

GUIDE FOR PARENTS --- 3 YEARS

INJURY AND ILLNESS PREVENTION

Car Restraints – All 50 states have passed laws that require children to ride in approved child passenger safety seats. He should be restrained in a forward facing, federally approved, properly installed car safety seat. The safest place for a child to be restrained in a car is in the middle of the back seat. If your child must be restrained in the front seat of a car with a passenger side airbag, make sure that the care seat is as far back as possible from the dashboard. If your child safety seat must be secured with a shoulder harness, make sure you use a locking device to hold the belt in place (these usually come with the safety seat).

Smoke-free Environment – Passive smoke comes from two sources: Secondhand smoke, which is exhaled by the smoker, and Sidestream smoke, which rises from the end of a burning cigarette. Children exposed to passive smoke have more frequent and more severe respiratory tract infections than non-exposed children. Other problems made worse by exposure to passive smoke include: pneumonia, cough, bronchitis, croup, laryngitis, wheezing, bronchiolitis, asthma, flu, ear infections, middle ear fluid and blockage, sore throats, eye irritation, and SIDS. If you smoke, QUIT. If you can't quit, NEVER SMOKE INSIDE YOUR HOME, NEVER SMOKE IN THE CAR, and NEVER LEAVE YOUR CHILD WITH SOMEONE WHO SMOKES.

Pedestrian safety skills – Teach your child not to approach a street or cross parking lots without an adult. Teach your child to look both ways before crossing the street. Also teach your child not to talk to strangers and to never get into a car with someone he does not know.

NUTRITION

Encourage your child to eat three meals a day with the family. They also need 2-3 snacks per day, one mid-morning, one mid-afternoon, and perhaps one at bedtime. Children should eat a varied diet with all four food groups represented (dairy, meat, fruits and vegetables, and breads/starch). Make mealtimes pleasant and companionable. Let everyone talk about his or her day or plans for the day.

ORAL HEALTH

Use a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste and a soft toothbrush to clean your child's teeth twice a day. Your child should begin to brush his own teeth by this age. You may want to take your child with you to your dental appointment so he can become familiar with the office and the dentist. Some children at this age may be able to sit through a dental visit themselves.

PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

Spend time playing with your child each day. Appropriate toys for this age include beginner's jigsaw puzzles, nesting toys, unbreakable containers, board books with large pictures and simple stories, connecting toys, large crayons and stuffed animals.

Listen to and show respect for your child. Make sure your child feels that he and what he/she thinks is important.

BEHAVIOR

Curiosity about body parts may develop at this time. This is perfectly normal. Most children learn by touching and will probably touch their genitals when they find them, much like they touched and held their feet when they realized they had them. This too is also normal and you shouldn't make a big deal out of it. Answer all questions honestly and simply.

NURSERY SCHOOL / DAY CARE

Day Care – If day care is needed there are several options to choose from including center-based

day care, home day care (care in someone else's home), and in-home day care (care in your home). There are advantages and disadvantages to each and which you decide to use is a personal and individual decision. Before choosing any day care environment, you should be familiar with the state licensure regulations for childcare, check references, and observe the caregiver(s) with your child. For preliminary information you may contact the State Department of Social Services, United Way, religious organizations, the yellow pages, your doctor, or word-of-mouth from friends and relatives. Check out a number of different child care arrangements and facilities by telephoning and asking questions about openings and admission requirements; meeting with the directors and staff or caregiver to discuss your expectations; and talking with other parents from the facilities.

Nursery school – This is the perfect age to introduce your child to nursery school or an organized Play group, where he can stretch his skills while learning to socialize. It will also help your child in learning school readiness skills, like A B C's, colors, shapes, etc.

SAFETY

- Falls* – Use gates at the top and bottom of stairways. If your child does fall and seems to be acting abnormally in any way, call your doctor. Lock doors to any dangerous areas and hide the keys. Install window guards.
- Burns* – Never hold child while smoking, drinking a hot liquid, or cooking on a hot stove or grill. Never allow anyone to smoke around your child. Set water heater setting to 120 degrees F or lower to prevent scalding. Do not allow child to crawl or walk near a hot oven, space heater, or furnace vents. Place plug covers on all outlets.
- Choking* – Check all toys for sharp edges and for small parts that could be pulled or broken off. Keep bed away from windows with mini blind cords. Never give child any hard food or small object that could cause choking. Never leave small objects in your child's play area.
- Drowning* – Never leave child alone in the tub or near a pool of water no matter how shallow it is. Children can drown in just a few inches of water. Never leave child alone around containers of water like buckets, wading pools, sinks, and open toilets.
- Poisoning* – Store all medicines and cleaning products up and out of reach in locked cabinets. Use safety latches on drawers and cabinets. Keep the number of your local poison control and emergency room next to every telephone and make sure that you keep syrup of ipecac accessible.
- Guns* – Guns are not recommended in homes occupied by children. If you do own a gun, keep it unloaded, locked out of sight, and lock up ammunition in a separate location.
- Outdoors* – Hold on to your toddler whenever you are near traffic. Set up fences or other barriers to keep kids away from the street, pool, and other hazards. Make sure there is grass, sand, wood chips, or other soft surfaces under outdoor play equipment.

IMMUNIZATIONS

None required at this visit unless child is behind on immunizations and needs to catch up.