



BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

4 YEAR VISIT

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

✓ HOW YOUR FAMILY IS DOING

- Stay involved in your community. Join activities when you can.
- If you are worried about your living or food situation, talk with us. Community agencies and programs such as WIC and 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 feel unsafe in your home or have been hurt by someone, let us know. Hotlines and community agencies can also provide confidential help.
- Teach your child about how to be safe in the community.
 - Use correct terms for all body parts as your child becomes interested in how boys and girls differ.
 - 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.

✓ HEALTHY HABITS

- Give your child 16 to 24 oz of milk every day.
- Limit juice. It is not necessary. If you choose to serve juice, give no more than 4 oz a day of 100% juice and always serve it with a meal.
- Let your child have cool water when she is thirsty.
- Offer a variety of healthy foods and snacks, especially vegetables, fruits, and lean protein.
- Let your child decide how much to eat.
- Have relaxed family meals without TV.
- Create a calm bedtime routine.
- Have your child brush her teeth twice each day. Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride.

✓ GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

- Give your child plenty of time to finish sentences.
- Read books together each day and ask your child questions about the stories.
- Take your child to the library and let him choose books.
- Listen to and treat your child with respect. Insist that others do so as well.
- Model saying you're sorry and help your child to do so if he hurts someone's feelings.
- Praise your child for being kind to others.
- Help your child express his feelings.
- Give your child the chance to play with others often.
- Visit your child's preschool or child care program. Get involved.
- Ask your child to tell you about his day, friends, and activities.

✓ TV AND MEDIA

- Be active together as a family often.
- Limit TV, tablet, or smartphone use to no more than 1 hour of high-quality programs each day.
- Discuss the programs you watch together as a family.
- Consider making a family media plan. It helps you make rules for media use and balance screen time with other activities, including exercise.
- Don't put a TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone in your child's bedroom.
- Create opportunities for daily play.
- Praise your child for being active.

Helpful Resources: National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233 | Family Media Use Plan: www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan
 Smoking Quit Line: 800-784-8669 | Information About Car Safety Seats: www.safercar.gov/parents | Toll-free Auto Safety Hotline: 888-327-4236

4 YEAR VISIT—PARENT

✓ SAFETY

- Use a forward-facing car safety seat or switch to a belt-positioning booster seat when your child reaches the weight or height limit for her car safety seat, her shoulders are above the top harness slots, or her ears come to the top of the car safety seat.
- The back seat is the safest place for children to ride until they are 13 years old.
- Make sure your child learns to swim and always wears a life jacket. Be sure swimming pools are fenced.
- When you go out, put a hat on your child, have her wear sun protection clothing, and apply sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher on her 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.
- Ask if there are guns in homes where your child plays. If so, make sure they are stored safely.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CHILD'S 5 AND 6 YEAR VISIT

We will talk about

- Taking care of your child, your family, and yourself
- Creating family routines and dealing with anger and feelings
- Preparing for school
- Keeping your child's teeth healthy, eating healthy foods, and staying active
- Keeping your child safe at home, outside, and in the car

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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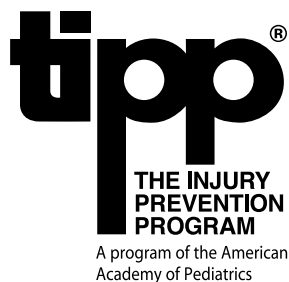
The information contained in this handout should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances. Original handout included as part of the *Bright Futures Tool and Resource Kit*, 2nd Edition.

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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 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 quickly*, 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 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. Also, when you use the microwave stay nearby to make sure your child does not remove the hot food.



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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. Use medications as directed and safely dispose of unused medicine as soon as you are done with it.

If your child does put something poisonous in his or her mouth, call the Poison Help Line immediately. Add the Poison Help number (1-800-222-1222) to your phone contacts list. 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. It is safest for children to ride rear facing as long as possible, until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer. Many convertible seats have limits that will permit children to ride rear facing for 2 years or more. When they outgrow rear facing, children should ride forward facing in a car safety seat with a harness. Many of these can be used up to 65 pounds or more, and this will help provide the most protection possible.



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 airbag.

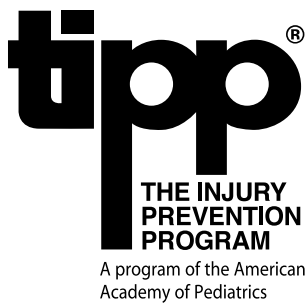
Do not allow your child to play or ride a tricycle in the street. **Your child should play in a fenced yard or playground.** Driveways are also dangerous. Walk behind your car before you back out of your driveway to be sure your child is not behind your car. You may not see your child through the rearview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

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

From Your Doctor

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Tips for Getting Your Children to Wear Bicycle Helmets



Tips for Getting Your Children to Wear Bicycle Helmets

Establish the helmet habit early.

Have your children wear helmets as soon as they start to ride scooters or tricycles and if they are a passenger on the back of an adult's bike. If they learn to wear helmets whenever they ride something with wheels, it becomes a habit for a lifetime. It's never too late, however, to get your children into helmets. Allow your children to participate in choosing their helmet. They'll be able to let you know if it is comfortable. And if they like the design, they are more likely to wear it.

Wear a helmet yourself.

Children learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride your bike, put on your helmet. Plan bicycle outings during which all family members wear their helmets to further reinforce the message. The most important factor influencing children to wear helmets is riding with an adult who wears a helmet.

Talk to your children about why you want them to protect their heads.

There are many things you can tell your children to convince them of the importance of helmet use.

1. Bikes are vehicles, not toys.
2. You love and value them and their intelligence and need to protect them.
3. They can permanently hurt their brains or even die of head injuries.

Most professional athletes use helmets when participating in sports. Bicycle racers are required to use them when racing in the United States and in the Olympics.

Reward your kids for wearing helmets.

Praise them; give them special treats or privileges when they wear their helmets without having to be told.

Don't let children ride their bikes unless they wear their helmets.

Be consistent. If you allow your children to ride occasionally without their helmets, they won't believe that helmet use really is important. Tell your children they have to find another way to get where they are going if they don't want to use their helmets.

Encourage your children's friends to wear helmets.

Peer pressure can be used in a positive way if several families in the neighborhood make helmet use a regular habit at the same time.

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How should a helmet fit?

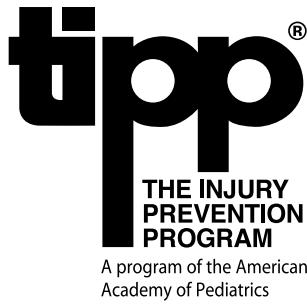
A helmet should be worn squarely on top of the head, covering the top of the forehead. If it is tipped back, it will not protect the forehead. The helmet fits well if it doesn't move around on the head or slide down over the wearer's eyes when pushed or pulled. The chin strap should be adjusted to fit snugly.

REMEMBER

Head injuries can occur on sidewalks, on driveways, on bike paths, and in parks, as well as on streets. You cannot predict when a fall from a bike will occur. It's important to wear a helmet on every ride.

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Safe Bicycling Starts Early

When a child receives his or her first tricycle or bicycle, a lifelong pattern of vehicle operation is begun. A bike is not just a toy but a vehicle that is a speedy means of transportation, subject to the same laws as motor vehicles.

Training Children in Proper Use of Their Bicycles

1. Parents should set limits on where children may ride, depending on their age and maturity. Most serious injuries occur when the bicyclist is hit by a motor vehicle.
 - a. Young children should ride only with adult supervision and off the street.
 - b. The decision to allow older children to ride in the street should depend on traffic patterns, individual maturity, and an adequate knowledge and ability to follow the “rules of the road.”
2. Children must be provided with helmets (approved by the US Consumer Product Safety Commission) and taught to wear them properly on every ride, starting when they get their first bike or tricycle.
3. The most important rules of the road for them to learn are
 - a. Ride with traffic.
 - b. Stop and look both ways before entering the street.
 - c. Stop at all intersections, marked and unmarked. Stop signs apply to everyone who uses the road, whether in a car or on a bike.
 - d. Before turning, use hand signals and look all ways. Make eye contact with drivers to ensure they see you before riding in front of a stopped car.
4. Children should never ride at dusk or in the dark. This is extremely risky for both children and adults. Your child should be told to call home for a ride rather than ride a bike.
5. Children should receive training in bicycle riding, including the rules of the road, and should have their privilege with the bike withheld if they ignore safety rules or don't wear a helmet.
6. Children should learn how to keep their bikes in good repair, with parents checking the tires, brakes, and seat and handlebar heights annually.

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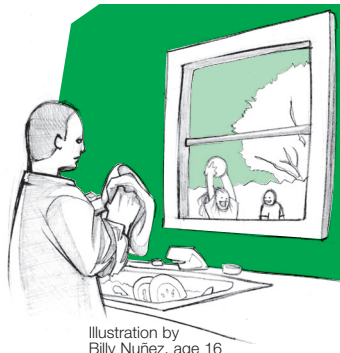


Illustration by
Billy Nuñez, age 16

YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN A LOT WHEN THEY PLAY

PLAYING WITH OTHERS IS IMPORTANT CHILD'S WORK

- Support play by making your home a good place to play.
- Teach the skills needed to play well with others.
- Learning to play well with others is not a one-time lesson. It takes time and practice.
- Important life skills are learned when children play. These skills will help them make and keep friends.

When young children play with children close to their own age, they learn:

- How to cooperate
- When to lead and when to follow
- How to solve problems

CREATE PLAY OPPORTUNITIES

Invite other children to your home or to play in the neighborhood park.

- The first visit needs to be short (about 1 hour) and is best with only one other child.
- Plan to end before everyone gets too tired.
- Know how to contact the other child's parent.

Go to another child's home.

- For the first visit, you may want to stay until you know your child is comfortable being there without you.
- Get to know the other child's parents. You might be able to help each other out!

Join an organized play group.

- When playing without parents, children do best with a small number of children.

Find out with whom your child likes to play.

- For children in child care, preschool, and play groups, invite a friend to your house or to the park.

MAKE YOUR HOME A GOOD PLACE TO PLAY

- Plan ahead. Avoid things like superhero dress-up clothes and toy guns that encourage aggressive play.
- Find out what your visitor enjoys. Ask your child what activities the friend enjoys. Playtime will be more fun, and this teaches your child to be thoughtful.
- Have enough items for everyone. If there aren't enough, suggest another activity.
- Your child's "favorite thing" does not need to be shared. Let your child put away a few things that are off limits.
- Make your home a safe place. Poisons need to be locked away. Homes without guns are the safest. But if there are guns, they need to be stored locked and unloaded; bullets need to be stored in another locked place.
- Do not overplan. Just set the stage with materials and ideas. Let the children use their creativity and imaginations!

Help the children with some activities, like cutting out shapes for arts and crafts, and keep an eye on them at all times. For the most part, it is better if you only get involved when they need your help. Give them a chance to resolve differences on their own.



TEACH YOUR CHILD TO BE A GOOD PLAYMATE

Before, during, and after your child plays with other children, talk about how to get along with others.

Set a few simple and very specific rules.

- “People are not for hitting.”
- “We do not grab toys from other children.”



Help your child express likes, dislikes, and desires with words. Review what to say.

- “I like to paint on the easel.”
- “I do not like to...”
- “I want to be a firefighter.”

Show your child how to solve problems. Explain why something is not possible and offer other choices.

- “Tell Julie you don’t like to be pushed on the swing. Maybe you would both like to ride on the seesaw instead.”

Notice and praise the children for things that went well.

- “I really liked the way you remembered to take turns with the watering can.”
- “It was great to hear you using your polite words!”

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR IS NORMAL

Since it is hard for young children to understand someone else’s point of view, there will be some arguments. Young children react to the moment and may do things without thinking.

Aggressive behavior is often not meant to be hostile or to hurt others. In fact, young children frequently get upset when another child gets hurt while playing.

When something happens that is upsetting, talk with everyone. Help each child try to see the other child’s point of view. This way, children will learn how to avoid and deal with arguments.

If you are concerned about your child’s aggressive behavior, talk to your pediatrician.

TIPS ON REDUCING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Provide the right amount of space.

A small number of children in a very large space, or a large number of children in a small space, tends to increase aggressive play. Have the right amount of space to avoid conflicts.

Plan how to respond in a positive way.

It’s easier to guide children to good behavior instead of telling them what not to do. “I will be right here; come and tell me if you need my help.”

Redirect behaviors like pushing, hitting, or taking someone else’s toys to a more positive activity.

Often, this means it’s time for a new activity. “We don’t grab toys; we share toys. It looks like you’re done with that truck for now. Here are some paper and markers for you.”

Teach children to use words to express feelings, desires, and needs.

A child’s first reaction is usually “physical,” so this may be difficult to learn. With words, children learn how to solve their own problems. Teach your child to say something like, “I don’t like that. Grabbing my toy makes me mad. Please give it back.”

Assume a child does something for a good reason, even if the action is not nice.

What looks aggressive, like grabbing toys from others, may be a child’s attempt to join in with others. Teach children to take turns rather than get mad at them for grabbing toys.

Pay attention to basic comfort and needs.

Conflicts are more likely to happen when children are too hot, too cold, hungry, or tired!



DEALING WITH REJECTION

Playtime can be fun or difficult. Either way, children will learn a lot when they play!

At some point, your child will feel rejected by other children. Everyone does and it's painful. You cannot avoid hurtful situations, but you can provide support and love when problems occur.

Teach your child how to try again. Trying again is an important life lesson on how to respect and get along with others. Focus on teaching all the children involved how to get along and not on finding out who was right and who was wrong.

Your positive attitude is very important when your child is having a hard time.

Help your child understand why another child might not want to play when or what your child does.

- "Jenny doesn't want to play, but maybe Emma does. Why don't you ask her?"
- "I wonder if José would rather paint than play ball."

It is easier for young children to take turns than to play with a toy at the same time!

Connected Kids are Safe, Strong, and Secure

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The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 66,000 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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TIPS | for parents of Preschoolers

Read early and read often. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of reading. It's never too early to begin reading to your child! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Read together every day.**

Read to your child every day. Make this a warm and loving time when the two of you can cuddle close.

■ **Give everything a name.**

Build your child's vocabulary by talking about interesting words and objects. For example, "Look at that airplane! Those are the wings of the plane. Why do you think they are called wings?"

■ **Say how much you enjoy reading.**

Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. Talk about "story time" as the favorite part of your day.

■ **Read with fun in your voice.**

Read to your child with humor and expression. Use different voices. Ham it up!

■ **Know when to stop.**

Put the book away for awhile if your child loses interest or is having trouble paying attention.

■ **Be interactive.**

Discuss what's happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions.

■ **Read it again and again.**

Go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100th time!

■ **Talk about writing, too.**

Mention to your child how we read from left to right and how words are separated by spaces.

■ **Point out print everywhere.**

Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find a new word on each outing.

■ **Get your child evaluated.**

Please be sure to see your child's pediatrician or teacher as soon as possible if you have concerns about your child's language development, hearing, or sight.

Visit www.ReadingRockets.org for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.