



Bright Futures Parent Handout

15 Month Visit

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

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Talking and Feeling

- Show your child how to use words.
 - Use words to describe your child's feelings.
 - Describe your child's gestures with words.
 - Use simple, clear phrases to talk to your child.
 - When reading, use simple words to talk about the pictures.
- Try to give choices. Allow your child to choose between 2 good options, such as a banana or an apple, or 2 favorite books.
- Your child may be anxious around new people; this is normal. Be sure to comfort your child.

SLEEP ROUTINES AND ISSUES

A Good Night's Sleep

- Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- Have a simple bedtime routine that includes a book.
- Put your child to bed at the same time every night. Early is better.
- Try to tuck in your child when she is drowsy but still awake.
- Avoid giving enjoyable attention if your child wakes during the night. Use words to reassure and give a blanket or toy to hold for comfort.

SAFETY

Safety

- Have your child's car safety seat rear-facing until your child is 2 years of age *or* until she reaches the highest weight or height allowed by the car safety seat's manufacturer.
- Follow the owner's manual to make the needed changes when switching the car safety seat to the forward-facing position.
- Never put your child's rear-facing seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger airbag. The back seat is the safest place for children to ride
- Everyone should wear a seat belt in the car.
- Lock away poisons, medications, and lawn and cleaning supplies.
- Call Poison Help (1-800-222-1222) if you are worried your child has eaten something harmful.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs and guards on windows on the second floor and higher. Keep furniture away from windows.
- Keep your child away from pot handles, small appliances, fireplaces, and space heaters.
- Lock away cigarettes, matches, lighters, and alcohol.
- Have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and an escape plan.
- Set your hot water heater temperature to lower than 120°F.

TEMPER TANTRUMS AND DISCIPLINE

Temper Tantrums and Discipline

- Use distraction to stop tantrums when you can.
- Limit the need to say "No!" by making your home and yard safe for play.
- Praise your child for behaving well.
- Set limits and use discipline to teach and protect your child, not punish.
- Be patient with messy eating and play. Your child is learning.
- Let your child choose between 2 good things for food, toys, drinks, or books.

HEALTHY TEETH

Healthy Teeth

- Take your child for a first dental visit if you have not done so.
- Brush your child's teeth twice each day after breakfast and before bed with a soft toothbrush and plain water.
- Wean from the bottle; give only water in the bottle.
- Brush your own teeth and avoid sharing cups and spoons with your child or cleaning a pacifier in your mouth.

What to Expect at Your Child's 18 Month Visit

We will talk about

- Talking and reading with your child
- Playgroups
- Preparing your other children for a new baby
- Spending time with your family and partner
- Car and home safety
- Toilet training
- Setting limits and using time-outs

Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222

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



American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

The recommendations in this publication do not indicate an exclusive course of treatment or serve as a standard of medical care. Variations, taking into account individual circumstances, may be appropriate. Original document included as part of Bright Futures Tool and Resource Kit. Copyright © 2010 American Academy of Pediatrics, Updated 8/11. All Rights Reserved. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not review or endorse any modifications made to this document and in no event shall the AAP be liable for any such changes.

Eight Sleep Tips for Every Child

1 Maintain a consistent bedtime and awaking time.

Your child's biological clock has a strong influence on her wakefulness and sleepiness. When you establish a set time for bedtime and wake up time you "set" your child's clock so that it functions smoothly. Aim for an early bedtime. Young children respond best with a bedtime between 6:30 and 7:30 P.M. Most children will sleep better and longer when they go to bed early.

2 Encourage regular daily naps.

Daily naps are important. An energetic child can find it difficult to go through the day without a rest break. A nap-less child will often wake up cheerful and become progressively fussier or hyper-alert as the day goes on. Also, the length and quality of naps affects night sleep – good naps equal better night sleep.

3 Set your child's biological clock.

Take advantage of your child's biology so that he's actually tired when bedtime arrives. Darkness causes an increase in the release of the body's sleep hormone -- the biological "stop" button. You can align your child's sleepiness with bedtime by dimming the lights during the hour before bedtime. Exposing your child to morning light is pushing the "go" button in her brain — one that says, "Time to wake up and be active." So keep your mornings bright!

4 Develop a consistent bedtime routine.

Routines create security. A consistent, peaceful bedtime routine allows your child to transition from the motion of the day to the tranquil state of sleep. An organized routine helps you coordinate the specifics: bath, pajamas, tooth-brushing. It helps you to function on auto-pilot at the time when you are most tired and least creative.

5 Create a cozy sleep environment.

Where your child sleeps can be a key to quality sleep. Make certain the mattress is comfortable, the blankets are warm, the room temperature is right, pajamas are comfy, and the bedroom is welcoming.

6 Provide the right nutrition.

Foods can affect energy level and sleepiness. Carbohydrates can have a calming effect on the body, while foods high in protein or sugar generate alertness, particularly when eaten alone. A few ideas for pre-bed snacks are: whole wheat toast and cheese, bagel and peanut butter, oatmeal with bananas, or yogurt and low-sugar granola. Vitamin deficiencies due to unhealthy food choices can affect a child's sleep. Provide your child with a daily assortment of healthy foods.

7 Help your child to be healthy and fit.

Many children don't get enough daily physical activity. Too much TV watching and a lack of activity prevents good sleep. Children who get ample daily exercise fall asleep more quickly, sleep better, stay asleep longer, and wake up feeling refreshed. Avoid activity in the hour before bedtime though, since exercise is stimulating – they'll be jumping on the bed instead of sleeping in it!

8 Teach your child how to relax.

Many children get in bed but aren't sure what to do when they get there! It can help to follow a soothing pre-bed routine that creates sleepiness. A good pre-bed ritual is story time. A child who is listening to a parent read a book or tell a tale will tend to lie still and listen. This quiet stillness allows him to become sleepy.

Work with these eight ideas and you'll see improvements in your child's sleep, and yours too.

Elizabeth Pantley, author of *The No-Cry Sleep solution for Toddlers & Preschoolers*-