

GUIDE FOR PARENTS – 5 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 car 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). At 4 years old or 40 pounds, your child may be moved to a federally approved, properly installed booster seat. Your child should not use a seat belt alone until he is large enough that the shoulder harness fits properly, or you are using a safe-fit device to keep the shoulder harness away from the child's neck.

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.

Other – Teach your child never to talk to strangers. Also, have your child memorize his name, address and telephone number.

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

Your child should brush his teeth at least twice a day with a fluoridated toothpaste. He or she should visit the dentist every 6 months for routine cleaning.

PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

- Spend time playing with your child each day.
- Praise your child for cooperation and for any and all accomplishments he makes
- Listen to and show respect for your child. Make sure your child feels that he and what he/she thinks is important.
- Now is the time to have your child begin to learn responsibility. A few simple chores around the house like picking up his or her toys after play, helping to clear the table after meals, or helping with the dishes will also make your child feel more a part of the household.
- Read to your child daily and allow him to read to you.
- Encourage your child to talk to you. A good forum for this interaction is at the evening meal.

SEX EDUCATION

Your child may have questions about their body and the differences between boys and girls at this age. Answer the questions posed simply and honestly. Sexual curiosity and exploration are normal.

SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL ENTRY

Prepare your child for school by explaining what will happen in a usual day. Take a tour of your child's school and meet your child's teacher before the school year begins. Let your child be actively involved in picking out his or her school clothes. All this preparation will help build his enthusiasm and decrease his anxiety about beginning school.

SAFETY

Falls – Guard against falls from: play equipment such as slides and monkey bars; tricycles – use the kind that allow the child to be close to the ground – ***your child should always wear a helmet when riding any cycle***; stairs – use gates at the top and bottom of stairways; windows – 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.

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. Consider swimming lessons.

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 child 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. Do not allow your child to ride tricycle or bike in the street or near traffic.

IMMUNIZATIONS

At this visit, your child may receive his last set of immunizations before entering school, if they were not given at his / her 4 year visit. These include:

- DtaP – Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Acellular Pertussis
- IPV or OPV – Inactivated Polio Vaccine or Oral Polio Vaccine
- MMR – Measles, Mumps, Rubella
- Varicella – Chickenpox Vaccine (optional) consider if your child has not had chickenpox and/or has not already received this vaccine at an earlier doctor's visit.

Your child's vision and hearing will also be checked at this visit.