



# BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PATIENT

## 7 AND 8 YEAR VISITS

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

### ✓ TAKING CARE OF YOU

- If you get angry with someone, try to walk away.
- Don't try cigarettes or e-cigarettes. They are bad for you. Walk away if someone offers you one.
- Talk with us if you are worried about alcohol or drug use in your family.
- 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.
- Enjoy spending time with your family. Help out at home.

### ✓ HANDLING FEELINGS

- Talk about your worries. It helps.
- Talk about feeling mad or sad with someone who you trust and listens well.
- Ask your parent or another trusted adult about changes in your body.
- Even questions that feel embarrassing are important. It's OK to talk about your body and how it's changing.

### ✓ EATING WELL AND BEING ACTIVE

- Brush your teeth at least twice each day, morning and night.
- Floss your teeth every day.
- Wear a mouth guard when playing sports.
- Eat breakfast every day.
- 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.
- If you drink fruit juice, drink only 1 cup of 100% fruit juice a day.
- Limit high-fat foods and drinks such as candies, snacks, fast food, and soft drinks.
- Have healthy snacks such as fruit, cheese, and yogurt.
- Drink at least 3 glasses of milk daily.
- Turn off the TV, tablet, or computer. Get up and play instead.
- Go out and play several times a day.

### ✓ DOING WELL AT SCHOOL

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

## 7 AND 8 YEAR VISITS—PATIENT



### PLAYING IT SAFE

- Make sure you're always buckled into your booster seat and ride in the back seat of the car. That is where you are safest.
- Wear your helmet and safety gear when riding scooters, biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowboarding, and horseback riding.
- Ask your parents about learning to swim. Never swim without an adult nearby.
- 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.
- Don't open the door to anyone you don't know.
- Have friends over only when your parents say it's OK.
- Ask a grown-up for help if you are scared or worried.
- It is OK to ask to go home from a friend's house and be with your mom or dad.
- Keep your private parts (the parts of your body covered by a bathing suit) covered.
- Tell your parent or another grown-up right away if an older child or a grown-up
  - Shows you his or her private parts.
  - Asks you to show him or her yours.
  - Touches your private parts.
  - Scares you or asks 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.
- If you see a gun, don't touch it. Tell your parents right away.

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 ► PARENT

## 7 AND 8 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 her.
- Spend time with your child. Get to know her 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.
  - Know who your child talks with online.
  - Install a safety filter.

### ✓ YOUR GROWING CHILD

- Give your child chores to do and expect them to be done.
- Be a good role model.
- Don't hit or allow others to hit.
- Help your child do things for himself.
- Teach your child to help others.
- Discuss rules and consequences with your child.
- Be aware of puberty and changes in your child's body.
- Use simple responses to answer your child's questions.
- Talk with your child about what worries him.

### ✓ STAYING HEALTHY

- Take your child to the dentist twice a year.
- Give a fluoride supplement if the dentist recommends it.
- Help your child brush her teeth twice a day
  - After breakfast
  - Before bed
- Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride.
- Help your child floss her teeth once a day.
- Encourage your child to always wear a mouth guard to protect her 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.

### ✓ SCHOOL

- Help your child get ready for school. Use the following strategies:
  - Create bedtime routines so he gets 10 to 11 hours of sleep.
  - Offer him a healthy breakfast every morning.
- Attend back-to-school night, parent-teacher events, and as many other school events as possible.
- Talk with your child and child's teacher about bullies.
- Talk with your child's teacher if you think your child might need extra help or tutoring.
- Know that your child's teacher can help with evaluations for special help, if your child is not doing well in school.

**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

# 7 AND 8 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.
- Teach your child to swim and watch her in the water.
- Use a hat, sun protection clothing, and 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).
- Provide a properly fitting helmet and safety gear for riding scooters, biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowboarding, and horseback riding.
- If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Teach your child plans for emergencies such as a fire. Teach your child how and when to dial 911.
- 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.

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## 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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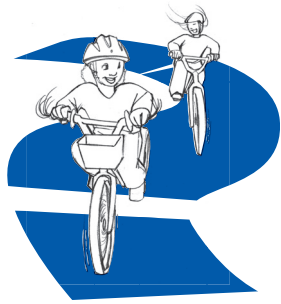


Illustration by  
Billy Nuñez, age 16

# FRIENDS ARE IMPORTANT: TIPS FOR PARENTS

## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

As your child is making new friends and spending more time with them, you can:

- Get to know these friends and their parents.
- Communicate expectations about friendships in a clear and open way.
- Help your child connect to school and the larger community.

Friendships are important, but your guidance and monitoring of activities are needed for your child to be safe and successful.

**F**riendships take on new meaning and importance as your child grows. Young people make and break friendships, explore the world around them, and begin to figure out who they want to be.

Friends will become more important to your child during this time. Friends help teach:

- Communication skills
- Self-confidence
- A sense of self

## FRIENDS ARE SPECIAL

Friendships are some of your child's most important relationships. Close friendships involve intense feelings, learning how to trust, learning to criticize with honesty, and feeling secure outside of the family.

Friends help define personality and independence. Friendships teach young people how to deal with their own complex feelings and those of others.

With more friends and a wider range of interests and activities, your child may begin to spend less time at home.

**By knowing your child's close friends,  
you will learn a lot about your child.**

## GET TO KNOW YOUR CHILD'S FRIENDS

- Talk with them on the phone.
- Meet them at neighborhood or school events.
- Find out what they and your child do together.

## Let your child know that friends are welcome in your home.

- Review "house rules" with your child prior to the visit.
- Let your child, the friend, and the friend's family know that an adult will be there.
- Know what's going on by seeing, hearing, and talking with them about what they are doing. Be informed, but keep a low profile.

## Follow guidelines for when your child is invited to a friend's home.

- Find out about the friend's "house rules" and who else will be at home, like parents, another adult, brothers, or sisters.
- Ask about what they plan to do during the visit.
- Talk with your child about things that are important to you: no guns, violent TV and video games, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Take this time to review behaviors that are healthy and those that are dangerous.
- Be sure to have the telephone number of where your child can be reached. If you want to call, go ahead and pick up the phone.
- If there is a change of plans, you need to be told.



## GET TO KNOW OTHER PARENTS

- Talk with them on the phone.
- Meet them at neighborhood or school events.
- Greet them when dropping your child off at their home.

## COMMUNICATION IS KEY

School-aged children need and want more independence. Good communication, with clear expectations, helps parents and children trust that what is going on is safe.

To communicate clearly and openly with your child,

- Make clear and consistent rules.
- Speak in a firm and loving voice.
- Agree on rules, like curfew time, and enforce the agreed-upon consequences when a rule is broken.
- Know where and with whom your child is spending time.

**When plans change—and they will—let your child know that you need to be contacted for approval of any changes.**

### Staying in Touch

- If your child has a cell phone or pager, talk about its proper use.
- For emergencies, your child needs to know, and have written down, your home, work, and cell phone numbers.
- Have a back up plan. If you cannot be reached, your child also needs the contact information for an adult relative, neighbor, or family friend who can be called.

## PROMOTE A SENSE OF BELONGING

**Young people often do best when they belong to a group.**

- Help your child use afternoons, weekends, and summers to find activities that will help develop this sense of belonging.
- Many young people are involved with a sports team, after-school music or arts programs, or Boys & Girls Clubs. Others join the youth group of a religious association.
- Support your child during this time of pursuing personal interests and exploring new opportunities. Know that your child's interests are likely to change frequently!

**Sports**—Besides playing, your child might help coach, be a student manager, become an official, or be a timekeeper. Talk about good sportsmanship.

- Being a good winner and a good loser.
- Keeping a positive attitude.
- Showing respect for players, coaches, officials, and the crowd. Discuss how important it is to set a good example while watching a game or event.

**Clubs**—Check with the school and local community groups to find out what is offered. You may be surprised to find out how many different programs are available.

- Get involved as a chaperone or adult member.
- Help your child think about the different activities that are available and to make good choices. But allow space for independent exploration. There is a fine balance here. If you become too pushy, your child may pull back and not want to talk with you.



**As your child explores different options, safety is always a concern.**

Find out:

- Where will the activity be? Indoors or outdoors? Far from or close to your home?
- How will the activity be supervised? By parents, an older brother or sister, or another adult?
- Is this a structured program or school-sponsored activity?

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Volunteering is a good way for your child to make friends. In turn, the whole community benefits from their talent and energy.

**Help your child find ways to give back.**

By helping others in the community, young people build self-confidence and learn how to work with others. They can:

- Help younger children learn to read.
- Assist their peers as tutors.
- Help paint a mural or build a playground.

**One of the most powerful ways to have an effect on who your child is friends with is when you become involved.**

Find community projects that you and your child can work on together. Volunteering may even lead to a paying job!

Connected Kids are Safe, Strong, and Secure

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# TIPS | for parents of Second Graders

Find ways to read, write, and tell stories together with your child.

Always applaud your young reader and beginning story writer! 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.

## ■ Tell family tales.

Children love to hear stories about their family. Talk about a funny thing that happened when you were young.

## ■ Create a writing toolbox.

Fill a box with drawing and writing materials. Find opportunities for your child to write, such as the shopping list, thank you notes, or birthday cards.

## ■ Be your child's #1 fan.

Ask your child to read aloud what he or she has written for school. Be an enthusiastic listener.

## ■ One more time with feeling.

When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often kids are so busy figuring out a word they lose the meaning of what they've just read.

## ■ Invite an author to class.

Ask an author to talk to your child's class about the writing process. Young children often think they aren't smart enough if they can't sit down and write a perfect story on the first try.

## ■ Create a book together.

Fold pieces of paper in half and staple them to make a book. Ask your child to write sentences on each page and add his or her own illustrations.

## ■ Do storytelling on the go.

Take turns adding to a story the two of you make up while riding in a car or bus. Try making the story funny or spooky.

## ■ Point out the relationship between words.

Explain how related words have similar spellings and meanings. Show how a word like *knowledge*, for example, relates to a word like *know*.

## ■ Use a writing checklist.

Have your child create a writing checklist with reminders such as, "Do all of my sentences start with a capital? Yes/No."

## ■ Quick, quick.

Use new words your child has learned in lively flash card or computer drills. Sometimes these help kids automatically recognize and read words, especially those that are used frequently.

Visit [www.ReadingRockets.org](http://www.ReadingRockets.org) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.