



# Bright Futures Parent Handout 3 Year Visit

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

ENCOURAGING LITERACY ACTIVITIES

## Reading and Talking With Your Child

- Read books, sing songs, and play rhyming games with your child each day.
- Reading together and talking about a book's story and pictures helps your child learn how to read.
- Use books as a way to talk together.
- Look for ways to practice reading everywhere you go, such as stop signs or signs in the store.
- Ask your child questions about the story or pictures. Ask him to tell a part of the story.
- Ask your child to tell you about his day, friends, and activities.

PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## Your Active Child

Apart from sleeping, children should not be inactive for longer than 1 hour at a time.

- Be active together as a family.
- Limit TV, video, and video game time to no more than 1–2 hours each day.
- No TV in your child's bedroom.
- Keep your child from viewing shows and ads that may make her want things that are not healthy.
- Be sure your child is active at home and preschool or child care.
- Let us know if you need help getting your child enrolled in preschool or Head Start.

FAMILY SUPPORT

## Family Support

- Take time for yourself and to be with your partner.
- Parents need to stay connected to friends, their personal interests, and work.
- Be aware that your parents might have different parenting styles than you.
- Give your child the chance to make choices.
- Show your child how to handle anger well—time alone, respectful talk, or being active. Stop hitting, biting, and fighting right away.
- Reinforce rules and encourage good behavior.
- Use time-outs or take away what's causing a problem.
- Have regular playtimes and mealtimes together as a family.

SAFETY

## Safety

- Use a forward-facing car safety seat in the back seat of all vehicles.
- Switch to a belt-positioning booster seat when your child outgrows her forward-facing seat.
- Never leave your child alone in the car, house, or yard.
- Do not let young brothers and sisters watch over your child.
- Your child is too young to cross the street alone.
- Make sure there are operable window guards on every window on the second floor and higher. Move furniture away from windows.
- 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. Ask if there are guns in homes where your child plays. If so, make sure they are stored safely.
- Supervise play near streets and driveways.

PLAYING WITH PEERS

## Playing With Others

Playing with other preschoolers helps get your child ready for school.

- Give your child a variety of toys for dress-up, make-believe, and imitation.
- Make sure your child has the chance to play often with other preschoolers.
- Help your child learn to take turns while playing games with other children.

## What to Expect at Your Child's 4 Year Visit

### We will talk about

- Getting ready for school
- Community involvement and safety
- Promoting physical activity and limiting TV time
- Keeping your child's teeth healthy
- Safety inside and outside
- How to be safe with adults

Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222

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

The Perkins Pediatric Clinic, LLC  
Michael W. Perkins, MD  
614 North Pine Street  
DeRidder, LA 70634

phone: (337) 462-6000  
www.perkinspediatrics.com



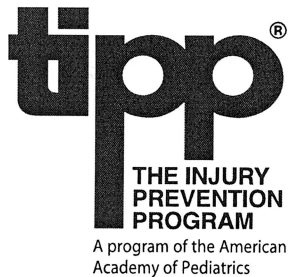
American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

The recommendations in this publication do not indicate an exclusive course of treatment or serve as a standard of medical care. Variations, taking into account individual circumstances, may be appropriate. Original document included as part of Bright Futures Tool and Resource Kit. Copyright © 2010 American Academy of Pediatrics. All Rights Reserved. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not review or endorse any modifications made to this document and in no event shall the AAP be liable for any such changes.

# 2 to 4 Years



## 2 TO 4 YEARS

### Safety for Your Child

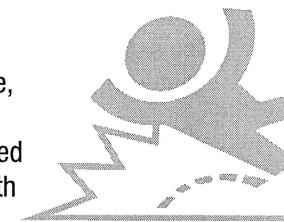
Did you know that injuries are the leading cause of death of children younger than 4 years in the United States? Most of these injuries can be prevented.

Often, injuries happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. Children *learn fast*, and before you know it your child will be *jumping, running, riding* a tricycle, and *using tools*. Your child is at special risk for injuries from falls, drowning, poisons, burns, and car crashes. Your child doesn't understand dangers or remember "no" while playing and exploring.

#### Falls

Because your child's abilities are so great now, he or she will find an endless variety of dangerous situations at home and in the neighborhood.

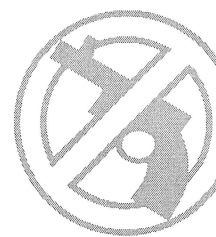
Your child can fall off play equipment, out of windows, down stairs, off a bike or tricycle, and off anything that can be climbed on. **Be sure the surface under play equipment is soft enough to absorb a fall.** Use safety-tested mats or loose-fill materials (shredded rubber, sand, wood chips, or bark) maintained to a depth of at least 9 inches underneath play equipment. Install the protective surface at least 6 feet (more for swings and slides) in all directions from the equipment.



Lock the doors to any dangerous areas. **Use gates on stairways and install operable window guards** above the first floor. Fence in the play yard. **If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally after a fall, call your doctor.**

#### 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. If you choose to keep a gun, keep it unloaded and in a locked place, with the ammunition locked separately. **Handguns are especially dangerous.** Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.



#### Burns

The kitchen can be a dangerous place for your child, especially when you are cooking. If your child is underfoot, hot liquids, grease, and hot foods can spill on him or her and cause serious burns. Find something safe for your child to do while you are cooking.



Remember that kitchen appliances and other hot surfaces such as irons, ovens, wall heaters, and outdoor grills can burn your child long after you have finished using them.

(over)

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



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.

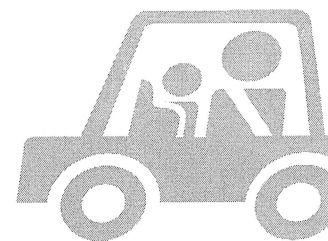
Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, especially in furnace and sleeping areas. Test the alarms every month. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries at least once a year.



## Poisonings

Your child will be able to *open* any drawer and *climb* anywhere curiosity leads. Your child may *swallow anything* he or she finds. Use only household products and medicines that are absolutely necessary and keep them safely capped and out of sight and reach. Keep all products in their original containers.

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



## And Remember Car Safety

**Car crashes** are the **greatest danger** to your child's life and health. The crushing forces to your child's brain and body in a collision or sudden stop, even at low speeds, can cause injuries or death.

**To prevent these injuries, correctly USE a car safety seat EVERY TIME** your child is in the car. If your child weighs more than the highest weight allowed by the seat or if his or her ears come to the top of the car safety seat, use a belt-positioning booster seat.

The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat. In an emergency, if a child **must** ride in the front seat, move the vehicle seat back as far as it can go, away from the air bag.

Do not allow your child to play or ride a tricycle in the street. **Your child should play in a fenced yard or playground.** Driveways are also dangerous. Walk behind your car before you back out of your driveway to be sure your child is not behind your car. You may not see your child through the rearview mirror.

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

From Your Doctor

The information 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 the individual facts and circumstances.

# Caring for Your Child's Teeth

Almost 1 in 4 children in America will have a **cavity** (KA-vuh-dee) before turning 4 years of age! That's why it's very important for parents to know how to care for their children's teeth.

## Things You Can Do to Care for Your Child's Teeth

### Birth to 1 Year

- After feedings, gently brush your baby's gums and any baby teeth with water and a soft baby toothbrush. Or wipe them with a clean washcloth or gauze.
- After the first tooth comes in, ask your child's doctor if your child is getting enough **fluoride\***.
- Your child's doctor will check your baby's mouth at well-child visits. Babies at high risk for decay will be sent to a dentist.

### 1 Year to 2 Years

- Brush your child's teeth twice a day with water and a soft baby toothbrush. The best times are after breakfast and before bed. Start when your child has any teeth.
- Make sure your child doesn't drink more than a small cup of juice each day. Only drink juice at mealtime, not in between.
- Take your child for a dental checkup if your child has not had one yet.

### 2 Years to 6 Years

- Brush your child's teeth twice a day. Help your child brush. Or repeat the brushing after your child is done. Children this age need to learn to brush, but they can't really do a good job yet.
- Start using a fluoride toothpaste. Teach your child not to swallow it. Use only a pea-sized amount and smear the paste into the bristles. Too much fluoride can make white or brown spots on your child's adult teeth.
- Floss between any teeth that touch each other.
- Take your child for a dental checkup at least once a year.



### 6 Years and Up

- Have your child brush his or her teeth **twice a day** with fluoride toothpaste.
- Teach your child to floss every night after brushing.
- Take your child for a dental checkup at least once a year.

## What Else You Can Do

**Make sure your child has regular checkups with a dentist.** Your child's doctor will also look at your child's teeth and gums during well-child visits and help you find a dentist if the teeth have early tooth decay.

**Make sure you have healthy teeth and gums.** You can pass germs that cause cavities if you share food or drinks with your child.

**Don't share food or drinks with your child.** If you do you can pass germs that cause cavities and gum disease. You can also pass germs that cause cavities if you lick your child's spoon or pacifier.

**Call the dentist if you are worried about tooth decay and other problems.** If you don't have a dentist, call your child's doctor to help you find one. Only a dentist can treat tooth decay.

### \* Words to Know

**fluoride** (FLOR-eyed)—a natural chemical that helps teeth stay strong and helps prevent tooth decay. It hardens the outer coating on the teeth called enamel. Fluoride also helps repair early damage to teeth.

**permanent** (PUR-muh-nint)—lasting for a lifetime. Permanent teeth replace baby teeth one by one in your child's mouth. If your child loses a permanent tooth, it *won't* grow back.

*Continued on back*

Continued from front

## What Is a Cavity?

An outer coating called enamel protects teeth. **Tooth decay** happens when germs in the mouth mix with sugar in foods and drinks. The germs then make acids that break down the enamel. **Cavities** (KA-vuh-deez) are holes in the enamel caused by tooth decay.

Cavities may look like white or brown spots on the teeth. You might also see white lines on the teeth where they meet the gums.

Tooth decay in your baby's teeth used to be called baby bottle tooth decay, but is now called early childhood caries. **Caries** (KAIR-eez) is another word for tooth decay.

### *Eating and Tooth Decay*

#### To help prevent tooth decay in your infant or child:

- Don't put your child to bed with a bottle with anything other than water.
- Don't let your child suck on a bottle or sippy cup with anything other than water except at feeding times.
- Don't let your child eat sweet or sticky foods, like candy, cookies, or fruit roll-ups. There is sugar in foods like crackers and chips too. These are especially bad if your child snacks on them a lot. They should only be eaten at mealtime.
- Don't let your child sip drinks that have sugar and acid, like juices, sports drinks, flavored drinks, soda pop, or flavored teas.

## How Does My Child Get Fluoride?

Fluoride can be added to drinking water and toothpaste. Your water department can tell you if your tap water has fluoride. If your water comes from a well, get a fluoride water test. If needed, your dentist or child's doctor will give your child fluoride drops or pills to take every day, or may suggest you buy bottled water with fluoride. Your child may also get fluoride treatments (varnish or gel) at a medical or dental visit.

## Do Pacifiers or Thumb and Finger Sucking Hurt Teeth?

Sucking a pacifier, thumb, or fingers can affect the shape of the mouth, and how the top and bottom teeth line up. This is called your child's "bite."

It's OK if you give your baby a **pacifier**, but...

- Wait until your baby is 1 month old if you're breastfeeding.
- Do not dip the pacifier in any sweet liquid.
- Wash and replace the pacifier often.

If your child sucks his or her **thumb or fingers**...

- Your child's bite will most likely be OK if he or she stops sucking by 4 or 5 years of age. That's when the **permanent**\* teeth start coming in.
- Ask your child's dentist or doctor about how to help your child stop his or her sucking habits.

To learn more, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Web site at [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) or visit the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Web site at [www.aapd.org](http://www.aapd.org).

Your child's doctor or dentist 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 or dentist.

We hope the resources in this handout are helpful. The AAP is not responsible for the information in these resources. We try to keep the information up to date but it may change at any time.

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

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

# Feeding Kids Right Isn't Always Easy: Tips for Preventing Food Hassles



Young children need nutrients from a variety of foods to stay healthy. But what if your child only eats macaroni and cheese or will not eat any vegetables?

Read on for information from the American Academy of Pediatrics on how to encourage positive eating habits and how to prevent food hassles. If you have specific questions about your child's nutrition, talk with your child's doctor or a registered dietitian.

## How to encourage positive eating habits

When children learn positive eating habits at a young age, they will make healthy food choices as an adult. Parents can

- Set a good example. The best predictor of a child with a healthy weight and lifestyle is parents with a healthy weight who make wise food choices and exercise regularly.
- Get your child involved in meal planning. Read recipe books together. Put your child in charge of writing down a grocery list and go shopping together. During trips to the grocery store you can introduce new foods and also teach your child how to make healthy and nutritious choices. Ask your child to help with measuring out ingredients.
- Try to serve snacks and meals around the same time each day.
- Schedule at least one meal together as a family. Research suggests that having dinner together as a family on a regular basis has positive effects on the development of children. And time spent together can be fun and bring family members closer together. Remember to turn off the TV.
- Give your children a 5-minute warning before mealtime. A 5-minute warning will give your children a moment to calm down, wash their hands, and get ready to eat. (Encouraging your children to wash their hands thoroughly before meals will help prevent foodborne illness.)
- Set up mealtime rules. Children who are anxious, excited, or tired may have trouble settling down to eat. Sometimes a simple "food rules" chart on the refrigerator helps to keep things in order. Examples of food rules include (1) come to the table with clean hands, (2) help when asked, and (3) do not make bad comments about food served or what others are eating.

## Work up an appetite!

Active play, along with eating right, promotes good health...and a healthy appetite! And it is the best exercise for toddlers and young children.

## What to do when mealtime is a hassle

Well-meaning adults often view a child's odd food and eating behaviors as a problem. However, childhood food jags, a fear of new foods, and other feeding challenges are usually a part of normal development.

There's no need to worry if a child skips a meal or won't eat the vegetables on his or her plate. Keep the big picture in mind. Offer a variety of healthy, nourishing foods. Be creative! A variety of colors, kid-friendly shaped foods, and foods arranged on the plate in an appealing manner can entice children to try foods they might otherwise avoid. Provide nutritious snacks to help round out picky eating habits during meals. Over time, a child will get everything needed to grow and develop normally.

Do not force your children to eat. While parents are the best judges of what children should eat and when, children are the best judges of how much they should eat. Food should be used as nourishment, not as a reward or punishment. In the long run, food rewards or bribes usually create more problems than they solve.

Children often use the table as a stage for showing their independence. Sometimes food is not the issue at all. The eating process is just one more way children learn about the world.



The feeding challenge...	What you can try...
<b>Food jags:</b> Eats only one food, meal after meal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure your child is hungry when mealtime comes. Offer only healthy snacks, and do not offer snacks too close to mealtime.</li> <li>• Let your child eat what he wants if the jag food is healthy.</li> <li>• Offer other foods at each meal before the jag food.</li> <li>• Be patient. After a few days, your child likely will try other foods. Food jags rarely last long enough to cause any harm.</li> </ul>
<b>Food strikes:</b> Refuses to eat what's served, which can lead to "short-order cook syndrome"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure your child is hungry when mealtime comes. Offer only healthy snacks, and do not offer snacks too close to mealtime.</li> <li>• Have whole-grain bread and rolls as well as fruit available at each meal, so there are usually choices that your child likes. You shouldn't prepare separate meals for each child, unless you want to be a short-order cook.</li> <li>• Don't be afraid to let your child go hungry if she won't eat what is served.</li> </ul>
<b>"The TV habit":</b> Wants to watch TV at mealtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn off the TV during meals. Watching TV during meals is a distraction that prevents family interaction and interferes with a child's eating. Mealtime is often the only time during the day that families can be together.</li> </ul>
<b>The complainer:</b> Whines or complains about the food served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your child whines and complains about the food offered, encourage her to eat what she can. If she continues to whine and complain, have her go to her room or sit quietly away from the table until the meal is finished. She can return and finish her meal only if she promises not to complain.</li> <li>• If your child is hungry and wants to come back to finish eating, let her know that it's good to have her rejoin the family.</li> <li>• Avoid letting her take food away from the table to eat, return for dessert, or snack until the next planned meal or snack time.</li> </ul>
<b>"The great American white food diet":</b> Eats only white bread, potatoes, macaroni, and milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your child to eat what he can. Do not force your child to eat other foods. Giving more attention to finicky eating habits only reinforces a child's demands to limit foods.</li> <li>• Offer a variety of foods from all the food groups.</li> <li>• Be patient. Eventually your child will move on to other foods.</li> </ul>
<b>Fear of new foods:</b> Refuses to try new foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model eating and enjoyment of new foods yourself by introducing new foods at each meal.</li> <li>• Encourage your child to allow a small portion of the new food to sit on her plate instead of forcing her to try new foods.</li> <li>• Be patient. It may take many tries before a child is ready to taste a new food... and a lot of tastes before a child likes a new food.</li> </ul>

Note: Do not feed children younger than 4 round, firm food unless it is chopped completely. The following foods are choking hazards: nuts and seeds; chunks of meat or cheese; hot dogs; whole grapes; fruit chunks (such as apples); popcorn; raw vegetables; hard, goeey, or sticky candy; and chewing gum. Peanut butter can be a choking hazard for children younger than 2.

## For more information

### American Academy of Pediatrics

[www.HealthyChildren.org](http://www.HealthyChildren.org)

### Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and [www.kidseatright.org](http://www.kidseatright.org)

### US Department of Agriculture and other federal government agencies

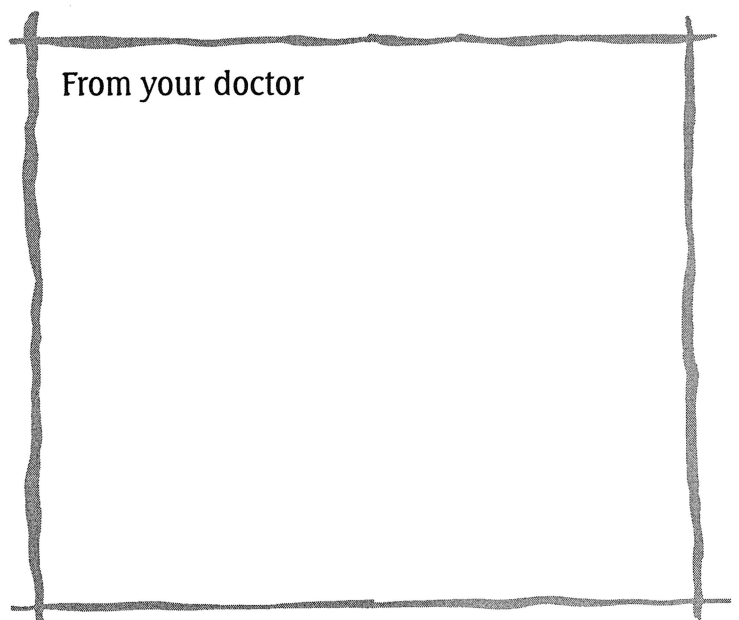
[www.nutrition.gov](http://www.nutrition.gov) (includes information about the new food group symbol, MyPlate, which replaced MyPyramid)

Developed in collaboration with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly American Dietetic Association). For more information about the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, visit their Web site at [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).

Listing of resources does not imply an endorsement by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The AAP is not responsible for the content of the resources mentioned in this publication. Web site addresses are as current as possible, but may change at any time.

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.

## From your doctor



American Academy  
of Pediatrics

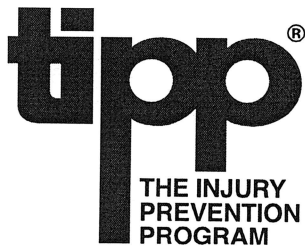


DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

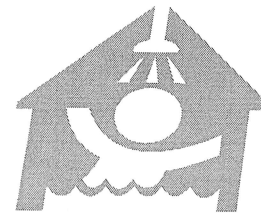
The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

American Academy of Pediatrics  
Web site—[www.HealthyChildren.org](http://www.HealthyChildren.org)

Copyright © 2011  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
All rights reserved.



A program of the American Academy of Pediatrics



## Home Water Hazards for Young Children

Each year many young children drown in swimming pools, other bodies of water, and standing water around the home such as

- Bathtubs, even with baby seats or bathtub “supporting ring” devices
- Buckets and pails, especially 5-gallon buckets and diaper pails
- Ice chests with melted ice
- Toilets
- Hot tubs, spas, and whirlpools
- Irrigation ditches, post holes, and wells
- Fish ponds, fountains

Children must be watched by an adult at all times when in or near water. Children may drown in an inch or 2 of water. Stay within an arm’s length of your child.

Other safety activities include the following:

- Empty all buckets, pails, and bathtubs completely after each use—do not leave them filled and unattended.
- Keep young children out of the bathroom unless they are closely watched. Teach others in the home to keep the bathroom door closed. Install a hook-and-eye latch or doorknob cover on the outside of the door. Always close the toilet lid, and consider using a toilet lid latch.
- Never leave a child alone in a bathtub or in the care of another child, even for a moment. A bath seat is not a safety device and is not a substitute for adult supervision.
- Use a rigid, lockable cover on a hot tub, spa, or whirlpool, or fence in all 4 sides as you would for a swimming pool.
- The hottest temperature at the faucet should be no more than 120°F to avoid burns. In many cases you can adjust your water heater.
- Throw away or tightly cover water or chemical mixtures after use.
- Watch children closely when they are playing near wells, open post holes, or irrigation or drainage ditches. Fill in empty holes or have fences installed to protect your child.
- Learn CPR and know how to get emergency help.

### From Your Doctor

The Perkins Pediatric Clinic, LLC  
Michael W. Perkins, MD  
614 North Pine Street  
DeRidder, LA 70634  
(337) 462-6000  
[www.perkinspediatrics.com](http://www.perkinspediatrics.com)

The information 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 the individual facts and circumstances.

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

