



Professional Resource



Introduction





About the Authors

The Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State (Clearinghouse) is an interdisciplinary team comprised of research faculty and staff and creative services professionals who are committed to providing outstanding support to professionals who provide programs and services to military families. The Clearinghouse is located within the Social Science Research Institute at the Pennsylvania State University.

The Clearinghouse has partnered with the Department of Defense's Office of Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) to create this Thrive Professional Resource for professionals who are working with children and youth and their families.

About the Thrive Initiative Programming

The Thrive Initiative is a portfolio of evidence-informed parent-education programs that are designed to empower parents and caregivers as they nurture children from the prenatal period until 18 years of age. The Thrive Initiative is divided into developmentally age-appropriate areas and consists of four universal web-based parenting programs — Take Root (for parents and caregivers of children 0-3 years old), Sprout (for parents and caregivers of children 3-5 years old), Grow (for parents and caregivers of children 5-10 years old), and Branch Out (for parents and caregivers of children 10-18 years old).

Thrive Initiative Program Areas			
Universal Parenting Programs			
Take Root	Sprout	Grow	Branch Out
Infants (0 to 6 months)	Preschool (3 to 6 years)	Grades K–5 (5 to 10 years)	Grades 6–12 (10 to 18 years)
Infants (6 to 12 months)			
Infants & Toddlers (1 to 3 years)			



Resource for Professionals






The purpose of this resource is to provide professionals with resources they can download, print, and share directly with the families they serve. Many of these resources can be found within the four web-based Thrive parent-education programs. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to engage in the age-appropriate Thrive web-based programming to learn additional skills and strategies beyond what is provided by the professional through this resource.

Layout of the Resource

This resource is divided into five age-graded categories with resources for each category.

- Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children of All Ages
- Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children 0-3 years old
- Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children 3-5 years old
- Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children 5-10 years old
- Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children 10-18 years old

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Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children of All Ages

**All
ages**






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American Academy of Sleep Medicine Sleep Guidelines

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) has established recommended sleep guidelines for children from infancy to adolescence to promote optimal health. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) supports these Guidelines.

Age	Recommendations
 Infants 4 months to 12 months	12 to 16 hours per 24 hours (Including naps)
 Children 1 to 2 years of age	11 to 14 hours per 24 hours (including naps)
 Children 3 to 5 years of age	10 to 13 hours per 24 hours (including naps)
 Children 6 to 12 years of age	9 to 12 hours per 24 hours
 Teenagers 13 to 18 years of age	8 to 10 hours per 24 hours

Source: <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/6630>

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Eating Together as a Family

Scheduling time to eat together as a family has many benefits for children and families, including family bonding, improved language and developmental boosts, and health benefits.



Family Bonding

Eating meals together provides the family with a time that allows them to connect individually and as a whole. Research indicates when a family eats together, each member tends to feel a strong bond with each other. This helps children to feel loved and, safe and secure. Mealtime conversations should be positive and upbeat.

Improved Language and Developmental Boosts

Family communication during meals allows children to advance their language and literacy skills as well as their social skills, such as waiting, using manners, and taking turns. Children are also provided with time to work on developing their fine motor skills while learning how to use silverware and helping make meals.






Health Benefits

The family dynamic can influence a child's food-related behaviors which may impact maintaining a healthy weight status. Sharing a higher frequency of family meals has shown to increase family members' consumption of fruits and vegetables and lower the consumption of fried foods and soft drinks. Families who eat together are also more likely to be physically active.

Tips for Eating Together as a Family

Find a time within the day where the entire family can get together to share a meal, whether it be breakfast, lunch or dinner. And, try to include all family members in the planning and preparation of meals.

 Tips for Scheduling	 Tips for Conversation	 Tips for Engagement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose any meal of the day to have as a family meal. 2. Cook several meals on a weekend day to save time prepping meals throughout the week. 3. Make your family meal a priority and communicate to family members the benefits of sharing a meal together and the importance. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask about your child's day: What fun thing did you do today? 2. Tell stories about the parents: Do you know some of the jobs Mommy and Daddy had when they were young? 3. Use one-line conversation starters: If you could be an animal, what would you be and why? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have your child help to plan and/or prepare the family meals. 2. Provide all family members with a dinnertime chore (e.g., set the table, wipe down the counters, etc.). 3. Allow each family member to choose a night of the week where the family eats the meal of their choice.

Sources:

The Family Dinner Project: thefamilydinnerproject.org

Neumark-Sztainer, D., Hannan, P.J., Story, M., Croll, J., and Perry, C. Family meal patterns (Associations with sociodemographic characteristics and improved dietary intake among adolescents) . J Am Diet Assoc. 2003; 103: 317–322



Story, M., Neumark-Sztainer, D., and French, S. Individual and environmental influences on adolescent eating behaviors. J Am Diet Assoc. 2002; 102: S40–S51



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Physical Activity Guidelines

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (2018) provide recommendations for people of all ages to improve their health. Some benefits of physical activity include improved bone health and weight status for children ages 3 through 5 years, improved cognitive function for youth ages 6 to 16 years, reduced risk of cancer, and improved brain health.

Age	Recommendations
 3 to 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preschool-aged children should be physically active throughout the day to enhance growth and development.• Adult caregivers of preschool-aged children should encourage active play that include a variety of activity types.
 6 to 17 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is important to provide young people opportunities and encouragement to participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age, that are enjoyable, and that offer variety.• Children and adolescents should do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily.• Aerobic: Most of the 60 or more minutes per day should be either moderate- and/or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, and should include vigorous-intensity physical activity at least 3 days a week.• Muscle-strengthening: As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include muscle-strengthening physical activity on at least 3 days of the week.• Bone-strengthening: As part of their 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, children and adolescents should include bone-strengthening physical activity on at least 3 days of the week.

Age	Recommendations
 <p>18 to 64 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. Some physical activity is better than none. • Adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity gain some health benefits. • For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Preferably, aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week. • Additional health benefits are gained by engaging in physical activity beyond the equivalent of 300 minutes (5 hours) of moderate-intensity physical activity a week. • Adults should also include muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity and that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week, as these activities provide additional health benefits.
 <p>65 years and older</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidelines for adults also apply to older adults. • As part of their weekly physical activity, older adults should do multicomponent physical activity that includes balance training as well as aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities. • Older adults should determine their level of effort for physical activity relative to their level of fitness. • Older adults with chronic conditions should understand whether and how their conditions affect their ability to do regular physical activity safely. • When older adults cannot do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week because of chronic conditions, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow.



Inclusivity

Teaching Your Kids about Tolerance and Acceptance

We are all different! While we all share being human, we are all different in many ways. No two people share the same traits: hair color, vocal quality, fingerprints, genetic profiles, and much more. These human differences are expressed by our race, ethnicity, and gender, as well as by our personalities and our physical and mental abilities. They combine to make each of us "one of a kind" — unique individuals with distinct identities.



What It Is

Tolerance and acceptance refers to an attitude of openness and respect for the differences that exist among people, including race and ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and people with physical, mental, or intellectual disabilities. It focuses on learning from one another, valuing cultural differences, rejecting stereotypes and respecting one another.



What It Is Not

Tolerance and acceptance is not about accepting bad behavior. We do not want to teach our kids to approve of behavior that is disrespectful, hurtful, or illegal.



Why Teach Tolerance and Acceptance?

During their early years, it is important for parents and teachers to help kids discover the beauty and power of diversity, and adopt an attitude of tolerance and acceptance.

Kids learn about the world in small steps, focusing first on recognizing images, sounds, objects, and people. From an early age, attitudes, like approval, tolerance, and acceptance quickly emerge as children reflect the mindsets expressed by family members.

Presenting positive mindsets like tolerance and acceptance will nourish curiosity, empathy, patience, and flexibility. By talking about and demonstrating acceptance of diversity, you will encourage respect for others as well as a deeper understanding of yourself.





How to Teach Tolerance and Acceptance

Learning to treat others with tolerance and acceptance begins with you.

It is not uncommon to be embarrassed or shocked by children's questions or statements. Kids are naïve, and come to each new encounter with fresh, open minds.

They notice new things, and things that seem different. With few prior experiences to help children filter their reactions, their expressions may be startling and seem inappropriate, but they are simply attempts to make sense of their world.



Although many remarks come suddenly, passionately, publicly, and at extreme levels of volume, it is important to respond in a manner that is calm, caring, positive, matter-of-fact, and nonjudgmental.

This is not always easy, but entirely possible, and important to master — especially since these moments may provide some of your best opportunities to help shape attitudes and perceptions, and cement your place as a trusted advisor.

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Family Media Action Plan

Check the items under each heading that apply to your family. Use the 'other' boxes to add any additional items specific to your family.

Adapted from healthychildren.org

Screen-Free Zones

Mobile devices and TVs are not allowed in the following screen-free zones in our home:

- ☐ **Bedroom**
Devices will be recharged overnight, outside of the child's bedroom.
- ☐ **Kitchen/Dining Table**
Family mealtimes will be tech-free.
- ☐ **Family Social Activities**
Family and social gatherings will be tech-free.
- ☐ **In Class (at School)**
Devices can be taken to school, but they may not be used during class time unless the teacher approves of use.
- ☐ **Other:**
- ☐ **Other:**

Device Curfew Time:

Devices will be charged in:

- ☐ **Parent's Bedroom** ☐ **Kitchen**
- ☐ **Other:**

Recreational Screen Time

- ☐ **Co-view with Parent/Adult**
- ☐ **Co-play with Parent/Adult**

Screen-Free Times

We will not use mobile devices or other screens during the following times:

- ☐ **While in the Car (except for long trips)**
Devices will not be used in the car, except during long trips.
- ☐ **While Driving**
- ☐ **Family Time**
Family time will be tech-free.
- ☐ **Meal Times**
Meal times will be tech-free.
- ☐ **1 hour before Bed**
Devices must be turned off at least 1 hour before bedtime.
- ☐ **Other:**
- ☐ **Other:**

Safety

- ☐ I agree that I will not give out personal information online or share private photos online. I will not talk with people whom I do not know. If someone shares something with me that makes me uncomfortable, I will tell a parent/adult.

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5210 Tips for Families

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5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables.

Fruits and vegetables provide a lot of nutrients and water without a lot of calories. They also contain fiber and a variety of phytochemicals that help prevent cancer, heart disease, and other diseases. Young children often reject new foods at first — it may take several exposures to a new food before it is accepted, so keep trying!

- Prepare meals and snacks at home using fruits and vegetables and let children help in the kitchen so they learn how to make healthy foods.
- Eat together as a family and model healthy eating to your children.
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods at planned times throughout the day. Let children choose whether and how much they eat.

2 or fewer hours of recreational screen time.*

Screen time is free time spent in front of screens — like televisions, video games, and the internet. It is possible to get enough physical activity and still engage in an unhealthy amount of screen time — so encourage your family to find other fun ways to spend their free time!

**review guidelines on parenting strategies to encourage quality screen time (AAP, 2015).*

- Same parenting rules apply to screen time — set limits.
- Role modeling is critical — limit your own screen time.
- Children learn better from live interactions than from passive videos — talk to your children!
- Content matters — review what your children are watching and don't just set a timer!

1 or more hours of physical activity.

Moving your body is a great way to burn calories, improve your mood, boost your energy, prevent cancer and cardiovascular diseases, and help you sleep better at night — plus, it can be a lot of fun! Look for activities your family can enjoy together so everyone can reap the benefits and help keep one another on track!

- Use activities instead of foods as incentives — a trip to the park, sledding hill, laser tag arena, skating rink, batting cage, or community pool can be great alternative to the ice cream shop to celebrate a job well done.
- Walk or bike as a family to get where you're going.
- Set up activity dates with like-minded families or sign up your family for a charity walk — if you're accountable to someone else you may be more likely to stay active.

0 sweetened beverages.

It is important to drink fluids to stay healthy, but sweetened beverages add extra sugar and calories to the diet. Watch out for drinks with the following ingredients: sugar, honey, sweetener, syrup (e.g., corn syrup, brown rice syrup), and/or ingredients ending in "-ose" (e.g., glucose, dextrose).

- Make water the norm for quenching thirst — drink water when you are thirsty and offer water to thirsty children.
- Sparkling water, still water with slices of lemon, and fruity herbal iced teas are fun alternatives to plain water.
- Nonfat and 1% milk and 100% fruit and vegetable juices contain beneficial nutrients and calories, so think of them as foods that contribute towards your family's healthy diet.



The Division of Responsibility in Feeding

The best way to feed your child is to follow the Division of Responsibility in Feeding. The Division of Responsibility encourages you to take leadership with feeding and give your child autonomy with eating.

- As a parent, you provide structure, support, and opportunities to learn.
- Your child chooses how much and whether to eat from what you provide.

The Division of Responsibility Toddlers through Adolescents

- You are responsible for **what**, **when** and **where** to feed your child.
- Your child is responsible for **how much** and **whether** to eat the foods you offer.

Do your feeding jobs:	Trust your child to do their eating jobs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose and serve the food.• Make eating time pleasant.• Show your child how to behave at meals.• Maintain structure: Provide regular meals and snacks. Offer your child water between regular meals and snack times but not other drinks or food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let your child grow in their own way. They will eat the amount they need.• They will learn to eat the foods you eat.• They will learn to behave well at family meals.• They will grow to have the body that is right for them.

Structure is essential!



Your child will eat and grow well if you maintain structure.

Have a schedule for sit-down family meals and sit-down snacks and stick with it.



Structure lets your child know they will be fed.

It helps them eat what and how much their bodies need.



Have family-friendly meals.



Have food you enjoy.

Put together what you enjoy and ordinarily eat and provide it for the family at mealtime. Family meals need to be rewarding to plan, prepare, and eat.



Make mealtimes pleasant.

Talk with and enjoy each other. Now is not the time to scold or fight. Your child wants to be at family meals because you are there. Turn all electronics off.



Lighten up your definition.

A family meal is when you all sit down together, share the same food, and pay attention to each other. You don't need a table (even a blanket on the floor will do) and the food does not need to be fancy.



Let everyone decide what and how much to eat from what you provide for the meal.



Start by getting in the meal habit.

Make meals your idea, based on food you usually eat. Do not just offer meals when somebody asks for food.



Make only one meal, but include easy-to-eat foods.

Include one or two foods that each person generally likes to eat and can fill up on, such as bread, pasta, rice, fruit, etc. Don't worry if your child eats only that one food meal-after-meal, day-after-day. Eventually, they will eat something different.



Remember whose meal it is.

It is yours, and you are inviting your child to join you. You know more about food than your child does. Sooner or later your child will eat many foods that you like to eat.



Have structured, sit-down snack times.



Regularly scheduled, sit-down snacks are an essential part of feeding and eating.

If your child complains about being hungry in between meals, you can tell them, "Snack-time is coming soon."



Offer several types of food at snack time.



Allow your child to eat as much of the snack as they want.



Manage amounts by managing timing.

Have a snack long enough after the last meal so your child is hungry and long enough before the next meal so your child can be hungry again.

Make sure you stick to your schedule.

Help your child understand that...



Food will be available at mealtime and snack time.

Other than that, the kitchen is closed.



You do not have to eat anything you do not want to eat.



You do have to say, "Yes, please," and "No, thank you."



You will not say, "Yuck."



There will always be bread* on the table and you can eat as much of it as you want.

Even if your child does not eat anything else. **bread or another food that generally everyone likes and can fill up on such as rice, pasta, fruit, etc.*



When I make something new, I will also make something you usually enjoy.



Some nights, I will make one person's favorite meal...

...and sometimes I will make your favorite meal.

Try not to make a big deal about eating and avoid pressuring your child to eat.



Ask yourself why you are doing something with feeding.

Is it to get your child to eat more, less, or different foods than they do on their own? If so, it is pressure.



Make mealtimes pleasant and talk about things other than food.



Food waste is a part of learning to eat.



Avoiding food waste is important but it is to be expected while your child is learning to eat.

At first, your child may serve themselves more than they can eat. Encourage them to take small servings but reassure them that they can always have more if they want.



Do not make your child eat all of their food, even if they take a little.

If you pressure your child to clean their plate, it will teach them to ignore their hunger and fullness.



Eventually, your child will learn to make more appropriate portion sizes and waste less food!

Make wise use of "forbidden" foods.

Children who regularly get to have "forbidden" foods during meals and snacks will eat as much as they are hungry for then stop. Children who are not allowed regular access to these foods eat a lot when they get the chance and tend to overeat them. The trick is to include these foods regularly enough that they don't feel like "forbidden" foods. Provide these foods to your child at certain times. For instance:



Include chips or fries at mealtimes.

How often you do this is up to you. Plan to have enough so everyone can eat as much as they want. Unlike sweets, fatty foods do not compete as much with other mealtime foods.



Have sweets for dessert, but limit everyone to one serving.

Put that serving at each person's place. Let your child or yourself eat it before, during, or after the meal.



Offer unlimited sweets at occasional snack times.

How often is up to you. Offer milk and a plate of cookies. Have your child sit down and eat as many cookies and drink as much milk as they want. At first, they may eat a lot but later they will not have as many.



Have soda occasionally for snack time or with a particular meal.



Your child will experiment to be sure the rules are really the rules.

Your reactions can pull you into being controlling — into trying to do their part with the Division of Responsibility.

Parenting with the Division of Responsibility in Feeding

Your Child's Move:	Your Move:
They are too worked up and busy to eat.	Spend a few minutes with them just before the meal, reading a book or washing hands. Set a 5-minute timer.
They cannot take time to eat.	Arrange for them to be hungry by not letting them eat between times.
They are too hungry to wait for meals.	Have sit-down snacks between meals.
They are messy on purpose — they drop, throw, or smear food — for fun or to get a rise out of you.	Give them one warning, then have them leave the meal. Don't let them come back.
They do not want to stay at the meal until you finish eating.	Let them leave when they get full. They will stay at the meal longer as they get older and enjoy the conversation.
They are naughty or otherwise disruptive at the meal.	Have them leave. They are full or they would eat—and behave!
They come back right after the meal, begging for a food handout.	Don't give them food until snack time. Ignore their tantrums.
They get down from the table, but want your attention, to sit on your lap, or to eat off your plate.	Pat them on the head and send them away. Teach them to play quietly while you eat.
They do not eat "enough" at mealtime.	Only they know how much is enough. Don't let them eat or drink between times, except for water. Plan a snack for a set time between meals and stick to it.
They want to make something different.	"Part of family meals is sharing the same food. You do not have to eat anything if you do not want to..."

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Taking Care of Emotions

It is important to balance the demands of parenting with personal enjoyment. Releasing emotions regularly—through talking, crying, or the activities below—helps prevent stressful emotions from becoming overwhelming, and consequently, becoming anger. When emotions are avoided or daily troubles are contained, parents can become emotionally numb and find action difficult. The years of child rearing go by quickly; taking care of your emotional health allows you to fully cherish the present moment and appreciate the joys of parenting.

Pick a strategy that you already use to maintain a sense of emotional well-being.

Mark one strategy you do well!



Creative Expression



Artistic expression can take many forms (e.g., painting, pottery, writing poetry or fiction, sculpting, crafting). Art provides the joy of creating and an outlet for the release of tension, fears, hopes, and dreams.



Physical Activity



Exercise (e.g., running, lifting weights, dancing, cycling) helps to release tension and increase endorphins, which are chemicals in the body that increase feelings of euphoria and strengthen the immune system.



Hobbies



Hobbies are regular activities that are done for pleasure, typically during one's leisure time (e.g., reading, gardening, sewing, traveling, putting together puzzles, and building models). Hobbies increase enjoyment, fulfillment, and joy. They also can engage the senses in escape.



Connections with Others



Time spent socializing with friends or family can increase enjoyment and decrease loneliness and isolation. In hard times, talking with caring individuals can allow feelings to be expressed and support to be offered.

☐ **Humor**

Giggles and guffaws increase your intake of oxygen, release endorphins, stimulate circulation, and relax muscles. As a result, laughter boosts one's mood and improves one's health! So, tickle your funny bone by reading comics, telling jokes, watching a comical show, joking with friends, or listening to a comedian!

☐ **Journaling**

Writing in a journal or diary or blogging can be a way to express emotions and process their meanings.

☐ **Spirituality**

A belief in a higher power is used by some as a moral compass, and it provides a sense of purpose and interrelatedness. Prayer and other forms of spiritual expression can provide solace in difficult times.

☐ **Meditation**

The practice of focusing one's attention allows for mental clarity, the release of stress, and greater self-awareness. Although not a replacement for traditional medical treatment, a growing body of scientific research suggests that meditation can increase physical health and help manage the symptoms of many diseases. There are a variety of types of meditation: guided, mantra, mindfulness, Qi gong, Tai chi, transcendental, and yoga.

☐ **Visualization**

Visualization involves generating an image or idea in the mind. It can be used to relax, embrace a positive image of one's self, or imagine an experience before acting on it. Visualization is sometimes used to ingrain a special place that provides a sense of warmth, safety, and peace.

☐ **Time in Nature**

Enjoying the beauty of nature (e.g., bird watching, hiking, camping, canoeing) can restore one's sense of connection to the larger world and provide an opportunity for reflection, appreciation, or gratitude.

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Coping Strategies for Children

Help your child process emotions and problem solve!

- Children express their feelings in a variety of ways, including body language, facial gestures, and behavioral changes.
- Observe and listen to your child to identify how they generally express common feelings like anger, sadness, and frustration.
- Knowing how your child usually reacts to stress will make it easier for you to help them before they begin exhibiting misbehavior.

Practice These Steps When Your Child Is Upset



Step 1: Relax

Recognize the physical symptoms that alert you to stress and take time to calm down or take a deep breath before helping your child.

Sample actions: Deep breathe, mental pause, self-talk, relaxed posture.



Step 2: Reassure

When a child is upset or exhibiting strong emotions, you can use courage, empathy, and compassion to help them. Avoid ignoring the behavior. Talk with the child. Approach them in a way that displays a desire to be supportive. A gentle physical touch can be comforting.

Sample actions: Physical contact — kneel to their level, hug, pat on back, cuddle, sit close, hold their hand.



Step 3: Be Present and Listen

Show your child they are important by being fully present. Limit distractions and give them your full attention. Listen actively to identify feelings and meanings.

Sample actions: Limit distractions (e.g., turn off cell phone), make eye contact, listen for meanings/feelings.



Step 4: Summarize

To clarify what your child is saying, briefly repeat the facts you hear.

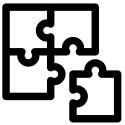
Sample actions: Verbally repeat what was heard.



Step 5: State the Feeling

When summarizing, state the potential feeling that you think your child is experiencing. This gives them the opportunity to confirm what they are feeling. It can also help your child to identify and name their emotions. Validate that all emotions are acceptable. Remember, children will be less inclined to physically or behaviorally express their emotions if they feel they can verbally share them with you.

Sample actions: Suggest the feelings heard — "It sounds like you are feeling..."



Step 6: Empower

Once your child is calm and can name their feelings, guide them in identifying the source of the feelings and problem-solving.

Sample actions: Ask questions and allow the child to lead in processing a solution.

Steps for Problem-Solving

- Help your child brainstorm and list a few possible solutions.
- Discuss the possible outcome or impact of each possible solution.
- Discuss the pros of each possible solution.
- Discuss any cons of each possible solution.
- Help them select a solution to try.

Limit and Reduce Stress for Your Child

Establish a Nurturing Environment



Provide Structure:

Maintain a daily schedule and routine.



Validate Feelings:

Children are just learning to identify, name, and process feelings. Help them by listening and naming the emotions you hear.



Involve Caring Adults:

Children who are connected to at least one caring adult grow healthier and happier.



Avoid Comparisons and Competition:

Acknowledge your child for their unique strengths and praise their efforts instead of accomplishments.



Offer Praise and Encouragement:

One's sense of self-esteem and one's ability to overcome stressors is bolstered when one feels supported.

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Signs of Trouble in Youth

This document outlines signs that a child or adolescent is experiencing stress, mental or emotional distress, or developing troublesome behaviors. Parents and caregivers can watch for these signs as indications that their children or adolescents may need the support of community resources.

Although every child is unique and the influences on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors may vary, parents and caregivers are positioned to be one of the first in their child's life to recognize that something is not right.

The signs of distress may be very subtle and inconsistent. So, if you suspect that your child is at risk, lovingly respond by checking in with them and consider seeking professional support.

Potential Warning Signs in Early Childhood



Changes in eating habits



Withdrawal or isolation



Changes in friendships



Sleep difficulties, nightmares, or bed wetting



Mood changes, such as hopelessness, anger, irritability, violent outbursts



Poor school attendance or performance



Regression to less mature behaviors (whining, clinging, thumb-sucking, tantrums)



Separation anxiety



Radical change in dress or appearance



Physical complaints: headaches, stomach pain, fatigue, chest pain



Intense worries or fears



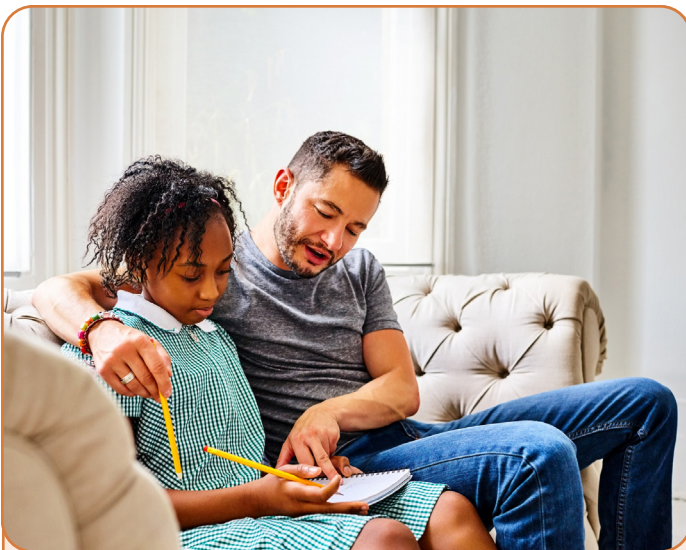
Drastic or dangerous changes in behavior or personality



Difficulty concentrating or staying still



Physical harm of self or others/fighting/desire to hurt others

















Stay Involved in their Schoolwork!

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, truancy or international unauthorized absences from school is the number 1 predictor that a boy will have a criminal record and the number 2 predictor for girls.

Potential Warning Signs in the Teenage Years

Youth, around the start of 6th grade or the initiation of middle school, can begin to exhibit behavioral changes. This can result from typical hormonal, neurological, or social influences. Sometimes, however, it can indicate more serious concerns.

One of the most perplexing challenges a parent faces is determining if their child is at risk for behaviors such as the following: drug/alcohol/tobacco use, poor academic attendance and performance, violence, depression, self-destructive behaviors (i.e., cutting, eating disorders), criminal activities, and suicide. Below are signs that an adolescent may need help:

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Withdrawal or isolation |  Diminished interest in activities/hobbies |
|  Disrespect or rejection of family values |  Declining grades or school absences |
|  Lying |  Promiscuity |
|  Extreme mood swings |  Unexplained weight loss |
|  Alcohol, drug, or tobacco use |  Financial changes |
|  Change in friends |  Self-harm |
|  Taking risks |  Talk of suicide |

How to Recognize Substance Use:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Decreased motivation | • Lower grades |
| • A rapid loss of weight | • Absences from school without parental knowledge |
| • Paleness or discoloration of the skin | • Change in physical appearance (poor hygiene, style change) |
| • Dark circles under the eyes | • Missing money or valuables |
| • Shaky hands | • Change in friends |
| • Sudden mood changes (irritable, depressed, anxious) | • Secretive behavior |
| • Hostile outbursts or anger at family members | • Forgetfulness |
| | • Unusual sleeping habits |



GET HELP IMMEDIATELY!

If your child or adolescent is talking about **suicide** or indicating **an interest in harming themselves**, don't delay! Seek the help of a mental health professional immediately.

Warning Signs

Talking about killing themselves or the following:

- Having no reason to live
- Being a burden to others
- Seeking revenge
- Feeling trapped
- Pain being unbearable

Change in behaviors:

- Increased substance use
- Researching or identifying a means to kill themselves
- Taking risks or acting recklessly
- Withdrawal or isolation
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling people (to say goodbye)
- Giving away prized possessions
- Suffering from anxiety or panic attacks

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



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Score **1 point** for each serving of a fruit or vegetable.

Score **2 points** for every day you had 2 hours or less of screen time (TV, computer, video games).

Score **2 points** for every day you were physically active for 1 hour or more.

Score **2 points** for every day you had zero (no) servings of sugar-sweetened drinks.

Score **2 bonus** points for each new fruit or vegetable you ate. List new fruits/vegetables:

Name: _____

Parent
Signature: _____

Total Score: _____

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Adapted from the 5210 Challenge on <https://5210.psu.edu>



Screen Time Recommendations

Technology is expanding and becoming a larger part of our life every day. It is easy for anyone to watch a TV show or play a video game and lose track of time. Children need to have supervision and guidance on screen time usage. Parents can set screen time limitations, so their children participate in a variety of educational activities. Some of the guidelines below could help you set limits for your child's screen time activity levels.

Overall



Be a positive role model by refraining from using your electronic device during family time and mealtime and use that time to interact with your child.



Discuss policies with other families; learn what works best for these families, then consider your own family's needs.



Engage in screen time together so your child understands the limits you have set.



Collect phones at the end of the night to charge them in the kitchen or the parent's bedroom. Removing phones can eliminate disruptions from needed sleep.

Recommendations

Ages 0-2 years



Before 18 months, avoid use of screen time unless you video chat with family and friends.



Parents of children 18 to 24 months of age who want to introduce digital media should choose high-quality programming and watch it with their children and discuss what the screen is displaying to help the children understand what they are seeing.

Ages 2-5 years



No more than 1 hour of screen time daily of high-quality programs.



Parents should co-view media with children to help them understand what they are seeing and apply the messages they are learning to the world around them.



Incorporate other activities such as reading books, building with blocks, or playing with toy cars.



Interact with your child in creative play to show you care about and are interested in them.

Ages 5-10 years



No more than 2 hours of recreational screen time daily.



Allow some time for your child to relax and enjoy media through educational, high-quality screen time.



Designate technology free zones such as the bedroom and dinner table.



No technology is allowed an hour prior to bedtime or during homework time.

Ages 10-18 years



No more than 2 hours of recreational screen time daily.



Be flexible with screen time limitations by letting your child make choices and help them understand the consequences their choices may have.



Go over the risks of screen time usage including sleep disruption, cyberbullying, and online solicitation in age-appropriate ways.

Reference:

American Academy of Pediatrics. (2016, October 21). American Academy of Pediatrics announces new recommendations for children's media use. <https://services.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2016/aap-announces-new-recommendations-for-media-use/>

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Babysitter Checklist

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



Contact Information

Parent's Name

Phone Number

Location Today

Parent's Name

Phone Number

Location Today

Home Address

If you need to reach me:

☐

Call

☐

Text

Return Time



In Case of an Emergency



Local Police



Fire Department



Poison Control

Emergency Contact #1

Phone Number

Relationship

Emergency Contact #2

Phone Number

Relationship



Health & Safety

Allergies or Medical Issues

(include dosages and times for medications)

Location of Emergency Items



Meals & Snacks

Foods to Avoid



Naps & Bedtime

Notes



Tips for Online Safety at Home

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

1) Protect all electronic devices.



Keep software updated with the latest security software.



Never turn off your firewall or antivirus software.



Keep the wireless router protected with a password.



2) Be smart online.



Do not click on links or attachments from addresses or people you do not know. Copy and paste links into your browser. Preview attachments before you download them.



Enable a secure VPN (virtual private network) for private searches and online browsing.

3) Think before handing out personal information.



Before you enter private information, check the web address. It should have a prefix of *https://* in the address and a locked lock should appear beside the address.

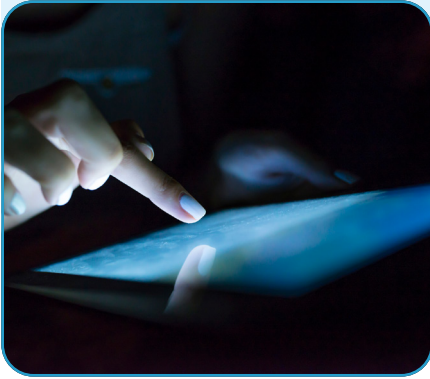


Never provide sensitive information in response to an email or instant message.



Give money to online charities with which you are familiar. Learn about who to contact and avoid giving to unknown senders; to protect from possible scams.





4) Create strong passwords and keep them secret.



Use a combination of capital and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols to make a phrase or sentence.



Use different passwords for different accounts for better security.



Write passwords in a notepad, and keep this in a safe place, or log passwords into a password manager online.

5) Take charge of your online reputation.



Google yourself once in a while to know what people see when they google you.



Generate an accurate positive online portrait of yourself.



6) Use social networks safely.



Check and change privacy settings on social media and web browsers to protect yourself from unwanted monitoring and manipulation of sensitive information.



Choose social friends wisely and keep tabs on posts that mention you.



Don't post anything that could harm your career or personal life.

7) Take extra steps to keep children safe online.



Monitor and provide guidance often.



Set guidelines for online access that fit your child's age and your values.



Know who your children interact with online.



References:

Kaspersky. (n.d.). Top 10 internet safety rules & what not to do online. <https://usa.kaspersky.com/resource-center/preemptive-safety/top-10-internet-safety-rules-and-what-not-to-do-online>

Microsoft. (n.d.). Top tips for online safety at home [Tip Sheet]. <https://query.prod.cms.rt.microsoft.com/cms/api/am/binary/RE1lmTu>

Resources for Parents and Caregivers of **Children 0-3 Years Old**

0-3
years

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Safe Sleeping Habits

Many parents have questions regarding their new baby and how to keep them safe. When it comes to sleeping, there is a lot of information about safety and the risks associated with sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Ages 0-12 Months

Below are recommendations to keep your baby safe from the day they come home until their 1st birthday. During this time, your baby's sleep methods will change, so you'll want to make sure you're updating your safety habits as well.



Room Sharing



According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), your baby's sleep area should be in the same room where you sleep for the first 6 months, or ideally, for the first year.



Room sharing can decrease the risk of SIDS by as much as 50% and is much safer than sharing a bed.

Baby Room Safety



A crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard that follows the safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is recommended for safe infant sleep.



Do not place blankets in the baby's crib or on top of the baby. Keep your baby warm by using the appropriate weight sleep wear.

Co-Sleeping



Your baby should always sleep alone in their crib — no siblings or animals should be in the crib with them.



Only bring your baby into your bed to feed or comfort. If you begin to feel tired or the baby falls asleep, put them in their own bed.



Never place your baby on a couch, sofa, armchair, or on top of an adult to sleep due to the risk of suffocation or falling.



Keep the baby's crib free of all small objects that could be swallowed.



Do not let strings or cords dangle anywhere near the crib.



Remove any teething necklaces from the baby's neck prior to sleeping.



Be sure to choose a sturdy changing table with a 2-inch guardrail around all four sides to prevent falls. Never leave your baby alone while on the changing table.



Safety Alert!

In the United States, approximately 3,500 infants die annually from sleep-related infant deaths, known as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and sudden unexpected infant death (SUID). Until your baby reaches their first birthday, remain cautious.



Ages 1-3 Years

Toddlers are very curious. You might find that your child is climbing or attempting to climb out of their bed at night, which can be dangerous. If you have lowered your child's crib and they are still maneuvering around the raised rails, it is probably time for a big-kid bed!

Crib-to-Bed Transition

This transition can be difficult, but it can keep your child safe — especially if they are climbing out of the crib!



If your child tends to be active in their sleep, you might look at toddler beds that are lower to the ground and have guard rails. This will hopefully prevent any falls.



If possible, avoid bunk beds. Even if your toddler intends to sleep on the bottom bunk, there might be too much temptation to climb to the top!



To make the transition a bit smoother, try removing the crib and position the new bed in that vacant spot. Falling asleep and waking up to familiar sights in your child's room will help provide your toddler with a sense of comfort and familiarity.

References:

American Academy of Pediatrics (2019). Make baby's room safe: Parent checklist. Retrieved 10/03/2019 from <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Make-Babys-Room-Safe.aspx>

St. Louis Children's Hospital [resource page] (n.d.). Tackling the toddler crib-to-bed transition. Retrieved 10/21/2019 from <https://www.stlouischildrens.org/health-resources/pulse/tackling-toddler-crib-bed-transition>

Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (2016). SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths: Updated 2016 recommendations for a safe infant sleeping environment. American Academy of Pediatrics, 138(5), 1-12. DOI:10.1542/ped.2016-2938

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Toddlers and Biting

Biting is considered a normal behavior that occurs during the toddler years. There are a number of reasons why toddlers may bite. For example, toddlers like to use their mouth to explore the environment around them and may use biting as a form of communication to show they are excited, frustrated, or bored.







A stressful event or new change — such as the birth of a new sibling, a move to a new house, or a lack of routine — can cause the child stress, which can lead to aggressive behaviors such as biting. Toddlers may also use biting as a self-defense strategy or may just be imitating other toddlers who bite. Typically, by the time a child reaches 3 years of age, this behavior is no longer utilized by the child.

Strategies to Help You Deal with Biting







-  **Try to figure out why your child may bite.**
Seeing a pattern can help you decide what to say and do to prevent a bite. For example:
 - *Do you think they are teething?*
Offer them a "chewy toy"; a cold, wet washcloth you keep in the freezer; or a bagel to chew on.
 - *Are they exploring cause and effect?*
Offer more toys and objects that allow them to "be the cause" (e.g., pots to bang with a wooden spoon, beads on a string, a pull toy).
 - *Do they bite if they get angry or frustrated?*
See session 3 of the Take Root 1-3 year program for strategies to keep their frustration low.
 - *Do they feel threatened?*
Some children withdraw, others may lash out and bite. Remind your child that you are there to take good care of them and keep them and their toys safe.
-  **Model how to deal with upset feelings.**
Stomp, make a face, take a deep breath, and say, "I am angry/frustrated!"
-  **Keep life predictable.**
Being able to count on what is going to happen next is comforting and helps a child feel in control. An example bedtime routine could be: play, bath, brush teeth, put on pajamas, read, three songs, a snuggle, and time for bed.
-  **Make soothing, relaxing activities a part of their day — and yours.**
Take a few minutes to review the Breathe to Thrive guide included on the Thrive website. It may give you some good ideas!
-  **Be ready to step in, if needed.**
Preventing a bite makes life easier for everyone.
-  **Pay extra attention when they are playing with a child they usually bicker with.**
Step in the moment you see tensions rising.



If Your Child Bites Another Child

-  Comfort the child who was bitten.
-  Explain to your child, "Biting hurts. Biting is not alright!"
-  Help your child calm down. It is scary to be so out of control that you bite.
-  Invite them to "check in" and help you take care of the child who was bitten. Talk about other ways to express their feelings — using words, stomping, growling, or running fast.
-  Never bite a child to show them how it feels, shame, hit, or yell at a child who bites. That will only teach them that biting, shaming, hitting, and yelling is OK because you do it.
-  Move on. Paying too much attention to biting can encourage a child to bite again.

If Your Child Bites or is Bitten at Child Care

-  Take a breath. Biting can stir up deep feelings for everyone, including your child who needs your support.
-  Arrange a time to sit and talk with your child's teachers about what happened. Talk about steps they are taking to prevent biting and about what you can do at home.
-  Avoid the blame game. It doesn't help anyone.
-  **If your child is the biter** – Decide if you will say something to the parents of the child who was bitten. If so, assure them you are doing everything you can to prevent it from happening again. But, before doing so, check with your child's teachers about whether or not the center has any policies about communication between parents in situations involving biting.
-  **If your child has been bitten** – Remember that in some programs the name of the child who bites is kept confidential. If you do know who the child is, try to put yourself in the place of the other parents before the conversation.
-  Remember, you and your child are on the same team.

Through a Young Child's Eyes

It's not always easy to be the parent of a toddler, but it can help to look at challenging behaviors through your child's eyes. If your child could tell you about when they bite, here is what they may say:



Biting is a behavior that seems to upset everyone — my parents, teachers, the child I bite — and it is upsetting and scary for me, too.

There are many reasons that I may bite. I may be teething, and my mouth hurts; I may be experimenting to see what happens; I may be frustrated or angry; or I may feel threatened. Identifying the reason can help you figure out how to help me stop biting.

Remember,
I am doing my best here.

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Family Media Guidelines

As a parent, you should ensure your child has plenty of time for active play outdoors as well as creative, imaginative play. Playing is the best way for a child to learn about themselves, others, and the world around them. However, allowing your child some monitored screen time may also provide another opportunity for them to learn and have some down time.

Some research has found screen-based activities can help children develop language skills and connect socially with long-distance family members. However, there is also research that indicates excessive screen time may lead to harmful outcomes for children such as increases in Body Mass Index (BMI), decreases in sleep, and delays in child development.

For this reason, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly advises parents to monitor and interact with their children during screen time. New “screen time guidelines” have been developed to support parents as they ensure their children have time for hands-on play, interacting with others, and sleeping. The information below intends to help you in manage your child’s screen time and develop a media use plan for your entire family.

Strategies for Managing Screen Time



Limit screen time to less than 2 hours per day. Provide specific times for active play.



Continue to check in with your child as they are having screen time so you can monitor what they are watching and for how long.



Create spaces where screen time is not allowed, such as during dinner or social events.



Identify games or shows for your child to play or watch that are educational, age-appropriate, and in line with your values. Some questions to consider when selecting shows or games include the following:



Set rules regarding screen time, and be sure to stick to the rules. Give a 5-4-3-2-1 minute warning, or set a timer to help your child know and prepare for when time is up.



Role model appropriate screen time use for your kids by limiting your media use. For example, turn your phone off or set it to “do not disturb” during meals and family time.



Spend time with your child at the screen, and talk about what is happening and how the characters might feel. Ask your child, “What do you see? What do you think is going to happen next?”



Avoid using screen time to calm your upset child, as this may cause them to have problems with managing emotions and setting limits.



Create Your Family Media Plan

We encourage you to make a Family Media Plan, which could help you be clear about your attitudes and expectations about your family's screen time. The AAP has developed a Family Media Use Plan tool that allows families to create a personalized Family Media Plan.

The AAP has also developed a Media Time Calculator that allows parents to calculate how much time their child spends on various activities (e.g., child care, physical activity, meal times) throughout the day to determine how much time they have left for screen time.

You can find both tools here: <https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan>

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Young Minds Policy Statement

This policy statement discusses the literature around children's use of television, videos, and mobile/interactive technologies, and provides guidelines for families on youth media use.

Link to website: <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/138/5/e20162591/60503/Media-and-Young-Minds>



Healthy Digital Media Use Habits for Babies, Toddlers, & Preschoolers

This web page provides detailed information about healthy digital media use for young children. Media use guidelines are discussed, and suggestions for the use of apps and digital books are considered. Tips for limiting media use and developing a family media plan for parents, families, and caregivers are also examined.

Link to website: <https://healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/How-to-Make-a-Family-Media-Use-Plan.aspx>

Why Limit Your Child's Media Use?

This web page provides information on why media use should be monitored and limited. Facts and tips for healthy media use are discussed.

Link to website: <https://healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/The-Benefits-of-Limiting-TV.aspx>



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Postpartum Depression

New moms and dads, adoptive parents, and parents of multiple children may experience the baby blue or postpartum depression.

Baby Blues

Experiencing the baby blues is common among parents. The key to health is to recognize the signs and take care of yourself. The symptoms of the baby blues generally last a week or two after bringing your baby home, and may be managed with self-care and support.

If you are experiencing the baby blues you may feel:



Sadness



Crying/Weepy



Anxiety



Thoughts That You Feel Off



Mood Swings



Trouble Sleeping



Lack of Energy



Unable to Concentrate



Impatience

Understanding that this stage will not last forever can be helpful when managing these or similar feelings. Some other healthy ways to manage the baby blues include:



Take time for yourself, and do something that you enjoy.



Reach out to friends and family whom you find supportive. Talk with them about how you are feeling.



Think about the positive aspects of being a parent. What are you doing well? What qualities do you love about your baby?



Eat healthy meals and snacks, and drink plenty of water.



Sleep when your baby is sleeping.



Connect with a local support group for new parents, or call a hotline to talk with a professional.



Make time to rest, and enjoy any down time.



Postpartum Depression

Postpartum depression is different than experiencing the baby blues and affects a smaller percentage of parents. The symptoms are generally more intense and tend to last longer.

Postpartum depression can start as early as the first few weeks after you bring your baby home and the symptoms and feelings can last for weeks or well into your baby's first year of life. Recognizing the signs and reaching out and accepting support are the first steps towards treating postpartum depression.

If you are experiencing postpartum depression you may feel:



Very Depressed



Highly Emotional



Angry and Irritable



Unable to Bond with Your Baby



Very Low Energy



Unable to Get Out of Bed and Care for Your Baby



Feelings of Guilt



Severe Mood Swings



Thoughts of Harming Yourself or Your Baby



Safety Alert!

Remember – If you feel you may hurt yourself or your baby, put your child in their crib or another safe place and call for help right away.

Postpartum depression is a form of clinical depression. If you are experiencing the symptoms of postpartum depression, ***please take action immediately.***

Arrange an appointment with your health care provider. Your health care provider can connect you with appropriate resources such as peer support groups, individual or group counseling, or more intensive psychiatric treatment, if necessary.

During your appointment, health care providers may ask you questions such as:

- What symptoms are you experiencing?
- At what intensity are you experiencing them?
- How long have you been feeling this way?
- Are your symptoms getting in the way of your daily routine? If so, to what extent?
- Are you using any drugs or alcohol? If so, to what extent?
- Are you having thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby?

It is important that you are honest and open with your health care provider. They are there to help you feel better!



Postpartum depression is treatable. The sooner you get support the sooner you will feel like yourself again. You may feel that you are immune to experiencing it, but postpartum depression can affect anyone, even if this is not your first baby.

How to Get Help



In an emergency, call 911.



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT
INTERNATIONAL

Postpartum Support International

1-800-944-4773

<https://www.postpartum.net/>



Postpartum Progress

<https://postpartumprogress.com/>

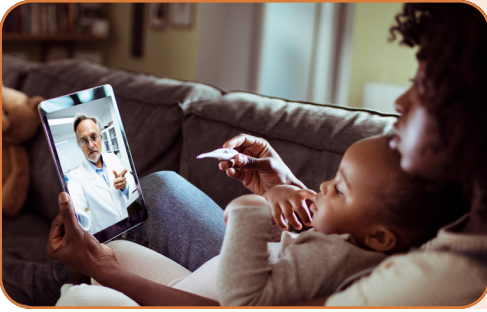


National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8225

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

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When Should I Call the Doctor?

As parents, we attempt to prepare and educate ourselves about what we should do when our baby has a fever or an illness. Most of the time, there should be no cause for concern. However, some signs and symptoms can relate to more serious illnesses.

Signs and Symptoms that Warrant a Call to the Doctor



Refusing or eating poorly several feedings in a row.



Hard to awaken or unusually sleepy.



Extremely floppy, crying more than usual, and hard to console.



Navel or penis is red, oozes, or bleeds.



Sunken or swelling soft spot on head.



Constipation for a few days, or if your baby is struggling or uncomfortable.



Dehydration — fewer tears, fewer wet diapers, or a dry mouth.



Eye discharge — one or both eyes are red or leaking mucus.



Rash that appears infected or is unexplained, especially if there is a fever.



Cold that interferes with breathing, nasal mucus lasting longer than 10-14 days, ear pain or cough.



Vomiting — liquid shoots out from the mouth, not the easy flow of spitting up — or unable to keep liquids down for 8 hours.



Diarrhea.



Fever:

- Under 3 months old – Contact the doctor.
- 3-6 months old – Contact the doctor if temperature is 102°F (38.9°C) or higher.
- If fever lasts more than 3 days – Contact the doctor.



Safety Alert!

If you think you should call the doctor, do it!

Make sure you have a pen and paper ready to jot down any instructions. If it is after hours, your doctor's office may redirect you to a 24-hour nurse line.

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/infant-and-toddler-health/in-depth/healthy-baby/art-20047793>



Additional Resources

Some additional resources that you may also find helpful include:



Kids Health

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents>

This resource provides information for parents on child aches, pains, and illnesses that are typical throughout childhood.



Zero to Three

<https://www.zerotothree.org/parenting>

This website offers information and tools to assist parents in strengthening their child's growth and development. A variety of topic areas are covered, including early development and wellbeing, parenting, early learning, and policy and advocacy.



Baby Center

<https://www.babycenter.com/baby>

Provides information for parents on baby sleep habits, baby care, feeding, health, development, and safety. The following article specifically discusses signs of a fever and when to worry: https://www.babycenter.com/health/illness-and-infection/fever-and-your-baby-or-child_84

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



Babysitter Checklist – Short

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



Family Information

Parent/Caregiver Names

Address

Parent/Caregiver Phone Numbers

Parent/Caregiver Destination

Expected Return Time



In Case of Emergency

Emergency Contact #1

Phone Number

Relationship

Emergency Contact #2

Phone Number

Relationship



Child Routine

Child #1

Diapering & Bathroom

Naps & Bedtime

Child #2

Diapering & Bathroom

Naps & Bedtime

**Child Routine** (cont.)**Child #1**

Meals, Snacks, & Beverages

Outdoor Play

Entertainment (e.g., TV, movies, games, books, websites)

Tips for Handling Tears and Temper Tantrums

Child #2

Meals, Snacks, & Beverages

Outdoor Play

Entertainment (e.g., TV, movies, games, books, websites)

Tips for Handling Tears and Temper Tantrums

**Special Instructions** (e.g., medical history, allergies, medications)**Child #1****Child #2**



Spanking: Is it an Ineffective Discipline Method?

Spanking has been used over the years to discipline young children. Today, there has been much debate on whether or not spanking works and is appropriate. Research clearly shows that spanking is ineffective and may lead to increased issues for children.

Some researchers argue that if parents stop spanking their children, the likelihood of child abuse will be reduced. For example, one study found that spanking was used as an initial or first discipline technique by parents who moved on to more intensive forms of physical punishment in a high number of child abuse cases.

Other researchers have found that spanking:



Is less effective than using time outs;



Sends mixed messages as children learn only to behave when there is a threat of physical violence;



Can induce feelings of fear, anger, and sadness;



Is associated with more childhood aggression;



Can be confusing and terrifying to a child because someone who cares for and loves them is physically hurting them;



Can make it difficult for a child to internalize a parent's explanation for why they were spanked;



Has been linked to increases in mental health issues and delinquent and criminal behavior in childhood and adulthood, negative parent-child relationships, and a higher risk of child abuse.

Spanking Violates Human Rights

Many human rights organizations consider spanking a form of corporal punishment and violence. Also, a number of national organizations — such as the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, and the National Association of Social Workers — have banned the use of spanking and recommend that parents use other forms of non-physical discipline techniques.





Recommended Parenting Strategies to Deal with Your Child's Behavior

As mentioned in the Take Root program, when your child is displaying unwanted behavior it is important to use three steps to respond to keep your child safe and help them thrive.

1



Stop

Take a Moment to tune into what you are feeling and seeing.

2



Breathe

Ask yourself, "What is my child's behavior trying to tell me?"

3



Think

Figure it out together — you and your child.

Strategies for Avoiding Challenging Behaviors

To help **avoid** challenging behaviors in your toddler:



Give your child lots of chances to feel and be competent.

Invite them to help you put napkins on the table, water the plants, dust, or carry their ball to the park. Feeling competent and capable will help your child learn that they can manage and build their confidence.



Keep your child's frustration level as low as possible.

Are they tired? Hungry? This may not be the time to run errands. Is the new puzzle too difficult? Put it away and bring it out again in a few months. Is it too hard to blow bubbles? You be the bubble blower and let them be the bubble popper.



Keep your frustration level as low as possible, too.

Toddlers have the amazing ability to tune into their adults. If you are upset, your child will sense it. So, consider the little things — and the big ones, too — that you can do to feel as calm and as steady as possible. For example, do you know those blocks you are always stepping on? Ouch! Put them away for now. Need a break, or at least some adult company? Call someone from your *Circle of Support* (see Take Root 0-6 months) to give you a break or meet up for a walk in the park.



Ways to Set Limits and Respond When Your Toddler Tests Them



Take a breath.

Remember that this behavior will not last forever. Talk with some other parents and you will find out that it isn't just your child.



Set only a few clear, consistent, and doable limits.

Examples include: Take off your shoes when you come into the house; no climbing on the coffee table; we wash our hands before dinner.



Offer realistic choices to help your child feel in control.

For example, do you want to wear your yellow shirt or your blue one? Would you like watermelon or a peach? Shall we put the puzzle together or read a book?



Respond in predictable, consistent, and clear yet respectful ways when your child tests.

Keep your focus on your child's behavior.



Notice positive behaviors.

Behaviors you pay attention to are likely to be repeated.



Responding to a Meltdown

If, despite your best efforts, your toddler has a meltdown:



Stay present.

Even when your child is losing it. Even when they grab a friend's toy or hit a child in the sandbox. Your presence is steady and reassuring.



Keep your eye on them, and be ready to step in as needed.

Whether to offer a hug, another toy, or to remove them from the situation.



Tell your child how you feel about their behavior.

"I know you are upset, but I don't want anyone to get hurt when you are throwing a block. I will sit here to help you stop throwing things." Or, "You wanted to walk into the street, but that is dangerous. So, I took your hand and said, 'We have to walk on the sidewalk.' You got very angry and frustrated. Mommy sat with you and you calmed down."



Give your child words for what they might be feeling.

"You got upset when I said, 'No more crackers.' You kicked and screamed. Your feelings were big." Or, "I know you wanted to play with the elephant but Louis has it now. It can be very hard to wait. Let's count to 10, then it will be your turn."



When things calm down, talk about other ways to handle the situation.

For example, suggest that your child stomp their feet or take a deep breath when they feel upset. Reassure your child that you — and other family members or adults — are there to help, and suggest they call you when they are starting to feel upset or frustrated.



Notice when your child does control their feelings and behavior.

"I saw from your face that you were angry and about to hit Henry, but then you stomped three big stomps. That was a good way of managing your feelings."

Parenting can be challenging, especially during times that require you to discipline your child due to their behavior. However, using some of the strategies listed — such as setting limits and responding appropriately to your toddler when they are having a meltdown — can assist you in managing their behavior.

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How Do I Keep My Baby Safe? – Checklist












Childproofing means eliminating possible dangers from your home. Even in the safest of environments, a child can still get hurt. Whether you live in a city apartment, a mobile home, a house in the country, student or military housing, or whether you live in your own home or with family or friends, there are common hazards and basic steps you can take to help keep your baby safe.

This checklist will help you identify items and areas in your home to inspect for safety. In the location boxes for each item, enter "R" for removed, "S" for secure, "NY" for not yet, and "N/A" for not applicable. Use the notes column to write reminders for yourself.

Items Secured or Removed	Living Room	Bedroom	Dining Room	Kitchen	Notes
 Lamps and Lamp Cords					
 Phone/Tablet Chargers					
 Computer Charger/Cords					
 Printer Cords					
 Extension Cords					
 Electric Fans and/or A/C Window Units					
 Curtains and Blind Cords					
 Plants					
 Tablecloths					
 Low-hanging Jewelry					
 Hair Dryers and Curling/Flat Irons					

Continued >



Items Secured or Removed	Living Room	Bedroom	Dining Room	Kitchen	Notes
 Paper and Paper Products (pencils, paperclips, etc.)					
 Soaps and Lotions					
 Household Cleaning Supplies					
 Lower Cabinets/Shelves with pots and pans, food, small appliances, books, sharp items, picture frames, vases, etc.					
 Pet Items (bowls, toys, etc.)					
 Garbage and/or Access to Plastic Bags					
 Electrical Outlets					
 Clothes Iron and/or Steamer					
 Small Toys from Older Children					
 Items Related to Hobbies (e.g., knitting/crocheting, wood work, sewing, etc.)					
 Baby Gates					

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Resources for Parents and Caregivers of **Children 3-5 Years Old**

3-5
years

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Morning and Bedtime Routine Chart

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My Jobs To Do...

Today is



Morning

☐

Make Bed

☐

Get Dressed

☐

Comb Hair

☐

Eat Breakfast

☐

Brush Teeth

☐

Give a Hug



Bedtime

☐

Bath and PJs

☐

Brush Teeth

☐

Clean Room

☐

Story Time

☐

Bedtime

☐

Good Night



Good Choices Chart

Use this chart to help your child identify and make good choices. First, decide on the reward they will receive once all the squares are filled. Acknowledge when your child makes a good choice and write it in or add a sticker to one of the squares. Give your child their reward when they reach the end of the path!

's Good Choices!

Reward:


Start!


**Keep
Going!**

**Great
Job!**



**Almost
There!**




**You Did
It!**

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Troubleshooting Bedtime Challenges

Children require the appropriate amount of sleep regularly to promote optimal health. Experiencing adequate sleep has been shown to improve attention, behavior, learning, memory, emotional regulation, quality of life, and mental and physical health. Sometimes bedtime is a struggle even if routines are in place and followed. Remember to remain calm and be consistent! Here are some troubleshooting ideas for those tricky times when bedtime might be challenging.

The Slippery One

For the child who continues to get out of bed after the nightly routine...

Remain calm, do not engage in conversation, and take your child back to their bedroom and place them back into bed. This pattern may happen several times, but be consistent! It will pay off!



The Just One More

For the child who is suddenly thirsty, has to pee, or needs to tell you something...

Prior to the final step of putting your child in bed, offer them water, have them use the toilet, and ask them if they have anything they want to tell you before they go to sleep. Adding these steps into your routine may help eliminate the requests once they are already in bed.

The Overactive One

For the child who seems to get hyper right before bedtime...

Add time into the bedtime routine for your child to burn off some energy. For example, before bath time, give them 5 minutes of crazy time where they can run and be active. Then, when it is time for a bath and the remainder of the routine, make it clear that crazy time is over.





The Early Riser

For the child who is up much earlier than they should be...

Try using a clock (or other system) that shows your child when it is okay to wake up and get out of bed.

The Scary Dreamer

For the child who has nightmares or night terrors...

Nightmares and night terrors can be very common for a toddler. Sometimes, nightmares and night terrors can occur when a child is sick, overtired, anxious, has experience trauma, has irregular sleep routines and bedtimes, or is experiencing developmental milestones. Try to provide comfort (e.g., rocking your child) during these times, but make sure you don't put into place any strategies that you might regret later (e.g., bringing them into your bed).



The Staller

For the child who will do anything to prolong sleep time...

Before putting your child into bed, you could give them the opportunity to choose one (new) fun thing to do before getting into bed.

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Toddler Bedtime Routine Chart

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Bedtime Routine

6:45 pm	7:00 pm	7:05 pm	7:10 pm	7:20 pm
Bath Time	Put on PJs	Brush Teeth	Read Stories	Go to Bed
				

Tips for Successful Routines



The timing of a bedtime routine is dependent on the family's schedule. Adjust times accordingly, so children ages 3 to 5 years are getting the recommended 10 to 13 hours of sleep per night.



Add additional items to the bedtime routine as necessary. For example, if your child starts to use excuses to avoid going to sleep — like having to go to the bathroom right after they get into bed — you may need to add time for your child to use the potty after storytime.



Print out a routine chart so your child can follow the steps to see completed tasks and what steps are left to do.



If changes in the routine occur, such as a parent being absent for bedtime, think ahead to avoid behavioral issues. For example, if Dad typically reads the stories but will not be present, record Dad reading the book so you and your child can follow along at bedtime.



Maintain consistency — even across parents and caregivers — so your child knows what to expect.



Reading to Your Child

The benefits of reading to your child are well-researched in the area of social science. Researchers have been exploring how reading to your child helps with language development, word recognition, increasing expressive vocabulary, and fostering life-long learning.

Reading to your child is beneficial for academic growth, and it promotes parent-child bonding time. When parents and children read together, they are connecting and relationship-building. Reading together is a time to learn about each other and the world around you. Take a look at some tips that help engage young ones in reading time and some fun book suggestions.



Read Together Daily

Make reading together a priority in your schedule. Offer a variety of books to your child and let them pick the book they want to read. Engage with your child by sharing your favorites too!

Be Expressive

We don't want our kids to feel like reading is a chore. Strive to make reading together a fun time. Be expressive, use silly voices, make sounds, vary your pace and volume, and be a dynamic reader. Engage with your child as you read together!



Talk About It

Reading together is a great time to nurture comprehension, social-emotional learning, and problem-solving skills. Talk with your child about what you are reading. Questions like, "What do you think will happen next?" "How do you think the character is feeling right now?" "What would you do if that happened to you?" are all great questions to ask and encourage dialogue.

Book Suggestions

Check out these websites for great books for children ages 3 to 5 years old:



Scholastic

<https://www.scholastic.com/home>



Free Children Stories

<https://www.freechildrenstories.com/>



American Library Association

<https://www.ala.org/>



Age Appropriate Hygiene for 3 to 5 Year Olds

Children ages 3 to 5 are able to start taking on some personal hygiene tasks themselves. Use the following information as a guide to help your child begin to assume some self-care responsibilities. Remember, your child is new to these tasks and will need your help to make sure they fulfill the task appropriately. Role model hygiene-related behaviors and incorporate hygiene-related tasks into everyday routines to encourage skill development.

Hand Washing

Hand washing should typically occur before handling food or eating, when caring for your own or someone else's sickness, after using the toilet, or after touching an animal. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that individuals lather and wash their hands for approximately 20 seconds. Incorporate a child's song (e.g., ABC song) into the task to get your child to wash their hands for the recommended amount of time. If soap is not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.



Brushing Teeth

Brushing teeth should occur twice daily, typically once in the morning and evening. Children should start brushing as soon as they have teeth, and at the age of 3 to 5 years, should brush with a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste with supervision and assistance. Allow your child to take on the responsibility once they have mastered the skill to handle brushing alone. Monitor the amount of toothpaste they use, so they do not swallow too much fluoride, which could damage their teeth over time.

Combing and Brushing Hair

Children with short hair can master this skill early and with little effort. Practice role-modeling skills so your child can mirror your actions. Children with longer hair may need help combing their hair and manipulating hair ties or barrettes. Allow your child to help pick out hairstyles or barrettes so they can feel included in the process. Children with textured hair, such as curly or kinky hair, may need parents to administer additional treatments to keep their hair healthy and tangle-free.





Getting Dressed

Beginning very early in life, children can play a role in getting dressed. Getting dressed is especially important in potty training as children need to maneuver pants and bottoms as they use the toilet. Keep in mind that children ages 3 to 5 years old are still developing fine motor skills and may need help with buttons, snaps, and zippers. At this age, opt for clothing with elastic or stretchy waistbands.



Using the Toilet

Children ages 3 to 5 years old have either started using the toilet or have already been doing it for some time. Dress your child in clothing that is easy to remove, and help them learn to dress and undress so they may use the toilet independently. Children this age will need help cleaning themselves after a bowel movement. Continue encouraging independence and teach your child the skills until they have mastered cleanliness. Children should always wash their hands after using the toilet.

Taking a Bath

Always supervise children ages 3 to 5 years old when taking a bath. While they will still need help bathing (e.g., regulation of water temperature), they are ready to start learning how to wash themselves and work up to independence in the bath. Teach them how to use soap and shampoo, scrub the various parts of their body, and rinse and dry properly. Encourage bathing and cleanliness by making bath time fun and allowing time for play.



Sources:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

American Dental Association: <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en>

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Stress Management

Stress is a feeling that can arise when you deal with situations that you feel are positive or negative. Stress is individual and unique — circumstances that cause stress in one person may not cause stress in another. Small stressful events can also compound and create more intense feelings of stress.

You can control your stress level by being aware of what causes your stress and learning to manage stress. This resource provides some strategies to help you manage stress in general, and during stressful moments. Remember, stress management takes practice!

General Tips for Stress Management



Take care of your physical health. Get enough sleep, eat healthy meals, exercise, and drink plenty of water.



Make time for you. Schedule down time, and make it a priority.



Engage in positive self-talk and look at things from a positive point of view.



Build a support system.



Develop a mindfulness practice. Spend time deep breathing, meditating, and find quiet places.



Take time to unplug from screens and social media.



Seek out professionals for help. Talk to a therapist or counselor.



Managing Stress in the Moment



Remember to breathe and relax your muscles. Think about slowing your breathing. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.



Count to 10 before you respond. This gives you a moment to relax and collect your thoughts.



Give yourself a time out.



Talk it out with someone you trust. If you are feeling stressed, talk about it.



Move your body — go for a walk, run, stretch, dance — just move!



Write down 10 things for which you are grateful.



Listen to your favorite music.

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HALT and Other Behavior Management Strategies

Children ages 3-5 years old are working on the skills they need to manage their behavior. As parents, we can recognize that our child's behavior is telling us something and coach them when they are struggling to behave in a way that we find appropriate. Below are some strategies to help you manage your child's misbehavior and build a positive relationship with them.

Think about WHY your child is misbehaving!

Remember, behavior is a clue to how your child is feeling. Remember HALT!

H**Hungry**

Is my child misbehaving because they are **hungry**?

A**Angry**

Is my child misbehaving because they are **angry**?

L**Lonely**

Is my child misbehaving because they are **lonely** (or bored)?

T**Tired**

Is my child misbehaving because they are **tired**?

Once you determine why your child might be misbehaving, you can address the unmet need.

Make it a team effort!

Work with your child and let them know why the behavior is unacceptable, and help them use appropriate strategies to get their behavior under control.



Clearly define what you would like your child to do!

Often, parents tell their child what they **don't want them to do**. Instead, tell your child what you **would like them to do**.

For example, if your child is running in the store, you might say: "I need you to **walk**, please," instead of saying, "Stop running!"



Notice when your child is behaving in a positive and appropriate way!

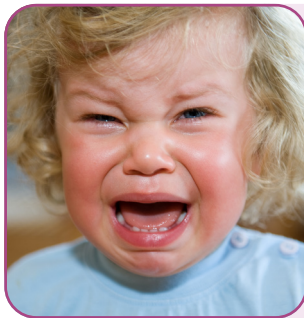
Try and catch your child while they are exhibiting positive behaviors and share a brief praise statement in the moment.

If you notice your child put a toy away before leaving the playroom say, I noticed you put your toy away before leaving the playroom. Thanks!"

Remember: Praise should be **SPECIFIC, EFFORT FOCUSED**, and **IN THE MOMENT!**

Source: Siegal, D., & Bryson, T. (2014). No-drama discipline: The whole-brain way to calm the chaos and nurture your child's developing mind.

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Normal vs. Abnormal Temper Tantrum

Temper tantrum behavior is common among children ages 3 to 5 years old and is a normal part of development. There is little research to indicate that abnormal temper tantrum behavior could be a red flag for an underlying clinical symptom. However, if your child exhibits persistent temper tantrums that last more than 25 minutes in duration and include aggressive behavior, self-injury, and the inability to self calm themselves after, you may want to speak to a clinical provider.



Normal Temper Tantrum



Age

12 months up to age 4.



Behavior During Tantrum

Crying, flailing arms or legs, falling to the floor, pushing, pulling, or biting.



Duration

Up to 15 minutes.



Frequency

Less than 5 times a day.



Mood

Should return to normal between tantrums.



Abnormal Temper Tantrum



Age

Continuing past age 4.



Behavior During Tantrum

Injury to themselves or others during the tantrum.



Duration

Lasts longer than 15 minutes.



Frequency

More than 5 times a day.



Mood

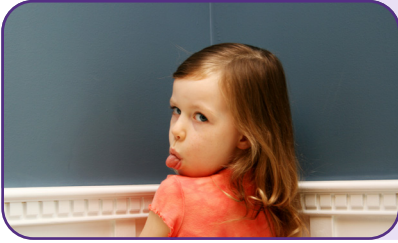
Persistent negative mood between tantrums.

Source:

Daniels, E., Mandleco, B., & Luthy, Karlen E. (2012). Assessment, management, and prevention of childhood temper tantrums. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*, 24, 569-573.

Belden, A.C., Thomson, N., & Luby, J.L. (2008). Temper Tantrums in healthy versus depressed and disruptive preschoolers: Definitional tantrum behaviors associated with clinical problems. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 152(1), 117.

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Punishment vs. Positive Discipline

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Punishment

The purpose of punishment is to control, coerce, and/or shame a child into acting a certain way through the threat or use of pain, loss, or confinement. Punishment is executed through external control.



Positive Discipline

The purpose of positive discipline is to teach children to control and manage their behaviors in an acceptable way. Positive discipline helps children develop a sense of control over their behaviors. Discipline often teaches the child a lesson that can be applied to future situations.

The Guiding Principles of Positive Discipline



Be a Good Role Model

Pay attention to your own behaviors and emotions. Model respectful behaviors.



Be Consistent

Make sure your child knows what the behavior expectations are, and state them positively. Define the expectations; clearly tell your child what to do, not just what not to do!



Be Curious

Consider why your child is misbehaving. Take time to consider and identify the meaning behind the behavior. Talk with your child!



Be Reasonable

Your child is learning how to manage small and big emotions. Remember their age and state of development. Children ages 3 to 5 years old need you to teach and guide them, so they are able to develop a sense of control over their behaviors.

Adapted from: Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence <https://allianceforchildwelfare.org/>



Positive Communication

Communication is more than just talking and listening. When we think about effective communication we utilize skills such as eye contact and open body language, active listening, an openness to see things from a different point of view, and responding respectfully.



Positive Communication is a tool that parents can use when interacting with their young children that promotes parent-child relationship and parent-child stress management. Positive communication does not mean only saying nice things, however, it is framing a message in the actions we want to see while prioritizing emotional connectedness.

Take a look at some examples below and notice how this subtle shift in language can change the tone and feel of the statements while still conveying a direct message.

Instead of Saying:	Try Saying This:
Stop running.	I need you to walk.
Stop crying.	I can see that this is hard for you.
Don't hit.	It's okay to feel frustrated, but it's not okay to hit. Please be gentle.
Stop yelling.	Your voice is so loud and I can't understand you right now. Take a deep breath and then talk to me.
Don't get upset.	It's okay to feel sad.

Parenting style and culture play a role in what communication with your child looks like in your family. Think about the interactions that you have with your child daily and explore reframing your language to be more positive! Notice how your child responds to you as you utilize this tool!



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Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a normal part of life and something that children will experience with siblings, peers, parents, and other adults. As parents, we can help support our children when they experience conflict and teach them the skills they can use to resolve conflict, now and in the future. Below are some tips to help you coach your child through a resolution process.

Learn to Identify and Manage Emotions

If your child is experiencing a conflict with someone, be prepared to help them manage strong emotions. When working with your child to identify feelings, you should recognize and name feelings and teach them it is okay to say how they feel. Children ages 3-5 years old need help linking the emotion they are feeling with feeling words. In addition, you should teach your child that it is not okay to hit, kick, or use physical force against themselves or anyone else.



Listen to Understand

Check in with your child and ask them, "What happened?" Listen to your child. Help them understand that when they express themselves in an appropriate way, they will be heard and understood. Practice good listening techniques. For example, eliminate other distractions, and look at your child when they are talking to you.



Problem Solve Together

Children ages 3-5 years old may need help finding possible solutions to the problems they are experiencing. Ask your child how they would like to solve the problem and then role-play potential scenarios. If your child has a hard time coming up with strategies to solve the issue, offer possible positive solutions. The key is to foster positive communication and joint problem-solving. Taking time to encourage these thinking skills now will help your child use this strategy in the future.

Empathy

Remember, the emotions your child is experiencing are very real. Be empathetic with your child when they are sharing their feelings. When your child is sharing their feelings, take the opportunity to teach them to be empathetic and ask them how others involved in the situation may feel. Remember the age and stage of your child. Looking at situations from another's point of view may be challenging for some children ages 3 to 5 years old.

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Incorporating Physical Activity

When we talk about screen time, we also talk about physical activity, as screen time can relate to sedentary behaviors. However, a child can get enough physical activity in one day and still have too much screen time. The Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America has developed guidelines for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

For each age group, SHAPE stress that parents and caregivers should understand the importance of physical activity and promote movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity. Remember to focus on fun and movement with children this age.



Physical Guidelines for Preschoolers

Guideline 1:

Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity each day.

Guideline 2:

Preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes — and up to several hours — of unstructured physical activity each day, and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.

Guideline 3:



Preschoolers should be encouraged to develop competence in fundamental motor skills that will serve as the building blocks for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.

Guideline 4:

Preschoolers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.

Guideline 5:

Caregivers and parents in charge of preschoolers' health and well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and promoting movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.



MOVE, PLAY AND LEARN AT HOME

For resources and activities to increase your child's physical activity check out:

<https://www.shapeamerica.org/publications/resources/downloads-earlyChildhood.aspx>

For the full list of guidelines visit:

<https://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/guidelines/apppracticedoc.aspx>

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Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children 5-10 Years Old

5-10
years

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Developmental Milestones Chart

As children grow, they experience many physical, cognitive, social, and emotional changes. While no two children develop at the same rate, there are some milestones you can expect children to achieve within a given age range. Below is a chart that outlines some of the typical developmental milestones children between 5 and 10 years of age experience. The following milestones are presented as a guide only. Every child grows at a unique pace; some mature more quickly or more slowly than others. If you have concerns, you could discuss them with your child's doctor.

Developmental Milestones

Age	 Physical	 Cognitive	 Social	 Emotional
5 Years Old	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hop, skip, and somersault• Climb and swing• Use a fork and spoon• Use the toilet independently• Dress and undress independently• May begin to lose baby teeth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Count at least 10 objects• Aware of everyday items like food or money• Copy geometric shapes like a triangle• Write some letters and numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Desire to make their friends happy• Are aware of gender• More inclined to agree with rules• Begin to act more independently (e.g., may go to a neighbor's house by themselves)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show care and concern for others• Can be both demanding and cooperative• Wish to be like their friends• Able to distinguish between reality and fantasy
6 Years Old	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are beginning to lose baby teeth• Can catch a ball• Able to write their own name• Developing better balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know their age, birthday, and address• Communicate well verbally• Start to understand casual relationships• Begin to understand the notion of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Like to play with friends of the same gender• Use a lot of imagination in their play activities• Still want their parents to play with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to be fearful of things like big animals and monsters• Begin to understand others' feelings, but still tend to be self-focused• Start to develop a sense of humor• Want to be a "big" kid and to feel that they are contributing or helping (e.g., taking care of a younger sibling)
7 Years Old	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well-developed hand-eye coordination• Energetic• Can use scissors properly• Ride a bike without training wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reads books independently• Think in a logical fashion• Have a vocabulary of a few thousand words• Comprehends the meaning of symbols like + (plus) or = (equals)• Can tell time• Knows the days of the week, months, and seasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Becomes better at regulating emotions during challenging times, such as losing a game• Engage in turn-taking and cooperative play• May have a best friend• Better able to distinguish between right and wrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Become more self-aware and self-critical• Capable of feeling guilt and shame• May experience extreme emotional reactions



Age	Physical	Cognitive	Social	Emotional
8 Years Old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences muscle growth in their arms and legs Have better coordination, reaction time, and endurance Brush their teeth independently Use kitchen instruments and simple tools like a hammer or screwdriver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are capable of thinking about multiple things at the same time Are able to follow complicated instructions Communicate at an adult-like level May begin to have favorite subjects in school Can understand basic fractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the ability to master social skills and make friends May have several close friends of the same gender Enjoy being a part of a group (e.g., team sports or extracurricular clubs) Are susceptible to peer pressure Can be friendly and pleasant, but also impolite and pushy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong desire to feel loved and understood, especially by their parents May be sensitive and act dramatically May experience rapid changes in emotions Still tend to struggle with being patient
9 Years Old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start to show a growth pattern related to gender; girls are starting to get taller and weigh more than boys Lose about four baby teeth each year; these are replaced with permanent teeth Become increasingly interested in team sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face more academic challenges at school Become more independent from the family Begin to see others' point of view more clearly Have an increased attention span 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start to form stronger, more complex friendships and peer relationships Experience more peer pressure May experience bullying behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize basic social norms and appropriate behavior Can control their anger most of the time Have more stable emotions than in the previous year; mood swings may still occur, but not as frequently Are curious about relationships between boys and girls
10 Years Old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an increased appetite and need more sleep Show improvement in handwriting and the ability to use tools May complain of growing pains or muscle cramps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to plan and predict with increasing accuracy Use logic to explain reactions and their findings to make further predictions May still have a hard time sorting facts from opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that rules can be negotiated Test limits; try to figure out which rules are negotiable and which are not Are increasingly independent from family and have a growing interest in their friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience insecurity, mood swings, and struggle with self-esteem Are affectionate, silly, and curious, but may also be selfish, rude, and argumentative Recognize and complain when they consider issues to be unfair Fine line between being a big kid and wanting to be a child

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Playing Games with Your Child

Playing games is a great way for you to bond with your child! It also provides opportunities for your child to develop their thinking, organizational, motor, language, and social skills. Each of these skills is important to a child's future and can be taught through play! For example, select an active game to help promote your child's physical health or choose a puzzle to help them learn problem-solving skills. The following tips will help you get the most out of playing games with your child.



Choose Carefully

Games come in a variety of styles, and it is important to select games that are appropriate for your child's age, development, and skill level — as well as one that they will enjoy! Include your child in the decision-making process when selecting games to play.

Be Flexible

Sometimes, modifications may need to be made in order to play a particular game with your child. For example, if it rains when you are hoping to set up an obstacle course outside, set one up inside instead. Or, if your child really wants to play a particular board game that may be too advanced, change the rules so you both can play.

Mix It Up

Play a variety of games with your child. Playing different games will provide more opportunities to enhance different skills and abilities. Don't hesitate to switch to a new game if your child's interest appears to be waning. Keep in mind, however, some children may want to play the same game multiple times. Be sure to play the game, but stress that you would also like to play a new game.

Check for Understanding

Games have rules or procedures that need to be followed. As you explain those rules or procedures to your child, take a few minutes to make sure they understand. You could also provide a quick demonstration or the rules or procedures to help them understand what they are supposed to do. Try not to start the game until you are confident your child understands how the game works. This can help prevent confusion or frustration and make the game more enjoyable.

Be a Role Model

Games can teach children valuable social skills such as teamwork, taking turns, following directions, regulating emotions, and losing (or winning) gracefully. Children learn a lot from observation, so it is important that parents model appropriate, pro-social behaviors for them. As you interact with your child during the game, make sure you demonstrate these skills.





Look for Teachable Moments

In addition to being a positive role model, take note of your child's behavior and discuss it with them. Children may struggle with social skills when they are focused on "winning." Talk about the importance of teamwork, taking turns, following directions, regulating emotions, and losing (or winning) gracefully. Your child can benefit from a loving and supportive conversation about these behaviors. Ask questions that will help your child process their behaviors and arrive at their own conclusions; avoid simply telling them what to do or believe.

Be Intentional

Make time to play with your child. You do not have to block out hours of your schedule to play a game with them; sometimes, all you need is 10 or 15 minutes. It is unlikely that game playing will occur if you are not intentional about it. If you are hesitant because of time issues or other commitments, let your child know your time limits before playing. For example, you might say, "I really want to play with you, but I have to cook dinner. Let's agree to play for 30 minutes, and then I will start dinner." In addition, game play does not have to be structured. For example, if you notice that your child is playing with Legos, take a few minutes and join in, but remember to let them lead the play activity.



Downplay Competition

Most games will inevitably have a winner and a loser; this aspect of game play should be deemphasized as it can promote emotions or behaviors that detract from enjoyment and learning. If you notice that your child is focused on competition, gently remind them that it is just a game and it is more important to enjoy spending time together with friends and family. You could also try praising and encouraging your child's effort to help take the focus of performance. Remember to tell your child specifically what they are doing right — even if they are losing! For example, "I really liked the way you kept your cool even when we were losing. It was so fun playing with you!" If your child becomes too fixated on winning and repeatedly displays inappropriate behavior, take a time out from the game to give your them a chance to calm down and refocus.

Have Fun

The most important part of any game is having fun! Create an environment in which you focus on love, laughter, and learning. Be supportive, keep the tone light, and interject humor.



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Giving Effective Verbal Praise

When parents encourage their children, confidence and competence grow. One strategy for encouraging children is verbal praise. However, research conducted by Carol Dweck, Professor of Psychology at Stanford University, suggests that person-focused praise (e.g., "you're so smart" or "you're such a good boy") can have unintended, negative impacts on confidence, motivation, determination, and effort.

Children who are regularly praised for personal characteristics, such as intelligence, may be unwilling to try harder tasks or take risks because they fear making mistakes or not being praiseworthy. Person-focused praise can also lead children to develop unrealistic expectations, compare themselves to others, or become obsessed with achievements.

How You Praise Your Children Matters!

The type of praise that genuinely encourages children and promotes positive development follows:

Praise Should Be Specific

Praise should *clearly communicate* to the child what they have done well. Generic praise (e.g., "good job") does not benefit children because it does not help them understand what specific behaviors are desirable and should be continued in the future.



For Example: If your child cleans up their toys, rather than simply saying, "thank you," an effective praise statement would be to say something like, "Thank you so much for picking up all of your toys and putting them away in the toy box."

Praise Should Be Effort-Focused

Praise that *emphasizes effort, determination, and learning* helps children understand that these tools are necessary to overcome setbacks. Praise that encourages effort and a positive attitude leads children to be driven to achieve by personal fulfillment rather than by comparison to others or competition.



For Example: If your child has learned to write their first name, rather than telling the how smart they are, an effective praise statement would be to say something like, "You have worked so hard on spelling your name, and it really shows here. You stuck with practicing it even when it was hard. That's great!"

Praise Should Be Genuine

Praise should be communicated in a sincere way. Here are some tips on how to ensure that your praise statements are delivered in a sincere manner.



When Delivering Praise:

- Get close to your child;
- Make eye contact;
- Use an enthusiastic tone of voice; and
- Keep statements realistic.

You Should Avoid:



Exaggerated Praise

Exaggerated praise (e.g., "That's the most amazing picture I've ever seen") is not beneficial. According to Kenneth Ginsburg, Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, this type of praise comes across as dishonest and unbelievable, and it can cause children to become indifferent to more genuine praise.



Sarcastic Compliments

Criticism that is sarcastically disguised as a compliment confuses children. Children do not know if they should pay attention to what was said or how it was said, which makes it hard for them to know if the behavior should continue or discontinue.



Praise for Ordinary Tasks

According to research by Wulf-Uwe Meyer, Professor of Psychology at the University of Bielefeld in Germany, praise that is given for simple and ordinary tasks (e.g., praising an 8 year old for tying their shoes) is counterproductive because it can lead children to believe they are low of ability (e.g., "I must be really incompetent if I'm getting praised for doing something this easy").

Praise Should Be Timely

When children are learning a new behavior or skill, praise should be delivered as soon as parents notice or become aware of the behavior or activity. According to Gerald R. Patterson, a distinguished Research Scientist at the Oregon Social Learning Center, praise becomes much less effective at reinforcing positive behavior the longer it is delayed. Parents need to pause what they are doing and offer praise as soon as they notice their child engaging in valued and appreciated behaviors or activities.

Praise Should Be Fitting

As children begin to perform a desired behavior or skill more regularly, praise should be used less and less frequently as a reinforcer. According to Patterson, learned behaviors are more likely to continue if they are occasionally reinforced.



For Example: If your child begins to regularly use their manners at the dinner table, instead of praising them every time they are polite, a parent should praise their behavior once in a while.



Effective Verbal Praise Examples

Here are some useful examples of praise statements to try with your child:

Don't be Generic	Try to be <i>Specific</i>
"Good job!"	"You put all of the colored pencils back into the box and put the box back in the drawer. The table looks very clean now. Thank you."
"Nice work!"	"You sounded out all of the words in that sentence even when it was hard. Way to go!"
"Amazing!"	"You were very polite and used your manners when speaking to your teacher at the conference today. Thank you."

Don't be Person-Focused	Try to be <i>Effort-Focused</i>
"You're so smart!"	"You studied hard for your spelling test. You wrote the words out every day this week, and it really paid off!"
"You're such a nice girl!"	"You really put a lot of thought into how you could help your friend with her show-and-tell project. I bet she really appreciated what you did for her."
"You're a fantastic artist!"	"You're putting a lot of detail into how you're drawing the house and family. It looks very colorful!"

Don't Exaggerate	Try to be <i>Genuine</i>
"That was the most amazing touchdown I've ever seen!"	"You ran as hard as you could to get that touchdown. I like how you didn't give up even when it looked like you were about to get tackled."
"There isn't a better reader than you on the face of the planet!"	"That was a really long book, but you stuck with it until you finished it. You didn't give up even when you didn't know a word. You're making improvements, and it shows."
"Wow, I've never eaten a sandwich that tasted so good. You're going to be America's next great chef!"	"I really appreciate that you put all my favorite toppings on the sandwich you made me. That was very thoughtful!"

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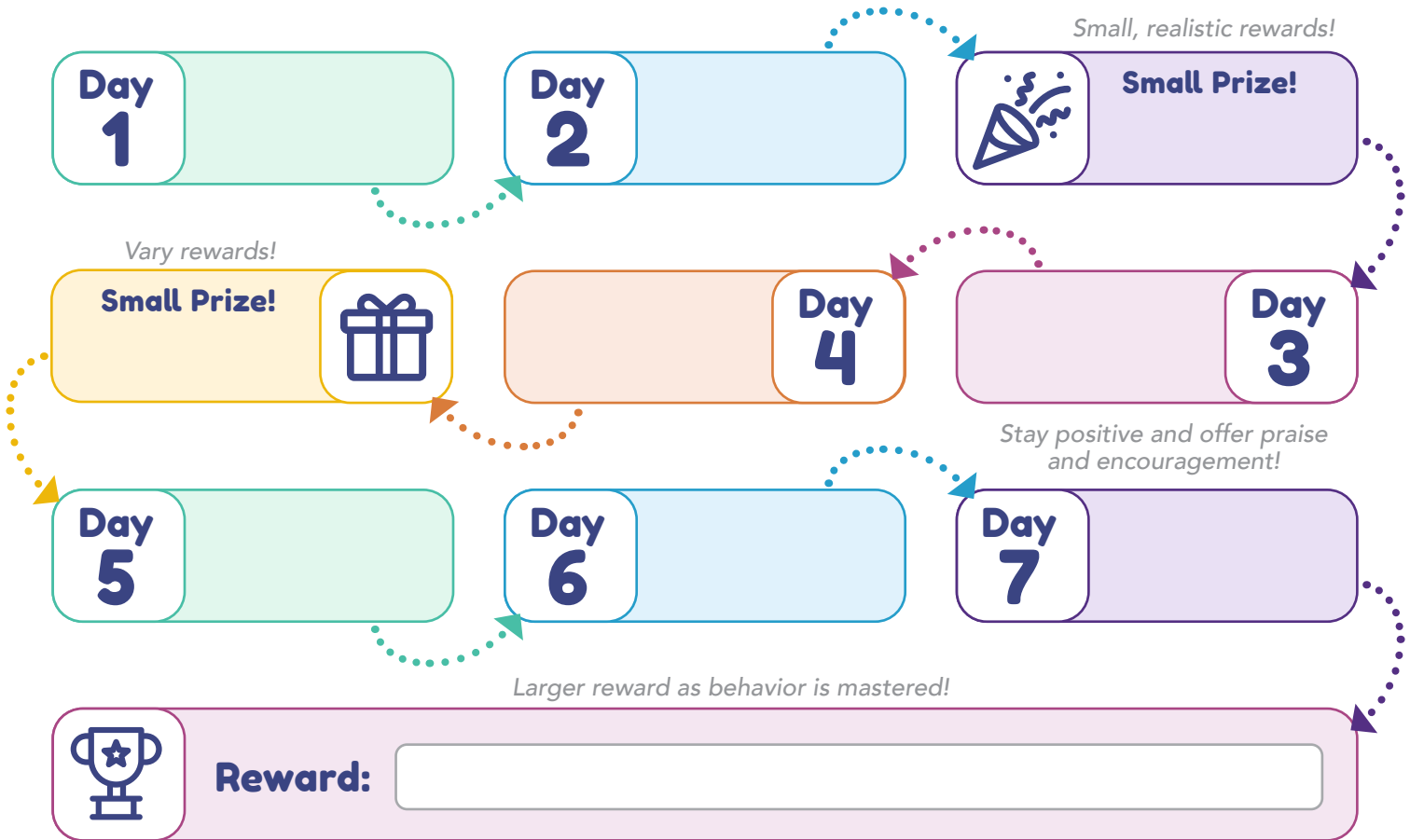
Reward Chart

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's Reward Chart

New Behavior:

Remember, be specific and state the task positively!



List a behavior you want your child to learn:

List rewards that your child might want to earn:



Bedtime Routine

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Establishing a Bedtime Routine

Please write down *times* and some bedtime *rituals* that you can try at home to establish a bedtime routine.

Bedtime Routine







Routine Steps	Time	Bedtime Rituals
To prepare for bed:		
To spend some time bonding:		
Lights Out!		Good Night! Sleep Well!



Bedtime Bonding

Bedtime Rituals offer an opportunity to bond with your child! By establishing a time and process for sleep, you can provide your child with a sense of security and love. This requires some effort, but it reduces bedtime struggles and aids your child in falling asleep faster and sleeping more soundly. In addition, using bedtime to bond helps your child's bedtime experiences to be relaxing, enjoyable, and nurturing.

Set the Stage for Sleep!

-  Establish a set time for bedtime (generally by 8 p.m.) and dedicate a set amount of time for your child's bedtime routine (generally between 20 minutes to 1 hour).
-  Offer your child a warning as the time to transition to bedtime activities approaches. You can add an element of fun by turning on soft music.
-  Be consistent! Families have many demands on their time. Make bedtime and bonding a priority as it can be a rewarding way to connect with your child at the end of the day.
-  Children find structure comforting; it reduces stress, and they come to know what you expect of them. Incorporate healthy habits, like brushing teeth, into the ritual. Other rituals, like taking a warm bath, can help to relax muscles and ready children for sleep.
-  Make certain your child has comfortable pajamas and a safe, comfortable, and dedicated place to sleep with limited sights, sounds, and distractions. Avoid having televisions, computers, or cell phones in your child's bedroom.
-  Bedtime is a time of separation for children, and some children may need items that provide a sense of comfort or security — like a night light, blanket, doll, stuffed animal, or an item that belongs to their parent/caregiver.



Enjoy Special Moments Together!

Once your child is in their pajamas and ready for bed, cherished moments and memories can be made! Below are some ideas for creating special bonding opportunities.



Start a conversation game! Bedtime is a great time to talk to your child without all the daily distractions. Identify a way that you can end each day with a short conversation — share the highs and lows of the day, ask about what your child wishes to dream about, or talk about what they are looking forward to tomorrow.

You can end the day with praise and encouragement! Find something your child did during the day that you are grateful for or proud of and tell them about it.

Reading books to your child is a good way to calm them, and also encourage reading skills, a love of learning, and imagination. You can also use the time to tell stories. For example, share stories of your own childhood or your relatives' experiences. This can help your child better understand and appreciate their heritage and your family's values.

Weave your values into the evening rituals. For example, some families choose to say a prayer or read religious texts together.



Relaxation strategies can be practiced — such as stretching, visualization, or meditation.

End the day by laughing and telling jokes to each other.

Singing a lullaby may be a soft and soothing addition to your nightly ritual.

Use bedtime as an opportunity to physically express love for your child. Cuddle while reading, hug them, and kiss them goodnight.



Bedtime Books!

Below is a list of children's bedtime books that reinforce bedtime rituals, highlight the joys of sleep, and share silly nighttime antics.



A Book of Sleep by
Il Sung Na



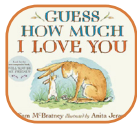
Goodnight Moon by
Margaret Wise Brown



Pajama Time! by
Sandra Boynton



Bear Snores On by
Karma Wilson



Guess How Much I Love You by Sam McBratney



Snoozers: 7 Short Bedtime Stories for Lively Little Kids by Sandra Boynton



Bedtime for Francis by
Russell Hoban



How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight? by
Jane Yolen



Snug in Mama's Arms by
Angela Shelf Medearis



Chicken Bedtime is Really Early by Erica S. Perl



I Need My Monster by
Amanda Noll



The Going to Bed Book by
Sandra Boynton



Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late! by
Mo Willems



In the Night Kitchen by
Maurice Sendak



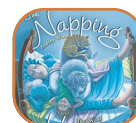
The Goodnight Train by
June Sobel



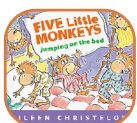
Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book by
Dr. Seuss



I Love You, Stinky Face by
Lisa McCourt



The Napping House by
Audrey Wood



Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by
Eileen Christelow



It's Time to Sleep, My Love by
Nancy Tillman



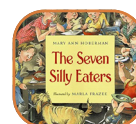
The Night Night Book by
Marianne Richmond



Go Away, Big Green Monster! by Ed Emberley



It's Too Soon! by
Nigel McMullen



The Seven Silly Eaters by
Mary Ann Hoberman



Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site by
Sherri Duskey Rinker



Kiss Good Night by
Amy Hest



Time for Bed by
Mem Fox



Good Night, Gorilla by
Peggy Rathmann



Llama Llama Red Pajama by
Anna Dewdney



Tuck Me In! by
Dean Hachen



The Benefits of Rules and Routines

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Setting Limits and Expectations

When setting limits and expectations, be **clear**, **concise**, and **consistent**!



Model the behavior.



Give step-by-step instructions.



Provide a time for when the expectation must be met.



Check for understanding.



Reinforce compliance and effort.



Adjust the task as the child's abilities grow.



Limit Screen Time



During meals, turn off electronics.



Provide access to play spaces, board games, and art supplies.



Make electronics less convenient.



Set time limits and monitor usage closely.



Serve as a role model.

Physical Activity

Encourage 60 minutes of physical activity daily!

Benefits



Better sleep.



Improved health.



Improved mood.



Increased energy.



Increased self-esteem.





Regular Family Meals

Spend time together eating healthy meals!

Benefits



Improved family cohesion.



Increased in academic performance.



Decreased risky behaviors like substance use, sexual activity, and violence.



Decreased depression.



Healthy weight.

School Involvement



Establish a time for homework.



Create a study space.



Review homework.



Participate in school activities.

Benefits



Increased academic confidence.



Increased organizational and planning skills.



Increased school engagement.



Increased academic performance.





Household Responsibilities

Meaningful family contributions!



Keep tasks simple.



Give clear instructions.



Don't expect perfection.



Offer praise and encouragement.



Show gratitude.

Benefits



Builds skills.



Increased self-esteem and self-reliance.



Increased responsibility.



Increased connection.

Consistent Bedtime



Children need about 10-11 hours of sleep.



Avoid caffeine.



Keep technology items out of the bedroom.



Start the bedtime routine about an hour before sleep.



Include rituals like a bath or reading together.

Benefits



Increased family bonding.



Better rest for the mind and body.



Improved health.



Decreased power struggles.



Screen Time Tracking Chart

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Track Your Child's Screen Time

- Post the chart in a convenient location, such as near the television or computer.
- Write in the minutes/hours your child spends on each type of screen daily.
- Add the total in the "Total Hours Per Day" column at the end of each day.
- At the end of each week, add up the "Total Hours Per Day" column to determine the weekly total. Place the amount in the "Total Hours Per Week" row.

's Screen Time Tracking Chart

Starting Date:

Day	Television	Movies	Video Games	Cell Phones	Computer/ Internet	Total Hours Per Day
Monday						<input type="text"/>
Tuesday						<input type="text"/>
Wednesday						<input type="text"/>
Thursday						<input type="text"/>
Friday						<input type="text"/>
Saturday						<input type="text"/>
Sunday						<input type="text"/>



You can help your child be healthy!

Closely monitor screen time and encourage physical activity!

**Total Hours
Per Week**



Phrases That HELP and HINDER

You play the biggest role in your child's eating behavior. What you say has an impact on developing healthy eating habits. Negative phrases can easily be changed into positive, helpful ones!

Phrases that HINDER

Instead of...

- *Eat that for me.*
- *If you do not eat one more bite, I will be mad.*

Phrases like these teach your child to eat for your approval and love. This can lead them to have unhealthy behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs about food and themselves.

Instead of...

- *You're such a big girl; you finished all of your peas.*
- *Look at your sister. She ate all of her bananas.*
- *You have to take one more bite before you leave the table.*

Phrases like these teach your child to ignore fullness. It is better for children to stop eating when full and satisfied than when all of the food has been eaten.

Instead of...

- *See, that didn't taste so bad, did it?*

This implies to your child that they were wrong to refuse the food. This can lead to unhealthy attitudes about food or self.

Instead of...

- *No dessert until you eat your vegetables.*
- *Stop crying and I will give you a cookie.*

Offering some foods, like dessert, in reward for finishing others, like vegetables, makes some foods seem better than others. Getting a food treat when upset teaches your child to eat to feel better which can lead to overeating.

Phrases that HELP

Try...

- *This is kiwi fruit; it's sweet like a strawberry.*
- *These radishes are very crunchy!*

Phrases like these help to point out the sensory qualities of food. They encourage your child to try new foods.

Try...

- *Is your stomach telling you that you are full?*
- *Is your stomach still making its hungry growling noise?*
- *Has your tummy had enough?*

Phrases like these help your child recognize when they are full. This can prevent overeating.

Try...

- *Do you like that?*
- *Which one is your favorite?*
- *Everybody likes different foods, don't they?*

Phrases like these make your child feel like they are making the right choices. It also shifts the focus toward the taste of food rather than who was right.

Try...

- *We can try these vegetables again another time. Next time, would you like to try them raw instead of cooked?*
- *I am sorry you are sad. Come here and let me give you a big hug.*

Reward your child with attention and kind words. Comfort them with hugs and talks. Show love by spending time and having fun together.

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



Discipline Strategies

Remember: When your child is misbehaving, that is when they may need to connect with you the most!

Try to be attuned to why they are misbehaving. Misbehavior may be motivated by an unmet need (e.g., hunger), difficulty managing strong emotions, or a skill they have not mastered.



Step 1: Calm Down



Step 2: Connect

While Connecting with Your Child:

- **Be Reassuring and Respectful.** Remember, you love your child but dislike the behavior.
- **State the Rule and the Reason.** Remind your child of the rule and the reason for it. This can be an opportunity to use an **I statement**:
"I feel insert a feeling word when you name the misbehavior because state the impact and I want you to name the desired behavior."
- **Request the Desired Behavior Respectfully.** Say, "Please do this..." or ask your child to tell you what behavior is expected.



Step 3: Listen



Step 4: Involve Your Child in Problem Solving



**Honor Your
Child and Your
Relationship!**



Additional Strategies

Planned Ignoring

This is deliberately withholding your attention from your child while they are misbehaving. This technique can be used when they are exhibiting a frustrating behavior — like making noises, whining, or having a temper tantrum. It should not be used when harm is possible, if they are emotionally distraught, or if the behavior is driven by a physical need (e.g., hunger, more sleep).

Precision Requests

This is redirecting your child or providing clear and direct instructions. When giving a precision request, keep the following in mind:



Get physically down to your child's level by kneeling or squatting next to them.



Reassure your child that you love them while telling them that you dislike their behavior.



Honestly express how their behavior affects you, others, or the environment.



Explain that there is a reason behind each rule.



Give time for your child to process your request. Wait at least 5-10 seconds, so they have time to comprehend and react to your request.



Give the instructions only once.



If the behavior doesn't change, remind them of the consequences for not cooperating.



Issue the consequence immediately, if needed.



Consequences

Natural Consequences



Natural consequences can occur without parental intervention as long as there are not safety concerns.



Allow your child to assume responsibility for the consequence and be certain to engage them in talking about the role of their decisions and actions.



Natural consequences teach problem-solving and healthy decision-making skills.

Logical Consequences and Removing Privileges



Explain the consequences ahead of time.



Give your child a warning and allow time for them to adjust their behavior.



If the behavior continues, promptly give a consequence that matches.



When removing an object or activity, select one that has value to your child. It is recommended that food items not be used as a privilege.



Deliver the consequence calmly.

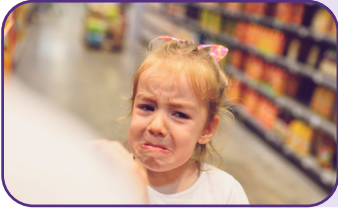


Keep the consequence simple and the duration short, so it is not difficult for you to monitor and enforce.



**Be Calm,
Clear, Concise,
and Consistent!**

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Correcting Misbehavior

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Be *reassuring* and *respectful*! Remember, you love your child but dislike the behavior!

1. When Your Child is Highly Reactive...

Connect with curiosity to understand the behavior.



1. Calm Down

Remaining calm and helping your child calm down moves them from reactive to receptive.



2. Connect

Show your child verbal and non-verbal empathy to help them regain emotional balance. A loving touch is a powerful way to comfort and decrease internal stress!



3. Listen

Describe your observations and ask questions to understand what motivated the behavior. Reflect and validate feelings.



4. Involve Your Child in Problem Solving

Focus on the lesson you want your child to learn from the experience. Involve them in choosing a way to make amends and in making better decisions.

2. When Your Child Needs Guidance...

Provide a reason and a request to redirect the behavior.

1. State the rule.

2. State the reason for it.

3. Request the desired behavior respectfully.

This can be an opportunity to use an **I Statement**:

"I feel insert a feeling word when you name the misbehavior because state the impact and I want you to name the desired behavior."

Naming the impact and sharing the perspective of those affected by the misbehavior helps children understand that their choices have consequences and develop empathy and awareness of others!

4. Give your child time to react to the request.

5. Once your child corrects the behavior...

Give praise and positive reinforcement.

3. When a Consequence is Necessary...

Calmly request that the behavior changes...

Give Your Child Time to React

Wait 5-10 minutes for compliance.

Misbehavior Continues

Respond Calmly with a Consequence

Immediately after the consequence is fulfilled, give praise and reinforcement.



In All Discipline Situations...

Consider the lesson you want to teach!

Remember, your goal is to show love and build skills that last a lifetime!

Resources for Parents and Caregivers of Children 10-18 Years Old

10-18
years

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Actively Listening to Your Adolescent

Quality communication is a critical part of successful parenting, and active listening is an important component of positive and productive communication with your adolescent. Active listening is making a conscious effort to hear the words your adolescent is saying and to understand the entire message they are conveying. There are four key steps to being a successful active listener.

Step 1: Be Present and Limit Distractions

Showing your adolescent that they have your undivided attention helps your child understand that how they feel and what they are saying is important to you. Be sure to concentrate on what is being said. By including nonverbal gestures that show you're listening — like nodding or smiling — your adolescent may feel more willing to share with you and be open with you (Vitalaki & Katsarou, 2021).



Step 2: Do Not Interrupt

While your adolescent is speaking, concentrate on their words, and do not think about your response. If you are formulating your reply, your attention will be distracted, and you may miss key points. Wait until your adolescent has finished speaking, or better yet, ask them if they are finished speaking before you respond.

Step 3: Withhold Judgement

When listening to your adolescent, do not make judgments on the words or actions, and make a point to hear the whole story. It is important for your child to feel that their thoughts and feelings are valid and deserve consideration.



Step 4: Paraphrase What Was Said

When talking with your adolescent, repeat what they said by using statements like, "I hear you saying..." and "It sounds like you feel..." followed by "Does that sound right?" Paraphrasing shows your adolescent that you understand or don't understand what they said, which will allow your child to clarify points for you.

Actively listening to your adolescent can help create a safe and trusting communication environment in which your child feels heard and understood. As a result of the trust that is built, you may be better able to prevent or diffuse conflict and understand your child's needs, so you can find solutions together.

References:

- Vitalaki, E., & Katsarou, E. (2021). Active listening: A model for teachers and parents to actively listen and act upon children's concerns in terms of their perceptions of quality of life. In F.N. Valanidou, L. Neophytou, M. Anatasou, & M. Koutsellini (Eds.), *Children's life quality: Participation, recreation, and play* (pp. 74-104). University of Cyprus: Center for Social Innovation.

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



Family Meeting Tip Sheet

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Benefits of Family Meetings



Connect, regularly, as a family to help your children develop their developmental assets.



Stay up to date on what is going on in other family members' lives.



Discuss topics and concerns, in a safe environment, that may be hard to talk about at other times.



Teach children how to listen without judgment.



Help children learn to see other people's perspectives and respect those perspectives.



Encourage children to learn how to give time to others, even when they are busy.



Help children understand they are individuals, but they are also part of a unit.

Tips for Family Meetings

Create Guidelines for Family Meetings



Decide when and where meetings will be held: Make sure everyone is free to attend the meeting time.



Anyone in the family is allowed to call a meeting: Ensure parents are not the only ones who are comfortable calling these types of meetings.



All family members should be invited to family meetings: Make certain each family member is heard and has a chance to understand why decisions are made and how they are made.



Have Routine Family Meetings



Family meetings should not always be about important decisions or crises:

Family meetings also provide an opportunity to plan vacations, outings, celebrations, family member's accomplishments, or discuss next week's dinner menu.



Make sure there is an agenda, and everyone has seen it in advance of the meeting:

All family members should have the opportunity to know what is going to be discussed, so they may gather their thoughts, concerns, and solutions prior to the meeting.



Make Family Meetings a Positive Interaction



Start the meeting on a positive note:

Even if the meeting is being called to discuss a crisis, incorporate positivity.



Everyone gets to talk if they want to:

Everyone should be heard, even if opinions and ideas do not align with someone else's thoughts and feelings.



Everyone should practice active listening: Hearing what everyone is saying is an important part of communication.



Negative comments and put downs should not be tolerated: If the tone of the meeting starts to become negative, it should be halted to give everyone a chance to calm down.



When possible, put thoughts and concerns to a family vote: After hearing everyone's thoughts, if appropriate, let the family vote on the decision to be made.



Develop an Action Plan and follow through: A plan of action should be adopted, and there may need to be a follow-up meeting to evaluate how the action plan is going or if any changes need to be made.



Family Action Plan

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

Description of the need for action:

(Example: Dishes are not being put away after dishwasher is done.)

Brief description of how the family will act to fulfill the need described:

(Example: Create a schedule of putting dishes away.)

List of specific actions:	Who will complete these actions:	Actions need to be completed by:	Family will discuss results on:	Measurement of success:
Example: Put dishes away on the date you're assigned.	Example: Tieera: Monday–Friday Grace: Saturday & Sunday	Example: Before child's bedtime each day	Example: 1 month (Dec 6)	Example: Dishes are put away daily when mom checks before she goes to bed.



How to Talk to Your Teen About Substance Abuse

Talking to your teen about drugs and alcohol should be an ongoing conversation. There should be planned discussions and spontaneous teaching moments.



Tips for Talking to Your Teen About Drugs and Alcohol



Ask your teen's views.

Avoid lectures. Instead, listen to your teen's opinions and questions about drugs. Assure your teen that they can be honest with you.



Discuss reasons not to use drugs.

Avoid scare tactics. Emphasize how drug use can affect the things that are important to your teen — such as sports, driving, health, and appearance.



Consider media messages.

Social media, television programs, movies, and songs can glamorize or trivialize drug use. Talk about what your teen sees and hears.



Discuss ways to resist peer pressure.

Brainstorm with your teen about how to turn down offers of drugs.



Be ready to discuss your own drug use.

Think about how you'll respond if your teen asks about your own drug use. If you chose not to use drugs, explain why. If you did use drugs, share what the experience taught you.

Mayo Clinic (2021)

If your teen is under the influence, this is not the time to have a discussion. The time for these important, and sometimes hard, discussions about what happened is when everybody is clear headed and calm.



If You Think Your Teen is Involved in Drug Use



Talk to them.

You can never intervene too early. Casual drug use can turn into excessive use or addiction and cause accidents, legal trouble, and health problems.



Encourage honesty.

Speak calmly and express that you are coming from a place of concern. Share specific details to back up your suspicions. Verify any claims your teen makes.



Focus on the behavior, not the person.

Emphasize that drug use is dangerous but that doesn't mean your teen is a bad person.



Check in regularly.

Spend more time with your teen, know your teen's whereabouts, and ask questions after they return home.



Get professional help.

If you think your teen is involved in significant drug use, contact a doctor, counselor, or other healthcare provider for help.

Mayo Clinic (2021)



SAMHSA's National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4257)

SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families who are facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

References

Mayo Clinic. (2021, February 25). *Teen drug abuse: Help your teen avoid drugs*. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/tween-and-teen-health/in-depth/teen-drug-abuse/art-20045921>

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



Helping Kids Fight Cyberbullying

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

Standing Up To Cyberbullying: Top Ten Tips for Teens

Don't be a bystander — stand up to cyberbullying when you see it. Take action to stop something that you know is wrong. These **Top Ten Tips** will give you specific ideas of what you can do when you witness cyberbullying.



1. Report to school.

If the person being cyberbullied is someone from your school, report it to your school authorities. Many schools have anonymous reporting systems that allow you to let them know what you are seeing without disclosing your identity.



2. Collect evidence.

Take a screenshot, save the image or message, or screen-record what you see. It will be easier for an adult to help if they can see — and have proof of — exactly what was being said.



3. Report to site/app/game.

All reputable online environments prohibit cyberbullying and provide easy tools to report violations. Don't hesitate to report incidents; those sites/apps will protect your identity and not "out" you.



4. Talk to a trusted adult.

Develop relationships with adults you can trust and count on to help when you (or a friend) experience something negative online. This could be a parent, teacher, counselor, coach, or family friend.

**5. Demonstrate care.**

Show the person being cyberbullied that they are not alone. Send them an encouraging text or snap. Take your friend aside at school and let them know that you are always there.

**6. Work together.**

Gather your other friends and organize a full-court press of positivity. Post kind comments on the victim's wall or under a photo they have posted. Encourage others to help report the harm. There is strength in numbers.

**7. Tell them to stop.**

If you know the person who is doing the cyberbullying, tell them to stop. Explain that it's not cool to be a jerk to others. But say something — if you remain silent, you are telling the bully you are okay with that behavior.

**8. Don't encourage it.**

If you see cyberbullying happening, don't support it in any way. Don't forward it, don't add emojis in the comments, don't gossip about it with your friends, and don't stand on the sidelines.

**9. Stay safe.**

Don't put yourself in harm's way. When your emotions are running high, resist posting something that may escalate the situation. Don't hang out online where most people are cruel. Never physically threaten others in the online (or real life) arena.

**10. Don't give up.**

Think creatively about what can be done to stop cyberbullying. Brainstorm with others, and use everyone's talents to do something epic!









Adapted from: <https://www.cyberbullying.org/standing-up-to-cyberbullying-tips-for-teens.pdf>



Modeling Healthy Relationship Behavior

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

Healthy Relationship Modeling

Positive Behavior	How It Is Modeled
 "I" Statements	Use "I" statements when talking with your teen. Avoid accusatory "you" statements.
 Active Listening Skills	Give your teen your full attention when they are talking to you. Do not judge them or try to think about what you're going to say while they are saying it.
 Problem-Solving Skills	Calmly and rationally talk through challenges with your teenager. Help them break the problem down and have a solution-focused conversation.
 Purposeful Intent – Compromise	When disagreeing with your teen, try to find a "middle ground" solution that both parties are comfortable with.
 Purposeful Intent – Mutual Respect	Continually demonstrate that, for the most part, other human beings, regardless of differences, hold value and deserve respect.
 Purposeful Intent – Boundaries and Values	Discuss with others what you are comfortable and uncomfortable with. Engage with your child from their point of view.
 Purposeful Intent – Reciprocity	Show care and compassion and expect nothing in return.
 Honesty	Own your mistakes and discuss them with others. Refrain from lying, cheating, and stealing.



Unhealthy Relationship Modeling

Negative Behavior	How It Is Modeled	Try This Instead
 Uncontrolled Anger	Exhibiting violent or overly emotional conversations or actions when angry.	Take a short break from the conversation and collect your thoughts. It's okay to say you need a minute and revisit the conversation later.
 Disrespecting Other's Boundaries	Continuing with problematic behavior directed at others after being asked to stop.	If you are asked to stop a specific behavior, do so.
 Physical Abuse	Hurting someone physically — like pushing, hitting, grabbing, or kicking.	Physical abuse can be a result of uncontrolled anger. If you have these feelings, remove yourself from the situation until you have had a chance to cool down.
 Dishonesty	Some common forms of dishonesty include lying, cheating, and stealing.	Refrain from acting in deceitful ways. Avoid having dishonest or disingenuous conversations.
 Avoidance	Neglecting others' emotional needs, limiting difficult conversations, or an unwillingness to engage in problem-solving behavior.	Check in with those in your life periodically. Make sure that everyone is doing okay and try to help those who may not be doing fine.
 Transactional Behavior	Only doing things when there is something in return for yourself.	Act selflessly — find ways to help others when there may be no clear gain for yourself.
 Isolation	Keeping others from support networks outside of the relationship	Understand that you, alone, cannot be a complete support network to someone. Work to cultivate support networks for others.



Positive Conversations (Refrigerator Card)

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Using Positive Language

Words to Use	Words to Avoid
I feel...	You always...
I think...	You never...
It scares me...	You don't care...
I am wondering if...	Don't be...
I understand...	I don't want to...
I need...	I told you so...



Respectful Communication

Respectful communication is essential to having positive relationships and to a child's development. Good communication involves listening and conversing in ways that make children feel valued. It also models appropriate behaviors for your child to exhibit with others. Here are some tips on how to help your pre-teen or teen learn how to have respectful and clear communication

Pre-Teens

Staying connected with your pre-teen child is part of good ongoing communication. You can stay connected and build your relationship with your child by using unplanned, everyday interactions. This is when you make special time to do things together that you both enjoy. Here are some ideas for planned and unplanned connecting:



Regular family meals



Fun family outings



One-on-one time with your child



Family meetings to discuss and work out problems

Listening and Communicating

Active listening can be a powerful tool to improve communication and can build a positive relationship with your child. Children of all ages learn through modeling, and the best way to teach active listening to your pre-teen is to practice doing it yourself. Active listening is a way of saying to your child, "Right now, you're the most important thing to me." Here's a quick guide to active listening:



Stop what you're doing and give your child your full attention.



Look at them while they are talking to you.



Show interest and show you're trying to understand.



Listen without interrupting, judging, or correcting.



Concentrate hard on what your child is saying.





Negotiating

Negotiating can help your pre-teen learn to think through what they want and needs and communicate this in a reasonable way. While learning to manage conflict and learning to negotiate, difficult conversations will arise. You will need to have these conversations in the pre-teen years. Building good communication includes tackling difficult conversations together. Here are some tips for handling difficult conversations:



Stay calm. Plan a good time to talk when you are feeling relaxed and have no distractions.



Reassure your child that you do want to discuss the issue.



Let them know you're happy that they want to talk to you.



Avoid being critical or judgmental or getting emotional and try to think objectively.



Actively listen to your pre-teen.



Thank your pre-teen for coming to you.

Teens

As your child enters the teen years, they are becoming more independent and have learned many good and maybe not so good communication skills. Look at the Pre-Teen guide for tips on active listening and tough conversations. When your child reaches the teen years, they may develop friendships and romantic relationships. Here is how you can help your teen navigate respectful communication.

Friendships

To teenagers, friends become increasingly important, and positive, accepting, and supportive friendships help teenagers develop positive relationships now and when they become adults. You can play an important role in helping your teen manage peer relationships.



Building a warm and caring relationship with your teen can help them with their own social relationships.



Praise teenagers when you see them being fair, trusting, and supportive. This encourages them to keep working on those positive social traits.



Getting to know your teen's friends can show your child you understand how important their friendships are. Encourage your teen to have friends over and give them a space in your home to hang out.





Teenage friendships can sometimes take a turn towards toxicity, and your teen may need your help to understand this. Here is how you can help.



Explain to your teen that if your friendships aren't making you feel good, they aren't good relationships.



Teens need to know to watch out for signs of bad friendships. Some signs of bad friendships include put-downs, manipulation, exclusion, and other hurtful behavior.



Talk to your teen about what good friends do, such as looking out for each other, caring about each other's feelings, and treating each other with respect.



Romantic Relationships



Romantic relationships are a major developmental milestone for your teen. Every teen is different, and every family will feel differently about when romantic relationships will be allowed. Romance will happen, and understanding what respectful, good communication will help your teen form safe and healthy relationships. Talking to your teen about romantic relationships is one of those difficult conversations. It is essential to start setting ground rules early. Before your teen starts making romantic connections, ensure your teen understands what they are allowed to do and what the consequences will be for breaking these rules.

Adapted from: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/teens/communicating-relationships/communicating/teen-communicating-relationships>

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!



Setting Boundaries and Expectations

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Tips for boundaries to be effective:



Make sure the rules, and consequences for breaking them, are understood by your teen.



In rulemaking, be deliberate and do not act impulsively.



Ask for your teenager's input when deciding new rules or adjusting old ones. Asking for their thoughts gives your teen increased confidence and a better understanding of why the rule exists.



Stay firm with your rules, and keep to agreed-upon punishments.



Model the behavior you want to see from your teen.



Try not to fix every problem. Let your teen experience consequences that do not have a severe or long-term negative impact on their life and allow them to learn from the problem or mistake.



Continually talk to your teen about what you expect from them.



Make sure the established expectations are developmentally appropriate and it is possible for your child to meet those expectations. The table below will give you an idea of how to manage appropriate expectations with a teenager.

Realistic Expectations	Unrealistic Expectations
Grades are to be kept above a specified threshold	Grades are not to be below perfect
Chores are established and are to be done without being asked	Assuming your teenager knows what chores need to be done without them being identified
Putting a large amount of effort into being the best you can be at a given task	Being the best at a given task when compared to all peers
Alcohol and drugs are to be avoided	That your teenager will never be confronted with drugs or alcohol
Your teenager will act respectfully	Your teenager will not have their own thoughts and feelings about things
Your teenager will try their best to be responsible and stay out of trouble	That your teenager will never make mistakes and missteps
Your teenager will spend time with the family	That your teenager will spend all their free time with the family
Your teen will limit entertainment screen time to an agreed-upon limit	Your teenager will abstain from any sort of digital technology



Ways Parents Can Influence the Health of LGBTQ+ Youth

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

Be Affirmative and Supportive

Sexuality and gender identity are not things that can be changed and often present over time as individuals engage in self-discovery. Help your teen embrace this topic and feel safe being open and honest with you.

Be Empathetic

Try to understand and imagine what feelings your teenager is experiencing. This will help inform your perspective as you guide them through this time.



Stand Up for Your Child

Listen to your teen, and take it seriously, if they tell you they are being bullied.



Hold Zero Tolerance for Jokes or Slurs at the Expense of the LGBTQ+ Community

Address the issue when you encounter this type of behavior in your community.

Be Mindful of Your Teen's Mental Health

Watch for warning signs that your teen may be in distress. Some of these signs may be persistent anxiety, insecurity, depression, low self-esteem, and emotional problems.

Help Your Teen Connect with LGBTQ+ Organizations

This will help your teen find a sense of community with others who are having, or have had, similar experiences.



Celebrate Diversity

Introduce your teen to ideas, media, and personalities that/who exhibit positive traits and belong to the LGBTQ+ community. It is important that your teen recognizes there are positive examples when considering the existence of social stigma.

Engage in Your Teen's Self-Expression

Through supportive conversations, find out what your teen is trying to express through their choices in clothing, jewelry, hairstyle, and room decorations.



Stay Involved

Keep informed of what your teen is doing and whom they are spending time with. By doing this you are passively communicating to your teenager that you care about their well-being and safety.

Keep Learning

Stay informed and educated on the facts and issues that surround the LGBTQ+ community.

Keep in mind that even if your child is not part of the LGBTQ+ community, they most likely know peers or others who are. To be supportive of the healthy development of all teens, everybody should be familiar with the above protective factors.

For more information review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention fact sheet Parents' influence on the health of lesbian, gay, and bisexual teens: What parents and families should know at https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parents_influence_lgb.pdf

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017, June 21). LGBT Youth. Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm>.

Rafferty, J. (2021, June 7). Gender-diverse & transgender children. HealthyChildren.org. Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/Pages/Gender-Diverse-Transgender-Children.aspx>.



Talking Tips to Protect Your Child from Online Predators and Grooming

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!

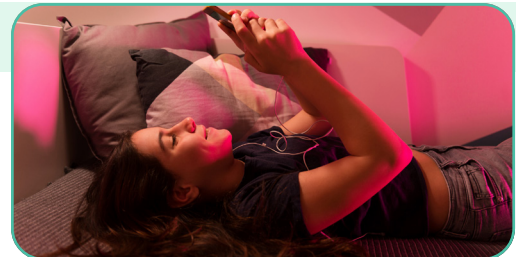


Explain what and who is an online predator.

Online predators can be teenagers or adults who are pretending to be children or classmates or other children who are pretending to be your friends. Explain to your child how, in an online format, you don't really know who anyone is because they can have fake accounts and false identities.

Describe safe online relationships.

Talk about relationships in real life and how they are different from online relationships. Describe what a risky relationship may be like online and discuss how to look for dangerous or potentially harmful signs.



Discuss privacy and information safety.

Tell your child about privacy and what that means. Discuss the issues that come with sharing information, and consider how to keep yourself safe.

Talk about the dangers of social media.

Review the dangers of social media usage. Talk about the different kinds of scams that pervade the internet and false information that is shared.





Bring up selfies.

Describe, and be specific while also age suitable, what is an appropriate selfie and what is inappropriate. This topic could help you to start the conversation about predators and photos.

Reinforce safety rules.

Remind your child about the rules for online usage in your home. Reinforce that you are keeping them safe by being responsible for their online safety.



Discuss grooming.

Talk to your child about grooming and explain that it is when a person tries to develop a relationship with a child or their family so they can sexually abuse the child.

Have a heart to heart – let your child know they can always talk to you.

Keep an open mind, be responsive, and do not get upset if your child comes to you to discuss difficult situations. Having open and honest communication with your child on a regular basis will let them know you are always there to listen and help.



Adapted from: <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/child-social-situations/online-activities-social-media/9-ways-to-protect-your-child-from-online-predators>



The Importance of Positive Self-Image

Most individuals understand the concept of self-esteem, but do you understand what self-image is? Self-image is a mental picture of yourself, but it also involves how you feel about yourself and your abilities. With the increase of interaction within our digital online world, the idea of one's self-image has increased in awareness and has, potentially, become more important.



What is self-image?

There are three main parts to a person's self-image:

1. The way a person perceives or thinks of themselves.
2. The way a person interprets how others perceive or think of them.
3. The way a person would like to be or how they perceive their ideal self.

Personal evaluation of self-image can include many dimensions of one's self:



Physical – appearance.



Psychological – personality.



Intellectual – intelligence.



Skills – social and technical skills.



Moral – values and principles.



Sexual – society's masculine/feminine norms.





What are the differences between positive and negative self-image?



Positive self-image can include the following:


- Seeing yourself as an attractive and desirable person.
- Having an image of yourself as a smart and intelligent person.
- Seeing a happy, healthy person when you look in the mirror.
- Believing you are at least somewhat close to your ideal version of yourself.
- Thinking that others perceive you as all of the above and you perceiving yourself in this way.

Negative self-image can include the following:

- Seeing yourself as unattractive and undesirable.
- Having an image of yourself as a stupid or unintelligent person.
- Seeing an unhappy, unhealthy person when you look in the mirror.
- Believing you are nowhere near your ideal version of yourself.
- Thinking that others perceive you as all of the above.

What is an unhealthy self-image?

An unhealthy self-image can be described as distorted and/or low self-image. Having a negative self-image may lead to an unhealthy self-image. Distorted self-image can include the following:

 Comparing your body to others' appearances.

 Seeking surgery.

 Checking in a mirror.

 Avoiding mirrors.

 Skin picking.


 Excessive grooming.

 Depression.

 Sense of worthlessness.

 Isolation.

 Loss of interest in activities.

 Body dysmorphia.

 Avoiding social events.

 Eating disorders.

 Anxiety.

 Persistent feelings of shame.

 Problems at work and school, including disciplinary actions and termination.



How to Address and Change Self-Image Issues?

Changing the way we think and feel can be hard; there is no quick way to improve one's self-image, but it can be done. Try using the following activity to strengthen your self-image. These can be done alone or as a family.

- List 10 things you love about yourself!
- List 5-10 skills you possess.
- List 5 achievements of which you are proud.
- List 3 occasions where you overcame adversity.
- List 5 people who have helped you.
- List 5 people whom you have helped.
- List 20 things you appreciate about your life.



Appreciation involves understanding how you have benefited from the good things that have happened to you in your life; realizing these things can make it easier for you to feel grateful and positive about yourself and your life.

How can the value of self-image be incorporated into your family life?

Create a Sense of Belonging to Your Family

This is an important feeling you can instill in your child to help them build a healthy self-image. To create this important sense of belonging, try using simple inclusive statements like, "We are the Smiths!". This helps even very young children understand that they have a safe place in their family.



Invite Values into Your Family

Make value declarations to reinforce the sense of belonging, and help your child understand your family's most important values. These actions can boost your child's sense of self.

Turn your statement of inclusion (e.g., "We are the Smiths!") into a value declaration.

- We are the Smiths, and we are problem solvers!
- We are the Smiths, and we believe community service is important.
- We are proud even though we are quirky.



Use Value Declarations to Set High Expectations

You can use declarations to set high (but achievable) expectations for your children and your family.

Saying something like, “Our family dinners are a chance to open up and share with those who love us” or “We have so many things to be grateful for” will help even the youngest children understand what is important to your family and what is expected of them — participate in meaningful family moments and show gratitude for what they have.

Encourage Your Child to Share

Starting with the toddler years, encourage your child to talk about and share what happened during their day.



Ask if something good happened and what it was.



Ask if anything funny happened and what it was.



Ask if anything sad happened and what it was.



Ask if anything upsetting happened and what it was.



Ask if anything weird happened and what it was.

Encourage your child to share with you. Allow them to talk about friends and situations. Learn and grow together. This activity can lead to many years of positive healthy communication.



Take the Teachable Moments

Once your child is sharing these sorts of observations with you, take advantage of these situations and use them as teachable moments. For example, if something upsetting or sad happened that day, you could do the following:



Discuss why the behavior was inappropriate, how the behavior affected the child who was directly involved and the rest of the class, and how your child felt about the situation.



Discuss how certain behaviors are not consistent with family values.

Use Descriptive Praise

Help your child learn how to use positive self-talk now and later in life by using descriptive praise. For example, here are some ideas.

Try to not use generic wording, like “You did well!” Tell your child exactly what they did well and why it was good. For example, you might say, “Wow, you wiped down the table without even being asked. That shows initiative. I love it!”

Using descriptive praise will help your child know what is good behavior and praiseworthy and make them feel that being good and praiseworthy are achievable.



Repeat All of the Above on a Regular Basis



Maintain a child's positive sense of self and help your child continue to grow in healthy directions.



Continue to affirm values.



Reinforce positive behavior choices.



Help your child differentiate between good and inappropriate or unacceptable behavior.



Embrace the assistance of other family members and friends who can use similar strategies.



Children and adolescents are exposed to our online world. Teaching and reinforcing positive self-image are critical. Faced with social media, Photoshop, camera filters, fake news, and false information online, youth (and adults) can easily slip into a pattern of negative thoughts regarding their self-images. Regular and repeated reinforcement of positive self-image can help young people avoid developing an unhealthy self-image.

Adapted from: <https://www.positivepsychology.com/self-image/>

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Safe Driving Pledge

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PARENT-TEEN DRIVING AGREEMENT

I, _____, will drive carefully and cautiously and will be courteous to other drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians at all times.



I PROMISE

I promise that I will obey all the rules of the road.

- ☐ Always wear a seat belt and make all my passengers buckle up
- ☐ Obey all traffic lights, stop signs, other street signs, and road markings

I promise that I will make sure I can stay focused on driving.

- ☐ Never text while driving (writing, reading, or sending messages)
- ☐ Place the cell phone in the back seat of the car while driving
- ☐ Drive with both hands on the wheel
- ☐ Drive only when I am alert and in emotional control
- ☐ Call my parents for a ride home if I am impaired in any way that interferes with my ability to drive safely, or if my driver is impaired in any way
- ☐ Never use headphones or earbuds to listen to music while I drive

I promise that I will respect laws about drugs and alcohol.

- ☐ Drive only when I am alcohol and drug free
- ☐ Never allow any alcohol or illegal drugs in the car
- ☐ Be a passenger only with drivers who are alcohol and drug free

I promise that I will be a responsible driver.

- ☐ Drive only when I have permission to use the car, and I will not let anyone else drive the car unless I have permission
- ☐ Drive someone else's car, only if I have parental permission
- ☐ Complete my family responsibilities and maintain good grades at school as listed here:

**RESTRICTIONS**

I agree to the following restrictions but understand that these restrictions will be modified by my parents as I gain more driving experience and demonstrate that I am a responsible driver.

- ☐ For the next _____ months, I will not drive after _____ pm.
- ☐ For the next _____ months, I will not transport more than _____ teen passengers (unless I am supervised by a responsible adult).
- ☐ For the next _____ months, I won't adjust the stereo, electronic devices, or air conditioning/heater while the car is moving.
- ☐ For the next _____ months, I will not drive in bad weather.
- ☐ I understand that I am not permitted to drive to off-limit locations or on roads and highways as listed here:

- ☐ Additional restrictions:

**PENALTIES FOR AGREEMENT VIOLATIONS**

- ☐ Drove while texting (composed, read or sent message or email with phone).
NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS
- ☐ Drove after drinking alcohol or using drugs.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS AND PAY ALL ASSOCIATED COSTS
- ☐ Got ticket for speeding or moving violation.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS AND PAY ALL FINES AND/OR TICKETS
- ☐ Drove after night driving curfew.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS



- ☐ Drove too many passengers.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS
- ☐ Broke promise about seat belts (self and/or others).
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS
- ☐ Drove on a road or to an area that is off limits.
NO DRIVING FOR _____ WEEKS/MONTHS

I agree to follow all the rules and restrictions in this agreement. I understand that my parents will impose penalties, including removal of my driving privileges, if I violate the agreement. I also understand that my parents will allow me greater driving privileges as I become more experienced and as I demonstrate that I am always a safe and responsible driver.

SIGNATURES

Driver: _____ Date: _____

Parent promise: I also agree to drive safely and to be an excellent role model.

Parent (or guardian): _____ Date: _____

Parent (or guardian): _____ Date: _____

Adapted from Parent-Teen Driving Agreement:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). https://www.cdc.gov/parentsarethekey/pdf/patk_2014_teenparent_agreement_aap-a.pdf