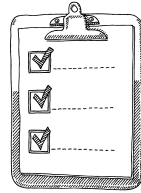
- Infancy (birth through 11 months)

- Early Childhood (1 through 4 years)
- Middle Childhood (5 through 10 years)
- Adolescence (11 through 21 years)

Each section includes information on what to expect during regular well-child visits to your health care provider. Additionally, each section highlights stage-specific aspects of the Bright Futures “health promotion” themes. These themes are important to children’s health across their lifetime. For each visit, you will find information and strategies to promote and encourage strategies for your child’s good health and help prevent illness and disease.

Well-Child Visit Subsections

A well-child visit may be called by different names—well-child, well-check, check-up, annual visit, or another name. The purpose of these visits is to help families keep children healthy and to identify any potential problems as early as possible.



Look for each of the following signposts in each visit:

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

Here you’ll find reminders and suggestions of questions or topics you can write down to discuss during the visit.

CYSHCN: CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

This section includes reminders of things to consider if your child has special health care needs as they, just like all children, need high-quality, well-child care. Note: the well-child visit for CYSHCN can improve clinical outcomes, as measured by hospitalizations, emergency department use, and detection of rare complications.

CHECK: AT THIS AGE YOUR CHILD MAY...

This section notes what your child might be doing or be ready to do at specific ages. Use these points to help ask questions or start discussions with your child's health care providers to learn and track what is appropriate for your child.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

Each well-child visit has a set of age-specific priorities that the health care provider may want to discuss with you and your child. YOUR questions and concerns are always the #1 priority. Share these, along with your child's interests and achievements, and help your child learn to take an active role in this partnership.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT

This section gives a brief overview of the well-child exam. Families should always feel free and comfortable to ask health care providers for more information about any tests or procedures.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCE WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

Each visit section includes some tips created by families for families to promote healthy ways to build resilience and connections among you, your family and friends, and your community.

Think of the yearly well-child visit (more often for kids under 3 years of age) as a road map that provides clinical evaluation, information, and guidance to help you navigate the health of your children as they grow through each age and stage. Each visit is a chance for you to work with your child's health care provider as a team, to think specifically about your child's development, and to consider the best ways to help your child grow. Remember, each day also offers a chance to improve the health and well-being of your family!



Your Child's Health Care Team

Think of your child's health care team as a group of people who have your child's health and well-being at heart. This team knows the value of working together—particularly including working with you and your child. Your child's health care provider may be a pediatrician, family medicine physician, internal medical-pediatrician physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner. Your child's health care team may also include specialists, therapists, and counselors.

If your child has special health care needs, your team may be larger and include providers in many roles. Keeping track of all the members of the team, appointments, recommendations, and medications can be challenging. Coordinating this care for your child can best happen through family-centered care and the medical home.



Family-Centered Care and Partnerships

Family-centered care recognizes that you are the constant in your child's life. Yet, while you have the main responsibility, you are not alone in caring for your child. This approach to providing care ensures the health and well-being of your child and family by focusing on respectful family/professional partnerships. Focusing on partnership helps foster two-way information sharing, communication, and trust, as well as shared decision-making, in the care and health of your child. Family-centered care

- Honors the strengths, cultures, traditions, and expertise of everyone.
- Makes life easier.
- Reduces stress and conflict.
- Improves care, communication, and your child's health.

The elements of a successful family/professional partnership are mutual commitment, respect, trust, open and honest communication, cultural responsiveness, and flexibility. Partnerships

can be formal or informal, short term or lifelong. Partnerships change as your child grows and as your needs, interests, and circumstances do. In any partnership, families should feel that their experiences and traditions are valued and respected. In turn, families should respect the intentions and expertise of health care providers and others. As in any relationship, there will be ups and downs and times when compromise and negotiation are needed.

Medical and Dental Homes

These “homes” are not buildings, but instead models of providing care. A medical or dental home is a health care setting that is accessible, affordable, high quality, continuous, comprehensive, family-centered, coordinated, compassionate, and culturally responsive. Why do you want a medical and dental home for your child? Having one primary person/location in charge of your child’s health that knows and understands your child and family makes communication and coordination easier. A primary health care team, led by a physician, gets to know the child and family. This team identifies and addresses all medical and non-medical needs. The family—including the child—and the health care providers are respected as equal partners in the child’s care.



Bright Futures is built on the belief that every child benefits from and deserves medical and dental homes. For more information on the medical home, visit the website for the National Resource Center for Patient/Family-Centered Medical Home at <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/>. For more information on the dental home, go to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry’s website at <https://www.aapd.org/research/oral-health-policies--recommendations/Dental-Home>.

Schedule of Health Visits Recommended by Bright Futures

Introductory Visit: Before your baby is born.

Infancy: Newborn, First Week, 1 Month, 2 Months, 4 Months, 6 Months, 9 Months.

Early Childhood: 12 Months, 15 Months, 18 Months, 2 Years, 2 1/2 Years, 3 Years, 4 Years

Middle Childhood: 5 & 6 Years, 7 & 8 Years, 9 & 10 Years

Adolescence: 11–14 Years (Early), 15–17 Years (Middle), 18–21 Years (Late)

Themes And Definitions To Assist In Using The Family Pocket Guide

Health Promotion and Prevention

While the words “health promotion and prevention” may not be part of daily family conversations, they are one of the most important parts of your child’s life from birth through late adolescence. Health promotion and prevention focus on ways to engage and empower children, families, and communities to choose healthy behaviors and reduce risk. Families are key in promoting children’s health—and families are also the primary providers of care.

Care is not limited to the health care provided in a doctor’s office. It includes

- The food you serve.
- The physical activities you encourage.
- Other things families do every day.
- If your child has special health care needs, carrying out therapies and other forms of care.



Families are role models, teachers, “encouragers,” and supporters among many other roles. You can help children develop patterns of healthy living that last a lifetime.

From the very beginning, parents and families are important role models for children by demonstrating

- What we do.
- What we don't do.
- The way we handle daily life.

As children grow, other adults often come to play important roles, too. It is important to “live out loud.” This means you live your life in a way that sets an example for your children. Your children learn skills, behaviors, and language by listening to and watching you. If you practice healthy habits, it will be easier for them to do the same.

Health care providers, teachers, and others may offer your family many recommendations. Sometimes, being a parent involves determining how this good advice fits into your family's life. It can take time to figure out what is important to you and how recommendations may affect your time, energy, and resources. If you have questions—or if you disagree with the recommendations to begin with—discuss them with your child's health care provider. Sometimes, recommendations can be clarified or changed to meet your customs, traditions, or beliefs. You'll receive lots of recommendations—in today's busy world, it is important and necessary to compromise and prioritize.

Bright Futures Health Promotion Themes in Every Stage and Over the Lifespan

- **Promoting Lifelong Health for Families and Communities**

Every child deserves a bright future. Children need the opportunity to grow up in a loving family and supportive community. Experiences starting at birth—or even prenatally—can affect your child's entire life. Strong relationships with family members and



others can help children recover from challenging experiences and provide a solid foundation for lifelong learning, healthy behaviors, and wellness. Remember that your community, state, and government also play roles. The goal of Bright Futures is to support your child's movement through life so that the strengths and protective factors outweigh the risk factors.

- **Promoting Family Support**

Raising a healthy family is important, hard work. Everyone needs timely and accurate information and support that is culturally responsive. Think about what tools you need to be the best and who your supporters are—family, friends, health care providers, and others in your community. Think also about the kinds of support you can offer to others.

- **Promoting Health for Children and Youth With Special Health Care Needs**

All children need good preventive health care—including children and youth with special health care needs. Children and youth with special health care needs expect and deserve “a life like yours” in which they can enjoy life with access to family and friends, have fun, attend school, and plan for a future. Working together as partners with your child’s health care providers, teachers, and other care providers can go a long way to helping your child become as healthy and independent as possible, even with health challenges now and in the future.



- **Promoting Healthy Development**

Children grow and develop in so many ways and move from each stage of life quickly. As parents and caregivers, we provide love and support. And, just as our children change, our role as parents changes, too. We must learn

- When to help.
- When to set limits.
- When to stand back as your child takes steps toward adulthood.

Every child is different and develops at their own rate, so we need to understand each child’s individual path.

- **Promoting Mental Health**

Health includes both physical and mental well-being. Families, friends, health care providers, teachers, coaches, and others can contribute to a child's self-worth, self-confidence, and sense of joy and belonging. Learn about emotional and social development so that you will know

- What to expect.
- When to be concerned.
- Where to find resources.

- **Promoting Healthy Weight**

Healthy foods, healthy eating habits, and physical activity are important for maintaining healthy weight and lifelong health. Children learn from role models. When they see parents and others eating healthy food and being active, they are more likely to do the same. Maintaining a healthy weight is a challenge for many today. Fortunately, now more than ever, resources and supports are available to help find and prepare foods that support a healthy diet.

Body mass index is a measure used to determine healthy weight. For children 2–19 years, it is based on height, weight, and a child's developmental age. For more information, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/index.html>.



- **Promoting Healthy Nutrition (Healthy Food and Eating)**

Nutrition contributes the main part of children's growth, lifelong health, and well-being. Your family's culture and access to healthy foods help shape your children's eating habits. You can help them learn when and what to eat, as well as how to prepare foods to stay healthy. Sharing meals as a family and with others is an important social aspect of healthy eating.

• Promoting Physical Activity

Get Moving! That's today's message for everybody—infants to seniors. Physical activities help children and families build healthy habits that support a lifetime of health and well-being. Physical activity, combined with good nutrition, promotes a healthy weight. Sports, games, and other activities are a great way for children and adults to develop new skills and have fun together.

• Promoting Oral Health

Oral health is more than teeth. It includes the health of an individual's mouth including gums, lips, teeth, throat, and bones around the mouth and face. It also includes chewing and swallowing, because these motions affect a child's ability to eat and speak, among other functions. Oral health may also influence children's self-confidence—how they feel about their overall appearance. A dental home is important for all children.



• Promoting Healthy Sexual Development and Sexuality

Healthy sexual development and sexuality includes

- Building healthy relationships.
- Developing a healthy body image.
- Learning about the body.
- Learning appropriate ways to show affection including appropriate and inappropriate touch and language.
- Learning the difference between love and sex, as well as how to make responsible decisions about being sexually active.
- In some cases, developing and understanding gender roles and identification.

Children and youth make better decisions when they have strong connections with their families and trusted adults. They can connect with these adults to talk about sexuality and sexual development.

- **Promoting Healthy and Safe Use of Social Media**

Social media in all its forms is an ever-present part of the daily life for children, teens, and adults. It can help us learn about the world and connect with other people, but it also has risks. You can find guidance and a strategy on how to set up a family social media plan on *page 19*.

- **Promoting Safety and Injury Prevention**

Children need safe environments to grow and thrive. Caregivers are responsible for their babies' and young children's safety. As children grow, friends, child care providers, teachers, coaches, and others also help keep children safe. Older children and teens begin to learn to take charge of their own safety. While it may be hard to let go, health care providers help parents learn how to support their children in making safe decisions and taking responsibility for themselves.



Health Literacy

Health literacy is more than just being able to read health information well (like a prescription or instructions on medicine bottles). It also includes

- How you get health information.
- How well you use that information to make informed health decisions.
- What you do to stay healthy or follow health recommendations.

So much of staying healthy depends on what you do every day at home.

To help your children become healthy adults, you can be their champion! By developing your own health-literacy skills and using those skills to care for, model and teach health literacy to your children, you reduce their health risks. As a health champion, you teach them to defend their right to a healthy lifestyle.

Partnering with your child’s health care provider is the perfect place to start.

- Ask questions during visits.
- Use services and resources that health care providers offer.
- Encourage your child’s growing role in health visits.

You can use your Bright Futures Family Pocket Guide for this. Remember, it is normal for concerns or questions to arise after you leave the doctor’s office; so, before you leave the provider’s office, ask staff how to stay in touch with them in between appointments.

Social Determinants of Health

Most of us are aware of the role biological factors, such as genes or prenatal health, can play in the future health of our children. Similarly, “social determinants,”—or the web of interpersonal and community relationships experienced by your children and family—can affect your child’s future health. According to the World Health Organization, social determinants of health are “the things that make people healthy or not.”³ They include

- The social and economic environment.
- The physical environment.
- The person’s individual characteristics and behaviors.

These social determinants can be strengths or risk factors, and everyone has both in their lives. Examples of social factors affecting health could include safe, predictable home routines; education; homelessness; domestic abuse; food insecurity; racism; poverty; and neglect. Other factors can negatively affect children and families, including drug use, violence (including police violence), and unsafe neighborhoods. Notably, these factors do not necessarily “determine” health nor do they pose risks to health in the same way for each child. Families, friends, providers, communities, teachers, and many others can work together to provide resources and build resilience to overcome risks.

One goal of the **CONNECT BUILDING RESILIENCE** tips in each section is to give family-to-family ideas to tackle these social complexities. These strategies will help you teach your kids to do more than just weather each storm. They can build connections that help them grow and thrive.

Cultural Responsiveness: Respect and Appreciation for our Differences

The Family: A Description

We all come from families. Families are big, small, extended, nuclear, multi-generational, with one parent, two parents, and grandparents. We live under one roof or many. A family can be as temporary as a few weeks, as permanent as forever. We become part of a family by birth, adoption, marriage, or from a desire for mutual support. As family members, we nurture, protect, and influence each other. Families are dynamic and are cultures unto themselves, with different values and unique ways of realizing dreams. Together, our families become the source of our rich cultural heritage and spiritual diversity. Each family has strengths and qualities that flow from individual members, and from the family as a unit. Our families create neighborhoods, communities, states, and nations. ⁴



Families and health care providers are often challenged by the differences among them. They may be unsure of how to connect or communicate, let alone partner. Differences may arise in terms of race and ethnicity, language, gender, sexual orientation/identification, immigration status, education, religion, or income level. In addition, families may face demands and constraints with time and responsibilities. As a result, you may have a different belief and idea

about how to partner and communicate than your child’s health care provider. Through open communication and sharing of information and resources, you can build bridges that support true partnerships between your family and professionals. As a family member, you are encouraged to share your thoughts, feelings, expectations, and other issues of importance to you, your child, and your family. This will help your health care provider learn the best ways to communicate with your family and what partnership means for your family.

“Cultural responsiveness is the ability to learn from and relate respectfully with people of your own culture as well as those from other cultures.”⁵

For more information, visit the National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University at <https://nccc.georgetown.edu/>.

Children and Youth With Special Health Care Needs

There are lots of terms used to describe children who may have disabilities, diagnoses, and/or special health care needs. Beyond and apart from their diagnoses, they are children first and foremost. The MCHB uses the term “children and youth with special health care needs” (or CYSHCN) and defines it as “those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”²



If your child has already been diagnosed with, or you think they may have, a special health care need, you are not alone. A 2017–2018 national survey indicates that nearly 20% of children or 14.6 million children (1 in 5) have special health care needs.⁶ CYSHCN have such a range of abilities and needs—no one description captures all. Some disabilities or chronic illnesses affect only a few areas of a child’s body; others affect many body systems. For example, a child

with a hearing impairment may have few or no other special health care needs. Yet another child may have such significant health care needs that all health, educational, and other recommendations and care need to be adapted to be effective.

This Family Pocket Guide can help you connect with your child, their providers, and other families with similar challenges. These relationships can empower you to learn more about your child's health care, educational, social, behavioral, and other needs.

CYSHCN require ongoing well-checks, in addition to the same monitoring of physical activity, screen time, healthy eating, and other "typical" kid "health and life stuff" experienced by children without special health care needs. They may also require more involved health and developmental screening and monitoring as well as medications, treatments, and more providers. Each child develops differently, and the way your child's special health care needs impact your child will likely mean that some recommendations, such as some in this booklet, will need to be adapted. Your health care provider can help you figure out what to expect in terms of speech, toilet training, walking, social skills, and other stages of development.

At times, you may feel overwhelmed with all that goes into your child's care. Take a deep breath and turn to those who support you, to family-led community organizations, and to your child's providers. For ideas on how to begin to organize all of the paperwork, take a look at how to make a Care Notebook just for your child on the AAP website at <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/tools-resources>.

Special Education

Passed in 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the federal law that provides a free, appropriate public education for children with disabilities from birth through age 21.⁷

Part C of IDEA, known as Early Intervention, is for infants and young children with disabilities or at risk for disability, up until age 3. Some states have an extended Part C that goes until age 5.

Families and professionals develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) that serves as a road map for early intervention services.

Part B of IDEA provides access to public school for eligible children ages 3 through 21 with the development of a plan known as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP provides a child with accommodations, modifications, and specialized instruction that allow the child to access the educational curriculum.



Some children who do not qualify for IDEA may benefit from supports and accommodations through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,⁸ administered by the US Office of Civil Rights (OCR), with a 504 Plan. These children might

- Need to use wheelchairs, crutches, or walkers.
- Have allergies or asthma.
- Have a diagnosis of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or another behavioral health challenge.

Visit the Center for Parent Information and Resources (<https://www.parentcenterhub.org>) for resources including information about the nearly 100 Parent Training and Information Centers (PTICs) and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs) in the United States and US territories. These centers work directly with families, children, and youth from birth to age 26 and help parents participate effectively in their children's education. Additionally, these centers partner with professionals and policymakers to improve outcomes for all children with disabilities.

Technology, Social Media, and Internet Safety

Most parents today are seeking guidance to monitor and guide their children's use of technology and social media in each age and stage of growth. New devices, sites, and apps appear daily, making it a challenge for parents to stay on top of what is safe and acceptable. Just as you monitor your child's activity in your neighborhood and community, you are right to monitor and guide their media and internet use.

Devices, social media, and the internet are part of all of our everyday lives. You can help your children learn to set limits on their use and use media and the internet responsibly, positively, and safely. These powerful tools connect and unite us—teaching children how to manage their potential in order to learn and grow is an important part of modern parenting.

A Family Social Media Plan

Work together as a family to develop rules and a family media plan that balances the realities of the digital age and child and family needs for physical activity, sleep, school activities, and unplugged time. Consider using social media sources or tools that allow you to protect your family's privacy.

Guide

- Help them find sites and apps appropriate for their age and personality.
- Help them understand that nothing is truly private or temporary with media and the internet.
- Help them be safe: for example, do not give out personal information.
- Help them understand how content can be misunderstood—and hurtful—and how to use media and the internet for good.

Monitor

- Place your family computer where you can easily see the sites your children visit.

- Check the internet history regularly to be sure you approve of your children's choices. You can purchase safety equipment and programs to help prevent access to questionable websites.
- Young children learn more from educational media when you watch or do it with them and talk about it afterward. Older children also benefit from open discussions.
- Get to know popular video games, TV programs, and music for kids in your children's age group.
- Show an interest in your child's online activity.
- Set limits according to your beliefs and values.
- Know who your children communicate with on a cell phone or through social media. Limit their phone, media use, and contacts to people you approve.



The AAP HealthyChildren.org website provides additional useful tips on developing a family social media plan at <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>.

INFANCY: PRENATAL TO 11 MONTHS



A New Life, New Routines

Congratulations! Whether you are pregnant, are a new parent, or have children and are expecting a new baby, this is an exciting time. Your family is preparing for or getting to know the baby. New parents have many concerns, from recovery after pregnancy and birth, to how to care for your baby. Each parent may have questions about these new roles.

You may wonder, “Is this typical for newborns?” Each child is unique. You’ll learn what makes your baby happy or sad. You’ll learn more about a new “language”—your baby’s ways of communicating—and the difference between “I’m hungry!” and “I need you!” You will learn to recognize those needs even before crying begins. Take heart—sometimes it takes time to learn this new language. If you aren’t sure or want help “interpreting” this language, then know you are not alone—your health care provider is just a call away.



Your baby is learning whom to trust and count on and is getting to know you and the rest of the family.

Building a New Partnership

This is an opportunity to build a partnership between you (as the caregiver) and your child and your health care provider. You and your health care provider will want to get to know each other so that you can work well together. Your health care provider is one of the experts with answers about your child, but the provider is only half of the team. You and your child are the other half. You know your child and family better than anybody.

Parents count on receiving information at health care visits—and this is important. Parents need to give information about

- Their family, their preferences, and their culture.
- What they think will or won’t work in their home.
- Their community—what it offers and what it needs—to support them and other families.

You Are Not Alone!

Parenting is a big job that is easier when you don't "go it alone." Think about people who can give you support when you need it. It might be your spouse or partner, a co-parent, other family members, other parents, community groups, or your health care or child care providers.

Lean in! Rely on your support network when you need to talk, cry, or share a silly story; call on your family's health care providers whenever you need help, support, or even a hug!

If you have questions about your baby's development, talk with your child's health care provider or others who know your child well. Babies develop at different rates and in different ways, so if you are worried about something, it may turn out to be nothing after all. Raising your concerns just means you are an attentive parent and simply want the best for your newborn.

On the other hand, you may be the first to notice something is not quite right. Put your fears to rest and seek answers. Take some time to write down your concerns so that when you speak with your provider, you are well prepared to ask specific questions. Finally, make good use of the many resources that exist in your community.

Babies With Special Health Care Needs

If you already know your baby has special health care needs, use every opportunity to learn more. Take time to write down and ask all of your questions. Seek resources and support groups for your baby, yourself, and your family. There is a world of information and support available. Families usually find that other families through parent-to-parent groups or other programs have a wealth of support and information to offer, too.

Most important, whatever your baby's special health care needs, your baby is a human being first. You are key in providing all the loving care that your baby needs. In addition to difficulties and special health care needs, also try to focus on what's going well,

including your baby’s strengths, abilities, and progress. Your health care provider can offer some balance. Also, remember to take care of yourself—you need to rest, sleep, and eat well in order to be the best possible caregiver for your newborn.

For more information, contact the Maternal and Child Health program in your state by calling 800-311-BABY (800-311-2229; Spanish: 800-504-7081). You may also connect with the Family-to-Family Health Information Center in your state at <https://familyvoices.org/affiliates/>.

Premature Births

Most babies are born after about 40 weeks of pregnancy, but some come early. In general, the earlier a baby is born, the greater the risk of health problems. Many of these babies will not have long-term effects from an early birth. Others may experience issues that can affect their health throughout their lives. These problems can include cerebral palsy, intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, chronic lung disease, blindness, and hearing impairment among others. If you are at risk of a preterm birth, or if your baby does come much earlier than you had planned, your health care provider—as well as preterm specialists (neonatologists)—can help you understand what is happening.



Your preterm infant may need to spend time in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). While this can be an overwhelming place for parents with machines, noises, doctors, nurses, and other health care providers, all are working to help your baby. Talk with the specialists about how your baby is doing and what you can do to help.

There are many resources to help you learn about “preemies”—including the AAP HealthyChildren.org website at <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/preemie/Pages/default.aspx>.

Promoting Lifelong Health For Families And Communities

Become Well informed

- Seek out reputable sources of information on how to best care for your baby. Your health care provider can suggest trusted and accurate websites and other resources.

Depend on Family and Cultural Supports

- Caring for infants takes teamwork. Each parent and family member will develop a special relationship with the baby. Most babies enjoy being held, cuddled, and talked to by family members. They respond with smiles as they learn whom to trust.
- Take advantage of your support network. Help from family, friends, and community and social media contacts will be important for you as you care for your baby



Take Advantage of Community and Other Resources

- Find out about the many organizations or programs available in the community to help support new families. They may be social, faith-based, cultural, volunteer, or recreational. Many of these are free or low-cost programs. If you need help with alcohol or drug use, some community agencies help families safely care for the baby and themselves during pregnancy and after. Some communities have programs for new dads, too. Talk with your health care provider or others about the needs you have—you may be eligible for food, fuel, housing, or transportation assistance.
- Take advantage of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This federal law entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons. It allows them to continue their group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave.⁹ For example, FMLA covers

- Birth and care of a newborn baby up to 1 year.
- Care of a newly adopted child or foster child.
- Care for serious health needs of family members.
- A variety of circumstances for active duty military families.
- For more information, go to the US Department of Labor website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla>.
- Evaluate health insurance benefits and other programs that pay for health care.

Child Care

- Talk to your health care provider about what to consider in looking for high-quality, affordable, and accessible child care or babysitters.
- Ask health care providers how to continue patterns of eating, sleeping, breastfeeding, and playtimes as well as about any problems your child has being away from you.

In addition to these positive things families can do, there are ways to keep your home healthy.

Keep Your Environment Safe

- Depending on where you live, you may have more control over risks in your environment such as tobacco smoke, mold, pesticides, and other environmental hazards. Do what you can to protect your baby and family.
- A smoke-free home and car are best for your baby. Minimize your baby's exposure to all kinds of smoke, including secondhand cigarette smoke, everywhere.
- Control mold at home. Mold grows in damp or leaky places. Prevent water leaks, ventilate your house or apartment well, and drain water away from your house's foundation, if you can.
- If you are a renter, learn more about your rights. Find out your landlord's legal responsibilities for taking care of the property where you live.

- Avoid pesticides or use the least toxic variety possible.

Personal Safety at Home

- If violence, abuse, or neglect ever occurs at home, notify the authorities and let your health care provider know immediately! There are programs and ways to keep you, your partner, and your newborn safe.

Parent And Family Health And Well-Being

Planning for the New Baby

- Adding a new baby to your household is a major life event, whether you are the birth parent or not. Take care of YOURSELF as you make adjustments to welcome the new baby.
- Go to all prenatal or other health care appointments, eat a healthy diet, get enough sleep, and be physically active. If you have special health care needs, ask your doctor for any special instructions.
- Maintain good oral health and get regular dental checkups.
- If you work inside or outside the home, do your best to make plans to take time off to be with the new baby and to recover from pregnancy and delivery.
- Tell family and friends specific things they can do to help, such as giving your family some time alone.
- Before you leave the hospital, make sure you have a phone number to call if you have questions once you get home.
- Ask questions and get the support you need for yourself, too.
- Take time for yourself and time for you and your partner.
- Identify your personal support system. Find others to talk to and to get support from—raising children is hard work!
- Take time for deep breathing and to de-stress in a safe way. Above all, forgive yourself when you make a mistake. Mistakes are opportunities for further growth, learning, and development!

- Talk about what it's like to become a parent, including your hopes and fears. Think about family planning and how many children you would like to have. Discuss how you plan to be involved in raising this baby.
- Share with others what growing up was like for you.
- Consider how other children in the family might feel about the new baby.
 - Give your older children extra attention when the baby arrives. Help them adjust to new routines.
 - Find little ways to have them help with the baby so that they will feel proud to be a big sister or brother. This can help strengthen family bonds.

Emotional Changes

- A new baby brings so many changes to your regular routine, as well as any number of aspects of work, life, home, etc. In addition to adjusting to the physical changes associated with birth, parents may experience an ongoing lack of sleep and may worry whether everything is all right. You may also go through a wide range of emotions, from happy and excited to tired and sad (even weepy).
- A range of emotions can happen with adoptive and foster parents, as well. An addition to the family is a major adjustment—no matter how the child joins the family.
- Many mothers experience some sadness, often called “new baby blues.” Let others—including your partner—know if you are sad much of the time and don't enjoy things you did in the past. Enough sleep and nutritious meals will help.
- Sleep when the baby sleeps and try not to be tempted to use that time to do chores.
- Talk with your baby's health care provider for help.
- Sometimes this depression can become serious and you may need more than sleep and nutrition to overcome it. It's important to work with your health care provider if these “baby blues” are

becoming difficult to handle so that you can be supported with the help you need.

Infant Care, Behavior, And Development

The Importance of a Loving Touch

- Your baby needs lots of love and will get to know you as the source of food, comfort, and affection. This new relationship helps build a strong, healthy, lifelong bond. It sets the tone for how your baby will respond to other close relationships throughout life.
- An infant cannot be “spoiled” by too much cuddling and rocking or by talking and singing. Responding quickly to cries teaches babies that their needs are important, and they can trust you to meet them.
- Parenting is more than just feeding and diapering the baby. Babies love to nestle on a shoulder and enjoy special playtime with family members.



Comforting a Fussy Baby

- It's normal for babies to have fussy periods especially in the late afternoon or evening. Watch for cues that your baby is tired and needs to sleep.
- Infant massage may help calm and relax and could help your baby go to sleep more easily.
- Use a baby swing if your health care provider says your baby is old enough. Rocking may soothe the baby.
- Some babies can be difficult to calm no matter what. **Take a break and don't blame yourself if what you try isn't working. Never shake your crying baby in frustration!** This can lead to brain damage. Talk with your health care provider about other

ways to calm your baby. Parenting can be overwhelming. If you ever feel you might hurt your child, seek help.

Call the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline anytime (24/7) at 800-4-A-CHILD (800-422-4453). For more information, go to the organization's website at <https://www.childhelp.org/childhelp-hotline/>.

Ideas to calm your baby:

- Just being with your fussy baby can help.
- Singing.
- Talking, patting, or stroking.
- Bundling, holding, rocking, and dancing.
- Going for a car ride or a walk.
- Spending time in and surrounded by nature.
- Playing animal and bird sounds or nature music.



Before Talking—Learning to Communicate

- Babies learn to communicate when moms, dads, and other family members talk with them while doing everyday activities like changing diapers, bathing, and dressing. Your baby will respond by looking at you, cooing, crying, and smiling to show their feelings.
- Help your baby develop communication skills.
 - Read to your baby. Name pictures and objects from around the home and community as you point to them—understanding can come later.
 - Play music and sing.
 - Imitate the many sounds that your baby makes.

- Play baby games such as “pat-a-cake,” “peek-a-boo,” and “so big,” as well as your traditional, cultural, and Native/Indigenous versions of these simple games.

Meeting New People

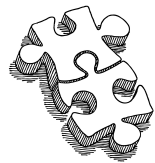
- Babies are usually eager to interact and play with others. However, they may be wary of people they don’t know well—even relatives. This shows they are building strong relationships with parents or caregivers and is a positive sign of growth.
- If someone new is meeting your baby, ask that person to give your baby some time to become comfortable with a new face.

Playtime

- Babies learn how the world works from their play, including peek-a-boo and drop-the-toy.
- Toys labeled for your baby’s age will likely be safe and match interests and abilities. Start with rattles, mobiles, stuffed toys, and soft balls. Pots, pans, and wooden spoons will do, too. Always avoid small toys with breakable parts a baby could choke on.
- The AAP recommends no television or other digital media for children younger than 18 months.
- Babyproof your home and then give your baby opportunities to safely explore. To reduce the chance of injury, keep an eye on your baby at all times. Your baby will feel safer knowing you are near. Babyproofing is important anywhere your baby plays.

Setting Limits

- Teach your child what behaviors are expected and reinforce positive behaviors with smiles, hugs, and kind words. As babies begin to figure out how to move around and reach new things, continue to make play spaces safe so you don’t have to say “No” all the time.
- Manage your baby’s behavior in a positive way. Replace an off-limits object with one that’s okay or distract the baby with something new.



- Keep rules consistent among parents, family members, and child care providers. Discuss behaviors that are allowed and those that are not.

Bedtime Routines

- Help your baby develop a bedtime routine that signals the day is over.
- Include habits that let your baby get to sleep easily. This might help reduce night-waking. Read a favorite book, sing a calming song, or give your baby a bath.

Staying Healthy and Recognizing Early Signs of Illness

- Hand-washing is an important way to keep the whole family healthy.
- Recognize early signs of illness such as fever, vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, seizures, or skin rashes. Your baby's behavior might not seem quite right. List things that seem different, then call your health care provider to discuss them.
- A baby's temperature should be taken rectally for accuracy.
- If your baby has special health care needs, follow the above recommendations, along with any that are specific for your child.

Healthy Weight/Healthy Nutrition/Physical Activity

Healthy Feeding Choices

- Whether breastfeeding or formula feeding, your baby depends on you to make healthy choices for them. Breastfeeding provides the best nutrition and protection from illness. It helps mothers lose pregnancy weight and offers some protection against breast and ovarian cancer.
- As you think about how you will feed your baby, you may want to talk to your health care provider, a lactation consultant, or a breastfeeding counselor to explore your options.

- Most national organizations recommend that all babies breastfeed exclusively for about the first 6 months of life, when possible. Recommendations also include to continue breastfeeding while adding nutritious solid food for a full year. Continue as long as you and your baby want.
- You'll quickly learn how to recognize when your baby is hungry—and when they've had enough. Let your baby take the lead.

Breastfeeding Basics

- Your new baby should nurse 8–12 times within 24 hours and long enough to satisfy.
- You'll know your breastfed baby is getting enough by checking for wet diapers (6–8 a day), bowel movements (1–3 a day), and growth at regular visits to the health care provider.
- Go over breastfeeding practices with your health care provider, lactation specialist, or breastfeeding counselor. They'll have tips for breastfeeding and breast care. This is especially helpful if you have a baby with special health care needs.
- If you take any medications, be sure to discuss your prescriptions with your health care provider. Many medications are safe to use while breastfeeding, but some are not. If you use alcohol or smoke, let your health care provider know because these substances can cause problems for your baby.
- If you wish to introduce a bottle to your breastfeeding baby, pick a time when your baby is not overly hungry or full. Have someone other than the mom offer the bottle. Wait until breastfeeding is well established, usually at 4 to 6 weeks.
- If you plan to return to work or school, learn about guidelines to accommodate breastfeeding mothers, including pumping.



Formula-Feeding Basics

- If formula-feeding, ask your health care provider what type of formula to use, how to prepare it, how often to feed your baby, and what equipment you need.

- Remember, microwaving is not a good idea because milk may heat unevenly and become too hot.
- Feeding is a special time to interact with your baby. Hold and talk to your baby during feedings. Don't prop the bottle.

New Foods and New Skills—Around 6 Months

- Around 6 months, your baby may be ready to drink from a cup, with help. Fruit juice does not provide any nutritional benefit to children under age 1 and should not be included in your child's diet. Avoid sodas and artificially flavored "fruit" drinks. These drinks do not provide good nutrition for growth.
- Don't offer food other than breast milk or formula until your baby is ready (around the middle of their first year). Remember, you can discuss these changes with your baby's health care provider. Your baby should
 - Be able to sit with arm support and have good head and neck control.
 - No longer push food out of the mouth with the tongue.
 - "Tell you" they want more by leaning forward with an open mouth.
- Give babies opportunities to feed themselves—even if they make a mess.
- Choose finger foods your baby will not choke on. Avoid honey or large chunks of food (such as carrots, hot dogs, grapes, and other hard or sticky foods).
- Help your baby get used to new food tastes and textures. You may have to offer a food many times before the baby will learn to accept and enjoy it.

Babies Need to Be Active, Too!

- Tummy time for play is important. Wait a few minutes after a feeding to start. Set up toys and things to look at while your baby is pushing up on the tummy.
- Infant car seats and carriers are important safety devices, but babies need plenty of time out of those seats and carriers, too.



Oral Health

- Your baby's teeth are growing long before you see them peek through the gums. Around the middle of the first year, you'll see that first toothy grin!
- Oral health care should start even before teeth appear. Use tap water and a small soft-bristled toothbrush with a tiny smear of toothpaste (no bigger than a grain of rice) to wipe baby's gums and any teeth. Do this twice a day—after the baby's last feeding at night and again in the morning.
- Don't let your baby go to bed with a bottle. This can harm developing teeth.
- Ask your health care provider if your baby needs fluoride supplements.
- Don't share spoons or clean a dropped pacifier in your mouth. This can transfer germs from your mouth to your baby and lead to cavities.
- A teething baby may drool, become fussy, or put things in the mouth. A cold teething ring may help ease discomfort.

Social Media

- Social media is a way of life for many parents today. It can be a great way to connect with other parents to share tips, stories, and resources.
- Your health care provider can talk with you about sites (including blogs and birth groups for both moms and dads) that are useful

and trustworthy to use for networking and finding information about pregnancy, birth, and your new baby. The AAP HealthyChildren.org website is an excellent resource for families. For more information, go to <https://www.healthychildren.org>.

- As your baby grows, social media and video chat can be tools to help you stay connected with family and friends who live far away.

Safety And Injury Prevention

Safe Sleep

- Always have your baby sleep on the back on a firm, tight-fitting mattress.
- For at least the first 6 months, let your baby sleep in your room but in their own crib, not in your bed. If you have different ideas, opinions, or cultural traditions, discuss them with your health care provider.
- Ensure your crib is safe. The slats should be no more than 2 3/8" apart.
- Take steps to prevent suffocation. Don't put any toys, blankets, or crib bumpers in the crib. The safest cover for a baby is a sleep sack or footed pajamas that keep your baby warm. For more information about safe sleep environments, call the Safe to Sleep Campaign: 800-505-CRIB (800-505-2742).

Prepare for Emergencies

- Install smoke detectors and make sure they work properly. Check the batteries regularly. Talk with your family about fire emergency evacuation plans.
- Install a UL-certified carbon monoxide detector/alarm in the hallway near every separate sleeping area of the home.
- Try to complete an American Heart Association or American Red Cross First Aid or Infant CPR program. Learn what to do if your baby is choking.
- Have a family first aid kit.

- Post a list of the local emergency telephone numbers by every telephone and program the numbers into your cell phone.
- Have a family emergency plan. Your community may have a disaster readiness plan, too.
- If your child or other family member has special health care needs, talk with your health care provider about how to prepare for those health needs during emergencies or disasters.

Preventing Injuries

- Do not use baby walkers. They aren't necessary and can cause accidents.
- Make sure toys have no sharp edges, points, or small removable parts.
- Safely store sharp things away from your baby—scissors, pens, pins, razors, knives, and knitting needles.
- Keep your baby safe around your pets. Dogs and cats can become jealous of a new baby. Learn about possible risks and how to protect your baby.
- Try to stay a step ahead of what you think your baby is capable of doing or getting into. Continually check your home and places you visit with your baby for potential safety hazards.

Preventing Burns

- Watch your baby carefully near stoves, fireplaces, heaters, irons, and hair dryers.
- Be careful of hot drinks when holding the baby.
- Lower hot water temperature to below 120 degrees to avoid burns when washing or bathing the baby. Test water temperature with your wrist to make sure it is not too hot.
- Don't expose your baby's sensitive skin to direct sunlight. If your baby has to be in the sun, always have them wear a hat. Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of more than 15 to any exposed skin and a sunscreen made for children.



For babies younger than 6 months, if adequate clothing and shade are not available, use sunscreen on small areas of the body such as the face and backs of the hands.

- Keep electrical cords out of your child's reach. Chewing on a live extension cord or a poorly insulated wire can cause mouth burns. Cords can also be used to pull an object down on the baby. Use electric outlet covers anywhere nothing else is plugged in.

Water Safety

- Watch your baby constantly whenever near water.
- BEWARE: Drowning occurs quickly and quietly. Children can drown in even a few inches of water, including the bathtub, play pools, buckets, or toilets. A supervising adult should be close enough to touch young children whenever they are in or around water.

Preventing Falls

- Don't leave your baby alone for even a second on high places. To prevent falls, always keep one hand on your baby on changing tables, couches, or beds.
- Keep furniture away from windows and install window guards on second-story floor windows or higher. Use gates at the tops and bottoms of stairs.

Preventing Choking

- Keep balloons, plastic bags, and small toys that the baby could swallow out of reach.
- Keep telephone cords and cords from blinds or curtains out of reach.

Car Safety

- Use an approved rear-facing safety seat all the time when transporting your baby in a vehicle. Make sure it is properly placed in the back seat and secured.
- Do not start the engine until everyone—including you—is buckled in.

- Ask your health care provider about safe transportation resources for babies with special health care needs, such as premature babies or babies in casts.
- Never leave your baby alone in the car for any reason, even briefly. Develop habits that will prevent you from forgetting your baby in the car. Consider putting your purse or cell phone on the floor of the back seat with your baby to help you remember to check before you leave the car.

Poison Safety

- To prevent poisoning, keep household products such as cleaners, chemicals, and medicines locked up and out of your child's sight and reach. Keep the Poison Help number (800-222-1222) posted next to every phone and programmed into your cell phone.
- Lead is toxic. To prevent exposure to lead, be aware of any sources in your home such as paint used in homes built before 1978, pottery and pewter, insecticides, and hobby materials. Consider whether anyone in your home works in a setting that contains lead. Find ways to prevent it from coming home on clothes (eg, changing before entering a car or home where the baby spends time).

Gun and Firearm Safety

- The best way to keep your baby safe from injury or death from firearms is not to have a gun or firearm in the home.
- If it is necessary to keep a gun or firearm in your home or the homes of people you visit, the firearm should be stored unloaded and locked, with the ammunition locked separately.
- When visiting family or friends, or if your child goes to another home for child care, remember to ask those individuals if guns are present in their homes.

Prenatal Visit

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

Choosing a Pediatric Health Care Provider Before Your Baby is Born

- As you prepare for the birth of your baby, parents will have many questions and decisions to make. Selecting and getting to know your health care provider before your baby arrives are good ways to begin a long-term relationship. You'll want someone who will work with you as your baby grows.
- Schedule a prenatal appointment with potential health care providers. This is a good way to see whether your ideas about parenting mesh with those of the health care provider and vice versa. It is okay to “shop” for a person whose style fits yours!
- Bring up issues to be sure you agree on the things that are important to you in raising your baby. Both parents should use the time to get to know the viewpoints and experience of the health care provider.
- Share things about your family that will be helpful to know when caring for your baby.
- Find out whether your health care provider will see your newborn in the hospital. Ask about
 - Office hours (including nights and weekends).
 - How to reach your health care provider for urgent problems.
 - How soon your provider expects to see you and the baby in the office.



CYSHCN: CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

You are likely a ball of emotions—excitement, nerves, and anticipation. If a prenatal test has indicated that your child may have special health care needs when they are born, you may even feel scared. So much is unknown for all expectant parents. You are not alone!

- Take time to process information with your partner.
- Continue to fall in love with your baby and strengthen your relationship to enter parenthood together.
- If connecting with others who may have similar experiences helps, reach out to other parents for support through Family Voices (<https://familyvoices.org>) or Parent to Parent USA (<https://www.p2pusa.org>). Caring for your child will require teamwork, so begin to form relationships with partners in care by asking questions of doctors involved in your care and in antenatal or fetal care. Try to learn as much as possible. There may not always be answers, but there can always be discussion and partnership to navigate birth and beyond. Remember that your questions, worries, and concerns just show your love for your newborn.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

This visit is a chance to get to know each other—so be sure to bring your previously prepared questions to discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Support needed from family, friends, and your culture; housing, heat, health coverage, or enough money for food, child care, and diapers; dampness, mold, or lead in your home or from eating non-food items; adjusting to being pregnant or supporting your partner who is pregnant; safety from violence at home; tobacco, alcohol, or drug use; access to health information.

- **Parent and family well-being:** Your emotional and mental health; healthy eating and physical activity; prenatal care; family values, health beliefs, and practices.
- **Newborn care:** Getting to know your medical home; childbirth plans; circumcision plans; hand-washing; outings with baby; active involvement of both parents.
- **Breastfeeding/bottle-feeding guidance:** Plans for feeding the baby; where to get help with breastfeeding; use of medications, herbs, or traditional health remedies; concerns about having enough money to buy food or formula.
- **Safety:** Seat belts and having an infant car seat when leaving the hospital; where and how baby should sleep; general babyproofing, including smoke alarms and reducing risks from burns, pets, and firearms.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Think about what you might need as you go through the rest of your pregnancy, delivery, and the early days of caring for a newborn—whether you are the pregnant woman or another caregiver.
- Make a list. Consider where and how you might be able to get the support you need. Friends, family, and health care providers can offer support and resources or know where to find them.
- Seek out other pregnant women or expecting dads and family members at parks, grocery stores, work sites, or visits to the health care provider. There's great value in having others to share with!
- What would make your first days at home with the newborn easier? Perhaps a friend or family member can help with meals or shopping. Perhaps you can freeze some meals for easy dinners later.

- Your community may have new parent or breastfeeding support groups where you can meet, share your experiences, and learn from one another.
- **Reminder:** The Infancy section (*beginning on page 21*) has many recommendations for new babies as they grow. Most important, what you do at home every day will matter and will have a lifelong impact on your baby’s health and well-being.

Newborn Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

Congratulations! The birth of a baby is an exciting time. Once you’re at home with your baby, you may have lots of questions.

- Write down your questions and bring them to your first visit. The newborn visit is a good time to ask.
- Remember: While your health care provider is the medical expert, you will become the expert about your baby. Help your health care provider get to know your newborn.



CYSHCN: BABIES WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

You are likely a ball of emotions—excitement, nerves, and anticipation. If your child was born with special health care needs, you may even feel scared. So much is unknown for all expectant parents. You are not alone!

- Take time to process information with your partner.
- Continue to fall in love with your baby and strengthen your relationship to enter parenthood together.
- If connecting with others who may have had similar experiences helps, reach out to other parents for support through Family



Voices (<https://familyvoices.org>) or Parent to Parent USA (<https://www.p2pusa.org>). Caring for your child will require teamwork. Begin to form relationships with partners in care.

- Ask questions to doctors involved in your care and in antenatal or fetal care. Try to learn as much as possible. There may not always be answers, but there can always be discussion and partnership to help you navigate—at birth and beyond. Remember that your questions, worries, and concerns just show your love for your newborn.

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR BABY MAY...

- Look at you when being held, cry when feeling uncomfortable, and calm when hearing your voice.
- Move arms and legs in sync and move automatically when startled.
- Turn the head to the side during tummy time.
- Keep hands in a fist and automatically grasp others' fingers or objects.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family support; loving and close contact with baby; questions or concerns about your living situation and having enough money for food; smoking by others at home; feeling safe from violence at home; alcohol or drug use.
- **Parent and family health and well-being:** Getting enough rest and taking care of yourself at home; reactions of older brothers and sisters.
- **Newborn behavior and care:** What your baby can do; baby supplies to have on hand; skin care; preventing illness; calming your baby; signs of possible jaundice.

- **Feeding:** Knowing when your infant is hungry, is full, and has had enough fluids; holding and burping during feedings; guidance for breastfeeding or formula.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats; never leaving baby in the car alone; where and how baby should sleep; home safety.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE NEWBORN VISIT

Your baby's health care provider will get to know you and your baby during your pregnancy, labor, and delivery; your expectations as parents; and the support you'll have when you bring your baby home.

At the newborn visit, your health care provider will

- Check your baby from head to toe.
- Carry out screening tests for hearing, bilirubin, blood, and congenital heart defects.
- May perform other screening tests for blood pressure and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Get close. Stay personal with your baby! Newborns can only focus on nearby things, and your face will quickly become the favorite thing to look at.
- Talk or sing to your newborn. Your voice will be familiar and comforting.
- Hold your baby close! Skin-to-skin contact makes your baby feel safe and loved. Involve other family members in this special holding time, including older siblings. Help them learn safe ways to hold the baby and stay near to help as needed.

- **Reminder:** Review the Infancy section (beginning on page 21) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your baby’s health and well-being.

First Week Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your baby’s new accomplishments in the first week of life.
- Fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child’s health.



CYSHCN: BABIES WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Discuss how things are going for you and your child—any concerns, needs, or support services. Diagnoses, referrals, and information may continue to swirl around you but continue to focus on getting to know your baby.
- Share the joys of getting to know your baby with your health care provider as well as share information, referrals, and services to organize and plan with your provider.
- Mention treatments or visits to specialists.
- Consider organizing the information you will gather about your newborn in a Care Notebook. Explore the National Resource Center for Patient/Family-Centered Medical Home’s website at <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/tools-resources> for ideas. Remember that your baby is more than information in the notebook.
- Continue to be your baby’s parents and enjoy and fall in love with your little one every day.

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR BABY MAY...

- Stay awake for feedings.
- Look at faces while being held.
- Cry when feeling uncomfortable.
- Calm when hearing your voice.
- Lift their head briefly and turn it to the side when on the tummy.
- Move arms and legs in sync and move automatically when startled.
- Keep hands in a fist.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health: Family support;** questions or concerns about your living situation and having enough money for food; smoking by others in the house.
- **Parent and family health and well-being:** Settling the baby into your home; reactions of the newborn's brothers and sisters; handling advice from others.
- **Newborn behavior and care:** Singing, talking, and reading to the baby; helping the baby adjust; calming your baby; when to call your health care provider; temperature taking; preparing for emergencies (infant CPR); preventing illness (eg, hand-washing, outings); skin care (sun exposure).
- **Nutrition and feeding:** How feedings are going; recognizing hunger, fullness, and having enough fluids; holding and burping; guidance on breastfeeding or formula.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats; never leaving baby alone in the car (heatstroke and hypothermia prevention); where and how baby should sleep; home safety (eg, hot liquids, bath water temperature).

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 1 WEEK VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Check your baby from head to toe.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and ask about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests and review results from previous screening tests for hearing and blood.
- May perform other screening tests for blood pressure and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Continue to talk and sing to your baby. You might feel a little silly, but your baby will love it!
- Connect with family and friends—ask for help if you need it. Most people want to help but aren't sure what you need. Be specific: “Can you pick up a loaf of bread at the store for me?”
- It's perfectly normal to have a range of emotions right now. At times, you'll feel great and in control. Other times you may feel overwhelmed. That's when your friends can help.
- **Reminder:** Review the Infancy section (beginning on page 21) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your baby's health and well-being.

1 Month Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your baby's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.



CYSHCN: BABIES WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Discuss how things are going for you and your child—any concerns, needs, or support services.
- If your baby is in early intervention, bring your IFSP (see *page 17*) to the visit and mention treatments or visits to specialists.
- If you have a Care Notebook started, bring that along and share it with your health care provider.



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR BABY MAY...

- Calm when spoken to or held.
- Look briefly at you or at objects.
- Become alert when hearing an unexpected sound.
- Make short vowel sounds.
- Hold the chin up when on the tummy.
- Hold fingers open when resting.



PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:**

Family support; questions or concerns about your living situation or having enough money for food; smoking by others at home; concerns about dampness, mold, radon, or pesticides in your home; feeling safe from violence at home; mother's use of alcohol or drugs.



- **Parent and family health and well-being:** Mother's health checkup; mother's emotional and mental health; father's emotional and mental health; family relationships; returning to work (eg, breastfeeding and child care plans).
- **Infant behavior and development:** Sleep/wake patterns; managing fussiness; baby's attachment to parents; avoiding media use; playtime (tummy time); contacting your health care provider after office hours.
- **Nutrition and feeding:** Feeding plans and choices; hunger cues, burping, and feeding strategies; pacifier use; breastfeeding or formula questions.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats; where and how baby should sleep; falls; preparing for emergencies.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 1 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Check your baby from head to toe.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and ask about changes in your family.
- Ask you if you've had any "baby blues."
- Carry out screening tests and review results from previous screening tests on hearing and blood.

- May perform other screening tests for blood pressure, tuberculosis, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- If you have older children, encourage them to get to know the baby and let them help as they are able based on their ages. Look for ways to give each child special attention.
- It's not too early to begin to read, tell stories, or sing! Your baby won't understand the words but will love the time together. Your baby won't care if you sing off-key or forget the words.
- Look for other new parents at parks or the grocery store. Make friends. Share your good days with each other!
- **Reminder:** Review the Infancy section (beginning on *page 21*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your baby's health and well-being.

2 Month Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your baby's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.



CYSHCN: BABIES WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Discuss how things are going for you and your child—any concerns, needs, or support services. When either parent is ready to return to work, talk to your health care provider or early

intervention specialist for ideas, information, and referrals to child care programs appropriate for your child’s health needs.

- If your child already sees specialists and other providers (including for early intervention or other therapies), bring reports, updates, medication information, or plans from those providers to keep the health care provider up to date.
- Consider ways to organize that information in a Care Notebook. Explore <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/tools-resources> for ideas.
- No matter what challenges arise with your child’s health and development, continue to be the parent—enjoy and fall in love with your child each day!

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR BABY MAY...

- Smile back at you.
- Make happy or upset sounds that help you understand your baby’s feelings.
- Make short cooing sounds.
- Lift head and shoulders when on the tummy.
- Keep head steady when held in a sitting position.
- Open and shut hands.
- Briefly bring both hands together.

PLAN: WHAT’S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family support and child care providers (eg, number, quality); questions and concerns about living situation and having enough money for food.
- **Parent and family health and well-being:** Mother’s health checkup; “baby blues”; relationships with brothers and sisters.

- **Infant behavior and development:** Parent–infant relationship; parent–infant communication; sleeping patterns; avoiding media use; physical activity (tummy time); managing fussiness.
- **Nutrition and feeding:** Feeding choices (delaying solid foods); hunger/fullness cues; feeding strategies (eg, holding, burping); breastfeeding or formula-feeding guidance.
- **Safety:** Car seats; safe sleep; water temperature and burns; drowning; falls.



EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 2 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Check your baby from head to toe.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and ask about changes in your family.
- Ask you if you’ve had any “baby blues.”
- Carry out screening tests and review results from previous screening tests for hearing and blood.
- May perform other screening tests for blood pressure and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- If the weather is nice, take your baby for a walk. You might meet other new parents who would enjoy some play dates.
- Stores are full of gadgets for entertaining babies—and most are unnecessary. Your baby is most entertained by the people they love—you and your family. Continue talking, reading, telling stories, and singing songs.

- If you are returning to work, look for ways to simplify your time at home. Make meals you can freeze on the weekends and thaw quickly at dinnertime. Get your family to pitch in with cleanup tasks—even young children can help with this.



- **Reminder:** Review the Infancy section (beginning on page 21) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your baby's health and well-being.

4 Month Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your baby's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.



CYSHCN: BABIES WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Discuss how things are going for you and your baby.
- Let your health care provider know what is going well and where you are getting help. Your health care provider may be able to help if there are services or other supports you need and can't find.
- If your baby is in early intervention, bring your IFSP (see page 17) to the visit and describe treatments or visits to specialists.



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR BABY MAY...

- Laugh out loud.
- Turn toward your voice.
- Make long cooing noises.
- Support themselves on elbows and wrists when on the tummy.

- Roll over from tummy to back.
- Keep hands open, not in a fist.
- Play with fingers.
- Grasp objects.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family relationships and support; child care providers (eg, number, quality); questions or concerns about lead in the home.
- **Infant behavior and development:** Self-calming; parent–infant communication; consistent, daily routines; avoiding media use; physical activity (tummy time).
- **Oral health:** Parent’s or caregiver’s oral health; teething/drooling; no bottles in bed.
- **Nutrition and feeding:** General guidance; feeding choices (avoiding grazing); delaying solid foods; breastfeeding guidance; supplements and over-the-counter medications; formula feeding guidance.
- **Safety:** Car seats; safe sleep; safe home environment; safe water temperature; burns; choking; falls; walkers; staying safe in the kitchen.



EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 4 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Check your baby from head to toe.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and ask about changes in your family.

- Ask whether you have had any “baby blues.”
- May carry out screening test for anemia, blood pressure, hearing, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- At this age, babies become more aware of the world around them. That makes it fun to help them explore—it can also be a challenge when you need them to focus on feeding or changing diapers.
- Look for quiet areas in your home where you can take your baby to feed or just to get a break from the rest of the busy house.
- Parenting is hard work! Try to find something you can do just for yourself when your baby is napping or when you have help from family or friends. A shower with your favorite music playing in the background can be a great way to give you a break.
- **Reminder:** Review the Infancy section (beginning on *page 21*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your baby’s health and well-being.

6 Month Visit

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Discuss and prepare your questions with your partner.
- Write down your questions.
- Share your baby’s new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child’s health.

CYSHCN: BABIES WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

As your baby begins to interact more with you and the world, you may develop concerns about the baby's learning, development, or behavior.

- Bring those concerns to your health care provider so that you can observe together, discuss, and seek the right evaluation, supports, and services.
- Don't forget to share the joy too!
- When either parent is ready to return to work, talk to your health care provider or early intervention specialist for ideas, information, and referrals to child care programs appropriate for your child's health needs.
- If your child already sees specialists and other providers (including for early intervention or other therapies), bring any reports, updates, medication information, or plans from those providers to keep the health care provider up to date.
- Consider ways to organize that information, such as a Care Notebook. Explore <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/tools-resources> for ideas.
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent—enjoy and fall in love with them each day!



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR BABY MAY...

- Pat or smile at the reflection in a mirror.
- Look at you when you call your baby's name.
- Babble.
- Make sounds like “ga,” “ma,” or “ba.”
- Roll over from back to tummy.

- Sit for a short time without support.
- Pass a toy from one hand to another.
- Rake small objects with 4 fingers.
- Bang small objects on a surface.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family relationships and support; child care; questions and concerns about your living situation; having enough money for food; concerns about tobacco, alcohol, and drug use; parents feeling sad or depressed.
- **Infant development and behavior:** Parents as teachers; talking, reading, and singing with your baby; avoiding media use; consistent, daily routines; baby putting self to sleep and calming.
- **Oral health:** Fluoride; gum and mouth care with clean cloth or toothbrush; avoiding bottle in bed.
- **Nutrition and feeding:** Feeding strategies (eg, when, how much); beginning solid food; choices of liquids; checking for pesticides in vegetables and fruits; breastfeeding or formula feeding.
- **Safety:** Car seats; safe sleep; burns; sun exposure; choking; poisoning; drowning; falls.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 6 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Check your baby from head to toe.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing, ask about changes in your family, and ask whether you have been having “baby blues.”



- Carry out an oral health risk assessment on your baby and apply fluoride varnish if your baby has a tooth. They also may recommend fluoride supplementation for your baby.
- May perform other screening tests for blood pressure, hearing, lead, fluoride supplementation, tuberculosis, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW

- A 6-month-old often begins to babble and make sounds. Carry on “conversations” with your baby and encourage other family members to do so, too.
- Remember that we are all humans! You will have good days and bad days. Having a friend or family member you can talk to on your bad days—or theirs—helps get through rough times. Your health care provider can help if you need it.
- Remember to celebrate your victories and “feel-good moments” as parents!
- **Reminder:** Review the Infancy section (beginning on *page 21*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your baby’s health and well-being.



9 Month Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your baby’s new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child’s health.

CYSHCN: BABIES WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

As your baby begins to interact more with you and the world, you may begin to notice concerns about the baby's learning, development, or behavior.

- Bring those concerns to your health care provider so that you can observe together, discuss, and seek the right evaluation, supports, and services.
- Don't forget to share the joy too!
- When either parent is ready to return to work, talk to your health care provider or early intervention specialist for ideas, information, and referrals to child care programs appropriate for your child's health needs.
- If your child already sees specialists and other providers (including for early intervention or other therapies), bring any reports, updates, medication information, or plans from those providers to keep the health care provider up to date.
- Consider ways to organize that information, such as a Care Notebook. Explore <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/tools-resources> for ideas.
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent—enjoy and fall in love with them each day!



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR BABY MAY...

- Use gestures like holding arms out to be picked up or waving “bye-bye.”
- Look for dropped objects.

- Play games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.
- Always turn to you when you call your baby’s name.
- Say a few words, like “mama” or “dada.”
- Look around when you say, “Where’s your blanket?”
- Copy sounds that you make.
- Sit well without support and pull up to stand.
- Easily change between sitting and lying down.
- Crawl on hands and knees.
- Pick up small objects with 3 fingers and thumb.
- Let go of objects on purpose and bang objects together.

PLAN: WHAT’S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family relationships and support; feeling safe from violence at home.
- **Infant behavior and development:** Changing sleep patterns; mobility (eg, safe exploration, play); learning new things; reactions to new people and situations; communicating with your baby; avoiding media use.
- **Discipline:** Teaching baby acceptable behaviors; consistent discipline.
- **Feeding routines:** Self-feeding; mealtime routines; introducing table foods; drinking from a cup; plans for weaning.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats; never leaving baby alone in the car; burns; poisoning.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 9 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Check your baby from head to toe.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and ask about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests for development and an oral health risk assessment, with fluoride varnish if your baby has a tooth.
- May also recommend fluoride supplementation and carry out other screening tests for blood pressure, hearing, lead, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Play simple games with your baby like peek-a-boo.
- Show simple picture books and tell the name of the things in the picture—“ball,” “dog,” “shoe.”
- Let your baby explore safe areas in your home as you keep a watchful eye.
- **Reminder:** Review the Infancy section (beginning on *page 21*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your baby’s health and well-being.

EARLY CHILDHOOD: 1 TO 4 YEARS



Life With Preschoolers

Toddlers and preschoolers are such fun. Every day is a new adventure! Seeing the world through your young child's eyes will change your own point of view.

Toddlers are always very busy. They are constantly on the go and forever getting into things. This is how they learn about the world around them. You, as the parent or caregiver, can help them explore by encouraging them and by making sure they have safe places to play. This means

- “Child-proofing” your home so that things that might harm your toddler are out of sight and reach.
- Making sure any other places your toddler plays are also safe.
- Keeping an eye on your child in stores, playgrounds, streets—anywhere you take them.

Young children are learning to play with others—at home, at school, and in the community. Look for parents and caregivers of young children who might like to get together. Playtimes are great for your toddler to begin to learn social skills. They are also wonderful opportunities for you and other adults to share stories, suggestions, and concerns—to learn from each other.

abcdef
ghijklm
nopqrst
vwxyz

Learning Everywhere, All The Time

Your young child is learning lots of things about you, your family, and your community. Whether at home, in preschool, or in child care, your child is taking in all that is seen and heard. You can help your child by turning day-to-day activities into learning opportunities.

- Let a trip to the grocery store be a lesson in colors, tastes, smells, counting, making choices, and even healthy eating.
- Go to the library for story time and let your child pick out books to bring home.

- Help your child write and mail a letter to grandma or another family member—and probably get one in return!
- Have your toddler help with simple chores around the house, like picking up toys or wiping a tabletop or washing dishes.
- When crossing the street, hold your child's hand and talk about the street signs, the colors of the traffic light, when to walk, and when to stop.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's development, talk with your child's health care provider or others who know your child well. Sometimes what we think might be a problem, turns out to be nothing to worry about. On the other hand, you know your child best and may be the first to notice when something is not quite right. Seek help from health care providers, family members, friends, and others to find answers and make use of the many resources and services available to children and families.

Children With Special Health Care Needs

If you suspect or know your child has special health care needs, learn about the condition and your child's needs and care. Ask questions and seek help for your child and family. There is a world of information and support when you're ready. Connecting with other families through parent-to-parent networks or other programs can be a great source of support and information. Your child's health care provider is key to connecting with resources. If you feel concerned about your child's development, you can connect with early intervention which targets children who show a delay in cognitive, social, or communication skills. These children may also have a delay in physical or motor abilities or self-care skills. The AAP HealthyChildren.org website provides more information on this topic at <https://www.healthychildren.org>.



Most important, your toddler is a child first, regardless of any special health care needs. You and your family are key in providing the loving

care that your child needs. Try to focus on your child's strengths and abilities, the progress being made, and what's going well. Your health care provider may be able to help you manage the challenges of raising a child with special health care needs. Every state has programs with resources to assist families of children with special health care needs.

For more information, contact the Maternal and Child Health program in your state by calling 800-311-BABY (800-311-2229) (Spanish: 800-504-7081). You may also connect with the Family-to-Family Health Information Center in your state at <https://familyvoices.org/affiliates/>.

Promoting Lifelong Health For Families And Communities

Maximize Family and Community Supports

- Take time for yourself. Keep your own health and spirits up. Try to do things you enjoy on a regular basis.
- Find others with small children. Parents can learn so much from each other.
- Ask for help to get through challenging times or when dealing with difficult behaviors.
- Build ties to your community. Look for ways to get involved through social, faith-based, cultural, volunteer, or recreational organizations or programs.
- When you can, help make your neighborhood and community a better place to live. Share ideas; be active in local programs.
- Speak up and be heard. Ask if you need help with health insurance or medical expenses. Also ask if you have problems covering food costs or have housing or other concerns.
- Find community social groups for children. Social interaction helps young children start to develop their sense of self and learn what others expect from them.

Minimize Environmental Risks

- A smoke-free home and car is best for your child. Try to minimize your child's exposure to smoke and secondhand smoke anywhere your child spends time.
- Ask for help if you're worried about a family member's alcohol or drug use.

Personal Safety at Home

- If violence or abuse ever occurs at home, let your health care provider know. Programs are available to help you be safe.

Child Care

- Talk to your health care provider about what to consider when you look for child care or babysitters—how best to continue your child's regular routines like eating, sleeping, and breastfeeding.
- Talk over any problems your child has being away from you.

Child Development And Mental Health

Build Healthy Emotions

- Show affection through hugs, smiles, and encouraging words. Of course, different families and cultures do this in different ways.
- Let your child practice making choices. Ask, "Do you want to wear your green or blue shirt today?" Limit to 2 or 3 choices; too many choices make it hard for a child to decide. Make sure the options you offer your child are acceptable to you!
- Help your child learn to explain feelings. Use words to describe what you think your child is feeling: "It looks like you're really sad that we have to leave the park now."
- Help your child learn to recognize others' feelings: "Look how excited grandma is to see you! Run and say 'hi!'"



- Be a role model. Teach your child to say “I’m sorry” or “I made a mistake” by doing so yourself.

Build Language Skills and Support Readiness for School

- Help your child learn to love books by reading every day. Talk about the pictures. Ask, “What happens next?” Let your child pick the book, even if it’s the same one you read last night and the night before.
- Your child is learning new words every day. Read books, look at magazine pictures, and sing songs. Talk about things you do together.
- Describe your child’s actions: “Oh, you’re pointing to the apples. Do you want to eat one?”
- Give your child plenty of time to respond to your questions. Repeat what is said so your child knows you are listening.
- If your family speaks two languages, great! Toddlers typically learn both with no difficulty, but speak to your health care provider if you have questions.
- Visit libraries, parks, construction sites, and other interesting places to broaden your child’s experiences.
- Become as active as you can with your child’s preschool or other child care program. Talk to your child about activities at “school.”

Build Healthy Family Relationships

- Share time with family members together and one-on-one during mealtimes, family outings, vacations, reading books, and other activities.
- If you are expecting a new baby, help prepare your child. Read books about a family with a new baby, big brothers, and big sisters.
- When the new baby is born, your child may stop using the potty or return to “younger behaviors.” Try not to make new demands during this time.
- Help your children develop good relationships with one another. There will be conflicts but try to resolve them without taking sides.

- Encourage good behavior through guidance and discipline: “Let’s pick up the toys so we can go to the park.” “No, you’re using the truck to hit so I’m putting it away.”
- Praise your child’s positive behaviors and accomplishments. Catch your child being good! When you can, ignore behavior you don’t want to encourage. Children really want your attention, so try to use it when they are doing things you want to encourage.
- Reduce the number of times you must say “No” by making your home child friendly. Create more “Yes” times and save “No” for when you really mean it.
- Add “thank you” onto your requests and directions; this act teaches manners by example.
- Decide as a family what rules are appropriate and try to follow them. Even if your child is too young to remember all the rules, keep reminding what is expected.
- Plan ahead what to do if your child doesn’t follow your rules. You might simply stop play, offer a distraction, or use a brief timeout to calm down.
- Help your child learn to use words instead of hurtful actions like yelling, hitting, or biting. Express your own feelings in words and provide a place to calm down. Give your child other ways to get rid of difficult feelings—for example, a soft ball to throw or a change of scene.



Make Playtime Fun

- Children learn from talking, playing, and working with others. Talk with your health care provider about the different kinds of playgroups or preschools. Your community may have fun, safe activities for young children—for example, local Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA, and Head Start programs.

- Offer encouragement as your child tries new things. It takes time and practice to build new skills. Praise your child's effort.
- Encourage your child to play alone as well as with others. Children learn important but different things when playing by themselves.
- Make sure your child's toys are safe. Remember that "toys" don't have to come from a toy store; often children have the most fun with pots, pans, spoons, and boxes.
- Join your child in make-believe play with dolls and toy animals.
- Help your child learn to share and take turns. This takes lots of practice!



Create a Quiet Bedtime Routine

- Help your child wind down at night with familiar routines. Bathing, brushing teeth, reading a book, talking about the day—these can be part of a nurturing routine.
- Try to put your child to bed at the same time each night. It's usually helpful to tuck toddlers in when drowsy, but still awake to help them learn to fall asleep on their own.
- At this age, it is normal for children to wake at night. Calm reassurance from you, combined with a gentle back rub, may help your child return to sleep.

Social Media

Media and Screens: TVs, cell phones, computers, tablets, video games, and other digital media are around us so often. It's never too early to begin thinking about how we use them and how they affect children.

- **Benefits of social media**

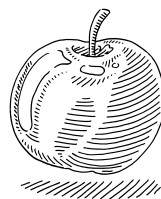
- Connect with others! How wonderful to be able to talk online with relatives far away and to share achievements and family news. It's also great to share time online with friends, ask questions, and talk about concerns.
- Many media devices allow us to reach out when it's convenient, a real plus in families' busy lives.
- **Risks of social media**
 - Your toddler may begin screen time and media habits that will be hard to change later.
 - Adults' use of media and screens may mean that their attention is not on the child, who may see things that are not appropriate for their age.
 - Young children's language and social development—and safety—benefit from parents' and caregivers' attention.
- **Limit media time**
 - Limit screen time and other media use to an hour or less a day. The AAP recommends no screen time for children younger than 18 months.
 - Watch educational programs with your child and talk about them.
 - TVs should not be in children's bedrooms.
 - Turn off TVs and other media at least an hour before bedtime as this may interfere with sleep.
- **Media plan**
 - The AAP suggests that families develop a media plan for the whole family on the HealthChildren.org website at <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx> (see also *page 19* for tips).

- You can begin a plan and change it as your needs and those of your children change. This plan can help you preserve face-to-face time during family routines, such as meals, playtime, and bedtime.

Healthy Weight/Healthy Nutrition/Physical Activity

Healthy Eating Habits Are Learned

- Provide nutritious food for your family.
- Toddlers gain weight more slowly than they did as babies. Offer your child nutritious food to support continued growth.
- Plan one large meal and several small meals or snacks each day. This meal schedule will provide energy and help your child make it through the day with an even temper. Don't worry if your toddler doesn't finish everything you offer.
- Your toddler may still be breastfeeding—and that's okay. Breastfeeding continues to be a good source of nutrition, disease protection, and comfort for growing toddlers.
- Have healthy snacks on hand such as
 - Fresh fruit (apples, guava, papaya, oranges, bananas) or vegetables (cucumber, zucchini), cut in small pieces or thin strips.
 - Applesauce, cheese, or small pieces of whole-grain bread or crackers.
 - Plain yogurt, sweetened with bits of mashed fruit.
 - Favorite cultural foods and snacks.
- Try to have water available for your child to drink. Also, encourage your child to drink 2 to 2½ cups of low-fat or fat-free milk each day. If you are using any milk substitute, discuss milk substitutes with your health care provider; some are fine, others are not. Juice



is not necessary. If you do serve it, limit juice to 4 ounces of 100% fruit juice and serve it with meals.

- Toddlers eat small amounts of food many times during the day and make messes as they learn to use spoons and forks. Cover the floor and don't worry about the mess.
- Eat meals as a family when possible. Make eating an enjoyable time. Turn the TV off so family members can talk about their day.
- When you can, give your child a chance to make choices about food. Maybe they can even help with some of the preparations.
- Encourage your child to try new foods. It often takes offering them several times—don't give up! Some children like to eat the same thing all the time. "Food jags" are common at this age.

Physical Activity

- Enjoy being physically active as a family, both inside and outside. Go for walks; ride bikes, tricycles, or scooters; and play tag.
- Children should not be inactive for more than an hour at a time, except when sleeping.

Learning to Use the Potty

- Look for signs that your child is ready to start toilet training, usually around age 2 or older. Girls are typically ready sooner than boys. For children with special health care needs, it might be later. Signs include:
 - Staying dry for 2 hours.
 - Knowing when it's time to go.
 - Being able to pull pants up and down.
 - Showing interest in using the toilet.
- Praise your child for trying. When accidents happen, be patient. Remind your child to tell you when they need to use the toilet.
- Read books with your child about learning to use the toilet.

- Encourage healthy sexual development. Expect your child to be curious about their own and others' bodies, including genitals. Use correct terms for all body parts. Explain that some body parts are private.
- Ask your health care professional about how to talk to your child about body parts.

Oral Health

- First tooth! It's always exciting when the first tooth appears. Brush twice a day, after breakfast and before bed. Use a soft toothbrush with only a small smear of fluoridated toothpaste (no bigger than a grain of rice) for children up to age 3 and a pea-sized amount for children ages 3 to 6. Teach your child how to brush each tooth surface. Welcome your child's help, though you will really have to do the job.
- Make the first dental appointment when your child is about 1 year old. Arrange follow-up appointments every 6 months or on the schedule your dentist recommends. Ask about fluoride supplements to strengthen teeth and prevent cavities.
- To protect developing teeth, don't put your child to bed with a bottle. If you do give a bottle, fill it with water only.
- Tooth decay, also called early childhood caries, is caused by bacteria. Sharing a cup or spoon can pass germs from you to your toddler. Don't clean pacifiers with your mouth.



Safety And Injury Prevention

Toddlers require constant adult supervision. Unless brothers and sisters are responsible and much older, don't rely on them to watch your young child.

Home Safety

- Plan for your child's growing skills, abilities, and limitless curiosity.
 - Put safety devices on windows and check them periodically to make sure they are still in place and working.

- Children love to tug on things. Check window blinds and their cords, electrical outlets, wires, tablecloths, and small appliances to make sure they are out of reach.
- Make sure the places you take your child are safe. This includes your home as well as grandparents' and child care providers' homes.
- Keep medicines and poisons locked up and out of reach. Keep the National Poison Control center number handy (800-222-1222) and program the number it into your cell phone. Call the center anytime you have a question.
- Toddlers are excellent climbers. Use gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Use window guards on upper story windows.



National Poison Control Center 800-222-1222

Car Safety

- Use a car safety seat appropriate for your child's height and weight. Make sure it is installed correctly and is still up to date; car seats now have expiration dates on them. If you use secondhand car seats, make sure they
 - Meet current safety standards (<https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats>).
 - Have never been in a crash.
 - Have not expired.
- The back seat is the safest place for children. All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing seat as long as possible. This means using the car seat until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer. Most convertible seats have limits that will allow children to ride rear facing for 2 years or more.

- Everybody in the car should wear a safety belt. Don't start the car until everyone is buckled up—including you. Set a good example!

Outdoor Playtime Safety

- Limit time in the sun. Put sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) on your child year-round before going outside for more than 10-15 minutes. Use broad-brimmed hats to shade faces. Sun is generally hottest between 11 am and 3 pm.
- Carefully supervise your children around playground equipment. Make sure the surface under the equipment is soft so they won't get hurt if they fall.
- Keep your child away from moving machinery or vehicles.
- Be sure your child always wears a helmet when riding a tricycle. This is also important when your child is in a bike trailer that's being towed or a seat on an adult's bike. Be a role model and wear a helmet yourself.



Water Safety

- Children typically love water and water play! Watch constantly whenever your child is near water, including bathtubs, play pools, buckets, or toilets.
- Swimming pools in your community, apartment complex, or home should have 4-sided fences with self-closing gates. A responsible adult or lifeguard should be present anytime your child is in the water.
- Children should always wear Coast Guard-approved life jackets when on a boat or other watercraft.

Fighting Germs

- Help your child wash their hands after diaper changes or toileting and before eating.
- Wash your own hands frequently, too, especially after being out in public.

- Work with your child to make sure they learn appropriate hand-washing techniques.
- Teach your child to cough or sneeze into a shoulder and to use tissues to wipe their runny nose.

Preventing Burns and Ensuring Fire Safety

- Begin to teach your toddler the danger of hot objects. Keep your child away from oven doors, heaters, and fireplaces. If possible, put a barrier around them. The AAP recommends that your hot water heater be set below 120 degrees.
- Homes should have working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors on every level, especially in the furnace and sleeping areas. Test detectors every month.
- Develop and practice an escape plan for your family so everyone can get out quickly if there is an emergency.

Gun and Firearm Safety

- The best way to keep your child safe from injury or death from guns or firearms is not to have any in your home.
- If there are guns at home, store them unloaded and locked away. Lock ammunition separately.

Stranger Safety

We worry about strangers, but we also know child abusers are often a person a child should be able to trust.

- Teach your child how to be safe with other adults—those you know and those you don't.
 - No adult should tell a child to keep secrets from parents.
 - No adult except the health care provider should express interest in a child's private parts.
 - No adult should ask a child to touch private parts (vulva, vagina, penis, or testicles).

12 Month Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your child's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.



CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Parent your child as you would any other 12-month-old by introducing them to the world around them—people, places, activities, books, play, and so much more.
- Share the joys of this shared exploration with your health care provider.
- Share anything you notice about their learning, development, or behavior that is a challenge or a concern.
- Keep your health care provider up to date on specialists, medications, and other treatments.
- If your child is in early intervention, bring your IFSP (see *page 17*) or other information to share from the program.
- Begin to feel confident in your skills to observe your child and know what your child needs.
- Your role as your child's voice and advocate is important—make sure your concerns are heard.
- You do not have to accept the response of “wait and see.”
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent. Toddlers are fun; enjoy and fall in love with them each day!



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Look for hidden objects.
- Imitate new gestures.
- Use “dada” and “mama” on purpose.
- Speak 1 or 2 words other than “dada” or “mama.”
- Follow an instruction you give along with a gesture, such as motioning and saying, “Give me the book.”
- Stand alone.
- Take first steps!
- Drop an object in a cup.
- Pick up small objects with 2 fingers.
- Pick up food and eat it.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health for your child, yourself, and your family:**

Staying in touch with family, friends, and others who help care for your child; juggling family and work; making decisions about how you raise your child; questions and concerns about your living situation; having enough money for food; concerns about tobacco, alcohol, and drug use.



- **Establishing routines:** Adjusting to your child's changing needs and behaviors; family time; bed/nap time routines; brushing teeth; healthy media habits.
- **Feeding and appetite changes:** Self-feeding; continued breastfeeding and making the change to family meals; teaching healthy eating habits.

- **Establishing a dental home:** Finding a pediatric or family dentist; first dental visits; brushing your child's teeth.
- **Safety:** Car seats; falls; drowning prevention and water safety; pets; sun protection; poisoning.



EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 12 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Check your child from head to toe.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and ask about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests for anemia.
- May carry out other screening tests for blood pressure, hearing, lead, oral health, tuberculosis, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Play games that build on your child's interests and growing skills—for example, rolling a ball or putting objects in a cup. Singing games are great too.
- Be sure to let friends and family know when your child stands alone or takes that first step. Whether they see in person or over a screen, they'll be excited too!
- At the grocery store, if your child is learning to say hello or goodbye, encourage them to say hi or wave to the person checking your groceries.
- **Reminder:** Review the Early Childhood section (beginning on *page 64*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child's health and well-being.

15 Month Visit



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Think about what's gone well since your last visit and what your child has learned or is doing.
- Write down your questions.
- Share your child's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.



CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Be ready to share anything you have noticed about your child's learning, development, or behavior that is a challenge or a concern.
- Keep your health care provider up to date on specialists, medications, and other treatments.
- If your child is in early intervention, bring your IFSP (see *page 17*) or other information to share from the program.
- Begin to feel confident in your skills to observe your child and know what your child needs—you are your child's voice and advocate!
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent. Toddlers are fun; enjoy and fall in love with them each day!



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Scribble spontaneously.
- Drink from a cup with only a few spills.
- Point to ask for things or to ask for help.
- Look around if you say, "Where's your ball?"
- Use 3 words in addition to names.

- Speak in “words” that may sound like an unknown language!
- Follow directions given in words only, with no gestures.
- Squat to pick up objects.
- Crawl up a few steps.
- Run.
- Make marks with a crayon.
- Drop objects in and take objects from a container.



PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Communication and social development:** Helping your child make choices; dealing with stranger anxiety; finding support and spending time with your partner; communicating with your child.
- **Sleep routines and issues:** Bedtime routines; night waking; avoiding bottle in bed.
- **Temperament, development, behavior, and discipline:** Setting limits for your toddler; helping your child learn to cope with day-to-day frustrations; using discipline to teach, not punish.
- **Healthy teeth:** Good oral health habits for you and your child.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats and wearing safety belts; poisoning; falls; fire hazards.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 15 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Measure your child's length, weight, and head size.
- Check your child from head to toe, paying special attention to skin, eyes, mouth, and abdomen.

- Check your child’s walking and interaction with other people.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests for oral health.
- May carry out other screening tests for anemia, blood pressure, hearing, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Is your child beginning to look for objects when you mention them? Ask, “Can you find that truck?”
- Your child is probably learning to talk. Repeat what your child is saying. Let others know those first words, too, so they can ask your child, “Who’s that? Yes, mama!”
- Are there older children visiting? Older kids often enjoy playing with little ones. Get them started rolling a ball back and forth.
- **Reminder:** Review the Early Childhood section (beginning on *page 64*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child’s health and well-being.



18 Month Visit

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Think about what’s gone well since your last visit and what your child has learned or is doing.
- Write down your questions.
- Share your child’s new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child’s health.

CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Be ready to share anything you have noticed about your child's learning, development, or behavior that is a challenge or a concern.
- Keep your health care provider up to date on specialists, medications, and other treatments.
- If your child is in early intervention, bring your IFSP (see page 17) or other information to share from the program.
- Begin to feel confident in your skills to observe your child and know what your child needs—you are your child's voice and advocate!
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent. Toddlers are fun; enjoy and fall in love with them each day!

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Play with others.
- Help dress and undress.
- Point to pictures in a book.
- Point to objects to draw your attention.
- Turn and look at you if something new happens.
- Begin to scoop food with a spoon.
- Use words to ask for help.
- Name 2 body parts and at least 5 familiar objects, like ball or milk.
- Walk up steps using 2 feet while holding your hand.
- Sit in a small chair.
- Carry a toy while walking.
- Scribble as if writing something important.
- Throw a small ball while standing.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Temperament, development, toilet training, behavior, and discipline:** Being ready if stranger anxiety returns; managing behavior with consistent limits; learning the signs that your child may be ready for toilet training; having another child.
- **Communication and social development:** Helping your child learn new words and concepts; talking, reading, and singing with your child.
- **Television viewing and digital media:** Developing healthy media habits; making time every day for active play.
- **Healthy nutrition:** Developing healthy eating habits; getting enough water and milk; limiting juice and sugar-sweetened drinks; handling your child's food likes and dislikes.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats and use of seat belts; poisoning; sun protection; gun safety; burns; fire safety; falls.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 18 MONTH VISIT

Your health care provider will

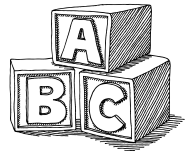
- Measure your child's length, weight, and head size.
- Check your child from head to toe, paying special attention to skin, eyes, mouth, and abdomen.
- Note how your child moves and interacts with other people.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests for autism spectrum disorder and development.



- May carry out other screening tests for anemia, blood pressure, hearing, lead, oral health, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- When you're ready to go out, ask your child to put on a hat or find the boots.
- If you have friends visiting, suggest that they ask your child to do something your child knows how to do or is learning—for example, "Where's your nose?" "Do you have a doll?" Everyone will be delighted!
- Children this age often like to pick up toys and put them back in the box. Of course, the toys may get dumped out again, but that's ok.
- **Reminder:** Review the Early Childhood section (beginning on page 64) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child's health and well-being.



2 Year Visit

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- What has your child been up to since the last visit? What new skills are emerging? Write down your questions.
- Share your child's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.



CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Be ready to share information as well as any concerns or questions.
- Bring along any information that will help keep your health care professional up to date such as specialist visits, medications, and treatments.
- If your child is in early intervention, you might bring along the IFSP (see *page 17*) and talk about successes or issues.
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent. Toddlers are fun; enjoy and fall in love with them each day!

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Play alongside other children.
- Be able to take off some clothing.
- Scoop well with a spoon.
- Use 50 words and 2-word phrases.
- Follow 2-step commands.
- Name at least 5 body parts.
- Speak clearly so that others understand what the child is saying about half the time.
- Kick a ball and jump off the ground with both feet.
- Run well and climb a ladder at a playground.
- Stack 5 or 6 blocks.
- Turn pages of a book.
- Use hands to turn knobs, toys, or lids.
- Draw lines.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Taking care of your own health and well-being; feeling safe from violence at home; asking questions and concerns about your living situation and whether you have enough money for food; the impacts of tobacco, alcohol, or drug use.
- **Temperament and behavior:** Helping your child learn to express emotions and behave in appropriate ways; spending one-on-one time with each of your children; encouraging them to be physically active; developing healthy media use habits.
- **Assessment of language development:** Paying attention to how well your child uses language, hears, and sees; reading with your child.
- **Toilet training:** Recognizing readiness signs; encouraging use of the potty; hand-washing.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats and seat belts; playing safely outdoors; gun safety.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 2 YEAR VISIT

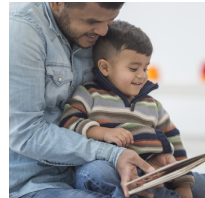
Your health care provider will

- Measure your child's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index.
- Check your child from head to toe, paying special attention to skin, eyes, mouth, and abdomen.
- See how well your child moves and speaks.
- Ask how your child interacts with others.
- Ask questions to see how your child is developing and about changes in your family.

- Carry out screening tests for autism spectrum disorder.
- May carry out other screening tests for anemia, blood pressure, cholesterol, hearing, lead, oral health, tuberculosis, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Stories, songs, and rhymes are great at this age because children are becoming so much more verbal.
- Maybe you, a relative, or a friend can read a story to your child, with your child turning the pages.
- When you go outside, can your child kick a ball for other kids or you to send it back?
- **Reminder:** Review the Early Childhood section (beginning on *page 64*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child's health and well-being.



2 1/2 Year Visit

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your child's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.

CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Take time during this well-check visit to discuss the transition from early intervention to early childhood special education or other programs. This usually means a change from an IFSP to an

Individualized Education (or IEP) (see *page 17* for information). This transition can be confusing and sometimes frustrating. Lean on your supports from health care providers, early intervention staff, parent mentors, and others to guide you.

- Connect with a parent center near you for free workshops to learn all about the next step in supports and services and how to advocate for your child!
- Keep your health care provider up to date on specialists and provider changes, including treatments, medications, and new diagnoses so that they can advocate for your child.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help or push things along to get what your child needs—in health and education.
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent—2 1/2-year-olds have personality. Enjoy and fall in love with them each day!

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Pee (urinate) in a potty or toilet.
- Stick a fork into foods.
- Wash and dry hands.
- Play pretend games with dolls or toys.
- Try to get you to watch by saying, "Look at me!"
- Use pronouns (me, he, she) correctly.
- Explain the reason for something, like needing a coat when it's cold.
- Name at least 1 color.
- Walk up and down stairs, 1 foot at a time.
- Run well without falling.
- Copy an up and down (vertical) line.
- Hold a crayon with thumb and fingers instead of a fist.
- Catch large balls.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Family routines:** Creating consistent day and evening routines; doing things together as a family; spending time with your partner away from home.
- **Language promotion and communication:** Listening and talking; reading and looking at pictures or objects together daily.
- **Promoting social development:** Learning to share; making choices; limiting media use.
- **Preschool considerations:** Playing with other children; toilet training help.
- **Safety:** Using car seats; playing safely outdoors; keeping children safe around water; protecting your child from the sun, fires, and burns.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 2 1/2 YEAR VISIT

Your health care professional will

- Check your child from head to toe.
- Talk directly with your child.
- Ask you questions about how your child is developing and about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests for development.
- May carry out other screening tests for anemia, blood pressure, hearing, oral health, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Children this age often like to make up games with trucks or dolls or blocks. Get down on the floor and play along!
- Encourage your child to show a visiting relative or friend a favorite book or activity. This helps others develop relationships with your child—and the other way around!
- Introduce your child to the person who delivers your mail. Let your child carry the mail in and look at the pictures in a flyer or magazine.
- **Reminder:** Review the Early Childhood section (beginning on *page 64*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child's health and well-being.

3 Year Visit

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your child's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.



CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Bring the joys, triumphs, concerns, and observations to this appointment along with updates from specialists and other providers about medication, treatments, and therapies.
- Of course, raise any questions or concerns you have.
- If your child was in early intervention and has moved to school-based services, this usually means a change from an IFSP to an IEP (see page 17 for information).

- Are there new procedures you need to know? Do you know where to get them?
- Are any tests or information needed from your health care provider to reinforce requests for services in school?
- If your child has started preschool, discuss how it is going and any adjustments that need to be made.
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent. Three-year-olds are fun; enjoy and fall in love with them each day!



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Go into the bathroom and pee (urinate) by themselves.
- Put on own clothes.
- Be able to feed self.
- Play pretend games.
- Play well with others and share.
- Speak in 3-word sentences.
- Tell you a story from a book or TV program.
- Speak clearly so others understand about three-quarters of the time.
- Compare things using words like “bigger” or “shorter.” Understand prepositions like “on” and “under.”
- Ride a tricycle.
- Climb on and off a couch or chair.
- Jump forward.
- Draw a single circle.

- Draw a person with a head and 1 other body part.
- Cut with child scissors.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Doing things and being together as a family; handling work–life balance; questions and concerns about living situation and having enough money for food; the impact of tobacco, alcohol, or drug use.
- **Playing with siblings and peers:** Learning to take turns; enjoying pretend play with friends; developing good relationships with brothers and sisters.
- **Encouraging literacy activities:** Reading, talking, and singing with your child; encouraging your child to talk to you and tell you stories.
- **Promoting healthy nutrition and physical activity:** Providing water and milk; limiting juice and sugar-sweetened drinks; building healthy eating habits; encouraging your child to be physically active; enjoying physical activity as a family; building healthy media use habits.
- **Safety:** Car safety seats; preventing choking; protecting from falls and cars; water safety; pet safety; gun safety.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 3 YEAR VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Measure your child's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Check your child from head to toe, paying special attention to skin, eyes, mouth, and abdomen.

- Notice how well your child speaks and ask your child questions to see how they are developing.
- Ask about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests for vision.
- May carry out screening tests for anemia, hearing, lead, oral health, and tuberculosis.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- When your child is playing with others and doing a good job sharing—praise them. This is an important skill!
- When grandmother or a friend comes over, ask your child to tell them a story or share something they did.
- Is it trash or recycle day? Kids this age love to help, and they are often impressed by the huge, noisy trash trucks and the people who load them.
- **Reminder:** Review the Early Childhood section (beginning on *page 64*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child's health and well-being.

4 Year Visit

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THIS VISIT

- Write down your questions.
- Share your child's new accomplishments and fully participate in this visit as a partner in your child's health.

CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Continue to tackle any concerns about learning, development, and behavior with your health care provider.
- Share updates from specialists and other providers about medication, treatments, and therapies.
- If your child receives special education, bring your IEP (see page 17 for more information).
- If your child has started preschool, discuss how it is going and if adjustments need to be made.
- Encourage your child to tell your health care provider what they think about school, their health, and anything else important to them!
- Take time to praise your child for sharing. The next transition—to kindergarten—is not far away.
- Begin to discuss how to support your child in that next step and share ways your provider can help.
- No matter what challenges arise with your child's health and development, continue to be their parent. Enjoy and fall in love with them each day!



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Go to the bathroom and have a bowel movement by themselves.
- Brush teeth, dress, and undress by themselves.
- Play complicated pretend games.
- Be able to answer questions like, “What do you do when you are cold?”
- Use 4-word sentences.
- Speak clearly so that others can understand all the time.

- Draw pictures you can recognize.
- Follow simple rules for games.
- Tell you a story from a book.
- Skip on 1 foot.
- Climb stairs, 1 foot at a time without help.
- Draw a person with at least 3 body parts; draw a cross.
- Button and unbutton medium-sized buttons.
- Hold pencil with thumb and fingers instead of fist.



PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THIS VISIT

YOUR questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Taking part in community activities; any questions or concerns about your living situation or having enough to eat; impacts of tobacco, alcohol, or drug use; feeling safe from violence at home or in the community.
- **School readiness:** Your child's ability to understand and speak clearly; play times with other children; being ready for school; early childhood programs.
- **Developing healthy nutrition and personal habits:** Providing water and milk; limiting juice; building healthy nutrition habits; keeping consistent bedtime routines, toothbrushing, and other healthy habits.
- **Media use:** Limiting media use, while encouraging physical activity; planning family time instead of screen time.
- **Safety:** Seatbelt positioning; when to switch to car booster seats; playing safely outdoors; water safety; sun protection; being safe around pets; and gun safety.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 4 YEAR VISIT

Your health care provider will

- Measure your child's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Check your child from head to toe, paying special attention to skin, eyes, teeth, ears/nose/throat, and abdomen.
- See how well your child moves and speaks.
- Talk with your child, ask questions to see how your child is developing, and ask you about changes in your family.
- Carry out screening tests for hearing and vision.
- May carry out other screening tests for anemia, cholesterol, lead, oral health, or tuberculosis.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Ask your child to tell—and show—a relative or friend something they are learning to do such as drawing a picture, skipping, or unbuttoning a coat.
- Take a trip to the library to pick out a book, maybe one about something your child especially likes—such as dogs, fire engines, or babies.
- Talk to your child about recycling. Why should families do it? What can be recycled in your community? Let your child help sort materials for recycling. Make it a family activity!

- **Reminder:** Review the Early Childhood section (beginning on *page 64*) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child's health and well-being.

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD: 5 TO 10 YEARS



Growing Up!

This exciting age group offers new challenges for parents. Children seem barely out of preschool, yet they are on the brink of puberty. They are learning how to be independent, and yet still need—and want—your help and guidance.

Five-year-olds may prepare for the first day of “real” school with excitement and some uncertainty. By age 10, most feel capable and independent in their communities. It can be a challenge for parents to learn when to “let go” and when to “hold on.” Your values and beliefs will guide your decisions about when to allow greater freedom while continuing to provide good supervision. Crossing streets, riding bicycles, and staying home alone are activities parents will decide about, based on children’s skills, judgment, and the level of safety in the community. The challenge is to provide clear rules and expectations while offering support as children begin to make their own choices.

In this age group, children are figuring out where they fit in—at home, at school, and in the community—and developing a variety of interests outside their family. As friends become a larger part of their lives, children typically begin to become more



independent. Consider how to support your child’s skills and efforts as well as how to recognize and reward your child’s progress. The tone you set with your child in this stage will carry over as your child moves into puberty and the teen years. Open communication now will set the stage for more serious conversations later on. Family time and outings can foster children’s interests and activities, as well as help with strong family communication and relationships. Explore and enjoy what your community offers. Introduce your child to the larger world through visits to places parks, museums and concerts, sporting events, and festivals.

Well-child visits are a time to discuss with your health care provider ways to help your child develop healthy habits now and for lifelong health. You and your child may discuss such topics as how to maintain a healthy diet, physical activity, mental health, sexuality, social media use, and safety. This guide and your child's health care provider can help you and your child think about ways to make these skills and habits part of daily life.

Children With Special Health Care Needs

At this age, the desires, development, and needs of children with special health care needs do not usually differ much from those of their peers. Rather, their desire to explore the world, develop interests, spend time with friends, and taste independence may require a bit more creativity, support, and expanded teamwork.

The middle childhood years can be a good time to help your child understand

- More about their own special health care needs.
- How to begin to self-manage and advocate to address needs.
- How or when to explain their needs to others.



This important process models the lifelong health and advocacy efforts they will need to make. It helps to empower and support independence—especially important when your child may need to rely some on others for health and other needs.

Children adapt best when families, schools, health care providers, and communities work together to facilitate inclusion and foster their emerging independence. Your child with special health care needs

- Will likely develop interests and want to become more involved in activities and the community or contribute more to the family.

- May need help and ideas for starting, building, or improving relationships with others.
- May seek ideas about how to become involved in or contribute to the balance of being like peers while making sure specific care needs are met.
- May need to think about how to discuss and explain their health care needs in ways that help them connect and participate, but also respect privacy and sense of self.
- Most important, will need your help to feel valued, regardless of their health care needs.

You are not alone in this—you have your child and a team of health care providers, teachers, family, community members, and more!

Even though your child with special health needs may have many doctors and appointments, sitting down with your primary health care provider for an annual well-child visit for overall health and screenings is important.

Promoting Lifelong Health For Families And Communities

Build Family and Community Connections

- Take time for yourself. Do something you enjoy on a regular basis.
- Build bonds with family and friends and look for ways to get your community involved to support you.
- Spend quality time with your child, talking and doing things you both enjoy.
- Show affection and praise your child's unique strengths, abilities, and efforts. Encourage your child's abilities, independence, and responsibility. Encourage their abilities to solve problems and creatively adapt to navigate the world.



- If financial or other support with medical, living, or food concerns would be helpful for your family, talk to your health care provider.

Personal Safety at Home and in the Community

- Teach your child nonviolence—when to practice it and how to use it to solve problems and issues in peaceful and creative ways.
- Be on the alert for possible bullying. Encourage your child to talk to a trusted adult at school if your child feels anxious or is being picked on at school. Help your child learn to tell the bully to stop and then leave the situation.
- If your child is bullying others, help them see how hurtful this can be. Your school, health care provider, and law enforcement agencies may have tips for children who are bullying others.

Tobacco, Drugs, or Alcohol Use

- Children will see smoking, drinking, and drug use (including drugs that can be breathed in) on TV and other media. You can use this as a way to open communication about substance use.
- Encourage their questions and give clear messages about what is acceptable and what is not—for example, 21 is the legal drinking age.
- Model appropriate alcohol use by adults.
- Share concerns with health care or other providers about alcohol or drug misuse by people who are regularly around your child—such as family members, close friends, or caregivers. Exposure to secondhand smoke greatly increases the risk of heart and lung diseases and can be harmful to your child. It is in the best interest for your child's health that they not be around smoke, including exposure to vapor from e-cigarettes.

Media And Internet Safety

Just as you watch your child's activity in the neighborhood and community, it is important to monitor and guide your child's media and internet use. Devices, social media, and the internet are a big part of all of our everyday lives. Help your child learn to set limits on their use and to use devices responsibly, positively, and safely.

Guide

- Work together as a family to develop rules and a family media plan (see *page 19*) that balances the realities of the digital age and family needs for physical activity, sleep, school activities, and unplugged time (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Gmedia/Pages/default.aspx>). This plan can help you preserve face-to-face time during family routines, such as meals, playtime, and bedtime.
- Help your child find sites and applications appropriate for their age and interests.
- Help them understand that nothing is truly private with media and the internet.
- Help them be safe—for example, never give out personal information.
- Help them understand how content can be misunderstood—and hurtful—and how to use media and the internet for good.

Monitor

- Place your family computer where you can easily see the sites your child visits.
- Check the internet history regularly to be sure you approve of your child's choices. You can purchase safety equipment to prevent access to questionable websites.
- Children learn more from educational media when you watch or do it with them and talk about it afterward.
- Get to know popular video games, TV programs, and music with kids in this age group. Show an interest in your child's online activity—set limits according to your beliefs and values.
- Know who your child communicates with on cell phones or through social media. Limit their phone, media use, and contacts to people you approve.

Screen Time

- Encourage healthy media habits.

- Quantity, quality, and location of screens all matter. Consider where TVs, phones, tablets, and computers are located; how they are allowed to be used; and for how long. For example, TV, computers, or phones in your child’s room can distract them from going to sleep and getting the amount of sleep they need to grow and thrive.
- Educational media options are beneficial—but so is unstructured play, time outdoors, physical activity, and hands-on learning. Find out how much school-time learning happens on computers and suggest your child try learning about or working on the same subjects with friends, outdoors, or with you.
- If your child is using media excessively, try to find out why. Open up conversations about why and try to support finding other activities or making friends.



Child Development And Mental Health

Be a Role Model—Children Learn by Watching Parents

- Take time to listen and share concerns so that your child feels loved and respected.
- Children watch and absorb your values, beliefs, and attitudes.
- Help your children learn to control their feelings and behavior. Even when frustrated or in a tough situation, praise your child for their efforts at self-control. Talk about times you’ve felt upset and how you found ways to establish acceptable behavior.
- Try to display non-aggressive responses to stress and anger.

Promoting

- All children, including those with special health care needs, can help with household chores. Give each child chores that fit their abilities.
- Establish family routines and rules to set expectations, build family teamwork, and balance privilege and responsibility. Giving your child responsibility for their belongings and for household or yard

tasks that meets their ability helps teach work ethic and instills pride and confidence.

- Anticipate some normal pre-teen or tween behaviors, such as friends becoming more important in your child's life, changes in the way your child communicates, or sudden challenges to parental rules and authority. There may be conflicts over issues of independence, refusal to participate in some family activities, moodiness, or a new desire to take risks.
- Supervise peer activities. Help your child's friends feel welcome in your home. When you can, get to know their families.

Establishing Traditions

- Talk about cultural and family traditions and customs or religious ceremonies you as a family may have observed growing up. Decide those you want to include in your family life.

Changing Bodies

- Prepare your child for the changes of puberty, such as body odor, acne or pimples, menstruation for girls, and wet dreams for boys. Explain things in a simple way that is appropriate for your child. It's a good idea to start these conversations before these changes begin so that your child will know what to expect when they occur.
- Encourage your child to ask questions. Children are likely talking with each other about all things related to puberty and sex. Even if you don't think your children are engaged in sexual activity, ask them, including children with special health care needs, what they know about it and if they have questions.
- If your child receives family life education at school or in the community, ask your child about these lessons. Talk to your health care provider, teachers, and community resource centers for advice, help, and information.



- TV and other media often contain sexually explicit material which can be confusing to children. Try to watch TV with them or avoid these programs. If your children do see them, use these as opportunities to discuss your beliefs and values.

Teach your child how to be safe with adults—those they know and those they do not.

- No adult should tell a child to keep secrets from parents.
- No parent should tell a child to keep secrets from the other parent.
- No adult, except the health care provider, should express interest in a child's "private parts" (those usually covered by a bathing suit).
- No adult should ask a child to touch his or her private parts.

Check out these websites for tips that opens the discussion for parent and children of all ages:

- HealthyChildren.org Sexual Abuse: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Sexual-Abuse.aspx>.
- CDC Preventing Child Sexual Abuse: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/childsexualabuse.html>.
- Prevent Child Abuse America: <https://preventchildabuse.org>.

Healthy Weight/Healthy Nutrition/Physical Activity

Healthy Eating

- Encourage healthy eating habits for your child and family by
 - Sitting down at the table together.
 - Sharing meals together as frequently as possible.
 - Turning off all devices to encourage conversation.

- Give your child a healthy breakfast every day. Research shows breakfast helps children learn and behave better at school.
- Help your child recognize—and respond to—feelings of being hungry and being full.
- Be a role model with your own healthy food choices.
- Aim for at least 5 servings of vegetables or fruits every day by including them in meals and snacks. Use your child’s fist as an estimation of serving size. Offer whole grains and lean protein (like fish, chicken, meat, eggs, beans, and peas).
- Make sure your child is getting enough calcium and vitamin D for strong bones and teeth—from milk, dairy products like low-fat yogurt and cheese, or foods and beverages fortified in calcium and vitamin D. An example of daily goals:
 - Children ages 4 to 8: 1½ to 2 cups of low-fat or non-fat milk a day.
 - Children ages 9 to 18: 2½ to 3 cups of low-fat or non-fat milk a day.
- Offer lots of water and limit juice to 4 ounces per day of 100% fruit juice. “Fruit drinks” and sodas are often high in calories and low in nutrients.

Healthy Weight

- The key to good health is a balance between the calories from foods eaten and the calories spent in activity. Work as a family to eat in a balanced way, for example, serve small portions, not large ones, or share larger portions, especially if high in fat or sugar. Weight loss is almost never a good idea while your child’s body is rapidly growing during puberty.
- As children have more exposure to media and society’s opinions about weight, it’s important to talk about what a healthy body looks and feels like. These conversations may help children feel good about their bodies and make better choices about food and exercise.

- If your child asks about diets to lose weight or dietary supplements, discuss this with your health care provider to make sure they are appropriate and safe.

Physical Activity

- Encourage your child to be physically active at least 60 minutes every day. It could be all at once or for shorter periods over the course of the day.
- Help your child find enjoyable ways to be active and support their interests in sports and physical activity. Come up with creative ways to be active like taking the stairs instead of the elevator or signing up for a dance class or sports camp.
- If your child has disabilities or other special health care needs that affect their ability to be active, look for other ways to keep your child moving. Your health care provider may have some good ideas.
- Join in the fun! Find physical activities your whole family enjoys that you can make part of your daily life.
- Encourage activity by limiting your child's screen time. This includes limiting watching TV, playing video games, texting, and using the computer (other than for homework).



Oral Health

- Your child should have a dental home and see a dentist regularly — twice a year (unless the dentist recommends a different schedule).
- Your child should brush twice a day with a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride (if recommended) and floss once a day. Supervise and help, if needed.
- Limit how many sugar-sweetened foods and drinks your child has each day.

- Children who play contact sports should wear a mouth guard to protect their teeth.

School

- Prepare your child for each new school year by talking about the opportunities, friends, and activities they may experience.
- Get involved by attending back-to-school nights, parent–teacher meetings, and other school activities. Develop relationships with teachers, other families, and the school so that you can create positive experiences and development for your child.
- Have a conversation with your child about the difference between school and learning. School is only one building where you can learn; learning can happen anywhere in the community and especially at home.
- Show interest in how your child is doing at school and in afterschool activities. Ask your child about the day—noting what went well and what did not. Praise your child’s efforts and accomplishments in school.
- If your child is not doing well in school, talk with teachers about what they observe. Ask about evaluations, special help, or tutoring. Encourage your child to talk to you about the challenges they are experiencing and to ask for help when needed.
- Provide a well-lit, quiet space for homework, preferably not near a TV or with the TV turned off. Decide with your child on the best time to do homework.



Safety

Supervision and Safety Rules

- Help your child understand your family safety rules, such as how to use 911 and what to do in case of a fire or other emergency. For example, some children like to discuss a fire plan. Let them know which family and neighbors can help. Ensure they have important emergency phone numbers.
- Talk with your child about how to follow safety rules everywhere.
- Begin to teach your child safe street habits. Children need to learn street and bus safety, such as how to read streetlights and street signs. They also need to learn how to use crosswalks, how to use sidewalks on larger roads, where to wait for the bus, and how to get on and off the bus safely.
- Be sure that your child is supervised before and after school and during vacations. As your child grows and matures, you will begin to provide less direct supervision—but make sure you or another adult is aware and available.
- Let your child know that it is always okay to call or ask to come home if your child is not comfortable at someone else's house.
- If your child is in an afterschool program or with a caregiver, be sure the setting is safe. Talk with caregivers about their attitudes about discipline. Do not let them hit or spank your child.



Car Safety

- Everybody in the car should wear a safety belt. Don't start the car until everyone is buckled up—including you. Set a good example!
- The back seat is the safest place to ride until age 13.
- Your child should use a car seat or a booster seat until the lap belt can be worn low and flat on their upper thighs and the shoulder

belt can be worn across their shoulder rather than the face or neck. They should be able to bend at their knees while sitting against the car seat back (usually when they are between ages 8 and 12 and about 4'9" tall).

Bike and Sport Safety

- Your child should always wear appropriate safety equipment for any activity they are doing—for example, biking, skating, skateboarding, skiing, and horseback riding.
- Your child should know the safety rules for any activity they are doing. For example, take time to watch your child ride a bike and see how well they ride. Praise them, offer tips, and talk together about how to ride safely.



Water and Sun Safety

- Use sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher), year-round, before your child goes outside to play or swim when your child will be outside for an extended period.
- Do not let your child play around water (eg, lakes, streams, pools, ocean) without appropriate supervision.
- Teach your child to swim and discuss pool safety rules:
 - No swimming without an adult or certified lifeguard supervision
 - No diving in shallow water
 - Swim only in pools with 4-sided fences, a gate that locks, and a life guard
- On any boat, be sure your child is wearing a Coast Guard-approved life jacket, sized for your child.

Fire and Carbon Monoxide Safety

- Install carbon monoxide and smoke detectors on every level in your house, especially in furnace and sleeping areas. Test the detectors once a month and change batteries at least twice a year (for example, when you change the clock). UL-certified carbon

monoxide detectors are recommended in hallways near every sleeping area of your home.

- Most children learn fire safety in school—involvement in making a family fire plan. Discuss and practice the fire plan.

Gun and Firearm Safety

- Children do not understand how dangerous guns and firearms can be, even with warnings.
- The best way to keep your child safe from injury or death from guns and firearms is to keep the weapons stored unloaded and locked. The ammunition should be locked away separately from the gun. Children should not know where guns are stored. Keep the key where children cannot get it.
- Ask if there are guns in homes where your child plays. If yes, make sure they are stored and locked appropriately before allowing your child to play there.
- Talk about guns and firearms in school, on the street, and on TV, the internet, or social media. Ask if your child has seen a gun in person or an image of it being used. For example, if children have seen images or heard of school shootings, help them work through their feelings. Discuss safety options with firearms in school, at home, at a friend's home, or anywhere.
- Education on proper and safe use of guns and hunting knives should be considered prior to allowing a child to hunt. Children should only hunt with adult supervision.

5 & 6 Year Visits

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THESE VISITS

- Write down your questions, new signs or symptoms, concerns, or improvements since your last visit. These are important! You and your child should be ready to participate fully in the visit. You are a partner with your health care provider; your child is learning to be one, too.



CYSHCN: CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Discuss how transitions from preschool to kindergarten and 1st grade are going. Talk about educational concerns and how the health care provider can support these. Share about the joy, friendships, and social adjustments that come with transition to “real school.”
- Encourage your child to do some of the sharing so they learn to express their own feelings and health and how to express their needs.
- Make sure to take along whatever you use to organize health information (eg, a care journal, Care Notebook, binder) and share information about educational plans (IEP or 504 Plan), treatments, medications, or visits to specialists.

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Balance on 1 foot, hop, and skip.
- Hold a pencil well; draw a person with 6 body parts; write some letters and numbers; and copy squares and triangles.
- Tie a knot; dress and undress.
- Speak clearly; be able to tell a story with full sentences; use past and present tenses; and use I, you, and we correctly.
- Count to 10; name at least 4 colors.
- Pay attention; follow simple directions.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THESE VISITS

YOUR and YOUR CHILD'S questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Feeling happy and self-confident; having good relationships with family; violence in or out of the home; concerns with financial needs; substance use.

- **Development and mental health:** Family routines; caring about and being respectful of others; handling feelings.
- **School:** Feeling ready to be at school; getting to know the school; afterschool care; parent–teacher communication.
- **Physical growth and development:** Regular dental visits, daily brushing/flossing, fluoride, and limiting sugar-sweetened drinks; healthy weight; healthy meals and snacks; fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; calcium for growing bones; at least 1 hour of daily activity/exercise.
- **Safety:** Car safety; safe play outdoors; water safety and protection from the sun; harm from adults; fire safety; gun safety.



EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 5 & 6 YEAR VISITS

Your health care provider will

- Measure height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Do a physical exam, paying special attention to eyes and mouth.
- Watch how your child walks and uses fingers and hands.
- Carry out screening tests for hearing and vision.
- May carry out other screening tests for anemia, cholesterol, lead, oral health, and tuberculosis.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Read with your child as much as possible! Sitting down with some good books daily with your child is great but not always easy to

accomplish in busy family life. Try reading street signs out loud to your child when you drive or have them cook with you and read the directions out loud together. Go through the mail together, looking for good words and phrases to read aloud.

- Although transition to formal school happens for your child in these years, try to keep the focus on still being a child and play as much as possible. Free play, imaginative play, creative play, and neighborhood play—inside, outside, no matter! Foster your child’s growth through exploration of themselves and the world through the powerful tool of play. Your child will need it even more now after a full day of school—and so will you!
- **Reminder:** Review the Middle Childhood section (beginning on page 102) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a great impact on your child’s lifelong health and well-being.



7 & 8 Year Visits

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THESE VISITS

- Write down your questions.
- Share anything new and exciting. These are important! You and your child should be ready to participate fully in the visit. You are a partner with your health care provider; your child is learning to be one too.

CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- As your child becomes more involved in school and other activities, share about friendships and social adjustments for your child and family.
- Encourage your child to talk to your health care provider about prejudice or misunderstanding they, or your family, may experience because of their health need. Discuss ways to overcome and connect to peers.
- Bring questions to your health care provider about connecting your child to interests and activities that are accessible, appropriate for their health needs, and FUN!
- Bring whatever you use to organize health information (eg, Care Notebook, care journal, binder) and updated information from all the people, places, and specialists involved in their care and education. This may include information about treatments, medications, therapists, activities, IEP or 504 Plan, social adjustments, or visits.



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Show social and emotional skills and a sense of right and wrong.
- Choose healthy eating and being physically active.
- Have caring relationships with family and other children and adults.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THESE VISITS

YOUR and YOUR CHILD'S questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:**

Feeling happy and self-confident; having good relationships with family and friends; avoiding violence at home and in the neighborhood (bullying and fighting); having enough money for food; asking questions about family tobacco, alcohol, and drug use; staying safe on the internet.



- **Development and mental health:** Independence; rules and consequences; temper; managing disagreements; puberty.
- **School:** Adapting to school; behavior or learning problems; school performance and progress; IEP or special education services; being involved with school activities.
- **Physical growth and development:** Regular dental visits, daily brushing/flossing, fluoride, and limiting sugar-sweetened drinks; healthy weight; healthy meals and snacks; calcium for growing bones; at least 1 hour of daily activity/exercise; limits on media use.
- **Safety:** Car safety (belts/booster seats); helmets; swimming; protection against the sun; harm from adults; gun safety.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 7 & 8 YEAR VISITS

Your health care provider will

- Measure your child's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Do a physical exam, covering your child with a drape for privacy and paying special attention to teeth and mouth, ankle/knee/hip movement, and the beginnings of sexual maturity.
- May carry out screening tests for anemia, cholesterol, hearing, oral health, tuberculosis, and vision.

- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.



CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Encourage and be a part of daily physical activity with your child—blow off steam together!
- Try a yoga class together or go for a daily family walk. If one child has an activity or practice, use the time to walk around the field or play at the park—for yourself or with your other children.
- Try to connect with your child each day about how school went—not just asking about homework, but finding ways for your child and the whole family to share positives and negatives from each day. Most of all, listen and pay attention to your child.
- **Reminder:** Review the Middle Childhood section (beginning on page 102) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a great impact on your child's lifelong health and well-being.

9 & 10 Year Visits



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THESE VISITS

- Write down your questions.
- Share anything new and exciting. These questions and comments are important! You and your child should be ready to participate fully in the visit. You are a partner with your health care provider; your child is learning to be this, too.



CYSHCN: CHILDREN WITH AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTHCARE NEEDS

- Discuss how things are going for you and your child at home, with friends, in activities, in the community, or at school.

- Share concerns, needs, and whether your child has access to all the support services needed. If your child receives special education services, bring the latest IEP or 504 Plan (see page 17).
- Make sure that your health care provider has accurate records of all of the people and things involved in supporting your child's life, such as specialists, therapies, medications, and adaptive activities.



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR CHILD MAY...

- Show increased social and emotional skills and a sense of right and wrong.
- Choose healthy eating and being physically active.
- Show that they are becoming more responsible; making good decisions on their own.
- Demonstrate caring relationships with family, other adults, and other children.
- Appear self-confident and hopeful; have a sense of well-being.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THESE VISITS

YOUR and YOUR CHILD's questions and concerns are the #1 priority! Your health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Feeling happy and self-confident; having good relationships with family and friends; avoiding violence at home and in the neighborhood (bullying and fighting); having enough money for food; talking about family tobacco, alcohol, and drug use; staying safe on the internet.
- **Development and mental health:** Temper; setting "reasonable" limits; growth spurts and other body changes that signal the beginnings of puberty; self-esteem; family time; getting along with family and friends; self-care.

- **School:** Behavior or learning problems; school performance and progress; readiness for middle school.
- **Physical growth and development:** Regular dental visits, daily brushing and flossing, and fluoride; limits on sugar-sweetened snacks and drinks; building healthy eating habits, including eating breakfast; 60 minutes of physical activity daily.
- **Safety:** Booster seats and riding in the back seat; helmets and protective sports gear; swimming; sun protection; knowing child's friends and their families; gun safety.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 9 & 10 YEAR VISITS

Your health care provider will

- Measure your child's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Do a physical exam, covering your child with a drape for privacy, paying special attention to skin and spine and checking for the beginnings of sexual maturity.
- May carry out screening tests for anemia, cholesterol, hearing, oral health, tuberculosis, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- As your child grows in emotional and social maturity, find ways to help connect them even more to the world—building compassion, stronger sense of self and the world around them.
- While you may already have a long to-do list or complicated family schedule, find ways your child can foster relationships or volunteering on their own or together with you or as a family. This helps build responsibility.

- Look within your community and daily life: offer to walk the dog for an elderly neighbor or rake their leaves, make and take a meal for a family in need, or volunteer time or collect donations for a school or community event. These can be regular or occasional ways to teach your child to connect with others and spread kindness.
- As activities and friends become increasingly important in your child's life, take time to share about your own experiences growing up. These conversations help you discuss the valuable lessons you learned from teamwork, volunteering, and other activities. By sharing time, rather than lecturing, you can open conversation to talk and work through some of the more difficult challenges they face. Talking about your family values and what it means to be a good teammate and friend can support your child as they navigate this ultra-competitive world—and keep them connected to you throughout the journey.
- **Reminder:** Review the Middle Childhood section (beginning on page 102) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what you do at home every day matters and will have a lifelong impact on your child's health and well-being.

ADOLESCENCE: 11 TO 21 YEARS



Letting Go

When our children are babies, we look forward to the first smile, laugh, and word. We encourage them to take each new step. As children approach the teen years, we often worry about their new skills. It's one thing to see a toddler start to walk. It's another to drop a teen at the mall with friends or to hand over the car keys. It may be especially hard for parents of teens with special health care needs to “let go,”—allowing their teens to set their own limits and have “teen” experiences.

Teens also develop at different rates. It's important to let them figure out how to handle new skills and responsibilities, yet still be there to provide help and advice. Youth with special health care needs may need unique supports. Your health care provider can refer you to helpful services.



Parents can also learn about services, resources, and supports from each other, school, and community sources. Share these resources and supports with your teen's health care provider as part of your parent/provider partnership.

Family Traditions

In many cultures, families celebrate coming of age with special rites and traditions. Help your health care provider learn about your culture, values, and preferences. You may prefer that you, or another adult in your family or community, be the one to talk to your teen about body changes, intimate relationships, sexuality, and responsibility for choices about health and wellness. By sharing this information and your preferences with your child's health care provider, together you can partner in preparing your child for all of the changes during the adolescent years.

Transition to Adult Health Care and Decision-Making

When you and your teen's health care provider work together to ensure that your teen receives health services and needed supports,

you are modeling the skills they will use to make health decisions as an adult. To prepare for this responsibility, it is important for teens to learn their medical history, making them informed partners in their own health care.

Then, teens can “test drive” these skills. Let them take on more responsibility. Let your teen take the lead during the health care visit. Ask your teen to think about questions to ask or specific topics to address with the provider. This is also the time to begin planning for health care transition—the move from pediatric to adult health systems. Families, teens, and current health care providers should partner and work together to ensure that teens are ready to manage their own health needs. Goals should include choosing adult providers and developing new health partnerships. This is especially important for teens with special health care needs. Some specialty providers continue with their patients. Others will work with you and your teen to transfer care to adult health care providers, hospitals, and health systems for adults.

Youth With Special Health Care Needs Or Disabilities

Transition to Adult Systems of Care

Many teens with special health care needs have teams of doctors, but your teen still needs a yearly well-visit with a primary health care provider. These health visits help ensure and support your teen’s overall health. This yearly exam is also a time to screen for secondary health conditions that can occur in all teens. Well-visits are a time to discuss puberty, healthy eating, physical activity, mental and emotional health, risky behaviors, friends, and school. This is also the time to talk about other services and supports that your teen has now or may need in the future.

Teens with special health care needs may have more transitions than their typical peers between ages 11 and 21. In addition to moving to adult health care systems, some teens will receive full or partial guardianship. This involves an adult with the legal authority to make

some or all decisions for a person making choices about health care, finances, or other parts of adult life. Whether or not to pursue guardianship can be difficult for families. Know that there are other options available that can help your teen keep their rights while still allowing to provide support for their decision-making. Supported decision-making can be an effective way for a teen to make decisions with guidance from a trusted adult. You can find more information by visiting the Got Transition website at <https://www.gottransition.org/> or the National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making website at <http://www.supporteddecisionmaking.org/>. For additional assistance with this process, you can contact your Family-to-Family Health Information Center (F2F). Visit <https://familyvoices.org/affiliates/> to find a local F2F chapter.

Some teens with IEPs may need more than 4 years to complete high school. Part B of IDEA allows them to stay in school through age 21. Transition planning should begin no later than age 16 in most states and by age 14 in other states. Transition planning should include goals for post-high school employment and independent living. Discuss this transition plan with your school team and share it with your health care provider in order to help the school and health care providers work together to meet the needs of your teen. You can contact the Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) in your state to get assistance on this transition process. Visit <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/> to find your local PTI.

If your teen gets support from a state agency, find out if eligibility changes at age 18. You can contact your local F2F to discuss your child's current services and determine what services may be available to your youth as they move into adulthood.

Health Insurance for Young Adults With Disabilities

With the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) in March 2010, parents are currently able to keep any adult child on their health plan until age 26. The ACA also stops health

insurers from denying coverage to children and adults with preexisting conditions. This means that your health insurer cannot deny coverage for your teen because of their disability. Some health plans cover dependents with disabilities of any age who are unable to work. Check with your health insurance plan to determine if coverage is available for dependent adults with disabilities. However, your teen may also be eligible for Medicaid through your state if they meet the Social Security Administration's disability criteria.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid

In some states, a teen with special health care needs may meet the Social Security Administration's disability criteria, which allows a teen to access SSI and Medicaid benefits; however, if family income is too high, the teen may not be eligible to get these benefits. When a teen turns 18 years old, even if still living at home, family income no longer counts towards the teen's eligibility. Depending on the teen's income and assets, they may now be able to receive SSI and Medicaid.

Applying for SSI and Medicaid can be a difficult process, and some individuals who meet the criteria as children do not always qualify as adults. This is because the definition of disability is stricter for adults. Sometimes your young adult with a disability may receive a denial-of-benefits letter from Social Security initially. However, many individuals receive approvals after 1 to 2 appeals of the decision. Contact the F2F Health Information Center in your state in order to get more information on eligibility, the appeal process, and other health financing options by visiting <https://familyvoices.org/affiliates/>.

Promoting Lifelong Health For Families And Communities

Talk With and Listen to Your Teen

- Try to talk with your teen every day. Sometimes it's easier to talk while doing other activities, such as eating meals or driving in the car.
- Show an interest in your teen's life without sounding nosy. Ask about friends, school, work, and other interests. Be a good

listener. Praise your teen's efforts and successes. When your teens come to you with problems, try not to fix them. Instead, listen to them and ask how they would like you to help. This allows them to think about how they can receive support in addressing the many issues they will face in their lives. It also helps them build confidence and competence in handling difficult situations.

- Model the positive behaviors you want your teen to engage in.
- Talk with your teen about relationships, dating, sex, marriage, parenting, and family planning as issues arise. Use topics and media that are interesting to your teen to start conversations. Share your views in a nonjudgmental way and listen to your teen's point of view.
- Share with your teen about what it means to be a "good friend." When you can, get to know your teen's friends. Be there to listen if problems arise in friendships that your teen would like help resolving.
- If your teen has a disability, talk with your teen directly about the disability, including the strengths, challenges, and weaknesses involved. Discuss practical supports, so they can pursue a successful path forward.
- If financial or other types of support would be helpful to your family, including access to food, medical care, or general aspects of living, talk to your health care provider.



School Responsibilities

- Emphasize the importance of school and the importance of learning—as well as the difference between the two. Help your teen find subjects they enjoy and can succeed in, as well as some that are interesting but challenging.

- Monitor and guide your teen as they assume more responsibility for schoolwork. Many teens need help organizing and setting priorities as they transition to high school and college.



- Be ready to help with organizational skills or new activities, such as applying for jobs and college.
- Help your teen find activities outside of school that interest them, especially if your teen has challenges with academic subjects.
- Encourage reading by helping your teen find books, magazines, and websites about subjects of interest. Help them learn about current events and watch or read the news every day.

- Help your teen learn how to use the internet safely and appropriately. Teach them how to evaluate websites to identify informative sites from less reputable ones. Also, help them learn about appropriate social media use and what is considered cyber bullying or inappropriate behavior.



- Teach your teen about online phishing and scams, as well as inappropriate content.

Independence and Decision-Making

- Involve youth in family decision-making, as appropriate. This can provide experience with the ups and downs of “real life” and the many ways families choose to address situations. Praise their efforts and thank them for their help.
- Discuss family responsibilities, expectations, and how these change with age.
- Encourage problem-solving skills rather than providing all the answers.

- The legal age of consent varies by state. Your teen's health care provider needs your teen's permission to share information with you once they reach legal age. Depending on your teen's medical and cognitive needs, you may want to ask your teen to sign a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) release form so that the health care provider can still talk to you about your teen's overall health and well-being.
- Teens with special health needs usually want to be like everybody else. Some may try not taking medications or following medical advice because it makes them feel different. Develop a partnership between you, your teen, and the health care provider to focus on helping your teen understand their medical condition. Together, discuss the need for self-care to help address these challenges. It is important for your teen to build confidence in who they are and understand what they need to be their best self. This will promote lifelong health, so take advantage of community resources and supportive adults.

- If your teen has special health care needs, discuss the support services and benefits they currently receive or could receive in the future and learn the ways these may be changing. This could include financial supports (eg, SSI, Medicaid, community waivers), public transportation, school supports, and employment services.



- Ask your teen's school to facilitate connections to community supports as a part of your teen's transition plan.

- Contact your state F2F Health Information Center to determine what community supports are available in your area for teens and young adults.

Personal Safety at Home and in the Community

- **This is critical:** Model nonviolent conflict resolution.

- Teens today think about different types of violence (such as school shootings and suicide bombers) and their impact on them. Most parents didn't face these issues when they were young. Talk about these events as you hear about them in the news.
- Ask your teen what their concerns are about different types of violence, like bullying and dating violence. Help your teen develop ways to cope non-violently, to address the situations they face, and to learn about available resources (eg, a guidance counselor, trusted adult at school) for assistance.
- Be on the alert for possible bullying. Talk to your teen's teacher, guidance counselor, or program leader right away if your teen is anxious about going to school or if you think your teen is being bullied. Help your teen learn to tell the bully to stop and then to leave. Also, teachers and health care providers can help if your teen is bullying others.

Become Involved in the Community

- Encourage your teen to get involved in your community by volunteering, serving on a committee, or doing another activity to contribute to community well-being.
- Support safe activities at school, in community- and faith-based organizations, and with volunteer groups to encourage personal and social development.
- Join with other parents in your community to keep all teens safe and active.

Tobacco, Drugs, or Alcohol Use

- Encourage your teen not to smoke, use e-cigarettes, or vape and to avoid places where others do.
- Ask for help if you or your teen is worried about any family member's alcohol or drug use.
- Talk to your teen about alcohol and drug use and what their friends are doing. Discuss the dangers and consequences of alcohol and drug use. Share the importance of staying away from these substances.



- Give your teen the tools to get out of uncomfortable or unsafe situations such as being with a drunk driver. For example, provide money for bus fare, ride shares, or honor a no-questions-asked call to parents.

Growing Up Healthy

Healthy Eating

- Support good nutrition and eating habits by keeping a variety of healthy foods at home and by encouraging healthful food choices.
- Encourage your teen to eat a balanced plate of food consisting of $\frac{1}{4}$ protein, $\frac{1}{4}$ starch, and $\frac{1}{2}$ fruits and vegetables. Visit <https://www.choosemyplate.gov> for additional tools to help your teen develop lifelong healthy eating habits.
- Limit high-fat or low-nutrient foods and drinks (eg, candy, chips, soft drinks).
- Provide 3 or more daily servings of low-fat (1%) or non-fat milk and other low-fat dairy products.
- Provide lots of fruits and vegetables, especially colorful ones.
- Serve lean meats, chicken, fish, and other sources of protein and iron.
- Serve whole-grain breads, cereals, and other grain products.
- Use community nutrition programs and food resources as needed. Check with your health insurance provider to determine if nutritionists or dietitians are considered preventive services that may be covered by your health insurance provider.
- Eat together as a family as often as possible. Make meals pleasant family times.
- Teach your teen to cook healthy meals to increase independence and develop healthy eating habits.



Healthy Weight

- Support your teen’s healthy weight. Help them balance eating healthy foods and being physically active. Help your teen understand that fad diets don’t work long term.
- As teens have more exposure to media and society’s opinions about weight, it’s important to talk about what a healthy body looks and feels like. These conversations may help teens feel good about their bodies and make better choices about food and exercise.
- If your teen asks about diets to lose weight or dietary supplements, discuss this with your health care provider to make sure they are appropriate and safe.
- Help your teen limit screen time on TVs, phone calls, texting, emails, chats, social networking, videos, video gaming, DVDs, and computer, not counting homework. Work together to set guidelines and discuss a balance of active and inactive pastimes.
- Help your youth be physically active. Walk around the mall before shopping, go on a hike, ride bikes, garden, or vacuum!

Physical Activity and Sports

- Encourage your teen to explore interests and find activities they enjoy—especially ones that can be done lifelong.
- Some teens like to play organized sports. As teens get older, sports often become more competitive. If your teen doesn’t enjoy the pressure, look beyond the competitive sports. Other types of physical activities welcome all including community leagues or sports like swimming, tennis, hiking, and running clubs.



- Provide a properly fitting helmet and safety gear for biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding.

Oral Health

- Your teen should be in charge of daily oral health care.
- Help create a daily routine for flossing and brushing with fluoridated toothpaste. Teach by example: floss, brush, and go for regular dental visits.
- If your teen has braces, follow your dentist's or orthodontist's advice for managing and cleaning the teeth and braces.
- Follow the recommended schedule for dental visits for your teen, usually twice a year. Ask your dentist if your teen needs more frequent exams or fluoride supplements.
- Your teen's dentist will be looking at their gums to make sure they are healthy. Follow any suggestions for their care as well.
- Work with your family dentist to develop an emergency plan before it is needed. This way, you and your teen will know who to call and what to do in case of an accident.
- Limit sugary drinks and snacks.
- Let your teen know that smoking and chewing tobacco are bad for teeth and overall health.
- Mouth guards protect the teeth and mouth when playing contact sports.
- Remember: Seat belts protect the mouth when riding in a car.



Hearing Loss

- Encourage your teen to protect against hearing loss.
- Talk about wearing hearing protection when attending concerts or around loud machinery.

- Keep the volume moderate when wearing earbuds.

Emotional And Mental Health

Success, Achievements, and Failure

- Praise your teen's efforts. Compliment successes.
- Show affection. Teens may act like they don't want your attention, but they really do! Remember that affection can be demonstrated physically or with words. Get to know how your teen receives affection best.
- Recognize failures. Don't be afraid to let your teen fail sometimes. Failure teaches coping skills, such as how to deal with anxiety and stress—emotions all teens must learn to handle as difficult situations arise in the future.
- Support your teen's evolving self-image. Comment on the positive things that your teen does or has learned. Don't just correct things they have done wrong.
- Encourage your teen to strive to reach their goals and be the best version of themselves. Talk to your teen about the importance of not comparing themselves to other people, as every person's needs, desires, strengths, and weaknesses are different.

Healthy Emotions

- Help your teen see things from others' points of view. Help them learn that not everyone thinks and feels the same way.
- Talk to your teen's health care provider if you are concerned about their behaviors, moods, mental health, or substance use.
- Model healthy emotions with your child by expressing your feelings and emotions at appropriate times. Allowing your teen to see your emotions lets them know that it is okay to express emotions and discuss your feelings.

- Inform your teen that hard times come and go. Encourage your teen to talk to you if they are feeling bored, sad, or irritable much of the time and/or if they have thoughts of harming themselves.



- Give your teen language to identify and express emotions. Help them think about how emotions feel in their body. For example, anxiety might feel like a sick stomach.
- Check in with your teen about feelings of extreme sadness or hopelessness. Ask them whether or not they are having thoughts of harming themselves. If they report feelings of extreme sadness, hopelessness, or thoughts of harming themselves—or you suspect that these feelings are present—contact your health care provider for immediate assistance.

Healthy Sexual Development

- Teens go through the physical changes of puberty at different times. Talk with your teen about their physical changes that occur during puberty, including menstruation for girls. Ask your daughter what language/terms she uses for her menstruation. Does she use terms such as her flow, her moon, her cycle, or something else? If you or your teen has questions about development, talk with your health care provider.
- Help your teen make a plan to resist pressure to have sex. This can be an issue for both boys and girls. Be there for your teen and provide support or assistance.
- You may feel uncomfortable talking with your teen about development, gender identity, sexual orientation, sexual pressures, teen pregnancy, or sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Ask your health care provider to help you begin the discussion or to take a role in handling these topics with your teen.

- Teach them about consent. Let your teen know that anything other than a sober, definite “Yes” is not consent. “No” means NO, and saying no is okay.
- Develop a plan with your child about what to do if they feel as though they are in an unsafe situation, including whom they can contact and the corresponding phone numbers.

Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

- Talk with your teen about relationships, dating, sex, marriage, parenting, and family. You might use a TV show, news article, or other current event to start a conversation. Don't judge, but be honest about your own views.
- Encourage your teen to wait to have sex (abstinence) and explain about safe sex. Help your teen make a plan to resist pressure to have sex. Let your teen know that the safest way to prevent pregnancy and STIs is to not have sex, including oral sex. However, if they are having sex, teach your teen about how to engage in safe sex.

Safety

Vehicle Safety

- Your teen is more likely to wear seat belts and sports helmets if you do. Know the laws in your state.
- Set expectations and limits when your teen is ready to drive. There are many sample “teen-parent driving contracts” available. Guides may discuss limiting the number of passengers, the amount of night driving, and how to avoid high-risk situations. Some states have added restrictions for teen drivers.
- Talk openly about the risks of driving under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, pills, or other mind-altering substances.
- Remind your teen about the dangers of talking on cell phones or texting while driving. This is illegal in many states.
- Help your teen make an action plan in case they feel unsafe riding in a car where the driver has been drinking, using drugs, or is driving unsafely.

- If your teen is in a crash or witnesses one, tell them not to leave the scene. Your teen should call 911 and wait for the police or ambulance to arrive.
- Teens younger than age 16 should not drive an all-terrain vehicle (ATV). They do not yet have the physical coordination or judgment to handle these vehicles safely. Everyone should wear helmets while riding on ATVs.



Gun and Firearm Safety

- The best way to keep your teen safe from injury or death from guns or firearms is not to have them in the home. If you do keep a firearm, it should be stored unloaded and locked. Lock the ammunition separate from the firearm. Then, hide the key.
- Make sure your teen understands gun and firearm safety and the risks from firearms owned by friends and their families.

Sun Safety

- Encourage your teen to use sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) year-round, if outside for more than 10-15 minutes.
- Encourage your teen to also wear a hat and avoid being outside for long periods between 11 am and 3 pm.

Social Media

- Establish an age for your teen to start using social media based on your cultural beliefs and family values. Most social media sites require that a teen be at least age 13 to sign up for a social media account without a parent's permission.
- Encourage your teen to keep social media profiles private to decrease the likelihood of personal information being used or stolen.
- Encourage your teen not to post their personal information, including phone number, address, email address, photographs, or location.

- Talk to your teen about the importance of posting pictures and comments that would pass the “grandma” test: If you wouldn’t want your grandma to see the picture or comment, it does not belong on social media. Remind them that employers frequently check social media presence.



- Encourage your teen not to accept friend requests from people they would not be able to identify while walking down the street.
- Consider establishing a social media contract with your teen in order to ensure that guidelines and expectations are understood.

11 Through 14 Year Visits (Early Adolescence)



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THESE VISITS

- Help your youth be a partner in their health. Give your youth a “heads up” about physical and emotional changes that may be occurring at this age.
- Ask your youth to write down questions about health and development, like signs of puberty, that they may want to discuss with the health care provider.
- Ask the health care provider for information on their transition policy. At this age, the visit often includes time for you and your youth together and some time with just your youth.



CYSHCN: YOUTH WITH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Discuss how the transition from elementary to middle school is going or has gone socially, academically, and in terms of special education supports and other services.
- Encourage your youth to start and participate in the transition discussion. This is a perfect time for them to feel independent, involved, and heard. They can begin to advocate for themselves.

- Spend time in the well-visit asking your youth what they want; they won't hesitate to tell you and your health care provider!
- Bring copies of any relevant education, health, or transition plans for your provider.
- Discuss recent visits with specialists, procedures, and/or medication changes. Review support services you use or may need.



CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR YOUTH MAY...

- Develop caring relationships with family, friends, and other adults.
- Take part in community life.
- Engage in activities that promote health and wellness, like choosing healthy eating, physical activity, and safety behaviors.
- Show social and emotional skills and a sense of right and wrong.
- Show compassion and caring for others.
- Cope with stress in constructive ways (eg, yoga, being in nature, art therapy)
- Take increasing responsibility and desire to make their own decisions.
- Show self-confidence, hopefulness, and well-being.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THESE VISITS

Youth and families' questions and concerns are the #1 priority. The health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family, friends, and community relationships; school performance; coping with stress and making decisions; fighting and bullying; concerns about living situation

and having enough money for food to eat; family use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

- **Physical growth and development:** Your youth's physical, mental, and oral health; body image; healthy eating and physical activity; getting enough sleep.
- **Emotional well-being:** Your youth's moods; concerns about mental health; concerns about substance use; how they feel about their changing body and sexuality.
- **Risk reduction:** Protection against pregnancy and STIs; tobacco, e-cigarette, drug, or alcohol use; sharing or misusing prescription medications; preventing hearing damage.
- **Safety:** Use of seat belts and helmets; sun protection; use of alcohol or drugs and riding in a vehicle; firearm safety; social media use.



EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 11 THROUGH 14 YEAR VISITS

Your health care provider will

- Measure your youth's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Do a physical exam, covering your youth with a drape for privacy and paying special attention to skin and spine.
- May examine genitals and breast development.
- May carry out screening tests for anemia, depression, cholesterol, hearing, HIV, oral health, tobacco/alcohol/drugs, STIs, tuberculosis, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- It is important to remember that during this time your youth is growing and changing rapidly. They are trying to figure out who they are in relation to the rest of the world. Talk to your emerging teen about their interests and get to know their friends. Help them begin to set goals and take on increased responsibility for their health, education, and behaviors.
- Difficult topics take center stage during early adolescence. The youth's focus begins to shift from family to peers and friend groups. With this shift comes exposure to topics that may be difficult to discuss with your youth such as sexual health, drugs and alcohol, and safety concerns.
- Talk to your emerging teen about the impact of the physical changes they are experiencing, including sexual development, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Also, talk to your youth about drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- Ask questions about whether or not their friends are using drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. By asking about friends, you may help your youth open up about the world around them. It can be a gateway to conversation about drug, alcohol, and tobacco use.
- Develop social media rules as a family—and stick to them. This may include things like making all bedrooms in your home device-free zones or having device-free mornings on the weekend in order to encourage increased family engagement. During this time it is important to model healthy social media and device use for your emerging teen and reinforce the importance of continued interaction with the family.
- **Reminder:** Review the Adolescence section (beginning on page 126) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what happens at home every day matters and will affect your teen's lifelong health and well-being.

15 Through 17 Year Visits (Middle Adolescence)



THINK: GETTING READY FOR THESE VISITS

- Help your teen be a partner in their health.
- Encourage your teen to write down health questions. Note anything new, like how they handle stress, a different set of friends, or changes at school.
- Your teen may speak with the health care provider alone about physical and emotional changes.
- Discuss finding an adult health care provider.



CYSHCN: TEENS WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Ask your health care provider to help you and your teen develop a transition plan that includes education about the differences between their current care plan and an adult care model.
- Discuss finding an adult provider in your community. Transitions in health care take time and relationship-building. It can be emotional for you and your teen.
- Be gentle and kind to yourselves and trust your gut! Discuss with your teen and health care provider how best to involve your teen in this process.
- Encourage your teen to form their own partnerships with new providers.
- Make sure that your health care provider has accurate records of all of the people and things involved in supporting your teen's life, such as specialists, therapies, medications, and adaptive activities and share any updates or concerns.

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR TEEN MAY...

- Develop caring relationships with family, friends, and other adults.
- Take part in community life.
- Engage in activities that promote health and wellness, like choosing healthy eating, physical activity, and safety behaviors.
- Show social and emotional skills and a sense of right and wrong.
- Show compassion and caring for others.
- Cope with stress in constructive ways.
- Take increasing responsibility and make their own decisions.
- Show self-confidence, hopefulness, and well-being.
- Have an increased desire for independence and social interaction with peers and friends.



PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THESE VISITS

Questions and concerns from teens and families are the #1 priority. The health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family, friends, and community relationships; school performance; coping with stress and making decisions; fighting and bullying; concerns about living situation and having enough money for food; family use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- **Physical growth and development:** Your teen's physical and oral health; body image; healthy eating and physical activity; getting enough sleep.
- **Emotional well-being:** Your teen's moods; concerns about mental health; how they feels about their changing body and sexuality.

- **Risk reduction:** Protection against pregnancy and STIs; tobacco, e-cigarette, drug, or alcohol use; not sharing, misusing, or using someone else's prescription medications; preventing hearing damage.
- **Safety:** Use of seat belts and helmets; safe driving; sun protection; gun and firearm safety; social media use.

EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 15 THROUGH 17 YEAR VISITS

Your health care provider will

- Measure your teen's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Do a physical exam, covering your teen with a drape for privacy, and paying special attention to skin and spine.
- May examine genitals and breast development.
- May carry out screening tests for anemia, depression, cholesterol, hearing, HIV, STIs, tobacco/alcohol/drugs, tuberculosis, and vision.
- **Immunizations:** See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Your teen's independence is continuing to develop during this time. Your teen has many of their own ideas and ways of doing things. These may be similar or different from the choices that you would make. It is important for your teen to feel that they have a voice and that open dialogue is encouraged. Have conversations with your teen that help them identify their own beliefs and values. Then discuss how to remain true to those beliefs in the face of peer pressure. When your teen comes to you with a problem, help them talk through it and make a decision that matches their beliefs and values.

- It is important to talk about staying safe as your teen spends more and more time with peers instead of family. Have conversations with your teen about maintaining safe friendships and romantic relationships.
- Encourage them to talk to you if they are considering becoming sexually active. While it is important to share your beliefs and values, it is also important to listen to your teen. Hear their perspective in order to keep the lines of communication open. These can be difficult conversations, but knowing that you are there for them—and that you are listening—helps to further your teen’s social and emotional development.
- Teens are under a lot of pressure to figure out who they are and how they fit in this world. They question sexuality (sex at birth versus gender) and cope with the pressure of determining the next steps in their lives. It is important to lead from behind; meaning let your teen make decisions for their future while providing tools and guidance to help them make the best decisions for themselves. Try not to pressure or stress your teen without providing them with the tools to handle these big decisions.
- **Reminder:** Review the Adolescence section (beginning on page 126) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what happens at home every day matters and will affect your teen’s lifelong health and well-being.



18 Through 21 Year Visits (Late Adolescence)

THINK: GETTING READY FOR THESE VISITS

- Help your young adult be a partner in their health.
- Ask your young adult to write down any questions and news to share, like career plans or moving away from home.

- Young adults will speak with the health care provider alone.
- Unless alternative supported decision-making or guardianship arrangements are in place, your young adult should also discuss health care transition.

CYSHCN: YOUNG ADULTS WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- You may want to set up a health care proxy so you can continue to help manage health care needs, if needed.
- If your young adult cannot manage their health or decision-making, you may need to discuss other supported decision-making options or guardianship.

CHECK: AT THIS AGE, YOUR YOUNG ADULT MAY...

- Develop caring relationships with family, friends, and other adults.
- Take part in community life.
- Engage in activities that promote health and wellness, like choosing healthy eating, physical activity, and safety behaviors.
- Show social and emotional skills and a sense of right and wrong.
- Show compassion and caring for others.
- Cope with stress in constructive ways.
- Take increasing responsibility and make their own decisions.
- Show self-confidence, hopefulness, and well-being.

PLAN: WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR THESE VISITS

Your young adult's concerns and questions are the #1 priority. The health care provider may also discuss

- **Promoting lifelong health:** Family, friend, and community relationships; school performance; coping with stress and making

decisions; feeling safe from violence at home or in the neighborhood; concerns about the living situation and having enough to eat; family use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs.



- **Physical health and health promotion:** Oral health; body image; healthy eating, physical activity; managing special health care needs and secondary conditions; transition to adult health care.
- **Emotional well-being:** Moods; coping with stress; concerns about mental health; how your young adult feels about their sexuality.
- **Risk reduction:** Protection against pregnancy and STIs; tobacco, e-cigarette, drug, or alcohol use; sharing prescription medications or using someone else's medications; preventing hearing damage.
- **Safety:** Seatbelts; helmets; sun protection; driving and substance use; gun and firearm safety.


EXPECT: WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 18 THROUGH 21 YEAR VISITS

Your health care provider will

- Measure your young adult's height and weight.
- Calculate body mass index and measure blood pressure.
- Do a physical exam, using a drape for privacy and paying special attention to skin.
- May examine genitals and do a breast exam.
- May carry out screening tests for anemia; cholesterol; hearing; HIV; STIs; tobacco, alcohol, and drugs use; tuberculosis; and vision.
- For women at the 21 year visit, perform a cervical dysplasia screening test.

- Immunizations: See the CDC chart at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines> for any needed at this age.

CONNECT: BUILDING RESILIENCY—WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Your young adult has moved into adulthood but will continue to need your guidance throughout these important years. Whether your young adult goes on to college, career, or community-based activities, it is important for them to know that you are still in their corner. Offer encouragement for their progress and provide advice as needed. When your young adult comes to you with a problem, help them talk through it and make a decision that matches their beliefs and values.
- 
- Continue to have conversations with your young adult about maintaining safe friendships and romantic relationships. Encourage them to continue to talk to you if they are considering becoming sexually active. Discuss ways to engage in safe, consensual sexual activity. Also, ensure that they have a plan that includes contacting you if they find themselves in an unsafe or dangerous situation.
 - Young adults are under a lot of pressure to figure out who they are and how they fit into the world. They question sexuality and cope with the pressure of determining the next steps in their lives. It is important to lead from behind; meaning let your young adult make decisions for their future while providing tools and guidance to help them make the best decisions for themselves. Try not to pressure or stress your young adult without providing them with the tools to handle these big decisions.

- Resist the urge to pass judgment on your young adult's decisions. Instead, use each success and failure as a conversation starter and learning opportunity. Help your young adult reflect on their choices including what worked and did not work. This will help them continue to build problem-solving skills for future situations.
- **Reminder:** Review the Adolescence section (beginning on page 126) for recommendations for this age. Most important, what happens at home every day matters and will affect your young adult's lifelong health and well-being.



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ACRONYMS

AAP American Academy of Pediatrics

ACA Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

ADHD attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder

ATV all-terrain vehicle

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CPRC Community Parent Resource Center

CYSHCN children and youth with special health care needs

F2F Family-to-Family Health Information Center

FMLA Family and Medical Leave Act

FV Family Voices

HIPAA Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP Individualized Education Plan

IFSP Individualized Family Service Plan

MCHB Maternal and Child Health Bureau

NICU neonatal intensive care unit

OCR Office of Civil Rights

PTI Parent Training and Information Center

SPF sun protection factor

SSI Social Security Income

STI sexually transmitted infection

RESOURCES

Bright Futures: For More Information On The Bright Futures Initiative, Visit <https://brightfutures.aap.org>.

Family Voices: For more information about parent support resources and the network, visit <https://familyvoices.org>.

AAP Family Media Plan: To develop a media plan for the whole family, visit <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>.

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry: For information about the dental home and more, visit <https://www.aapd.org/research/oral-health-policies--recommendations/Dental-Home>.

Body Mass Index: For more information on assessing for BMI, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/index.html>.

Car Seat Safety: For more information about car and booster seat safety, visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats>.

Care Notebook: For ideas on how to maintain a record of your child's care, services, providers, and notes, visit <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/tools-resources>.

Center for Parent Information and Resources: For resources including information about Parent Training and Information Centers and Community Parent Resource Centers in the United States and US territories, visit <https://www.parentcenterhub.org>.

Child help National Child Abuse Hotline: For child abuse prevention resources, visit <https://www.childhelp.org/childhelp-hotline>. Hotline number: 800-4-A-CHILD (800-422-4453).

ChooseMyPlate.gov: For tools to help your child develop lifelong healthy eating habits, visit <https://www.choosemyplate.gov>.

Family and Medical Leave Act: For more information on the FMLA, visit the US Department of Labor <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla>.

Family-to-Family Health Information Center: To find your local F2F center, visit <https://familyvoices.org/affiliates>.

HealthyChildren.org: For resources from the AAP parenting website, visit <https://www.healthychildren.org>.

Immunizations: For more information about immunizations and the CDC immunization schedule, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>.

Maternal and Child Health Bureau: To contact your local health department, call 800-311-BABY (800-311-2229; Spanish: 800-504-7081).

National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University: For more information on cultural competence, visit <https://nccc.georgetown.edu>.

National Resource Center for Patient/Family-Centered Medical Home: For more information related to the medical home, visit <https://medicalhomeinfo.aap.org/>.

Parent to Parent USA: For information about the Parent to Parent support network, visit <https://www.p2pusa.org>.

Prematurity: For more resources to learn about “preemies,” visit <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/preemie/Pages/default.aspx>.

Sexual Abuse Prevention: For more information, visit

- CDC Preventing Child Sexual Abuse <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/childsexualabuse.html>.
- HealthyChildren.org Sexual Abuse <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Sexual-Abuse.aspx>.
- Prevent Child Abuse America <https://preventchildabuse.org>.

Transition to Adult Systems of Care: For more information, visit

- Got Transition <https://www.gottransition.org>.

- National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making
<http://www.supporteddecisionmaking.org>.

BRIGHT FUTURES FAMILY POCKET GUIDE COLLABORATORS

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BRIGHT FUTURES CHILDREN'S HEALTH CHARTER

Every child deserves to be born well, to be physically fit, and to achieve self-responsibility for good health habits.

Every child and adolescent deserves ready access to coordinated and comprehensive preventive, health-promoting, therapeutic, and rehabilitative medical, mental health, and dental care. Such care is best provided through a continuing relationship with a primary health professional or team, and ready access to secondary and tertiary levels of care.

Every child and adolescent deserves a nurturing family and supportive relationships with other significant persons who provide security, positive role models, warmth, love, and unconditional acceptance. A child's health begins with the health of his parents.

Every child and adolescent deserves to grow and develop in a physically and psychologically safe home and school environment free of undue risk of injury, abuse, violence, or exposure to environmental toxins.

Every child and adolescent deserves satisfactory housing, good nutrition, a quality education, an adequate family income, a supportive social network, and access to community resources.

Every child deserves quality child care when her parents are working outside the home.

Every child and adolescent deserves the opportunity to develop ways to cope with stressful life experiences.

Every child and adolescent deserves the opportunity to be prepared for parenthood.

Every child and adolescent deserves the opportunity to develop positive values and become a responsible citizen in his community.

Every child and adolescent deserves to experience joy, have high self-esteem, have friends, acquire a sense of efficacy, and believe

that she can succeed in life. She should help the next generation develop the motivation and habits necessary for similar achievement.

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