



# BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

## 11 THROUGH 14 YEAR VISITS

Here are some suggestions from Bright Futures experts that may be of value to your family.

### ✓ HOW YOUR FAMILY IS DOING

- Encourage your child to be part of family decisions. Give your child the chance to make more of her own decisions as she grows older.
- Encourage your child to think through problems with your support.
- Help your child find activities she is really interested in, besides schoolwork.
- Help your child find and try activities that help others.
- Help your child deal with conflict.
- Help your child figure out nonviolent ways to handle anger or fear.
- If you are worried about your living or food situation, talk with us. Community agencies and programs such as SNAP can also provide information and assistance.

### ✓ YOUR CHILD'S FEELINGS

- Find ways to spend time with your child.
- If you are concerned that your child is sad, depressed, nervous, irritable, hopeless, or angry, let us know.
- Talk with your child about how his body is changing during puberty.
- If you have questions about your child's sexual development, you can always talk with us.

### ✓ YOUR GROWING AND CHANGING CHILD

- Help your child get to the dentist twice a year.
- Give your child a fluoride supplement if the dentist recommends it.
- Encourage your child to brush her teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- Praise your child when she does something well, not just when she looks good.
- Support a healthy body weight and help your child be a healthy eater.
  - Provide healthy foods.
  - Eat together as a family.
  - Be a role model.
- Help your child get enough calcium with low-fat or fat-free milk, low-fat yogurt, and cheese.
- Encourage your child to get at least 1 hour of physical activity every day. Make sure she uses helmets and other safety gear.
- Consider making a family media use plan. Make rules for media use and balance your child's time for physical activities and other activities.
- Check in with your child's teacher about grades. Attend back-to-school events, parent-teacher conferences, and other school activities if possible.
- Talk with your child as she takes over responsibility for schoolwork.
- Help your child with organizing time, if she needs it.
- Encourage daily reading.

### ✓ HEALTHY BEHAVIOR CHOICES

- Help your child find fun, safe things to do.
- Make sure your child knows how you feel about alcohol and drug use.
- Know your child's friends and their parents. Be aware of where your child is and what he is doing at all times.
- Lock your liquor in a cabinet.
- Store prescription medications in a locked cabinet.
- Talk with your child about relationships, sex, and values.
- If you are uncomfortable talking about puberty or sexual pressures with your child, please ask us or others you trust for reliable information that can help.
- Use clear and consistent rules and discipline with your child.
- Be a role model.

**Helpful Resource:** Family Media Use Plan: [www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan](http://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan)

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## SAFETY

- Make sure everyone always wears a lap and shoulder seat belt in the car.
- Provide a properly fitting helmet and safety gear for biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding.
- Use a hat, sun protection clothing, and sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher on her exposed skin. Limit time outside when the sun is strongest (11:00 am–3:00 pm).
- Don't allow your child to ride ATVs.
- Make sure your child knows how to get help if she feels unsafe.
- If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.

Consistent with *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition

For more information, go to <https://brightfutures.aap.org>.

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