



# BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

## 9 AND 10 YEAR VISITS

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

### ✓ HOW YOUR FAMILY IS DOING

- Encourage your child to be independent and responsible. Hug and praise him.
- Spend time with your child. Get to know his friends and their families.
- Take pride in your child for good behavior and doing well in school.
- Help your child deal with conflict.
- If you are worried about your living or food situation, talk with us. Community agencies and programs such as SNAP can also provide information and assistance.
- Don't smoke or use e-cigarettes. Keep your home and car smoke-free. Tobacco-free spaces keep children healthy.
- Don't use alcohol or drugs. If you're worried about a family member's use, let us know, or reach out to local or online resources that can help.
- Put the family computer in a central place.
- Watch your child's computer use.
  - Know who he talks with online.
  - Install a safety filter.

### ✓ STAYING HEALTHY

- Take your child to the dentist twice a year.
- Give your child a fluoride supplement if the dentist recommends it.
- Remind your child to brush his teeth twice a day
  - After breakfast
  - Before bed
- Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride.
- Remind your child to floss his teeth once a day.
- Encourage your child to always wear a mouth guard to protect his teeth while playing sports.
- Encourage healthy eating by
  - Eating together often as a family
  - Serving vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat or fat-free dairy
  - Limiting sugars, salt, and low-nutrient foods
- Limit screen time to 2 hours (not counting schoolwork).
- Don't put a TV or computer in your child's bedroom.
- Consider making a family media use plan. It helps you make rules for media use and balance screen time with other activities, including exercise.
- Encourage your child to play actively for at least 1 hour daily.

### ✓ YOUR GROWING CHILD

- Be a model for your child by saying you are sorry when you make a mistake.
- Show your child how to use her words when she is angry.
- Teach your child to help others.
- Give your child chores to do and expect them to be done.
- Give your child her own personal space.
- Get to know your child's friends and their families.
- Understand that your child's friends are very important.
- Answer questions about puberty. Ask us for help if you don't feel comfortable answering questions.
- Teach your child the importance of delaying sexual behavior. Encourage your child to ask questions.
- Teach your child how to be safe with other adults.
  - No adult should ask a child to keep secrets from parents.
  - No adult should ask to see a child's private parts.
  - No adult should ask a child for help with the adult's own private parts.

### ✓ SCHOOL

- Show interest in your child's school activities.
- If you have any concerns, ask your child's teacher for help.
- Praise your child for doing things well at school.
- Set a routine and make a quiet place for doing homework.
- Talk with your child and her teacher about bullying.

**Helpful Resources:** Family Media Use Plan: [www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan](http://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan)

Smoking Quit Line: 800-784-8669 | Information About Car Safety Seats: [www.safercar.gov/parents](http://www.safercar.gov/parents) | Toll-free Auto Safety Hotline: 888-327-4236

# 9 AND 10 YEAR VISITS—PARENT

## ✓ SAFETY

- The back seat is the safest place to ride in a car until your child is 13 years old.
- Your child should use a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle's lap and shoulder belts fit.
- Provide a properly fitting helmet and safety gear for riding scooters, biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowboarding, and horseback riding.
- Teach your child to swim and watch him in the water.
- Use a hat, sun protection clothing, and sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher on his exposed skin. Limit time outside when the sun is strongest (11:00 am–3:00 pm).
- If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.

Consistent with *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition

For more information, go to <https://brightfutures.aap.org>.

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# BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PATIENT

## 9 AND 10 YEAR VISITS

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

### ✓ TAKING CARE OF YOU

- Enjoy spending time with your family.
- Help out at home and in your community.
- If you get angry with someone, try to walk away.
- Say “No!” to drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes or e-cigarettes. Walk away if someone offers you some.
- Talk with your parents, teachers, or another trusted adult if anyone bullies, threatens, or hurts you.
- Go online only when your parents say it’s OK. Don’t give your name, address, or phone number on a Web site unless your parents say it’s OK.
- If you want to chat online, tell your parents first.
- If you feel scared online, get off and tell your parents.

### ✓ GROWING AND DEVELOPING

- Ask a parent or trusted adult questions about the changes in your body.
- Share your feelings with others. Talking is a good way to handle anger, disappointment, worry, and sadness.
- To handle your anger, try
  - Staying calm
  - Listening and talking through it
  - Trying to understand the other person’s point of view
- Know that it’s OK to feel up sometimes and down others, but if you feel sad most of the time, let us know.
- Don’t stay friends with kids who ask you to do scary or harmful things.
- Know that it’s never OK for an older child or an adult to
  - Show you his or her private parts.
  - Ask to see or touch your private parts.
  - Scare you or ask you not to tell your parents.
  - If that person does any of these things, get away as soon as you can and tell your parent or another adult you trust.

### ✓ EATING WELL AND BEING ACTIVE

- Brush your teeth at least twice each day, morning and night.
- Floss your teeth every day.
- Wear your mouth guard when playing sports.
- Eat breakfast every day. It helps you learn.
- Be a healthy eater. It helps you do well in school and sports.
  - Have vegetables, fruits, lean protein, and whole grains at meals and snacks.
  - Eat when you’re hungry. Stop when you feel satisfied.
  - Eat with your family often.
- Drink 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk or water instead of soda or juice drinks.
- Limit high-fat foods and drinks such as candies, snacks, fast food, and soft drinks.
- Talk with us if you’re thinking about losing weight or using dietary supplements.
- Plan and get at least 1 hour of active exercise every day.

### ✓ DOING WELL AT SCHOOL

- Try your best at school. Doing well in school helps you feel good about yourself.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Join clubs and teams, faith groups, and friends for activities after school.
- Tell kids who pick on you or try to hurt you to stop. Then walk away.
- Tell adults you trust about bullies.

## 9 AND 10 YEAR VISITS—PATIENT



### PLAYING IT SAFE

- Wear your lap and shoulder seat belt at all times in the car. Use a booster seat if the lap and shoulder seat belt does not fit you yet.
- Sit in the back seat until you are 13 years old. It is the safest place.
- Wear your helmet and safety gear when riding scooters, biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowboarding, and horseback riding.
- Always wear the right safety equipment for your activities.
- Never swim alone. Ask about learning how to swim if you don't already know how.
- Always wear sunscreen and a hat when you're outside. Try not to be outside for too long between 11:00 am and 3:00 pm, when it's easy to get a sunburn.
- Have friends over only when your parents say it's OK.
- Ask to go home if you are uncomfortable at someone else's house or a party.
- If you see a gun, don't touch it. Tell your parents right away.

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## Everyone in the Family

- Communal screen activities positively engage children in different ways! Break down screen time's inherent tendency to isolate us by enjoying a movie night or trip to the theater together.
- Participate in regular, physical activity together – walks, bike rides, trips to the park, etc.
- Model the type of behavior you want – limit your own screen time to 2 hours per day.
- Reinforce the message by having consistent conversations about appropriate amounts of screen time.
- Designate media-free time together, such as at the dinner table, in the car, etc., to achieve balance.



### Sources:

"American Academy of Pediatrics Announces New Recommendations for Children's Media Use." AAP.org, [www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/american-academy-of-pediatrics-announces-new-recommendations-for-childrens-media-use.aspx](http://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/american-academy-of-pediatrics-announces-new-recommendations-for-childrens-media-use.aspx).

Marcoux, Heather. "No More Guessing: Screen Time Guidelines for Toddlers to Teenagers." Motherly, Motherly, 7 Aug. 2018, [www.mother.ly/child/no-more-guessing-screen-time-guidelines-for-toddlers-to-teenagers](http://www.mother.ly/child/no-more-guessing-screen-time-guidelines-for-toddlers-to-teenagers).

## Managing Screen Time at Home

The guidelines listed above are a great starting point. Additional ways to monitor and protect your children from the effect of blue light exposure from digital screens include:

- Monitoring time on devices via screen-time-tracking and parental control apps like [Zift](#) and [Screen Time](#)
- Balancing exposure by implementing "earned" screen time by completing homework, finishing chores, brushing teeth, etc.
- Removing or shutting off digital devices in the child's bedroom 2 hours before bedtime to enforce limits and encourage a consistent sleep routine.
- Providing nutritional support against the harmful effects of blue light on eyesight via [EyePromise Screen Shield™ Teen](#)



# Beyond Screen Time: A Parent's Guide to Media Use

Media in all forms, including TV, computers, and smartphones, can affect how children and teens feel, learn, think, and behave. However, parents (you) are still the most important influence.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) encourages you to help your children develop healthy media use habits early on. Read on to learn more.

## Media Use and Your Children

You can decide what media use is best for your family. Remember, all children and teens need adequate sleep (8–12 hours, depending on age), physical activity (1 hour), and time away from media. (See the “Media Use Guidelines” chart for general guidelines for media use based on age.)

Because children today are growing up in a time of highly personalized media use experiences, parents must develop personalized media use plans for their children. Media plans should take into account each child's age, health, personality, and developmental stage. Create a Family Media Use Plan online at [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](http://HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan). By creating a Family Media Use Plan, parents can help children and teens balance their media use with other healthy activities.

## Why use digital media?

- Digital media use can
  - Expose users to new ideas and information.
  - Raise awareness of current events and issues.
  - Promote community participation.
  - Help students work with others on assignments and projects.
- Digital media use also has social benefits that
  - Allow families and friends to stay in touch, no matter where they live.
  - Enhance access to valuable support networks, especially for people with illnesses or disabilities.
  - Help promote wellness and healthy behaviors, such as how to quit smoking or how to eat healthy.

## Why limit media use?

Overuse of digital media may place your children at risk of

- **Not enough sleep.** Children with more media exposure or who have a TV, computer, or mobile device in their bedroom sleep less and fall asleep later at night. Even babies can be overstimulated by screens and miss the sleep they need to grow. Exposure to light (particularly blue light) and stimulating content from screens can delay or disrupt sleep and have a negative effect on school.
- **Delays in learning and social skills.** Children who watch too much TV in infancy and preschool years can show delays in attention, thinking, language, and social skills. One of the reasons for the delays could be because they interact less with parents and family. Parents who keep the TV on or focus on their own digital media miss precious opportunities to interact with their children and help them learn. Children and teens often use entertainment media

at the same time they're doing other things, such as homework. Such multitasking can have a negative effect on school.

- **Obesity.** Watching TV for more than 1.5 hours daily is a risk factor for obesity for children 4 through 9 years of age. Teens who watch more than 5 hours of TV per day are 5 times more likely to have overweight than teens who watch 0 to 2 hours. Food advertising and snacking while watching TV can promote obesity. Also, children who overuse media are less apt to be active with healthy, physical play.
- **Behavior problems.** Violent content on TV and screens can contribute to behavior problems in children, either because they are scared and confused by what they see or they try to mimic on-screen characters.
- **Problematic Internet use.** Children who overuse online media can be at risk for problematic Internet use. Heavy video gamers are at risk for Internet gaming disorder. They spend most of their free time online and show less interest in off-line or real-life relationships. There may be increased risks for depression at both the high and low ends of Internet use.
- **Risky behaviors.** Teens' displays on social media often show risky behaviors, such as substance use, sexual behaviors, self-injury, or eating disorders. Exposure of teens through media to alcohol, tobacco use, or sexual behaviors is associated with earlier initiation of these behaviors.
- **Sexing, loss of privacy, and predators.** Sexting is sending nude or seminude images, as well as sexually explicit text messages, using a cell phone. About 12% of youth 10 to 19 years of age have sent a sexual photo to someone else. Teens need to know that once content is shared with others, they may not be able to delete or remove it completely. They may also not know about or choose not to use privacy settings. Another risk is that sex offenders may use social networking, chat rooms, e-mail, and online games to contact and exploit children.
- **Cyberbullying.** Children and teens online can be victims of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying can lead to short- and long-term negative social, academic, and health issues for both the bully and target. Fortunately, programs to help prevent bullying may reduce cyberbullying.

## More Media Use Tips for Parents, Families, and Caregivers

- Do not feel pressured to introduce technology early. Media interfaces are intuitive, and children can learn quickly.
- Find out what type of and how much media are used and what media behaviors are appropriate for each child—and for you. Place consistent limits on hours of media use as well as types of media used.
- Select and co-view media with your child so your child can use media to learn, be creative, and share these experiences with your family.
- Check your children's media use for their health and safety.

## Media Use Guidelines

Age	Description	Tips
Younger than 2 years	<p>Children younger than 2 learn and grow when they explore the physical world around them. Their minds learn best when they interact and play with parents, siblings, caregivers, and other children and adults.</p> <p>Children younger than 2 have a hard time understanding what they see on screen media and how it relates to the world around them.</p> <p>However, children 18–24 months of age can learn from high-quality educational media, IF their parents play or view with them and reteach the lessons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media use should be very limited and only when an adult is standing by to co-view, talk, and teach (for example, video chatting with family along with parents).</li> <li>• For children 18–24 months, if you want to introduce digital media,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Choose high-quality programming.</li> <li>◦ Use media together with your child.</li> <li>◦ Avoid solo media use.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2–5 years of age	<p>At 2 years of age, many children can understand and learn words from live video chatting. Young children can listen to or join a conversation with their parents.</p> <p>Children 3–5 years of age have more mature minds, so a well-designed educational program such as Sesame Street (in moderation) can help children learn social, language, and reading skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit screen use to no more than 1 hour per day.</li> <li>• Find other activities for your children to do that are healthy for their bodies and minds.</li> <li>• Choose media that is interactive, nonviolent, educational, and pro-social.</li> <li>• Co-view or co-play with your children.</li> </ul>
5 years and older	<p>Today's grade-schoolers and teens are growing up immersed in digital media. They may even have their own mobile device and other devices to access digital media.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure media use is not displacing other important activities, such as sleep, family time, and exercise.</li> <li>• Check your children's media use for their health and safety.</li> </ul>
Tweens and teens	<p>Tweens and teens are more likely to have some independence in what they choose and watch, and they may be consuming media without parental oversight.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents should engage tweens and teens in conversations about their media use, digital citizenship, what they've seen or read, who they are communicating with, and what they have learned from their media use.</li> </ul>

See *More Media Use Tips for Parents, Families, and Caregivers*. Also, create a Family Media Use Plan online at [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](http://HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan). A Family Media Use Plan is useful to set consistent expectations and limits on media use for parents, children, and teens.

- Stop use of devices or screens for 1 hour before bedtime. Do not let your children sleep with devices such as smartphones.
- Discourage entertainment media while doing homework.
- Plan media-free times together, such as family dinners.
- Decide on media-free, unplugged locations in homes, such as bedrooms.
- Engage in family activities that promote well-being, such as sports, reading, and talking with each other.
- Set a good example. Turn off the TV and put your smartphone on “do not disturb” during media-free times with your family.
- Use sites like Common Sense Media ([www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)) to help you decide if movies, TV shows, apps, and video games are age and content appropriate for your children and your family values.
- Share your family media rules with caregivers or grandparents to help ensure rules are consistent.
- Talk with your children and teens about online citizenship and safety. This includes treating others with respect online, avoiding cyberbullying and sexting, being wary of online solicitations, and safeguarding privacy.
- Remember that your opinion counts. TV, video games, and other media producers, airers, and sponsors pay attention to the views of the public. For more information from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), visit <http://reboot.fcc.gov/parents>.
- Encourage your school and community to advocate for better media programs and healthier habits. For example, organize a Screen-Free Week in your town with other parents, teachers, and neighbors.

### From Your Doctor

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# WHAT IS A FAMILY MEDIA USE PLAN?

A Family Media Use Plan helps parents balance their children's online and off-line lives. Because every family is different, the American Academy of Pediatrics has a new tool to help you create a personalized plan that works within your family's values and busy lifestyles.



## Younger Than 1½ to 2 Years

Avoid media use (except video chatting).

## Preschoolers

No more than 1 hour per day of high-quality programming

## Grade-schoolers & Teens

Don't let media displace other important activities.

- 1 hour of exercise daily
- Family meals
- A full night's sleep
- "Unplugged" downtime

## All Ages

Co-view media with your kids (enjoy it with them) to help them learn from what they are doing, seeing, and saying online.

**Be their media mentor!**

Create your family's plan at [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](http://HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan).

By creating a Family Media Use Plan, parents can help children and teens balance their media use with other healthy activities.



Learn more and create a personalized Family Media Use Plan at [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](http://HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan).

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# Social Media Tips for Kids and Teens

**Link:** <https://health.choc.org/handout/social-media-tips-for-kids-and-teens/>

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**Social media can be a fun but dangerous place. To protect yourself from being exploited, bullied, disrespected or tricked, it is important to follow some important rules for social media safety.**

## **Follow the rules**

Be honest with your parents about the apps you download and the content you access. Adults can help protect you from predators and from content that might be inappropriate or dangerous.

## **Think before you post**

Do not post or share messages, pictures or videos that you would not want the world to see. You cannot control how information is shared by those who see it, even if you post it privately or later delete it. Remember that can never permanently erase something that has been published on the internet. You could face consequences later on in school, college interviews or job applications, for example.

## **Be aware of your privacy settings**

Make sure you know who can see what you post. The safest choice is usually to allow only your friends to see what you post. Always disable location services. Although it can be fun to let your friends know where you are, this also allows people with bad intentions to know how to reach you. Never share your passwords with anyone other than your parents.

## **Be cautious of requests by strangers**

Play it safe and only accept friend requests from your real-world friends. Do not agree to meet strangers offline, and never give away your phone number or address.

## **Be kind**

Remember that online communication does not allow you to tell how others are feeling, as you cannot see their facial expressions or hear their voice. Make sure that what you write cannot be misinterpreted. Be respectful of others' posts, even if you don't agree with them. If you wouldn't say something to someone's face, don't say it online.

## **If you are being cyberbullied, reach out**

Tell an adult you trust, such as a parent, teacher or school counselor, if you or anyone you know is being cyberbullied. Do not delete any communications. Save all screenshots and emails so you can show an adult. Block the person who is harassing you and make copies of all communications if needed.

## **Avoid overusing social media**

It's easy to get "sucked in" on social media and spend much more time than you intended to on it. But when people spend a lot of time on social media, they are at a higher risk of experiencing negative consequences, such as disrupted sleep and what researchers call "Facebook depression" (low self-esteem associated with comparing self with others who are thought to be "better off"). Spend quality time offline as well. Setting a timer or a time limit on your phone's settings for social media apps can be helpful.

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## Crisis Resources

If your child expresses thoughts of wanting to harm themselves or others, call **9-1-1** or visit the nearest emergency department.

### **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:**

**Call 9-8-8**

**Text any message to 9-8-8**

**Chat online at [988lifeline.org/chat](https://988lifeline.org/chat)**

### **Crisis Text Line:**

**Text "HOME" to 741741**

## **External Resources**

### **American Psychological Association**

Promoting healthy technology use for children (<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/digital-guidelines>)

### **Child Mind Institute**

Media Guidelines for Kids of All Ages (<https://childmind.org/article/media-guidelines-for-kids-of-all-ages/>)

### **Healthychildren.org**

Family media plan and media time calculator (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx>)

### **Healthychildren.org**

Dangerous internet challenges (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Dangerous-Internet-Challenges.aspx>)

### **The New York Times**

How to use TikTok's parental controls

(<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/26/technology/personaltech/tiktok-parental-controls.html>)

### **YouTube**

Parent resources for YouTube ([https://www.youtube.com/intl/ALL\\_us/kids/parent-resources/](https://www.youtube.com/intl/ALL_us/kids/parent-resources/))

### **Facebook**

Safety resources for parents (<https://www.facebook.com/help/1079477105456277>)

### **Instagram**

Parental guide for teens on Instagram (<https://about.instagram.com/community/parents>)

## **Learn more about CHOC's pediatric mental health services**

At CHOC, we specialize in providing a full spectrum of pediatric mental healthcare, including inpatient, intensive outpatient and outpatient program services.

Get resources (<https://www.choc.org/programs-services/mental-health/>)

## **Get 24/7 advice from CHOC**

Call our free nurse helpline at 1-844-GET-CHOC (tel:18444382462)

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*LONG LIVE CHILDHOOD*

# puberty— ready or not expect some big changes



Puberty is the time in your life when your body starts changing from that of a child to that of an adult. At times you may feel like your body is totally out of control! Your arms, legs, hands, and feet may grow faster than the rest of your body. You may feel a little clumsier than usual.

Compared to your friends you may feel too tall, too short, too fat, or too skinny. You may feel self-conscious about these changes, but many of your friends probably do too.

Everyone goes through puberty, but not always at the same time or exactly in the same way. In general, here's what you can expect.

## When?

There's no "right" time for puberty to begin. But girls start a little earlier than boys—usually between 8 and 13 years of age. Puberty for boys usually starts at about 10 to 14 years of age.

## What's happening?

Chemicals called hormones will cause many changes in your body.

### Breasts!

**Girls.** The first sign of puberty in most girls is breast development—small, tender lumps under one or both nipples. The soreness goes away as your breasts grow. Don't worry if one breast grows a little faster than the other. By the time your breasts are fully developed, they usually end up being the same size.

When your breasts get larger, you may want to start wearing a bra. Some girls are excited about this. Other girls may feel embarrassed, especially if they are the first of their friends to need a bra. Do what is comfortable for you.

**Boys.** During puberty, boys may have swelling under their nipples too. If this happens to you, you may worry that you're growing breasts. Don't worry—you're not. This swelling is very common and only temporary. But if you're worried, talk with your pediatrician.

### Hair, where?!

**Girls & Boys.** During puberty, soft hair starts to grow in the pubic area (the area between your legs and around your genitals—vagina or penis). This hair will become thick and very curly. You may also notice hair under your arms and on your legs. Boys might get hair on their faces or chests. Shaving is a personal choice. However, if you shave, use only an electric shaver.

### Zits!

**Girls & Boys.** Another change that happens during puberty is that your skin gets oilier and you may start to sweat more. This is because your glands are growing too. It's important to wash every day to keep your skin clean. Most people use a deodorant or antiperspirant to keep odor and wetness under control.

Don't be surprised, even if you wash your face every day, that you still get pimples. This is called acne, and it's normal during

this time when your hormone levels are high. Almost all teens get acne at one time or another. Whether your case is mild or severe, there are things you can do to keep it under control. For more information on controlling acne, talk with your pediatrician.

### Curves and muscles

**Girls.** As you go through puberty, you'll get taller, your hips will get wider, and your waist will get smaller. Your body also begins to build up fat in your belly, bottom, and legs. This is normal and gives your body the curvier shape of a woman.

**Boys.** As you go through puberty, you'll get taller, your shoulders will get broader, and as your muscles get bigger, your weight will increase.

Sometimes the weight gain of puberty causes girls and boys to feel so uncomfortable with how they look that they try to lose weight by throwing up, not eating, or taking medicines. This is not a healthy way to lose weight and may make you very sick. If you feel this way, or have tried any of these ways to lose weight, please talk with your parents or your pediatrician.

### Does size matter?

**Boys.** During puberty, the penis and testes get larger. There's also an increase in sex hormones. You may notice you get erections (when the penis gets stiff and hard) more often than before. This is normal. Even though you may feel embarrassed, try to remember that unless you draw attention to it, most people won't even notice your erection. Also, remember that the size of your penis has nothing to do with manliness or sexual functioning.

### Wet dreams

**Boys.** During puberty, your testes begin to produce sperm. This means that during an erection, you may also ejaculate. This is when semen (made up of sperm and other fluids) is released through the penis. This could happen while you are sleeping. You might wake up to find your sheets or pajamas are wet. This is called a nocturnal emission or "wet dream." This is normal and will stop as you get older.

### Periods

**Girls.** Your menstrual cycle, or "period," starts during puberty. Most girls get their periods 2 to 2 1/2 years after their breasts start to grow (between 10–16 years of age).

During puberty, your ovaries begin to release eggs. If an egg connects with sperm from a man's penis (fertilization), it will grow inside your uterus and develop into a baby. To prepare for this, a thick layer of tissue and blood cells builds up in your uterus. If the egg doesn't connect with a sperm, the body does not need these tissues and cells. They turn into a blood-like fluid and flow out of your vagina. Your period is the monthly discharge of this fluid out of the body.

A girl who has started having periods is able to get pregnant, even if she doesn't have a period every month.

You will need to wear some kind of sanitary pad and/or tampon to absorb this fluid and keep it from getting on your clothes. Most periods last from 3 to 7 days. Having your period does not mean you have to avoid any of your normal activities like swimming, horseback riding, or gym class. Exercise can even help get rid of cramps and other discomforts that you may feel during your period.

### **Voice cracking?**

**Boys.** Your voice will get deeper, but it doesn't happen all at once. It usually starts with your voice cracking. As you keep growing, the cracking will stop and your voice will stay at the lower range.

### **New feelings**

In addition to all the physical changes you will go through during puberty, there are many emotional changes as well. For example, you may start to care more about what other people think about you because you want to be accepted and liked. Your relationships with others may begin to change. Some become more important and some less so. You'll start to separate more from your parents and identify with others your age. You may begin to make decisions that could affect the rest of your life.

At times you may not like the attention of your parents and other adults, but they too are trying to adjust to the changes that you're going through. Many teens feel that their parents don't understand them—this is a normal feeling. It's usually best to let them know (politely) how you feel and then talk things out together.

Also, it's normal to lose your temper more easily and to feel that nobody cares about you. Talk about your feelings with your parents, another trusted adult, or your pediatrician. You may be surprised at how much better you will feel.

### **Sex and sexuality**

During this time, many young people also become more aware of their feminine and masculine sides. A look, a touch, or just thinking about someone may make your heart beat faster and produce a warm, tingling feeling all over. Talking with your parents or pediatrician is a good way to get information and to help you think about how these changes affect you.

You may ask yourself...

- When should I start dating?
- When is it OK to kiss?
- Is it OK to masturbate (stimulate your genitals for sexual pleasure)?
- How far should I go sexually?
- When will I be ready to have sexual intercourse?
- Will having sex help my relationship?
- If I am attracted to a same-sex friend, does that mean I am gay or lesbian?
- Is oral sex really sex?

### **Some answers**

Masturbation is normal and won't harm you. Many boys and girls masturbate, many don't. Deciding to become sexually active, however, can be very confusing. On the one hand, you hear so many warnings and dangers about having sex. On the other hand, movies, TV, magazines, even the lyrics in songs all seem to be telling you that having sex is OK.

The fact is, sex is a part of life and, like many parts of life, it can be good or bad. It all depends on you and the choices you make. Take dating, for example. If you and a friend feel ready to start dating and it's OK with your parents, that's fine. You may find yourself in a more serious relationship. But if one of you wants to stop dating, try not to hurt the other person's feelings—just be honest with each other. After a breakup both partners may be sad or angry, but keeping on with normal activities and talking it over with a trusted adult is usually helpful.

Getting close to someone you like is OK too. Holding hands, hugging, and kissing may happen, but they don't have to lead to having sex. Deciding whether to have sex is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Some good advice is in the article "Deciding to Wait." Why not take your time and think it through? Talk with your parents about your family's values. Waiting to have sex until you are older, in a serious relationship, and able to accept the responsibilities that come along with it is a great idea!

And you can avoid becoming pregnant, getting someone pregnant, or getting diseases. There is only one way to avoid pregnancy and infections related to sex, and that is by not having sex. And remember that oral sex is sex. You don't have to worry about pregnancy with oral sex, but you do have to worry about infections like herpes, gonorrhea, HIV (the virus that causes AIDS), and HPV (human papillomavirus -- the virus that can cause cancers of the mouth and throat, cervix and genitals in teens and adults).

However, if you decide to have sex, talk with your pediatrician about which type of birth control is best for you and how to protect yourself against sexually transmitted infections.

### **Taking care of yourself**

As you get older, there will be many decisions that you will need to make to ensure that you stay healthy.

Eating right, exercising, and getting enough rest are important during puberty because your body is going through many changes. It's also important to feel good about yourself and the decisions you make. Whenever you have questions about your health or your feelings, don't be afraid to share them with your parents and pediatrician.

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Courtesy HBCBS

Get your health on track by adding these tips to your daily routine.

**Eat 5 servings of fruits and veggies every single day.**



**Examples:**

**Fruits**

- Apples, bananas, oranges
- Berries, grapes
- Pears, plums, melon
- Canned fruit (packed in 100% juice or water)

**Vegetables**

- Asparagus, broccoli
- Beans, lentils, peas
- Carrots, celery
- Spinach, collard greens
- Tomatoes, peppers
- Canned veggies

**Limit screen time to 2 hours or less.**



**Screen time includes:**

- Watching TV, videos or DVDs
- Playing or being on a computer
- Playing regular and hand-held video games
- Going to the movies
- Instant messaging or online chatting

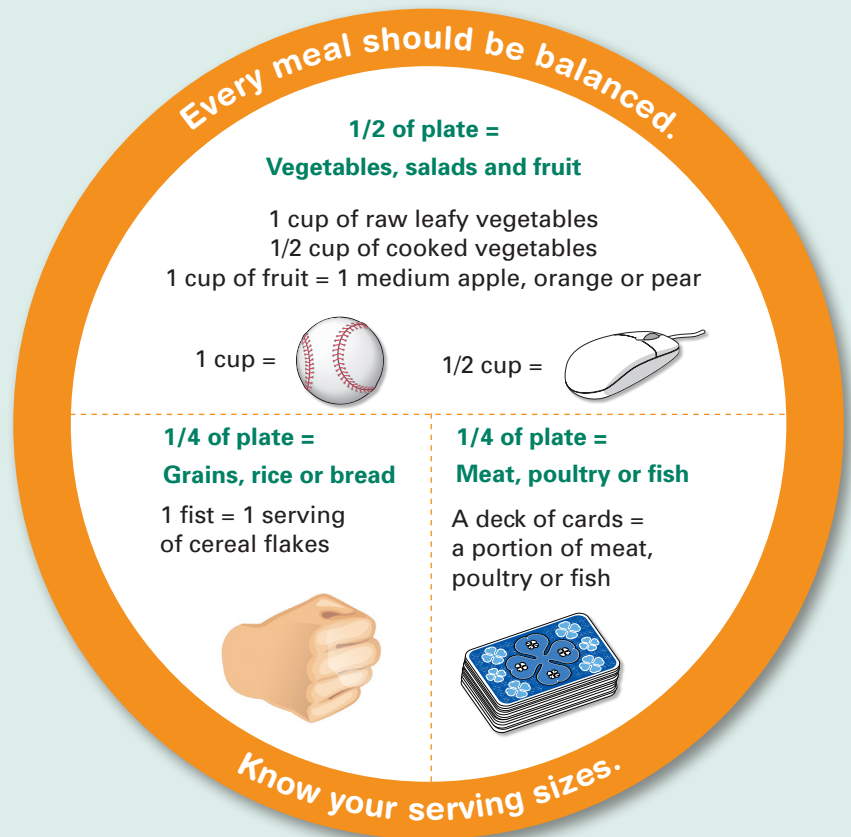


**Get at least 1 hour of physical activity.**

*Make sure an adult is there if necessary.*

- Shoot baskets
- Play volleyball
- Dance
- Skateboard

Review provided by leading experts:  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Diabetes Association



**Limit sweetened drinks to 0.**

**Examples of sweetened drinks to stay away from:**

- Soft drinks, soda, pop
- Juice drinks
- Chocolate milk
- Sports drinks

**Instead, drink:**

- Water with lemon, lime or orange to add flavor
- 1% or skim milk
- Unsweetened drinks
- Ask your physician about other healthy drink options



## Eat 5 servings of fruits and veggies every single day.



- Try to eat at least five or more fruits or vegetables a day. Use this as an opportunity to try new foods.
- Look at the labels of food that claim to be fruit-based, like gummy candy, because they may have a lot of sugar.
- Avoid eating at fast-food restaurants.
- Put food on small plates, like salad plates, instead of large dinner plates. Tell your family to do the same.
- Avoid eating fried foods, and look for healthier options like baked or grilled foods instead.
- Cook a meal with your parents for your family.
- Remember your portion sizes: 3 oz. of meat is the size of a deck of playing cards, a 4 oz. bagel is the size of a hockey puck, one cup of pasta is the size of a tennis ball, and 1 oz. of cheese is the size of four dice.

## Limit screen time to 2 hours or less.



- Lower your screen time by at least 30 minutes a day, until you are getting less than two hours of screen time each day.
- Remove the TV from your bedroom.
- Suggest activities to do after dinner as a family, such as going for a walk or bike riding.
- Avoid eating food in front of the TV.

## Get at least 1 hour of physical activity.



- Add 10 minutes of physical activity to your routine each day until you get at least an hour a day.
- Walk or ride your bike to and from school.
- Go for a bike ride.
- Swim at your local pool.
- Go for a hike.
- Dance to your favorite music in your room.
- Mow the lawn, wash the car or vacuum. You can be physically active when you are doing chores.
- Start a basketball or soccer team with your friends, and check out local pick-up games in your neighborhood park.
- Join a school sports team, outdoor club or dance class.
- Take a walk and bring your family along.
- Have a contest with a friend to see who is more active over a period of time (a few weeks, a month, two months, etc.).
- Make a list of all your reasons for being healthier. Read it often.
- Other activities: \_\_\_\_\_

## Limit sweetened drinks to 0.



- Drink water or low-fat/nonfat milk instead of sweetened drinks like juice, sweet tea, sports drinks or soft drinks.
- Read the labels on soda, juice and fruit-based drinks to avoid those that have a lot of sugar.
- Tell everyone in your family to avoid drinks that have sugar.

## BULLYING: IT'S NOT OK

Bullying is when one child picks on another child again and again. Usually children who are being bullied are either weaker or smaller, as well as shy, and generally feel helpless. Some children and youth are at higher risk of being bullied, such as those with disabilities or other special health care needs and those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Bullying occurs when there is an imbalance of power. Sometimes children argue with each other or make bad choices in their behavior, which is not bullying.

Cyberbullying occurs electronically, using things like social media sites, texting, chat rooms, or instant messaging. Cyberbullying can happen any time—day or night—and is visible to many more people than traditional bullying. It's very hard to undo or hide what the child who is cyberbullying has done.

### FACTS ABOUT BULLYING

- Both girls and boys can be bullies.
- A child can be both the bully and the victim.
- Bullies target children who cry, get mad, or easily give in to them.
- There are 3 types of bullying.
  - Physical—hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, punching
  - Verbal—threatening, taunting, teasing, hate speech (This can also include electronic messaging)
  - Social—excluding victims from activities or starting rumors about them



- Bullying happens
  - At school, when teachers are not there to see what is going on
  - When adults are not watching—going to and from school, on the playground, or in the neighborhood
  - Through electronic methods, such as social networks, texting, and instant messaging

Common characteristics of bullies and victims (from [www.StopBullying.gov](http://www.StopBullying.gov))

Generally, children who are bullied have one or more of the following risk factors:

- Are seen as different from their peers, such as being overweight or underweight, wearing glasses or different clothing, being new to a school, or not having what kids consider “cool”
- Are seen as weak or unable to defend themselves



- Are less popular than others and have few friends
- Do not get along well with others, are seen as annoying or provoking, or provoke others for attention

Those who bully others do not need to be stronger or bigger than those they bully. Often, these students require support to change their behavior and address other challenges that may be influencing their behavior. Children who bully may have more than one of the following characteristics:

- Are aggressive or easily frustrated
- Have less parental involvement
- Have issues at home
- Think badly of others
- Have difficulty following rules
- View violence in a positive way
- Have friends who bully others

### **EFFECTS OF BULLYING**

Children who experience any kind of bullying—including cyberbullying—can experience long-term effects, even into adulthood. Bullying can have consequences for both the bully and the victim, who

- Have a higher risk of substance use
- Are more likely to skip or drop out of school
- Can have health complications
- Have poor school performance
- Experience depression or other mental health challenges

### **TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT BULLYING**

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

- How are things going at school?
- What do you think of other kids in your class?
- Does anyone get picked on or bullied?
- What is lunchtime like? (or recess)
- Is anyone texting, tweeting, or posting mean things on social networks?

### **HELP YOUR CHILD RESIST BULLYING**

You cannot always help your child avoid all bullying, but you can help him build coping skills to deal with difficult situations. Spend time with your child, show him love and encouragement, and model good behavior toward others. Talk through difficult situations with your child so he knows he can trust you with his problems.

### **WHEN YOUR CHILD IS BULLIED**

It can be upsetting to find out your child has been bullied. Let her know you are there for her, willing to listen, and taking action to make sure it doesn't continue. Here are some things you can do.

- *Help your child learn how to respond.* For example, "Let's talk about what you can do and say if this happens again."
- Teach your child how to.
  - Look the bully in the eye.
  - Stand tall and stay calm.
  - Walk away.
  - Not respond to electronic messages and cut off communications with those who are sending unwanted messages.
  - Show bullying texts, posts, or e-mails to a parent or other trusted adult.

- Teach your child how to say in a firm voice.
  - “I don’t like what you are doing.”
  - “Please do not talk to me like that.”
  - “Why would you say that?”

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

- **Teach your child when and how to ask for help.** Your child should not be afraid to ask an adult for help when bullying happens. Since some children are embarrassed about being bullied, parents need to let their children know being bullied is not their fault.
- **Encourage your child to make friends with other children.** There are many adult-supervised groups, in and out of school, that your child can join. Invite your child’s friends over to your home.
- **Support activities that interest your child.** By participating in activities such as team sports, music groups, or social clubs, your child will develop new abilities and social skills. When children feel good about how they relate to others, they are less likely to be picked on.
- **Alert school officials to the problems, and work with them on solutions.** Since bullying often happens outside the classroom, talk with the principal, guidance counselor, or playground monitors, as well as your child’s teachers. Write down and report all bullying, including cyberbullying, to your child’s school. By knowing when and where the bullying occurs, you and your child can better plan what to do if it happens again.

### **WHEN YOUR CHILD IS THE BULLY**

No parents want to think their child would bully another child, but it does happen and parents must be ready to respond. If you know your child is bullying someone, take it very seriously.

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### ***Now is the time when you can change your child’s behavior.***

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

- Help your child understand what bullying is and why it is a problem. Help your child understand how bullying hurts other children. Give real examples of the good and bad results of your child’s actions.
- Set firm and consistent limits on your child’s aggressive or hurtful behavior. Be sure your child knows that bullying is never OK.
- Be a positive role model. Children need to develop new and constructive ways for getting what they want. All children can learn to treat others with respect.
- Use effective, nonphysical discipline, such as loss of privileges. When your child needs discipline, explain why the behavior was wrong and how your child can change it.
- Find positive ways to stop bullying with the school principal, teachers, counselors, and parents of the children your child has bullied.
- Supervise your child and help develop individual skills and interests. Children with too much “time on their hands” are more likely to find themselves in bad situations.

- Supervise their time online, and monitor what sites they are visiting. Require them to friend you on social media sites and share their passwords with you.
- Ask for help. If you find it difficult to change the behavior, reach out to a professional, like a teacher, counselor, or your child's pediatrician.

It is important for everyone in the community to work together to build a safe environment for all children. Partner with your child's pediatrician, school district, and local community leaders to create anti-bullying messages and policies. Find more information at [StopBullying.gov](http://StopBullying.gov).

### **WHEN YOUR CHILD IS A BYSTANDER (with additions from StopBullying.gov):**

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

- Don't give bullying an audience. Often, those who bully are encouraged by the attention they receive from bystanders. Children can help stop bullying by actively not supporting it.
- Set a good example.
- Help the child who is bullied get away.
- Tell a trusted adult. Talking with an adult is not tattling. Standing up for another child by getting help is an act of courage and safety. To make it easier, suggest taking a friend.
- Be a friend. Children can help someone who's been bullied by simply being nice to him. Being friendly can go a long way toward letting him know that he's not alone.

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## VACCINE INFORMATION STATEMENT

### Influenza (Flu) Vaccine (Inactivated or Recombinant): *What you need to know*

Many vaccine information statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis)

Hojas de información sobre vacunas están disponibles en español y en muchos otros idiomas. Visite [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis)

#### 1. Why get vaccinated?

**Influenza vaccine** can prevent **influenza (flu)**.

**Flu** is a contagious disease that spreads around the United States every year, usually between October and May. Anyone can get the flu, but it is more dangerous for some people. Infants and young children, people 65 years and older, pregnant people, and people with certain health conditions or a weakened immune system are at greatest risk of flu complications.

Pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus infections, and ear infections are examples of flu-related complications. If you have a medical condition, such as heart disease, cancer, or diabetes, flu can make it worse.

Flu can cause fever and chills, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, cough, headache, and runny or stuffy nose. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

In an average year, **thousands of people in the United States die from flu**, and many more are hospitalized. Flu vaccine prevents millions of illnesses and flu-related visits to the doctor each year.

#### 2. Influenza vaccines

CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated every flu season. **Children 6 months through 8 years of age** may need 2 doses during a single flu season. **Everyone else** needs only 1 dose each flu season.

It takes about 2 weeks for protection to develop after vaccination.

There are many flu viruses, and they are always changing. Each year a new flu vaccine is made to protect against the influenza viruses believed to be likely to cause disease in the upcoming flu season.

Even when the vaccine doesn't exactly match these viruses, it may still provide some protection.

Influenza vaccine **does not cause flu**.

Influenza vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

#### 3. Talk with your health care provider

Tell your vaccination provider if the person getting the vaccine:

- Has had an **allergic reaction after a previous dose of influenza vaccine**, or has any **severe, life-threatening allergies**
- Has ever had **Guillain-Barré Syndrome** (also called "GBS")

In some cases, your health care provider may decide to postpone influenza vaccination until a future visit.

Influenza vaccine can be administered at any time during pregnancy. People who are or will be pregnant during influenza season should receive inactivated influenza vaccine.

People with minor illnesses, such as a cold, may be vaccinated. People who are moderately or severely ill should usually wait until they recover before getting influenza vaccine.

Your health care provider can give you more information.



**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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## 4. Risks of a vaccine reaction

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- Soreness, redness, and swelling where the shot is given, fever, muscle aches, and headache can happen after influenza vaccination.
- There may be a very small increased risk of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) after inactivated influenza vaccine (the flu shot).

Young children who get the flu shot along with pneumococcal vaccine (PCV13) and/or DTaP vaccine at the same time might be slightly more likely to have a seizure caused by fever. Tell your health care provider if a child who is getting flu vaccine has ever had a seizure.

People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy or have vision changes or ringing in the ears.

As with any medicine, there is a very remote chance of a vaccine causing a severe allergic reaction, other serious injury, or death.

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## 5. What if there is a serious problem?

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An allergic reaction could occur after the vaccinated person leaves the clinic. If you see signs of a severe allergic reaction (hives, swelling of the face and throat, difficulty breathing, a fast heartbeat, dizziness, or weakness), call **9-1-1** and get the person to the nearest hospital.

For other signs that concern you, call your health care provider.

Adverse reactions should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Your health care provider will usually file this report, or you can do it yourself. Visit the VAERS website at [www.vaers.hhs.gov](http://www.vaers.hhs.gov) or call **1-800-822-7967**. *VAERS is only for reporting reactions, and VAERS staff members do not give medical advice.*

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## 6. The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program

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The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) is a federal program that was created to compensate people who may have been injured by certain vaccines. Claims regarding alleged injury or death due to vaccination have a time limit for filing, which may be as short as two years. Visit the VICP website at [www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation](http://www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation) or call **1-800-338-2382** to learn about the program and about filing a claim.

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## 7. How can I learn more?

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- Ask your health care provider.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Visit the website of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for vaccine package inserts and additional information at [www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/vaccines](http://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/vaccines).
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call **1-800-232-4636** (1-800-CDC-INFO) or
  - Visit CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

