

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD / 9 – 10 YEARS

Promotion of healthy habits

Supervise your child's activities with peers.

Be a role model for your child by having a healthy lifestyle.

Ensure that your child gets adequate sleep. For children 6-10 years of age, the suggested bedtime is 8-9 PM.

Supervise your child's personal care and hygiene.

Counsel your child about avoiding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Ensure that your child's school curriculum includes information about substance abuse.

Limit television viewing, video games or computer playing to 2 hours a day.

Injury prevention

Reinforce important safety considerations. Anticipate that your child may make errors in judgment due to increased risk-taking behavior.

Your child should use a booster seat with car seatbelt until they are 4-feet 9-inches tall, possibly up to age 12. Children should ride in the rear of a vehicle until they are 13 years old.

Anticipate providing less direct supervision.

Reinforce with your child safety rules for swimming pools.

Teach your child how to swim.

Ensure that your child puts on sunscreen before going outside for long periods of time.

Continue to keep your child's environment free of smoke.

Test smoke detectors to ensure that they work properly. Change batteries yearly.

Discuss with your child safety rules for the home, including those about visitors, use of the telephone, 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 your child always wears a helmet when riding a bicycle.

Reinforce sports safety with your child, including the need to wear protective sports gear such as a mouth guard or a face protector.

Teach your child to avoid high noise levels, especially when using music headsets.

Nutrition

Encourage your child to eat three regular meals and nutritious snacks daily that are rich in complex carbohydrates. Limit high-fat or low-nutrient foods and beverages such as candy, chips, or soft drinks.

Teach your child how to eat a balanced diet. Encourage your child 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. Aim for 5 fruits and vegetables every day along with 3 cups of low fat milk, yogurt or cheese.

Model and encourage good eating habits. Share meals as a family on a regular basis. Make mealtimes pleasant and companionable. Encourage conversation.

Teach your child how to eat a nutritious lunch at school either through the school lunch program or by packing a balanced lunch.

Promoting Physical Activity

Encourage regular physical activity.

Be sure that your child is active for 1 hour each day.

Promote physical activity in a safe environment.

Oral health

Ensure that your child brushes their teeth twice a day with a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste and flosses.

Schedule a dental appointment for your child every six months, unless the dentist determines otherwise based on individual needs/susceptibility to disease.

Reinforce with your child how to handle dental emergencies, especially the loss or fracture of a tooth.

Reinforce with your child the dangers of smoking and smokeless tobacco.

Sexuality education

Assess your child's preparation for puberty and sexual development.

If your child receives family life education at school or in the community, discuss it with them. 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 your child that delaying sexual behavior is the surest form of protection against disease and pregnancy.

Explore your child's understanding of sexually transmitted diseases, including HPV/AIDS.

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Promotion of social competence

Praise your child for achievements.

Help your child choose activities in which they can be successful.

Encourage your child to talk with you about school, friends, or feelings.

Answer their questions.

Encourage reading and hobbies.

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

Enhance your 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 your 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 your child to follow family rules, such as those for bedtime, television viewing, and chores.

Promote positive interactions between your child and their teachers and other adults.

Help your child learn appropriate or reasonable behavior.

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

Help your 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 your 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 your child's self-esteem by praising him and showing affection toward him.

Show interest in your 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 your child.

Share meals as a family whenever possible.

Foster conversation and open communication in the family.

Know your 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 your 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 your 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 your child about their 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.