



Bright Futures Parent Handout 12 Month Visit

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

Family Support

- Try not to hit, spank, or yell at your child.
- Keep rules for your child short and simple.
- Use short time-outs when your child is behaving poorly.
- Praise your child for good behavior.
- Distract your child with something he likes during bad behavior.
- Play with and read to your child often.
- Make sure everyone who cares for your child gives healthy foods, avoids sweets, and uses the same rules for discipline.
- Make sure places your child stays are safe.
- Think about joining a toddler playgroup or taking a parenting class.
- Take time for yourself and your partner.
- Keep in contact with family and friends.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Establishing Routines

- Your child should have at least one nap. Space it to make sure your child is tired for bed.
- Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- Have a simple bedtime routine that includes a book.
- Avoid having your child watch TV and videos, and never watch anything scary.
- Be aware that fear of strangers is normal and peaks at this age.
- Respect your child's fears and have strangers approach slowly.
- Avoid watching TV during family time.
- Start family traditions such as reading or going for a walk together.

ESTABLISHING ROUTINES

Feeding Your Child

- Have your child eat during family mealtime.
- Be patient with your child as she learns to eat without help.
- Encourage your child to feed herself.
- Give 3 meals and 2–3 snacks spaced evenly over the day to avoid tantrums.
- Make sure caregivers follow the same ideas and routines for feeding.
- Use a small plate and cup for eating and drinking.
- Provide healthy foods for meals and snacks.
- Let your child decide what and how much to eat.
- End the feeding when the child stops eating.
- Avoid small, hard foods that can cause choking—nuts, popcorn, hot dogs, grapes, and hard, raw veggies.

FEEDING AND APPETITE CHANGES

Safety

- Have your child's car safety seat rear-facing until your baby is 2 years of age *or* until she reaches the highest weight or height allowed by the car safety seat's manufacturer.
- Lock away poisons, medications, and lawn and cleaning supplies. Call Poison Help (1-800-222-1222) if your child eats nonfoods.
- Keep small objects, balloons, and plastic bags away from your child.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs and guards on windows on the second floor and higher. Keep furniture away from windows.
- Lock away knives and scissors.
- Only leave your toddler with a mature adult.
- Near or in water, keep your child close enough to touch.

SAFETY

SAFETY

ESTABLISHING A DENTAL HOME

- Make sure to empty buckets, pools, and tubs when done.
- Never have a gun in the home. If you must have a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.

Finding a Dentist

- Take your child for a first dental visit by 12 months.
- Brush your child's teeth twice each day.
- With water only, use a soft toothbrush.
- If using a bottle, offer only water.

What to Expect at Your Child's 15 Month Visit

We will talk about

- Your child's speech and feelings
- Getting a good night's sleep
- Keeping your home safe for your child
- Temper tantrums and discipline
- Caring for your child's teeth

Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222

Child safety seat inspection:
1-866-SEATCHECK; seatcheck.org

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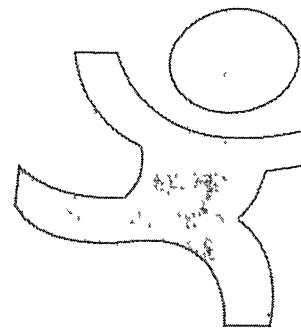
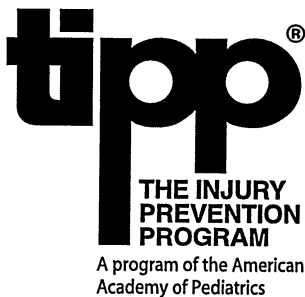
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1 to 2 Years



1 TO 2 YEARS

Safety for Your Child

Did you know that injuries are the leading cause of death of children younger than 4 years in the United States? Most of these injuries can be prevented.

Often, injuries happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. At this age your child can *walk, run, climb, jump*, and *explore* everything. Because of all the new things he or she can do, this stage is a very dangerous time in your child's life. It is your responsibility to protect your child from injury. Your child cannot understand danger or remember "no" while exploring.

Firearm Hazards

Children in homes where guns are present are in more danger of being shot by themselves, their friends, or family members than of being injured by an intruder. It is best to keep all guns out of the home. **Handguns are especially dangerous.** If you choose to keep a gun, keep it unloaded and in a locked place, with the ammunition locked separately. Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.

Poisonings

Children continue to explore their world by putting everything in their mouths, even if it doesn't taste good. Your child can *open doors and drawers, take things apart*, and *open bottles* easily now, so you must use safety caps on all medicines and toxic household products. **Keep the safety caps on** at all times or find safer substitutes to use. Contact Poison Help for more information.

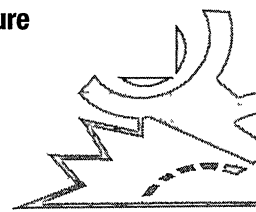
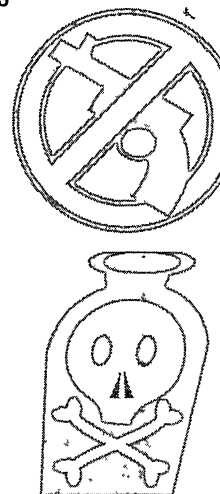
Your child is now able to get into and on top of everything. Be sure to keep all household products and medicines completely out of sight and reach. Never store lye drain cleaners in your home. Keep all products in their original containers.

If your child does put something poisonous into his or her mouth, call Poison Help immediately. Attach the Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222) to your phone. Do not make your child vomit.

Falls

To prevent serious falls, lock the doors to any dangerous areas. **Use gates on stairways** and **install operable window guards** above the first floor. **Remove sharp-edged furniture** from the room your child plays and sleeps in. At this age your child will walk well and start to climb, jump, and run as well. A chair left next to a kitchen counter, table, or window allows your child to climb to dangerously high places. Remember, your child does not understand what is dangerous.

If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally after a fall, call your doctor.



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Burns

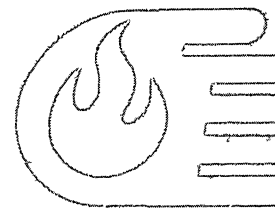
The kitchen is a dangerous place for your child during meal preparation. Hot liquids, grease, and hot foods spilled on your child will cause serious burns. A **safer place for your child** while you are cooking, eating, or unable to give him your full attention is the **playpen, crib, or stationary activity center, or buckled into a high chair**. It's best to keep your child out of the kitchen while cooking.

Children who are learning to walk will grab anything to steady themselves, including hot oven doors, wall heaters, or outdoor grills. Keep your child out of rooms where there are hot objects that may be touched or put a barrier around them.

Your child will *reach* for your hot food or cup of coffee, so don't leave it within your child's reach. **NEVER carry your child and hot liquids at the same time.** You can't handle both.

If your child does get burned, immediately put cold water on the burned area. Keep the burned area in cold water for a few minutes to cool it off. Then cover the burn loosely with a dry bandage or clean cloth. Call your doctor for all burns. To protect your child from tap water scalds, the hottest temperature at the faucet should be no more than 120°F. In many cases you can adjust your water heater.

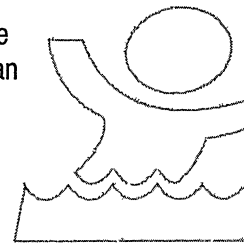
Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, especially in furnace and sleeping areas. Test the alarms every month. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries at least once a year.



Drowning

At this age your child loves to play in water. **NEVER leave your child alone in or near a bathtub, pail of water, wading or swimming pool, or any other water, even for a moment.** Empty all buckets after each use. Keep the bathroom doors closed. Your child can drown in less than 2 inches of water. Knowing how to swim does NOT mean your child is safe near or in water. Stay within an arm's length of your child around water.

If you have a swimming pool, fence it on all 4 sides with a fence at least 4 feet high, and be sure the gates are self-latching. Most children drown when they wander out of the house and fall into a pool that is not fenced off from the house. You cannot watch your child every minute while he or she is in the house. It only takes a moment for your child to get out of your house and fall into your pool.



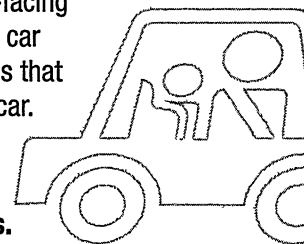
And Remember Car Safety

Car crashes are a great danger to your child's life and health. The crushing forces to your child's brain and body in a crash or sudden stop, even at low speeds, can cause severe injuries or death. **To prevent these injuries USE a car safety seat EVERY TIME** your child rides in the car. All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car safety seat until they are 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car safety seat's manufacturer. Be sure that the safety seat is installed correctly. Read and follow the instructions that come with the car safety seat and the instructions for using car safety seats in the owners' manual of your car. **The safest place for all infants and children to ride is in the back seat.**

Do not leave your child alone in or around the car. Keep vehicles and their trunks locked. Children who are left in a car can die of heat stroke because temperatures can reach deadly levels in minutes. They can be strangled by power windows or knock the vehicle into gear.

Always **walk behind your car** to be sure your child is not there before you back out of your driveway. You may not see your child behind your car in the rearview mirror.

Remember, the biggest threat to your child's life and health is an injury.



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Illustration by
Billy Nuñez, age 16

HOW DO INFANTS LEARN?

INFANTS ARE AMAZING

- As soon as they are born, infants start to learn about the world from their experiences.
- Infants can see and hear what is happening around them and can communicate their needs and interests to others.
- Parents can help their babies learn by playing with them.
- Parents can help give infants a strong start to life.

Infants have the ability to see faces and objects of different shapes, sizes, and colors. They can tell the difference between the voices of their parents and others. We're surprised when they mold their bodies into our arms or shoulders. We marvel at how they came into the world able to suck, communicate certain needs by crying, and, at times, calm down on their own. Most infants can do all of these things as soon as they are born.

Babies need and love to be held and touched. You will never spoil your baby by showing lots of love and by holding your child often.

YOU ARE YOUR BABY'S FIRST TEACHER

First experiences have a very important effect on the future. That's why you are so important to your baby's growth and development. The growth of your baby's brain is affected by the care and experiences you provide.

Loving attention helps new brain cells connect in ways that help infants:

- Feel secure and confident.
- Make sense of new ideas and information.
- Grow healthy bodies.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Use your face and voice.

Infants love to look at you and hear your voice. In fact, faces, with all their expressions, usually are more interesting than toys. Spend time talking, singing, and laughing. Play games of touching, stroking, and peek-a-boo.

Take turns.

Make faces, sounds, and movements that your baby can copy. Then you can copy the things that your baby does. This is how infants learn to communicate.

Repeat things again and again.

Infants need to practice something until they are sure of how it works. That's why it's important to do the same thing over and over again with your baby. Make a game out of repeating things. Besides learning about how things work, your baby will learn what to expect of people and situations.



Read.

One of the best ways infants learn to talk is when they are read to or told stories. Make a habit of reading to your baby every day. Starting good reading habits at this young age will help your baby continue to learn new things later on.

Since infants sleep more than older children, you will need to alternate learning activities with rest. Rest time is as important as being awake. When awake, infants tend to be more alert if they are approached calmly and if they are in a place without too much noise or confusion.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR

Your baby has a different style or personality from all other babies. It's fun to get to know your baby's likes, needs, and abilities. Find out how your baby relates to other people and situations.

- Some infants like more activity, some like less.
- Some infants are louder when they laugh or cry, some are quieter by nature.

All infants let us know when they have had enough. Some ways your baby may tell you that it's time for a nap are:

- Avoids making eye contact
- Becomes sleepy or fussy, may cry a lot
- Coughs or spits
- Rubs eyes

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Children grow faster in their first year than at any other time in their lives. This will take a lot of your time and energy. You need to be healthy and happy to give your child the best start possible.

When you feel good about yourself, you will be helping your baby feel happy and secure too. This is why you need to find the time to take care of yourself. Let people know when you need support or help. After you are rested, you will have more energy and you will be able to have more fun with your baby.

OTHERS WHO CARE FOR YOUR BABY

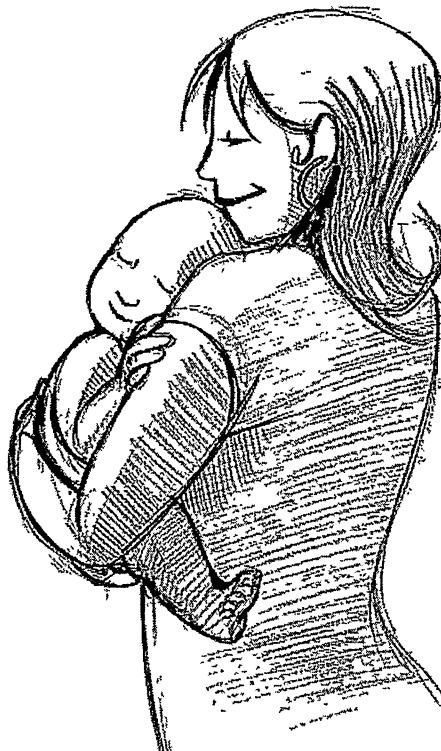
Developing a close bond with parents and family members is important. It helps infants form positive relationships with others.

- By letting other people hold and talk with your baby when you are around, your baby learns how to relate to other people.
- When you cannot be with your baby, it is best if the same few trusted people are the caregivers. Your baby will learn to expect and enjoy their company and kindness.
- If you decide to leave your baby with a relative, friend, or professional child care provider, visit and stay for a while the first few times you leave your baby. This way, you will feel confident about the safe and loving care being provided.

A STRONG START FOR LIFE

Infants spend the first year learning to feel secure about being loved by you.

Love—expressed in the ways mentioned here, and in many other ways by you—will give your child the physical strength to fight illness, the emotional strength to feel confident, and the ability to learn new things.

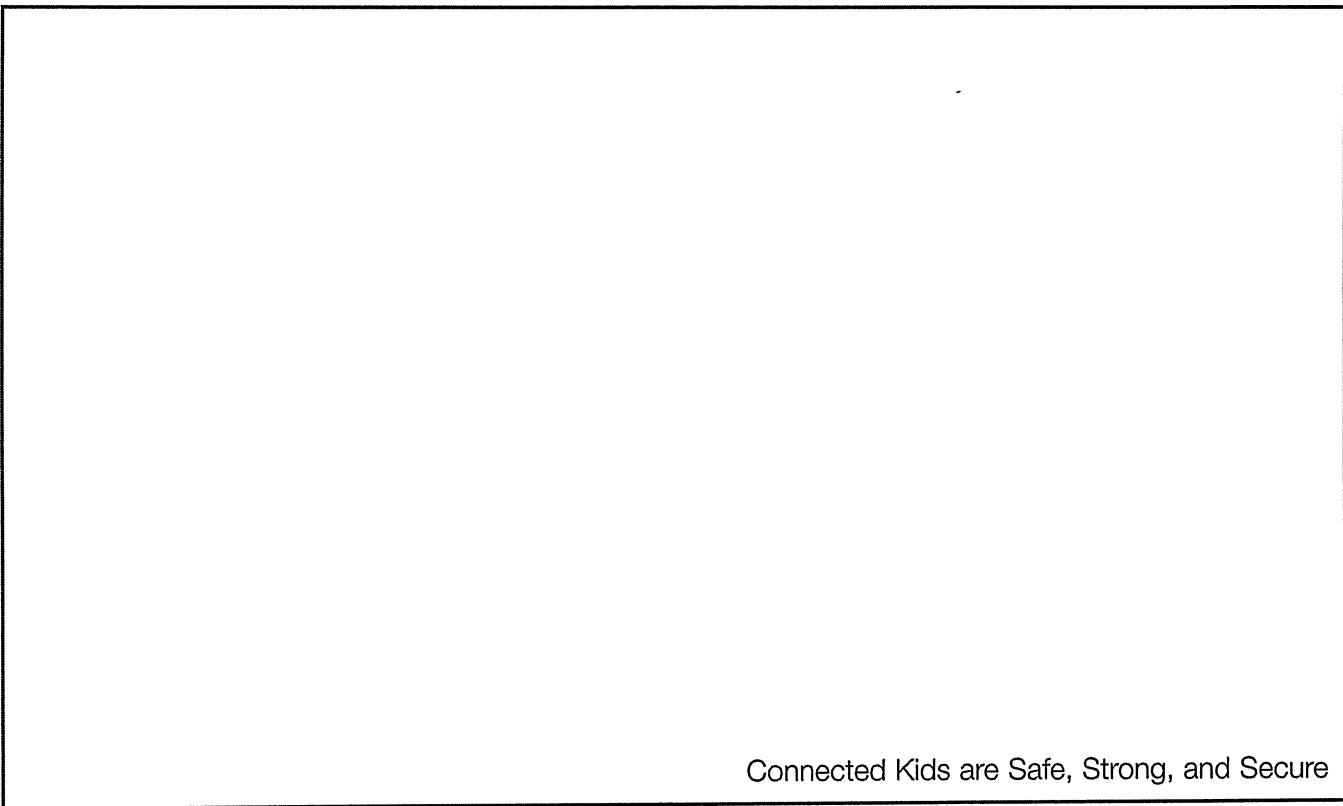
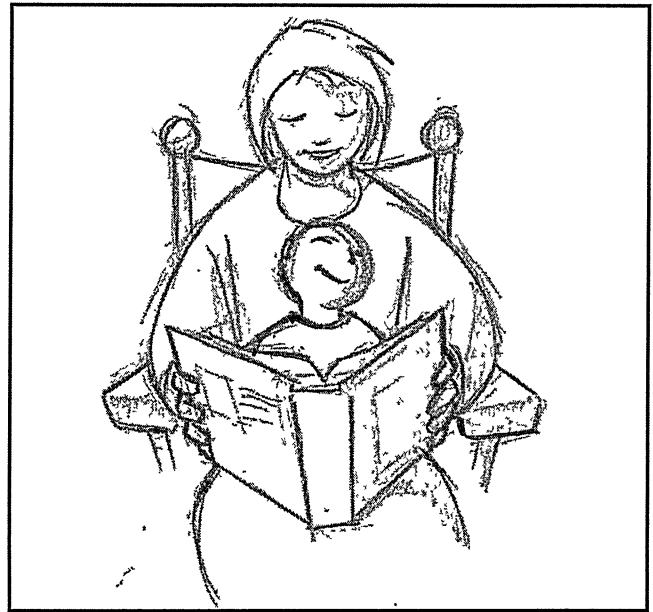


Being curious is how infants learn.

What looks like just play—going through drawers, emptying wastebaskets, ransacking kitchen cabinets—is the way your child finds out how the world works. Infants are learning about shapes, textures, and sizes. They also are discovering that some things are safe to eat and others are not. Make sure nothing dangerous goes into your baby’s mouth.

TV is not recommended for children younger than age 2 years.

Too much television is not good for early brain development—even educational TV isn’t good for infants. The brain is developing rapidly at this age. Calmly watching TV does not help the brain grow. During the first 2 years of life, children need activities that stimulate their brains.



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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What Is Your One-Year-Old Telling You?

Language begins long before the first spoken words. Your child starts “telling” you things during the first year of life. Your child may say things with looks, smiles, movements, or sounds. These early messages are very important.

Talk with your child’s doctor about how your child is growing and learning. Always tell the doctor right away if you are worried about something.

What’s Normal?

Children usually can do certain things at certain ages.

By 12 months your baby should:

- Look for and find where sounds are coming from.
- Know his or her name most of the time when you call it.
- Wave goodbye.
- Look where you point when you say, “Look at the _____.”
- Take turns “talking” with you. (Your child listens when you speak, then babbles when you stop.)
- Say “da-da” to Dad and “ma-ma” to Mom and at least one other word.
- Point to things he or she wants.



Between 12 and 24 months your baby should:

- Follow simple commands, like “Pick up your toy.” (You may need to point to the toy at first.)
- Get things from another room when asked.
- Point to a few body parts when asked.
- Point to things or events to get you to look at them.
- Bring things to show you.
- Name a few common objects and pictures when asked.
- Enjoy pretending, like having a tea party.

By 24 months your toddler should:

- Point to many body parts and common things when asked.
- Point to some pictures in books when asked.
- Follow 2-step commands. (For example, “Get your toy and put it in the backpack.”)
- Say about 50 to 100 words.
- Say many 2-word phrases like “Daddy go,” “doll mine,” and “all gone.”

* Words to Know

autism (AW-tiz-um)—a long-term problem in the brain and nerves. Many people with autism have trouble understanding others and being understood. They often have trouble making friends. They may like to do one thing over and over again.

developmental-behavioral specialist (duh-vel-up-MEN-tul bee-HAY-vyer-ul SPESH-uh-list)—an expert in the ways children grow and develop.

referral (ree-FUR-ul)—a note or phone call from a doctor sending you to see someone.

speech therapy (THAIR-uh-pee)—treatment for people who have trouble talking. There are many different speech problems, and many kinds of speech therapy.

Continued from front

Signs of a Problem

Babies express themselves in many ways. Talk with the doctor if your child:

- Doesn't use any words by 18 months.
- Doesn't put 2 words in a phrase by 24 months.
- Doesn't cuddle like other babies.
- Doesn't return a happy smile back to you.
- Doesn't seem to notice if you are in the room.
- Doesn't show you things to look at together.
- Doesn't respond when you call his or her name but seems to hear other sounds.
- Prefers to play alone. Seems to "tune others out."
- Doesn't seem interested in toys, but likes to play with other things in the house.

What to Do If Your Child Isn't Talking

Many children learn to talk late. One in 5 children is slow to talk or use words.

The problem may go away on its own. Or your child may need a little extra help. Sometimes **speech therapy*** is needed.

Late talking also may be a sign of something more serious. Your child may have a hearing loss, **autism***, or other problem with growing and learning. It's important to talk with your child's doctor if you're worried.

What the Doctor May Do

After you talk about your concerns, your child's doctor may:

- Ask you some questions about your child.
- Check how your child is developing.
- Order a hearing test.
- Refer you to a speech therapist for testing. The therapist will check how well your child expresses himself or herself. The therapist will also check how well your child understands words and gestures.

- Refer you to a **developmental-behavioral specialist***. This specialist will check all areas of your child's development.

It's OK to say you are still concerned if the doctor says your child will "catch up in time." You can also ask for a **referral*** to a developmental-behavioral specialist. This specialist may refer you to others for more help.

Programs That Can Help

Your child's doctor may also refer you to a developmental or school program. These programs help children with different kinds of growing and learning problems. The program staff may want to do their own tests with your child.

If your child is younger than 3 years, the doctor may refer you to an Early Intervention Program (EIP). Or you can contact the program yourself. The government pays for these programs. EIPs help children with delays and other problems.

If your child qualifies for help, EIP staff will work with you to make a plan. This is called an Individualized Family Service Plan, or IFSP. It may include training and support for you as well as therapy, special equipment, and other services for your child. After 3 years of age, the EIP staff will refer your child to the local school district.

Remember

Follow your instincts as a parent. Ask for more testing or a referral for your child if you are still worried.

Tell your child's doctor if your child seems slow or shows any of the "Signs of a Problem" on the left. Also, tell the doctor if your baby stops talking or doing things he or she used to do.

To learn more, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Web site at www.aap.org.

Your child's doctor will tell you to do what's best for your child. This information should not take the place of talking with your child's doctor.

Adaptation of the AAP information in this handout into plain language was supported in part by McNeil Consumer Healthcare.

Thumbs, Fingers, and Pacifiers



All babies are born with the need to suck. This is important because babies need the sucking reflex to eat and drink. Sucking for some babies also can have a soothing and calming effect. However, when does sucking become a problem? Read on for information from the American Academy of Pediatrics about pacifiers, when pacifier use and thumb and finger sucking could become a problem, and how to help your child stop pacifier use or thumb or finger sucking.

What do I need to know before offering a pacifier?

If your baby wants to suck beyond what nursing or bottle-feeding provides, a pacifier may satisfy that need. Before offering a pacifier, keep the following tips in mind:

- Offer a pacifier at nap time and bedtime. This helps to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). If you are breastfeeding, wait until breastfeeding is going well before offering a pacifier. This usually takes about 3 to 4 weeks.
- Do not use a pacifier to replace or delay meals. Only offer it when you are sure your baby is not hungry.
- Do not force your baby to take the pacifier if he doesn't want it.
- Never tie a pacifier to your child's crib or around your child's neck or hand. This is very dangerous and could cause serious injury or even death.
- Be prepared for night waking. If your child depends on a pacifier to fall asleep at night, he may wake up when the pacifier falls out. If you child is too young to put it back in his mouth or can't find or reach it if it has fallen out of the crib, you may need to wake up and get it for him.

What should I keep in mind when shopping for a pacifier?

- Pacifiers come in different sizes. You will also find a variety of nipple shapes, from squarish "orthodontic" versions to the standard bottle type. Try different kinds until you find the one your baby prefers.
- Look for a 1-piece model that has a soft nipple (some models can break into 2 pieces).
- The shield should be at least 1½ inches across so a baby cannot put the entire pacifier into her mouth. Also, the shield should be made of firm plastic with airholes.
- Make sure the pacifier is dishwasher-safe. Follow the instructions on the pacifier and boil it or run it through the dishwasher before your baby uses it. Be sure to squeeze the water out of the nipple with clean hands; otherwise, the hot water inside might burn your baby's mouth. Clean it this way frequently until your baby is 6 months old so that your infant is not exposed to germs. After that you can just wash it with soap and rinse it in clear water.
- Buy some extras. Pacifiers have a way of getting lost or falling on the floor or street when you need them most.

- Do not use the nipple from a baby bottle as a pacifier. If the baby sucks hard, the nipple may pop out of the ring and choke her.
- Pacifiers fall apart over time. Some manufacturers have expiration dates for pacifiers. Do not keep pacifiers past that time. Inspect them every once in a while to see whether the rubber has changed color or has torn. If so, replace them.

When do pacifier use and thumb and finger sucking become a problem?

If your child sucks strongly on a pacifier or his thumb or fingers beyond 2 to 4 years of age, this behavior may affect the shape of his mouth or how his teeth are lining up. If your child stops sucking on a pacifier or his thumb or fingers before his permanent front teeth come in, there's a good chance his bite will correct itself. However, if the bite does not correct itself and the upper adult teeth are sticking out, orthodontic treatment may be needed to realign the teeth and help prevent broken front teeth.

How can I help my child stop her pacifier use or thumb- or finger-sucking habit?

As a first step in dealing with your child's sucking habits, ignore them! Most often, they will stop on their own. Harsh words, teasing, or punishment may upset your child and is not an effective way to get rid of habits. Instead, try the following:

- Praise and reward your child when she does not suck her thumb or use the pacifier. Star charts, daily rewards, and gentle reminders, especially during the day, are also very helpful.
- If your child uses sucking to relieve boredom, keep her hands busy or distract her with things she finds fun.
- If you see changes in the roof of your child's mouth (palate) or in the way the teeth are lining up, talk with your pediatrician or pediatric dentist. There are devices that can be put in the mouth that make it uncomfortable to suck on a finger or thumb.
- No matter what method you try, be sure to explain it to your child. If it makes your child afraid or tense, stop it at once.

The good news is that most children stop their sucking habits before they get very far in school. This is because of peer pressure. While your child might still use sucking as a way of going to sleep or calming down when upset, this is usually done in private and is not harmful. Putting too much pressure on your child to stop may cause more harm than good. Be assured your child will eventually stop the habit on her own.

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American Academy of Pediatrics
Web site—www.HealthyChildren.org

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Teething in Children: Care Instructions

		Age tooth comes in	Age tooth falls out
Upper teeth	Central incisor	8-12 mos.	6-7 yrs.
	Lateral incisor	9-13 mos.	7-8 yrs.
	Canine (cuspid)	16-22 mos.	10-12 yrs.
	First molar	13-19 mos.	9-11 yrs.
	Second molar	25-33 mos.	10-12 yrs.
Lower teeth	Second molar	23-31 mos.	10-12 yrs.
	First molar	14-18 mos.	9-11 yrs.
	Canine (cuspid)	17-23 mos.	9-12 yrs.
	Lateral incisor	10-16 mos.	7-8 yrs.
	Central incisor	6-10 mos.	6-7 yrs.

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Your Care Instructions

Teething is the normal process in which your baby's first set of teeth (primary teeth) break through the gums (erupt). Teething usually begins at around 6 months of age, but it is different for each child. Some children begin teething at 3 to 4 months, while others do not start until age 12 months or later. A total of 20 teeth erupt by the time a child is about 3 years old. Usually teeth appear first in the front of the mouth. Lower teeth usually erupt 1 to 2 months earlier than their matching upper teeth. Girls' teeth often erupt sooner than boys' teeth.

Your child may be irritable and uncomfortable from the swelling and tenderness at the site of the erupting tooth. These symptoms usually begin about 3 to 5 days before a tooth erupts and then go away as soon as it breaks the skin. Your child may bite on fingers or toys to help relieve the pressure in the gums. He or she may refuse to eat and drink because of mouth soreness. Children sometimes drool more during this time. The drool may cause a rash on the chin, face, or chest.

Teething may cause a mild increase in your child's temperature. But if the temperature is higher than 100.4 F (38 C), look for symptoms that may be related to an infection or illness.

You might be able to ease your child's pain by rubbing the gums and giving your child safe objects to chew on.

Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.

How can you care for your child at home?

- Give acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) for pain or fussiness. Read and follow all instructions on the label.

- Gently rub your child's gum where the tooth is erupting for about 2 minutes at a time. Make sure your finger is clean, or use a clean teething ring.
- Do not use teething gels for children younger than age 2. Ask your doctor before using mouth-numbing medicine for children older than age 2. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warns that some of these can be dangerous. Talk to your child's doctor about other teething remedies.
- Give your child safe objects to chew on, such as teething rings. Do not use fluid-filled teethers.
- If your child is eating solids, try offering cold foods and fluids, which help to ease gum pain. You can also dip a clean washcloth in water, freeze it, and let your child chew on it.

When should you call for help?



Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Your child has a fever.
- Your child keeps pulling on his or her ears.
- Your child has diarrhea or a severe diaper rash.

Watch closely for changes in your child's health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You think your child has tooth decay.
- Your child is 18 months old and has not had an erupting tooth yet.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **C015** in the search box to learn more about "**Teething in Children: Care Instructions**".

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Stop That Whining!

Question: My daughter is constantly whining at me! Every time she calls "Mooooommeeeee" I have this great desire to change my name or run and hide under the nearest bed! Please don't tell me "she'll out grow it," because if the whining continues she may not make it to her next birthday.

Think about it: Talk about fingernails on a blackboard! Whining has got to be the ultimate in annoying childhood behavior. Because a whining child sounds worse than a frenzied siren alarm we tend to do anything to make it stop. Thus our little whiner discovers a great way to get our undivided attention.

NEVER EVER respond to or give in to a whining request. Make an announcement: "When you use your normal voice I will listen to you." Then turn your back to the whining child and make it obvious you are ignoring her by singing or reading a book out loud held in front of your face. If the child continues to whine, repeat the same sequence without engaging the child any further. (Pleading or discussing will only increase the whining.)

Help by modeling: Help your child by modeling what it is you want to hear. "I can't understand you when you use a whining voice, please say, "Mommy, may I please have a drink."

Create an incentive: Put a jar on the kitchen counter. Put ten nickels in it. Tell your child that every time she whines or fusses you will take a nickel out of the jar. Any nickels left over at bedtime will be hers to keep as a reward for remembering to use her "big girl voice."

Teach: Often children aren't really aware they are whining. Have a discussion about whining and demonstrate what it sounds like. (Put on a good show!) Tell your child you want to help her remember not to whine, so every time she does you are going to put your fingers in your ears and say "yuck!" and make a funny face. That will be her signal to find her regular voice.

Time it: Tell your child that you're going to set the timer for three minutes. She can fuss for three minutes and then she must stop. Some children will complain, "that's not enough time!" Then ask, "How much is enough, four or five minutes?" Typically, of course, five will be chosen. Make big production of setting the timer for five minutes, and announce that she must stop when the timer rings. Most kids will stop before the timer rings. If your persistent whiner doesn't stop after five minutes, you can put her in time out, or put yourself in time out, until the fussing ends.

Make sure you aren't giving whining lessons. Such as, "Will Youuu Pleezee Stop Whyyy Niingg! It's driving me Craazee!"

Praise! Praise your child's attempts at using a regular voice. "Ariel, I really enjoy hearing your pleasant voice!" Try to say "yes" to a request made in a regular, polite voice. For example, if your child normally whines about having a cookie after lunch, and today she asks pleasantly, try to give her at least a piece of a cookie to reward her for her appropriate manners. Make sure you tell her that's why you said okay, "Yes, you may have a cookie. I'm saying yes because you asked in such a nice voice and you didn't whine about it. Lucky you!"

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