



Bright Futures Parent Handout 18 Month Visit

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

LANGUAGE PROMOTION/HEARING

Talking and Hearing

- Read and sing to your child often.
- Talk about and describe pictures in books.
- Use simple words with your child.
- Tell your child the words for her feelings.
- Ask your child simple questions, confirm her answers, and explain simply.
- Use simple, clear words to tell your child what you want her to do.

Your Child and Family

- Create time for your family to be together.
- Keep outings with a toddler brief—1 hour or less.
- Do not expect a toddler to share.
- Give older children a safe place for toys they do not want to share.
- Teach your child not to hit, bite, or hurt other people or pets.
- Your child may go from trying to be independent to clinging; this is normal.
- Consider enrolling in a parent-toddler playgroup.
- Ask us for help in finding programs to help your family.
- Prepare for your new baby by reading books about being a big brother or sister.
- Spend time with each child.
- Make sure you are also taking care of yourself.
- Tell your child when he is doing a good job.
- Give your toddler many chances to try a new food. Allow mouthing and touching to learn about them.
- Tell us if you need help with getting enough food for your family.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Safety

- Use a car safety seat in the back seat of all vehicles.

SAFETY

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.
- Everyone should always wear a seat belt in the car.
- Lock away poisons, medications, and lawn and cleaning supplies.
- Call Poison Help (1-800-222-1222) if you are worried your child has eaten something harmful.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs and guards on windows on the second floor and higher.
- Move furniture away from windows.
- Watch your child closely when she is on the stairs.
- When backing out of the garage or driving in the driveway, have another adult hold your child a safe distance away so he is not run over.
- 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.
- Prevent burns by keeping hot liquids, matches, lighters, and the stove away from your child.
- Have a working smoke detector on every floor.

Toilet Training

- Signs of being ready for toilet training include
 - Dry for 2 hours
 - Knows if he is wet or dry
 - Can pull pants down and up
 - Wants to learn
 - Can tell you if he is going to have a bowel movement
- Read books about toilet training with your child.

TOILET-TRAINING READINESS

TOILET-TRAINING READINESS

CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR

- Have the parent of the same sex as your child or an older brother or sister take your child to the bathroom.
- Praise sitting on the potty or toilet even with clothes on.
- Take your child to choose underwear when he feels ready to do so.

Your Child's Behavior

- Set limits that are important to you and ask others to use them with your toddler.
- Be consistent with your toddler.
- Praise your child for behaving well.
- Play with your child each day by doing things she likes.
- Keep time-outs brief. Tell your child in simple words what she did wrong.
- Tell your child what to do in a nice way.
- Change your child's focus to another toy or activity if she becomes upset.
- Parenting class can help you understand your child's behavior and teach you what to do.
- Expect your child to cling to you in new situations.

What to Expect at Your Child's 2 Year Visit

We will talk about

- Your talking child
- Your child and TV
- Car and outside safety
- Toilet training
- How your child behaves

Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222

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

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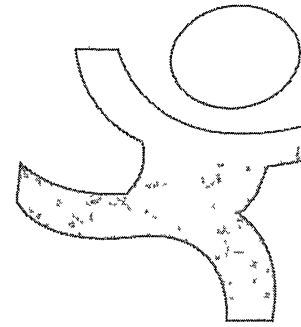
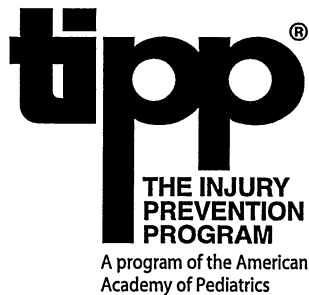
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DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

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1 to 2 Years



1 TO 2 YEARS

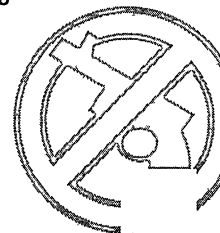
Safety for Your Child

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.

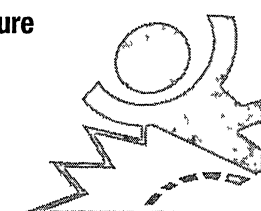


Your child is now able to get into and on top of everything. Be sure to keep all household products and medicines completely out of sight and reach. Never store lye drain cleaners in your home. Keep all products in their original containers.

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

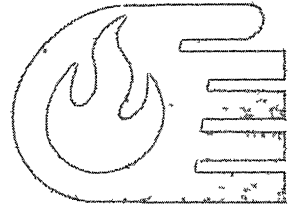
The kitchen is a dangerous place for your child during meal preparation. Hot liquids, grease, and hot foods spilled on your child will cause serious burns. A **safer place for your child** while you are cooking, eating, or unable to give him your full attention is the **playpen, crib, or stationary activity 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.

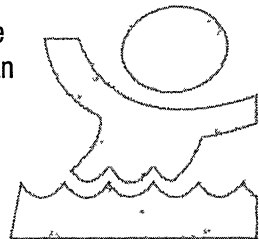
Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, especially in furnace and sleeping areas. Test the alarms every month. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries at least once a year.



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.



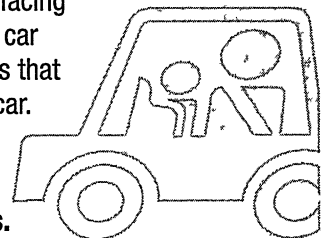
And Remember Car Safety

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

PLAYING IS HOW TODDLERS LEARN

RAISING A TODDLER CAN BE CHILD'S PLAY

- Play is how your toddler explores and learns about the world. Support and encourage this play.
- Allow your child lots of time to play.
- Match your child's interests with play activities.
- Take care of yourself—playing with your toddler can take a lot of your energy. When you are having fun, your child is having fun too!

Playing and pretending allow your child to learn and grow.

Play is how young children start to get ready for school.

- They learn how to feel comfortable being with other children, and how to be a good friend.
- Play gets children ready for learning—paying attention to adults, playing nicely with others, and feeling comfortable being away from their parents.
- Pretend play is one way children learn about difficult feelings like anger and fear.

TIP: Make the places in your home where you spend a lot of time safe places where your child can play and be supervised easily. Give your child lots of time to explore with things like water, sand, boxes, or any other safe item that your child finds interesting.

TIP: Provide simple and safe items, like plastic cups and plates, pots and pans, books, blocks, play tools, and crayons. This way, your child can copy your actions and work. Items should be stored in a safe place or in a container where children can easily see and get to them.

TIP: Describe what's going on to your child:

- "I see you drew a brown circle."
- "What a long jump you made!"

TIP: Ask questions.

- "How did you make this yummy soup?"
- "What will happen next?"

TIP: Find items that match your child's interests. If your child likes to watch ants crawl along the sidewalk, read a book about insects!

TIP: Visit special places related to your child's interests. You can start with a visit to your local library. You will get ideas for future play.

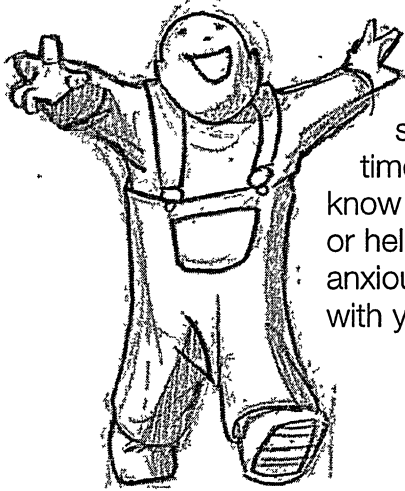
When you let your child guide the activities, you get a window into the delightful world of a toddler—a world where everything is new and full of possibility.

CHILD'S PLAY CAN BE HARD WORK FOR PARENTS

Playing with your child takes a lot of time and energy. When you are tired, your toddler will know it. Find time for yourself. Maybe your family can help out, or perhaps a friend



will watch your child for a few hours. You will come back with more energy and joy. If you are having fun, chances are your child is having fun, and learning, too.



If you find yourself losing patience, it's a sign that you need some time for yourself! Let people know when you need support or help. If you feel bored or anxious a lot of the time, talk with your pediatrician.

It helps to find company for you and your child.

- Many libraries have story hours.
- Community centers and YMCAs often have play groups.
- Find a popular playground where you can meet other parents with young children.
- Child care provides an opportunity for your child to meet others.

Connected Kids are Safe, Strong, and Secure

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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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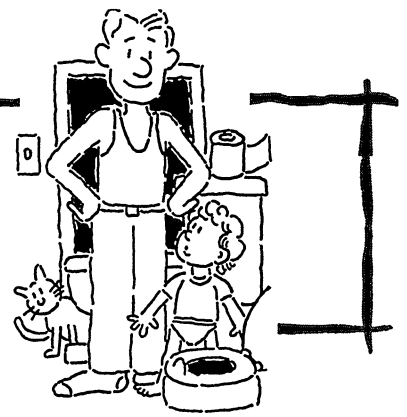
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Toilet Training



One important skill that you will need to teach your child is how to use the toilet. But teaching your child this skill takes time, understanding, and patience. The important thing to remember is that you cannot rush your child; each child learns to use the toilet in his or her own time. The American Academy of Pediatrics has written this publication to help guide you and your child through this important stage.

When is a child ready?

There is no set age at which toilet training should begin. Before children are 12 months of age, they have no control over bladder or bowel movements. While many children start to show signs of being ready between 18 and 24 months of age, some children may not be ready until 30 months or older. This is normal.

Most children achieve bowel control and daytime urine control by 3 to 4 years of age. However, even after your child is able to stay dry during the day, it may take months or years before he achieves the same success at night. Most children are able to stay dry at night after 5 years of age.

Is your child ready?

Signs that your child may be ready include the following:

- Your child stays dry at least 2 hours at a time during the day or is dry after naps.
- Bowel movements become regular and predictable.
- You can tell when your child is about to urinate or have a bowel movement.
- Your child can follow simple instructions.
- Your child can walk to and from the bathroom and help undress.
- Your child seems uncomfortable with soiled diapers and wants to be changed.
- Your child asks to use the toilet or potty chair.
- Your child asks to wear "big-kid" underwear.

Note: Some child care programs require children to be toilet trained as a requirement for enrollment. Don't let this be a threat to your child; it may be an incentive for her to cooperate in the toilet training process.

Toilet training tips

1. **Decide which words to use.** Choose the words your family will use to describe body parts, urine, and bowel movements. Remember that other people will hear these words too, so pick words that will not offend, confuse, or embarrass anyone. Avoid negative words like "dirty," "naughty," or "stinky." They can make your child feel ashamed and embarrassed. Talk about bowel movements and urination in a simple, matter-of-fact manner.

2. **Pick a potty chair.** A potty chair is easier for a small child to use because there is no problem getting onto it and a child's feet can reach the floor. Special books or toys for "potty time" may help make this more enjoyable for your child.
3. **Be a role model.** Children are often interested in their family's bathroom activities. It is sometimes helpful to let children watch parents when they go to the bathroom. Seeing grown-ups use the toilet (and wash their hands afterward) makes children want to do the same. If possible, mothers should show the correct skills to their daughters, and fathers to their sons. Children can also learn these skills from older brothers and sisters.
4. **Know the signs.** Before having a bowel movement, your child may grunt or make other straining noises, squat, or stop playing for a moment. When pushing, his face may turn red. Explain to your child that these signs mean that a bowel movement is about to come. Your child may wait until after the fact to tell you about a wet diaper or a bowel movement. This is actually a good sign that your child is starting to recognize these body functions. Praise your child for telling you, and suggest that "next time" he let you know in advance. Keep in mind that it often takes longer for a child to recognize the need to urinate than the need to move bowels.
5. **Make trips to the potty routine.** When your child seems ready to urinate or have a bowel movement, go to the potty. It may also be helpful to make trips to the potty a regular part of your child's daily routine, such as first thing in the morning, after meals, or before naps.

Keep your child seated on the potty for only a few minutes at a time. (It is better for boys to learn to urinate sitting down first, and then change to standing up when they are better at it.) Explain what you want to happen.

In the beginning, many children have bowel movements or urinate right after getting off the toilet. It takes time for children to learn how to relax the muscles that control the bowel and bladder. If this happens a lot, it may mean your child is not really ready for training.

Keep in mind

Major changes in the home may make toilet training more difficult. Sometimes it is a good idea to delay toilet training if

- Your family has just moved or will move in the near future.
 - You are expecting a baby or you have recently had a new baby.
 - There is a major illness, a recent death, or some other family crisis.
- However, if your child is learning how to use the toilet without problems, there is no need to stop because of these situations.

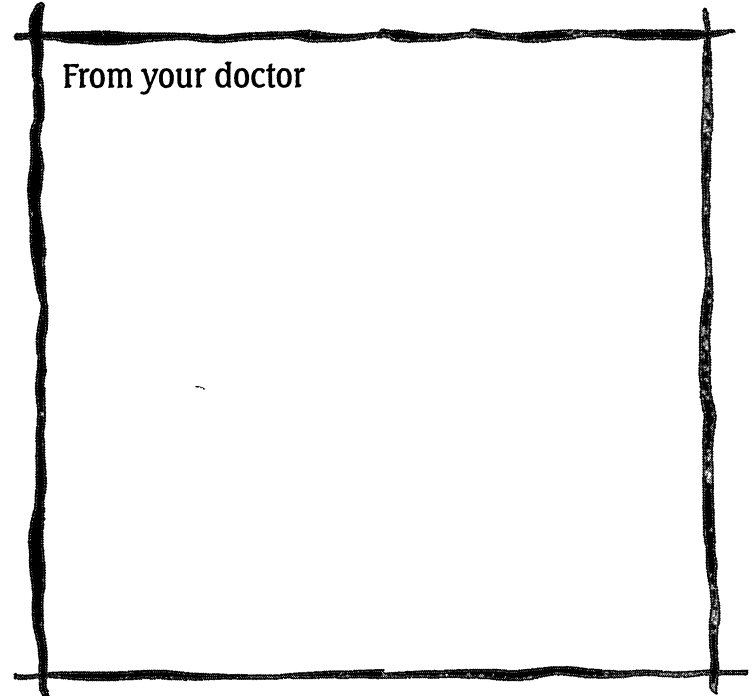
Your pediatrician can help

If any concerns come up before, during, or after toilet training, talk with your pediatrician. Often the problem is minor and can be resolved quickly, but sometimes physical or emotional causes will require treatment. Your pediatrician's help, advice, and encouragement can help make toilet training easier. Also, your pediatrician is trained to identify and manage problems that are more serious.

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From your doctor



6. **Teach your child proper hygiene habits.** Show your child how to wipe carefully. (Girls should wipe thoroughly from front to back to prevent bringing germs from the rectum to the vagina or bladder.) Make sure both boys and girls learn to wash their hands well after urinating or after a bowel movement.
7. **Praise your child.** Encourage your child with a lot of hugs and praise when success occurs. When a mistake happens, treat it lightly. Punishment and scolding will often make children feel bad and may make toilet training take longer.
8. **Try training pants.** Once your child starts using the potty with some success, training pants can be used. This moment will be special. Your child will feel proud of this sign of growing up. However, be prepared for "accidents." It may take weeks, even months, before toilet training is completed. Continue to have your child sit on the potty several times during the day. If your child uses the potty successfully, it is an opportunity for praise. If not, it is still good practice. Some children who are not ready for training pants will still feel that they are more "grown up" if they wear disposable training pants (Pull-ups is one brand name) as a step forward in the training process.

Some children will want to go back to diapers, especially for bowel movements. Instead of looking at this as a failure, praise your child for knowing when he needs to go. Suggest that he have the bowel movement in the bathroom while wearing a diaper. Encourage improvements, and work toward sitting on the potty without the diaper.
9. **Avoid a power struggle.** Children at toilet training ages are becoming aware of their individuality. They look for ways to test their limits. Some children may do this by holding back bowel movements. Try to stay relaxed about toilet training. Remember that no one can control when and where a child urinates or has a bowel movement except the child.
10. **Understand their fear.** Some children believe that their wastes are part of their bodies, and seeing their stools flushed away may be scary and hard to understand. Some also fear they will be sucked into the toilet if it is flushed while they are sitting on it. To give your child a feeling of control, let her flush the toilet. This will lessen the fear of the sound of rushing water and the sight of things disappearing.
11. **Moving up.** Most of the time, your child will let you know when he is ready to move from the potty chair to the "big toilet." Make sure your child is tall enough, and practice the actual steps with him. Provide a stool to brace his feet.



Power of Choice

Would you like to get your kids to willingly cooperate? Stop the daily battles? Teach your kids valuable life skills? If your answer is Yes! Yes! Yes!, then read on...

There are so many things we must get our children to do and so many things we must stop them from doing! Get up. Get dressed. Don't dawdle. Do your homework. Eat. It goes on and on. We can get our kids to cooperate and at the same time allow them to learn self discipline and develop good decision making skills. How? By offering choices.

Giving a choice is a very powerful tool that can be used with toddlers through teenagers. This is one skill that every parent should have tattooed on the back of his or her hand as a constant reminder. Parents should use this skill every day, many times a day. Giving children choices is a very effective way to enlist their cooperation because children love having the privilege of choice. It takes the pressure out of your request, and allows a child to feel in control. This makes a child more willing to comply.

Using choice is an effective way to achieve results, and when you get in the habit of offering choices you are doing your children a big favor. As children learn to make simple choices—*Milk or juice?*—they get the practice required to make bigger choices—*Buy two class T-shirts or one sweatshirt?*—which gives them the ability as they grow to make more important decisions—*Save or spend? Drink beer or soda? Study or fail?* Giving children choices allows them to learn to listen to their inner voice. It is a valuable skill that they will carry with them to adulthood.

You should offer choices based on your child's age and your intent. A toddler can handle two choices, a grade-school child three or four. A teenager can be given general guidelines. Offer choices such that you would be happy with whatever option your child chooses. Otherwise, you're not being fair. For example, a parent might say, "*Either eat your peas or go to your room*" but when the child gets up off his chair, the parent yells, "*Sit down and eat your dinner, young man!*" (So that wasn't really a choice, was it?)

Here are some ways in which you can use choice:

- ✓ *Do you want to wear your Big Bird pajamas or your Mickey Mouse pajamas?*
- ✓ *What pair of shorts would you like to wear today?*
- ✓ *Do you want to do your homework at the kitchen table or the desk?*
- ✓ *Would you rather stop at the gas station or give me the money to fill the tank?*
- ✓ *Do you want to wear your coat, carry it, or put on a sweatshirt?*
- ✓ *Would you prefer to let the dog out in the yard or take him for a walk?*
- ✓ *Do you want to run up to bed or hop like a bunny?*
- ✓ *What do you want to do first, take out the trash or dry the dishes?*
- ✓ *Do you want to watch five more minutes of TV or ten?*

✓ Will you do your homework now, after dinner, or shall I wake you at six tomorrow?

A typical problem with choices is the child who makes up his own choice! For example, "Taylor, do you want to put on your pajamas first, or brush your teeth?" To which little Taylor answers, "I want to watch TV." What to do? Just smile sweetly and say, "That wasn't one of the choices. What do you want to do first, put on your pajamas or brush your teeth?"

If your child is still reluctant to choose from the options that you offer, then simply ask, "Would you like to choose or shall I choose for you?" If an appropriate answer is not forthcoming then you can say, "I see that you want me to choose for you." Then *follow through*. Make your choice and help your child — by leading or carrying him — so that he can cooperate.

A mother in one of my classes reported using this skill with great success at home. It was after dinner and she said to her *husband*, "Honey, would you like to clean up the dishes or put the kids to bed?" He responded, "Hey! You're using that choice thing on me!" (All the skills presented in my book will work with adults, too.)

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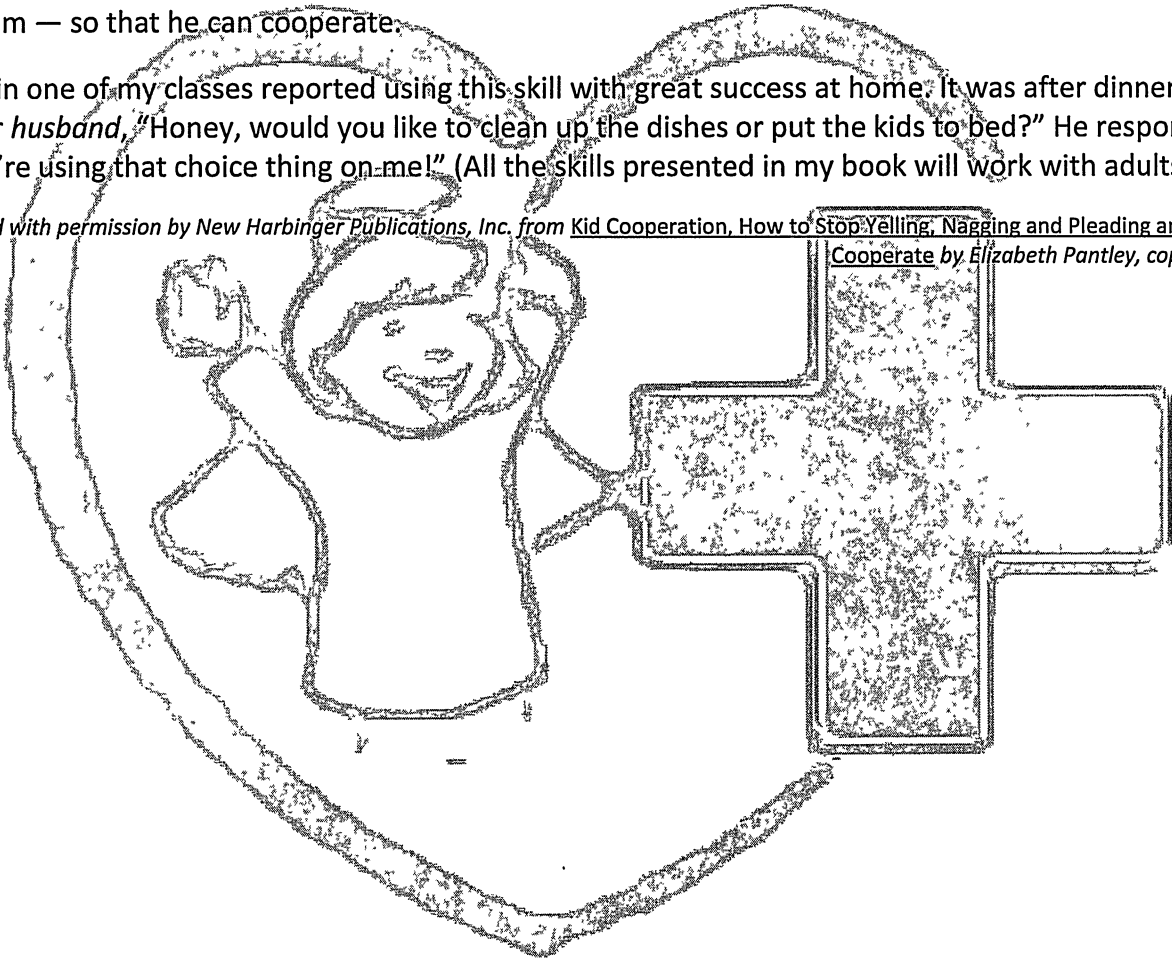




Illustration by
Billy Nuñez, age 16

GROWING INDEPENDENCE: TIPS FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

CHILDREN LOVE TO LEARN

- Open and honest communication will create a lifelong closeness with your child.
- Routines and responsibilities will let your child know what to expect. When a rule is broken, a natural consequence needs to follow.
- As you teach your child how to be independent, you also need to teach how to be safe.
- Learning how to be a good friend is an important skill you can teach your child.

Your little one is starting to explore the world outside your home. This is exciting, but can be scary!

Children from 4 to 6 years old are:

- Beginning to develop their independence and form real friendships.
- Learning rules to more difficult games.
- Developing important life skills.

SET LIMITS

When children do something against the rules, explain simply and in a few words:

- That what they did was wrong
- What will happen if the behavior continues

Consequences need to be logical, meaningful, and simple. For example:

- If your child rides a bike without a helmet, the bike is off limits for a day or two.
- When your child won't share a toy, that toy can't be used for the rest of the day.

CREATE AND KEEP ROUTINES

Teach about rules by setting up daily routines. Children do best when they know what to expect.

- In the morning:
 - Use the bathroom
 - Get dressed
 - Have breakfast
- At bedtime:
 - Take a bath
 - Brush teeth
 - Read a story

Schedule specific times for TV, video games, and use of the computer.

When you know what your child is watching, you can avoid violence and other unacceptable content.

Limit "total screen time" to no more than 2 hours a day.

Read at bedtime.

This helps your child:

- Settle down after a busy day
- Learn how to read

Have meals together as much as possible.

This is a great way to spend time together and share family traditions, while also teaching good eating habits and table manners.



TAKE TIME TO TALK AND LISTEN

Children feel important when adults take the time to talk with them. Talking often, and about many things, helps them gain self-confidence.

Ask about friendships and the activities that your child enjoys.

Talk about your own best and worst experiences.

Ask your child:

- “What was the best part of today?”
- “What was the hardest part of today?”

Let your child know that it’s OK to have and talk about negative feelings. Share the best and hard parts of your day. This teaches your child that we all have ups and downs.

ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY

When young children copy everyday household tasks, they are really learning how to contribute. With your support, tasks will soon be done with few reminders. As children grow older, they can begin to take on real responsibilities, such as:

- Setting the table
- Putting away their toys
- Feeding the pets
- Placing dirty clothes in a basket

Watch your child’s self-esteem grow when given the chance to help out.

ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE IN DRESSING AND BATHING

At first, this may take a little more time than helping your child get dressed or take a bath, but it is time well spent. Independence comes with practice, and with your guidance.

If you get the clothes ready the night before, the morning routine will involve only getting dressed. This way, your child can focus on just one thing.

Your child may need to be reminded of all the steps.

1. “In the morning, when you get up,
2. First, use the bathroom,
3. Then, take off your PJs,
4. And then, put on your clothes.”

Praise your child’s efforts and successes:
“You did a great job getting yourself ready for school today!”

TEACH SIMPLE RULES ABOUT SAFETY WITH ADULTS

Keeping children safe is an important job for parents. You want your child to respect and trust others, but you also need to teach your child to be careful.

Following are some simple rules and ways that you can start a conversation with your child about different safety issues.

“If you’re not sure, ask me.”

“If an adult asks you to do something that you’re not sure is OK, always ask me first. I won’t get mad at you for asking.”

“No secrets.”

“No one should ever tell you to keep a secret from me—one that might make me mad if I found out. Adults should never expect you to do this.”

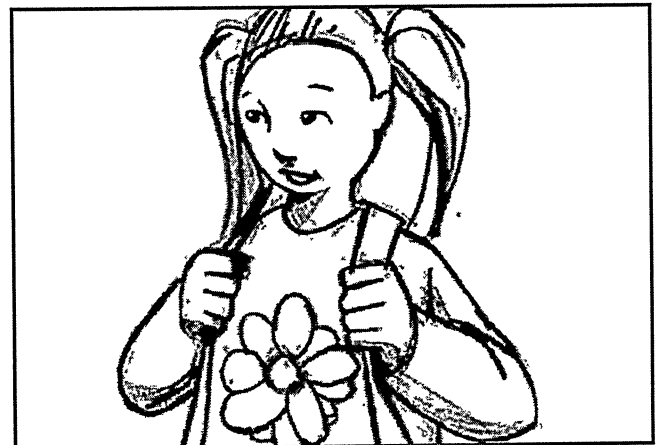
“Certain body parts are private.”

“No adults (except parents, doctors, and nurses) should touch you where you normally wear a bathing suit.”

“If we get separated, find a security guard or police officer.”

“This is a very busy place. If you can’t find me, find a security guard or police officer, or ask someone to help you find one. That person will help you find me.”

When you take your child to a crowded place, look around and point out the person who is there to help if you do become separated.



HELP YOUR CHILD BECOME A GOOD FRIEND

Four- to six-year-olds are learning what it means to be a friend. They will have fun times as well as arguments and hurt feelings. It can be tempting for parents to try to solve these problems themselves or by talking with the other child's parent.

Instead, guide your child to solve problems. With your help, your child can learn how to solve social problems.

1. Help your child understand the other child's point of view.

"I guess Suzie wants a turn too."

2. Teach your child the following:

- Stay calm
- Do not hit, grab, or shove
- Use words:
 - "I get upset when you talk to me like that."
 - "I'm sad you don't want to play with me."
 - "I'm angry you took the ball from me."

3. Stand close by and watch as the children solve their problem.

Being close by puts the children on their best behavior. This is how they begin to develop the confidence and skills to communicate honestly, calmly, and politely with others.

Connected Kids are Safe, Strong, and Secure

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

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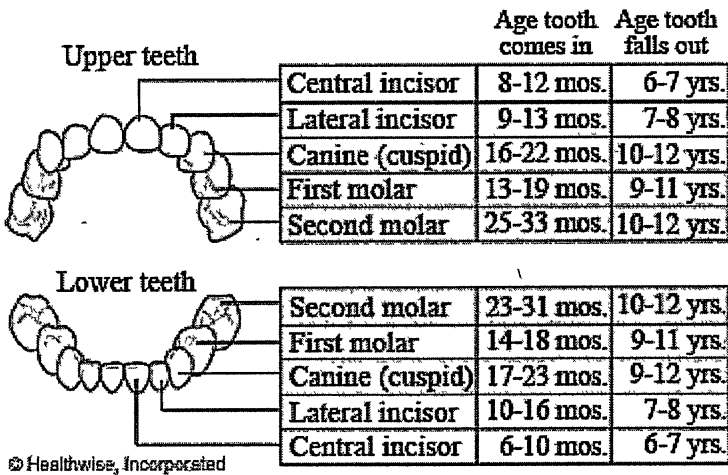
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American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

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 teethingers.
- 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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