

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD – 10 YEARS

Promotion of healthy habits

- Supervise the child's activities with peers.
- Be a role model for the child by having a healthy lifestyle.
- Ensure that the child gets adequate sleep.
- Encourage regular physical activity.
- Enforce reasonable television/music standards.
- Supervise the child's personal care and hygiene.
- Counsel the child about avoiding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Ensure that the child's school curriculum includes information about substance abuse.

Injury prevention

- Reinforce important safety considerations. Anticipate that the child may make errors in judgment due to increased risk-taking behavior.
- Anticipate providing less direct supervision.
- Continue to ensure that the child wears a seat belt in the car at all times.
- Reinforce with the child safety rules for swimming pools. Teach the child how to swim.
- Ensure that the child puts on sunscreen before he goes outside for long periods of time.
- Continue to keep the child's environment free of smoke.
- Test smoke detectors to ensure that they work properly. Change batteries yearly.
- Reinforce with the child safety rules for the home, including what to do when home alone. Discuss visitors, not tying up the telephone for long periods of time, and what to do in case of fire or other emergencies. Conduct fire drills at home.
- Ensure that guns, if in the home, are locked up and that ammunition is stored separately.
- Reinforce safety rules for bicycles. Ensure that the child always wears a helmet when riding a bicycle.
- Reinforce sports safety with the child, including the need to wear protective sports gear such as a mouth guard or a face protector.
- Teach the child to avoid high noise levels, especially when using music headsets.

Nutrition

- Encourage the child to eat three regular meals and nutritious snacks.
- Share meals as a family on a regular basis. Make mealtimes pleasant and companionable. Encourage conversation.
- Model and encourage good eating habits. Serve a variety of healthy foods.
- Teach the child how to choose nutritious snacks rich in complex carbohydrates. Limit high-fat or low-nutrient foods and beverages such as candy, chips, or soft drinks.
- Teach the child how to eat a balanced diet. Teach him to choose plenty of fruits and vegetables; breads, cereals, and other grain products; low-fat dairy products; lean meats; and foods prepared with little or no fat.
- Teach the child how to eat a nutritious lunch at school, either through the school lunch program or by packing a balanced lunch.

Oral health

- Ensure that the child brushes his teeth twice a day with a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste and flosses.
- Give the child fluoride supplements as recommended by the health professional based on the level of fluoride in the child's drinking water.
- Schedule a dental appointment for the child every six months, unless his dentist determines otherwise based on his individual needs/susceptibility to disease.
- As the child's permanent molars erupt, ensure that his dentist evaluates them for application of dental sealants.
- Reinforce with the child how to handle dental emergencies, especially the loss or fracture of a tooth.
- Reinforce with the child the dangers of smoking and smokeless tobacco.

Sexual education

- Assess the child's preparation for puberty and sexual development.
- If the child receives family life education at school or in the community, discuss it with him. Provide additional information as needed.
- For parents of girls: Prepare your daughter for menstruation.
- For parents of boys: Prepare your son for wet dreams.
- Begin to teach the child that delaying sexual behavior is the surest form of protection against disease and pregnancy.
- Explore the child's understanding of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

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Promotion of social competence

Praise the child for achievements.

Help the child choose activities in which he can be successful.

Encourage the child to talk with you about his school, friends, or feelings. Answer his questions.

Encourage reading and hobbies.

Spend individual time with the child, doing something you both enjoy.

Enhance the child's experiences through family trips (e.g. to parks, museums, or cultural events) or vacations.

Promote interaction and allegiance with peers through participation in social activities, community groups, and team sports.

Help the child learn how to get along with his peers. Discuss his awareness of differences among peers.

Promote independence by encouraging developmentally appropriate decision-making.

Set limits and establish consequences for unacceptable behavior. Expect the child to follow family rules, such as those for bedtime, television viewing, and chores.

Promote positive interactions between the child and his teachers and other adults.

Help the child learn appropriate or reasonable behavior.

Help the child develop an ability to withstand peer pressure, Discuss strategies and try role-playing.

Help the child develop an ability to deal constructively with conflict and anger in the family, at school, and in the neighborhood.

Assign age-appropriate chores, including responsibility for some household or yard tasks.

Provide personal space for the child at home, even if limited.

Teach a sense of social responsibility and acceptance of diversity.

Promotion of constructive family relationships and parental health

Anticipate the normal range of adolescent behaviors, including the pervasive influence of peers, a change in the communication pattern between adolescents and parents, sudden challenges to parental rules and authority, conflicts over issues of independence, adolescents' refusal to participate in some family activities, their moodiness, and their risk taking,

Serve as a positive ethical and behavioral role model.

Contribute to the child's self-esteem by praising him and showing affection toward him.

Show interest in the child's school performance and after-school activities. Set reasonable but challenging expectations.

Promote self-responsibility. Show affection in the family.

Spend some individual time with each child.

Participate in games and physical activities with the child.

Share meals as a family whenever possible.

Foster conversation and open communication in the family.

Know the child's friends and their families.

Encourage the development of good sibling relationships.

Acknowledge the conflicts between siblings. Whenever possible, attempt to resolve conflicts without taking sides. Do not allow violence. Handle anger constructively in the family.

Discuss with the health professional your own preventive and health-promoting practices (e.g. using seat belts, avoiding tobacco, eating properly, exercising and doing breast self-exams or testicular self-exams).

Promotion of community interactions

Ask about resources or referrals for food, housing, or transportation if needed.

Discuss with the health professional possible programs for the child: before-and after-school programs; swimming, soccer, or other exercise programs; or other community programs.

Participate as a family in school and community organizations and activities.

Contribute regularly to school or community activities that require adult supervision.

Encourage the child to participate in social, religious, cultural, volunteer, and recreational organizations.

Advocate for community programs and facilities for children (recreational, sports, and educational activities).

Discuss current events and social responsibility.

Promote social connections with neighbors and ties with extended family members.

Participate in activities that reflect cultural diversity (e.g. holidays, festivals, musical events, dance performances), and teach the child about his own culture.

Find out what you can do to make your community safer. Advocate for and participate in a neighborhood watch program.

Encourage peer-mediated conflict management in schools from third grade through high school.

Advocate for after-school supervision for all children.