

HEALTH ISSUES

Offer healthy snack and meal choices, limiting sugars. Children often don't eat meals well because they graze with snacks all day - that is fine, just make sure those snacks are healthy snacks (yogurt, peanut butter, vegetables, fruits, dry cereals).

Avoid direct sun exposure. Use a sunblock - SPF 50.

Brush your child's teeth twice daily with a pea-sized amount of toothpaste. Continue to bring child to dentist every six months for cleaning and cavity prevention.

SAFETY ISSUES

Continue safe car seat use. Read instructions for proper installation. Here are some general guidelines:

Place seat in the back seat. Children this age should face forward in an appropriate child car seat with 5-point harness.

Never put a child under 13 years of age in the front seat of a car with a passenger side airbag.

Turn the hot water heater in your home down so the hottest water you can get from the faucet is 120 degrees.

Install and test your smoke detector in or near your child's room.

Childproof your home (poisons, medicines, guns, plastic bags, sharp objects, cords, outlets, cigarettes, hot liquids, latches on cabinets). Make sure any playground environment is safe.

Obtain your local Poison Control Center's phone number and keep it on hand

Do not keep 5 gallon buckets in your home (to prevent drowning).

Avoid choke hazards (peanuts, popcorn, hard candy, chewing gum).

Use a bike helmet for your child (and yourself) if riding on the back of a bike and when learning to ride alone.

Supervise activities, especially around lawnmowers, large dogs, cars. Do not allow your child to ride on a riding lawnmower.

Place gates on stairways and bedroom doorway to protect against falls down stairs at night, if necessary.

Do not keep a firearm in your home. If you must, make sure it is locked and out of reach from your curious child.

YOUR CHILD SHOULD...

Know his or her name, age, and sex.

Be able to copy a circle and a cross.

Jump; kick, throw a ball, ride a tricycle.

Be understood by most strangers when speaking.

Successfully (or almost) potty-trained.

YOU SHOULD...

Praise your child at every opportunity.

Talk and sing regularly with your child.

Listen to music together with your child.

Continue to read books interactively with your child.

Encourage opportunities for safely exploring his or her environment.

Reward good behavior as much as possible. Discourage bad behavior when necessary.

Be consistent with rules. You decide how strict or liberal to be, just make sure you are consistent.

Keep discipline brief. "Time-out" is usually effective at this age (1 minute for each year of life)

Offer choices to your child at every opportunity to allow decision making.

Not allow hitting, biting, or mean behavior.

Allow for self-care opportunities.

Have a bedtime routine and put your child to sleep in his or her own room. If they wake up at night, take them back to their own room and, if needed, lay down with them in their room until they are asleep again.

Expect nightmares or night terrors on occasion. They should become less frequent.

Keep a family picture near your child's bed so it can be seen at night.

Eat meals as a family. Expect a poor appetite and don't argue with your child about not eating well.

Try to allow expression of feelings (anger, joy, sadness, fear).

Encourage potty training (usually successful between 18 months to 3 years).

Expect self-exploration of genitalia. Use correct anatomy terminology. Answer sex-related questions in a simple manner.

Expect your child to share, reward him or her when he or she does.

Be an example of the type of person you want your child to grow up to be - they are like sponges and absorb everything around them!