



Bright Futures Patient Handout

Early Adolescent Visits

Your Growing and Changing Body

- Brush your teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- Visit the dentist twice a year.
- Wear your mouth guard when playing sports.
- Eat 3 healthy meals a day.
- Eating breakfast is very important.
- Consider choosing water instead of soda.
- Limit high-fat foods and drinks such as candy, chips, and soft drinks.
- Try to eat healthy foods.
 - 5 fruits and vegetables a day
 - 3 cups of low-fat milk, yogurt, or cheese
- Eat with your family often.
- Aim for 1 hour of moderately vigorous physical activity every day.
- Try to limit watching TV, playing video games, or playing on the computer to 2 hours a day (outside of homework time).
- Be proud of yourself when you do something good.

PHYSICAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

How You Are Feeling

- Figure out healthy ways to deal with stress.
- Spend time with your family.
- Always talk through problems and never use violence.
- Look for ways to help out at home.
- It's important for you to have accurate information about sexuality, your physical development, and your sexual feelings. Please consider asking me if you have any questions.

SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC COMPETENCE

School and Friends

- Try your best to be responsible for your schoolwork.
- If you need help organizing your time, ask your parents or teachers.
- Read often.
- Find activities you are really interested in, such as sports or theater.
- Find activities that help others.
- Spend time with your family and help at home.
- Stay connected with your parents.

Violence and Injuries

- Always wear your seatbelt.
- Do not ride ATVs.
- Wear protective gear including helmets for playing sports, biking, skating, and skateboarding.
- Make sure you know how to get help if you are feeling unsafe.
- Never have a gun in the home. If necessary, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Figure out nonviolent ways to handle anger or fear. Fighting and carrying weapons can be dangerous. You can talk to me about how to avoid these situations.
- Healthy dating relationships are built on respect, concern, and doing things both of you like to do.

VIOLENCE AND INJURY PREVENTION

Healthy Behavior Choices

- Find fun, safe things to do.
- Talk to your parents about alcohol and drug use.
- Support friends who choose not to use tobacco, alcohol, drugs, steroids, or diet pills.
- Talk about relationships, sex, and values with your parents.
- Talk about puberty and sexual pressures with someone you trust.
- Follow your family's rules.

RISK REDUCTION

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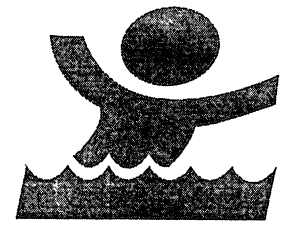
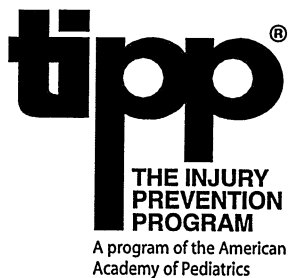


American Academy of Pediatrics



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Pool Safety for Children

A swimming pool can be very dangerous for children. If possible, do not put a swimming pool in your yard until your children are older than 5 years. Help protect your children from drowning by doing the following:

- Never leave your children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment. An adult who knows CPR should actively supervise children at all times.
- Practice touch supervision with children younger than 5 years. This means that the adult is within an arm's length of the child at all times.
- You must put up a fence to separate your house from the pool. Most young children who drown in pools wander out of the house and fall into the pool. Install a fence at least 4 feet high around all 4 sides of the pool. This fence will completely separate the pool from the house and play area of the yard. Use gates that self-close and self-latch, with latches higher than your children's reach.
- Keep rescue equipment (such as a shepherd's hook or life preserver) and a telephone by the pool.
- Do not use air-filled "swimming aids" as a substitute for approved life vests.
- Remove all toys from the pool after use so children aren't tempted to reach for them.
- After the children are done swimming, secure the pool so they can't get back into it.
- A power safety cover that meets the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) may add to the protection of your children but should not be used in place of the fence between your house and the pool. Even fencing around your pool and using a power safety cover will not prevent all drownings.

Remember, teaching your child how to swim DOES NOT mean your child is safe in water.

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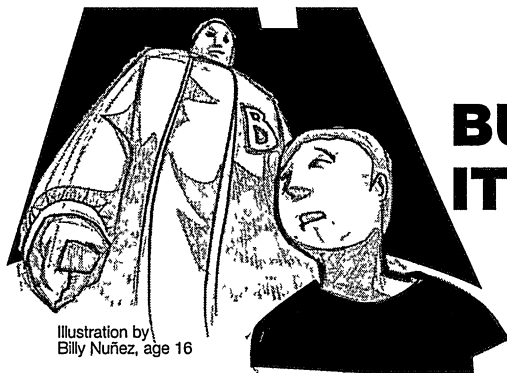


Illustration by
Billy Nuñez, age 16

BULLYING: IT'S NOT OK

BULLYING AFFECTS ALL CHILDREN

- Victims of bullying can learn how to respond safely to physical, verbal, and social bullying.
- Children who are bullies can change their behavior. When bullies are allowed to continue, it often leads to future problems.
- Bystanders—children who watch the bullies pick on others—can help stop bullying.
- Concerned and involved adults can reduce bullying in schools and neighborhoods.

Bullying is when one child picks on another child again and again. Usually children who are being bullied are either weaker or smaller, are shy, and generally feel helpless.

FACTS ABOUT BULLYING

- Both girls and boys can be bullies.
- Bullies target children who cry, get mad, or easily give in to them.
- There are 3 types of bullying.
 - Physical—hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, punching
 - Verbal—threatening, taunting, teasing, hate speech
 - Social—excluding victims from activities or starting rumors about them

■ Bullying happens:

At school—in the halls, at lunch, or in the bathroom, when teachers are not there to see what is going on.

When adults are not watching—going to and from school, on the playground, or in the neighborhood.

Through e-mail or instant messaging—rumors are spread or nasty notes are sent.

BULLYING IS DIFFERENT FROM FIGHTING OR TEASING

- A bully has power over another child.
- Bullies try to control other children by scaring them.
- Being picked on over and over can make your child a victim.
- Bullying usually happens when other children are watching.

TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT BULLYING

Even if you don't think your child is bullied, a bully, or a bystander, you will be helping to protect your child just by asking these questions:

- "How are things going at school?"
- "What do you think of the other kids in your class?"
- "Does anyone get picked on or bullied?"

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS BULLIED

Talk with your child about how to stay safe. Bullies always pick on smaller or weaker children. If there is a fight, and the bully "wins," this will only make matters worse for your child.



Help your child learn how to respond.

“Let’s talk about what you can do and say if this happens again.”

Teach your child how to:

- Look the bully in the eye.
- Stand tall and stay calm in a difficult situation.
- Walk away.

Teach your child how to say in a firm voice:

- “I don’t like what you are doing.”
- “Please do NOT talk to me like that.”
- “Why would you say that?”

Just telling your child to do and say these things is not enough. For many children, these skills do not come naturally. It is like learning a new language—lots of practice is needed. Practice so that, in the heat of the moment, these skills will come to your child naturally.

Teach your child when and how to ask for help.

Your child should not be afraid to ask an adult for help when bullying happens. Since some children are embarrassed about being bullied, parents need to let their children know that being bullied is not their fault.

Encourage your child to make friends with other children.

There are many adult-supervised groups, in and out of school, that your child can join. Invite your child’s friends over to your home. Children who are loners are more likely to get picked on.

Support activities that interest your child.

By participating in activities such as team sports, music groups, or social clubs, your child will develop new abilities and social skills. When children feel good about how they relate to others, they are less likely to be picked on.

Alert school officials to the problems and work with them on solutions.

- Since bullying often occurs outside the classroom, talk with the principal, guidance counselor, or playground monitors, as well as your child’s teachers. When school officials know about bullying, they can help stop it.
- Write down and report all bullying to your child’s school. By knowing when and where the bullying occurs, you and your child can better plan what to do if it happens again.

- Some children who are bullied will fear going to school, have difficulty paying attention at school, or develop symptoms like headaches or stomach pains.

Make sure an adult who knows about the bullying can watch out for your child’s safety and well-being when you cannot be there.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS THE BULLY

If you know that your child is bullying others, take it very seriously. Now is the time when you can change your child’s behavior.

In the long run, bullies continue to have problems. These problems often get worse. If the bullying behavior is allowed to continue, then when these children become adults, they are much less successful in their work and family lives and may even get in trouble with the law.

Set firm and consistent limits on your child’s aggressive behavior.

Be sure your child knows that bullying is never OK.

Be a positive role model.

Children need to develop new and constructive strategies for getting what they want. Show children that they can get what they want without teasing, threatening, or hurting someone. All children can learn to treat others with respect.

Use effective, nonphysical discipline, such as loss of privileges.

When your child needs discipline, explain why the behavior was wrong and how your child can change it.

Help your child understand how bullying hurts other children.

Give real examples of the good and bad results of your child’s actions.

Develop practical solutions with others.

Together with the school principal, teachers, counselors, and parents of the children your child has bullied, find positive ways to stop the bullying.

Supervise your child and help develop individual skills and interests.

Children with too much “time on their hands” are more likely to find themselves in violent or dangerous situations.

Ask for help.

If you find it difficult to change the behavior, reach out to a professional, like a teacher, counselor, or pediatrician.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS A BYSTANDER

Most children are neither bullied nor bullies—they just watch. There are things that your child can do to help stop bullying.

Tell your child not to cheer on or even quietly watch bullying.

This only encourages the bully who is trying to be the center of attention.

Encourage your child to tell a trusted adult about the bullying.

Talking to an adult is not “tattling.” Standing up for another child by getting help is an act of courage and safety. To make it easier, suggest taking a friend.

Help your child support other children who may be bullied.

Encourage your child to include these children in activities.

Encourage your child to join with others in telling bullies to stop.

Knowing what to say is important. If your child feels safe, the following statement may help to stop the bully: “Cool it! This isn’t going to solve anything.”

Connected Kids are Safe, Strong, and Secure

Graphic design and illustrations by Artists For Humanity, a non profit arts and entrepreneurship program for Boston teens.

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The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

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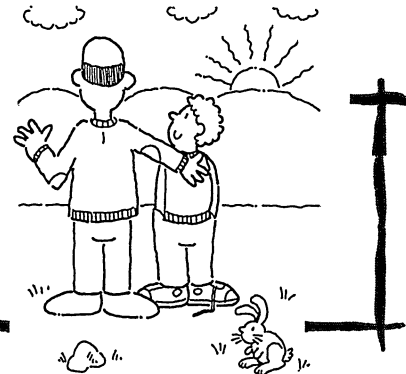
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Alcohol: Your Child and Drugs



One of the most abused drugs in our society is alcohol. It's also a drug that many people start using at very young ages. Though it's illegal for people younger than 21 years to drink, many children are introduced to alcohol well before they reach that age. The earlier they begin using alcohol, the higher the risk they will have problems with it later in life. This publication was written by the American Academy of Pediatrics to help parents understand the dangers of alcohol and how to prevent alcohol use.

Why parents should worry

- Eighteen percent of 8th graders and more than 37% of 10th graders have been drunk at least once.
- Nearly 30% of 10th graders say they drank alcohol in the past month.
- Five thousand people younger than 21 years die each year as a result of underage drinking.

Also, young people who began drinking alcohol before 15 years of age are 4 times more likely to develop alcohol dependence during their lifetime than those who began drinking at 21 years or older.

Alcohol is often the first drug that young people try. Since alcohol is legal for those older than 21 years and found in most American homes, it's often easy for children to be around alcohol and its use. Some parents may feel relieved when they find out their teen is "only" drinking alcohol. They may even think it isn't dangerous. Not true! Alcohol can harm your child's normal brain growth and development. Also, if young people like the feeling they get from alcohol, they may be interested in trying other drugs as well.

Risks linked to alcohol use

Even if a person only drinks alcohol occasionally, it can play a part in a variety of risky behaviors. Just one drink can impair decision-making and slow down reaction time. Underage drinking is not legal and is also linked to

- **Early sexual activity**, multiple partners, unintended pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections, including AIDS.
- **Drunk driving**. In 2004 2,115 young drivers aged 16 to 20 died in motor vehicle crashes; approximately 32% had been drinking, and 26% were legally drunk at the time of the crash.
- **Using other drugs** such as marijuana or cocaine.
- **Health concerns** like stunting brain growth, liver damage, hormone imbalances, and addiction to alcohol.
- **School problems** like poor grades and dropping out.
- **Accidents** and injuries that can be deadly or cause long-term problems.
- **Crime**, violence, and safety concerns.

Why young people drink

Young people drink alcohol for a variety of reasons.

1. Curiosity. They have heard that getting drunk is fun and they want to find out for themselves.
2. As a rite of passage. They see drinking as "something everyone does on their way to adulthood."
3. To get drunk. This explains why teens drink until they are out of control. Binge drinking (having at least 4–5 drinks in a short time, like 2 hours) is alarmingly common. Eight percent of 8th graders, 16% of 10th graders, and nearly 25% of high school seniors have reported binge drinking in the last 2 weeks.
4. To "fit in" with friends who drink.
5. To feel relaxed and more confident.
6. To escape problems, such as depressed feelings, family conflicts, or trouble in school or with a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Stages of alcohol use

The same pattern of use and abuse exists for alcohol as with other drugs such as marijuana or cocaine. The following is how experts explain the stages of alcohol use:

Stage	Description
Abstinence	No use.
Experimentation	The first 1 or 2 times your child drinks alcohol (more than a few sips). Children at this stage are curious about what it feels like to be drunk or high.
Non-problematic use	Repeated drinking in social situations without associated problems. Children at this stage drink in order to have fun with friends.
Problem use	Drinking for purposes other than recreation <i>or</i> drinking associated with a single problem, such as to deal with tension with parents or a school suspension. Children at this stage have begun to use alcohol to help manage their emotions.
Abuse	Drinking that has a negative impact on daily functioning <i>or</i> that is associated with recurrent and significant risks and problems. Children at this stage have experienced problems because of drinking but continue to drink anyway.
Dependence	Loss of control over alcohol use. Children at this stage have developed a compulsion to drink and no longer can simply decide to "just say no" or "stop drinking any time they wish."

How can I tell if my child is drinking?

Certain symptoms and behaviors are warning signs for alcohol use. Look for

- Alcohol odors on your child's breath or clothing
- Alcohol in your child's room or backpack
- Obvious intoxication, dizziness, or bizarre behavior
- Changes in dress and grooming
- Changes in choice of friends; alcohol use by your child's friends
- Frequent arguments, sudden mood changes, and unexplained violent actions
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Loss of interest in activities
- School problems like declining or failing grades, poor attendance, and recent discipline problems
- Runaway and delinquent behavior
- Talk about depression or suicide; suicide attempts

How to prevent alcohol use

Parents can help their children resist alcohol use in the following ways:

- **Boost confidence** and self-worth by praising your child often for what she does well. Avoid constant criticism.
- **Listen to what your child says.** Pay attention and really listen. Be helpful during periods of loneliness or doubt.
- **Know the facts and correct any wrong beliefs** your child may have, such as "everybody drinks."
- **Know who your child's friends are and set clear limits.** Do not support friendships with others whose parents do not set similar limits. Real friends do not urge their friends to break the rules, like drinking alcohol, or reject them if they don't. Insist that a parent be at any parties your child attends. Don't let your teen go to parties where alcohol is served.
- **Make promises.** Have your child promise never to get in a car when the driver has been drinking. You must promise your child that you will always be willing to pick him up, no questions asked, when a safe ride home is needed. Promise each other you will talk about it the next day.
- **Help your child deal with emotions.** Let her know that strong emotions are normal. There are healthy ways to express strong emotions. Talk about any concerns and problems. Assure your child that everything has an upside, and things do not stay "bad" forever. Be a good role model in the ways you express, control, or relieve stress, pain, or tension.
- **Talk about things that are temptations and those that are important to your child.** Talk about school and your child's need for peer-group acceptance. Discuss life goals and desires. Talk about the risk of using alcohol and drugs and how that might prevent reaching those goals. Teach children exactly how you expect them to respond if someone offers them alcohol.
- **Encourage healthy ways to have fun.** Family activities, sports and physical activities, interests in the arts, and hobbies can all be good uses of leisure time.

Parents who drink alcohol

Parents who drink should be careful how alcohol is used at home. Having a drink should never be shown as a way to cope with problems. Don't drink in unsafe conditions—before or while driving a car, mowing the lawn, boating, etc. Don't encourage your child to drink or join you in having a drink. Parents who are problem drinkers or who use alcohol often and in large amounts place their children at increased risk of alcohol dependence. Studies show that alcoholism runs in the family, so children of alcoholic parents are more likely to become alcoholics.

Alcohol and the media

No matter how often they hear how dangerous it is to drink alcohol, many young people today still think it's cool. A big reason for this is the media. Alcohol companies spend billions of dollars every year promoting their products on TV, in movies and magazines, on billboards, and at sporting events. In fact, alcohol products are among the most advertised products in the nation.

Alcohol ads never mention the dangers, such as alcoholism and drinking and driving, or how it affects an unborn infant (fetal alcohol syndrome). Most ads show drinkers as healthy, energetic, sexy, and successful. Ads are trying to boost sales of a product, so this product—alcohol—is made to look as appealing as possible!

The following are tips on how parents can address issues related to alcohol and the media:

- Talk about ads with your children. Help them to understand the sales pitch—the real messages in these ads.
 - Teach your children to be wary consumers and not to believe everything they see and hear on TV.
 - Make sure the TV shows and movies your children watch do not show drinking alcohol as cool or glamorous.
 - Don't let your children wear T-shirts, jackets, or hats that promote alcohol products.
 - Talk with your children's school about starting a media education program.
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- **Use teachable moments.** Discuss the tragedies resulting from alcohol use that are reported in the news. Ask your child what he thinks happened in the story and how tragedy could have been prevented.
 - **Join your child in learning all you can about preventing alcohol abuse.** Programs offered in schools, churches, and youth groups can help you both learn more about alcohol abuse.
- Your pediatrician understands that good communication between parents and children is one of the best ways to prevent alcohol use. If talking with your child about alcohol is difficult, your pediatrician may be able to help open the lines of communication. If you suspect your child is using alcohol or any other drug, ask your pediatrician for advice and help.

About teen confidentiality

All teens should be screened for alcohol and other drug use as part of routine medical care. Your child's doctor will want to ask questions about alcohol in private in order to get honest answers. If your child does report alcohol use, the doctor will determine whether your child needs very brief advice, a return visit, or a referral to a specialist. Every doctor will have his or her own policy about what information must be shared with a parent and what will stay confidential (meaning stay between the patient and the doctor), but most doctors will protect a teen's confidentiality if they believe that the teen's drug use is not an immediate safety risk to the child or others. It is important for you to respect the doctor's decisions about confidentiality in order to encourage your child to have an open and honest discussion with the doctor.

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