

BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

18 MONTH VISIT



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

✓ YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

- Expect your child to cling to you in new situations or to be anxious around strangers.
- Play with your child each day by doing things she likes.
- Be consistent in discipline and setting limits for your child.
- Plan ahead for difficult situations and try things that can make them easier. Think about your day and your child's energy and mood.
- Wait until your child is ready for toilet training. Signs of being ready for toilet training include
 - Staying dry for 2 hours
 - Knowing if she is wet or dry
 - Can pull pants down and up
 - Wanting to learn
 - Can tell you if she is going to have a bowel movement
- Read books about toilet training with your child.
- Praise sitting on the potty or toilet.
- If you are expecting a new baby, you can read books about being a big brother or sister.
- Recognize what your child is able to do. Don't ask her to do things she is not ready to do at this age.

✓ YOUR CHILD AND TV

- Do activities with your child such as reading, playing games, and singing.
- Be active together as a family. Make sure your child is active at home, in child care, and with sitters.
- If you choose to introduce media now,
 - Choose high-quality programs and apps.
 - Use them together.
 - Limit viewing to 1 hour or less each day.
- Avoid using TV, tablets, or smartphones to keep your child busy.
- Be aware of how much media you use.

✓ TALKING AND HEARING

- Read and sing to your child often.
- Talk about and describe pictures in books.
- Use simple words with your child.
- Suggest words that describe emotions to help your child learn the language of feelings.
- Ask your child simple questions, offer praise for answers, and explain simply.
- Use simple, clear words to tell your child what you want him to do.

✓ HEALTHY EATING

- Offer your child a variety of healthy foods and snacks, especially vegetables, fruits, and lean protein.
- Give one bigger meal and a few smaller snacks or meals each day.
- Let your child decide how much to eat.
- Give your child 16 to 24 oz of milk each day.
- Know that you don't need to give your child juice. If you do, don't give more than 4 oz a day of 100% juice and serve it with meals.
- Give your toddler many chances to try a new food. Allow her to touch and put new food into her mouth so she can learn about them.

Helpful Resources: Poison Help Line: 800-222-1222

Information About Car Safety Seats: www.safercar.gov/parents | Toll-free Auto Safety Hotline: 888-327-4236

18 MONTH VISIT—PARENT

SAFETY

- Make sure your child's car safety seat is rear facing until he reaches the highest weight or height allowed by the car safety seat's manufacturer. This will probably be after the second birthday.
- Never put your child in the front seat of a vehicle that has a passenger airbag. The back seat is the safest.
- Everyone should wear a seat belt in the car.
- Keep poisons, medicines, and lawn and cleaning supplies in locked cabinets, out of your child's sight and reach.
- Put the Poison Help number into all phones, including cell phones. Call if you are worried your child has swallowed something harmful. Do not make your child vomit.
- When you go out, put a hat on your child, have him wear sun protection clothing, and apply sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher on his exposed skin. Limit time outside when the sun is strongest (11:00 am–3:00 pm).
- If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CHILD'S 2 YEAR VISIT

We will talk about

- Caring for your child, your family, and yourself
- Handling your child's behavior
- Supporting your talking child
- Starting toilet training
- Keeping your child safe at home, outside, and in the car

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

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

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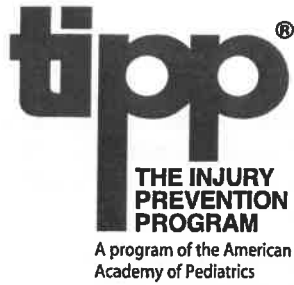
The information contained in this handout should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances. Original handout included as part of the *Bright Futures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

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1 to 2 Years



1 TO 2 YEARS

Safety for Your Child

Did you know that injuries are the leading cause of death of children in the United States? Most of these injuries can be prevented.

Often, injuries happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. At this age your child can *walk, run, climb, jump, and explore* everything. Because of all the new things he or she can do, this stage is a very dangerous time in your child's life. It is your responsibility to protect your child from injury. Your child cannot understand danger or remember "no" while exploring.

Firearm Hazards

Children in homes where guns are present are in more danger of being shot by themselves, their friends, or family members than of being injured by an intruder. It is best to keep all guns out of the home. **Handguns are especially dangerous.** If you keep a gun, keep it unloaded and in a locked place, with the ammunition locked separately. Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.



Poisonings

Children continue to explore their world by putting everything in their mouths, even if it doesn't taste good. Your child can *open doors and drawers, take things apart, and open bottles* easily now, so you must use safety caps on all medicines and toxic household products. **Keep the safety caps on** at all times or find safer substitutes to use. Contact Poison Help for more information.



Your child is now able to get into and on top of everything. Be sure to keep all household products and medicines completely out of sight and reach. Never store lye drain cleaners in your home. Keep all products in their original containers. Use medicines exactly as directed and dispose of unused medicine safely as soon as you are finished with it.

If your child does put something poisonous into his or her mouth, call Poison Help immediately. Add the Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222) to your phone contacts list. Do not make your child vomit.

Falls

To prevent serious falls, lock the doors to any dangerous areas. **Use gates on stairways and install operable window guards** above the first floor. **Remove sharp-edged furniture** from the room your child plays and sleeps in. At this age your child will walk well and start to climb, jump, and run as well. A chair left next to a kitchen counter, table, or window allows your child to climb to dangerously high places. Remember, your child does not understand what is dangerous.



If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally after a fall, call your doctor.

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Burns

The kitchen is a dangerous place for your child during meal preparation. Hot liquids, grease, and hot foods spilled on your child will cause serious burns. A **safer place for your child** while you are cooking, eating, or unable to give him or her your full attention is the **playpen, crib, or stationary activity center, or buckled into a high chair**. It's best to keep your child out of the kitchen while cooking.

Children who are learning to walk will grab anything to steady themselves, including hot oven doors, wall heaters, or outdoor grills. Keep your child out of rooms where there are hot objects that may be touched, or put a barrier around them. If you have a gas fireplace, keep children away while it is in use and for at least an hour after turning it off. The glass doors get extremely hot and can cause severe burns.

Your child will *reach* for your hot food or cup of coffee, so don't leave it within your child's reach. **NEVER carry your child and hot liquids at the same time.** You can't handle both.

If your child does get burned, immediately put cold water on the burned area. Keep the burned area in cold water for a few minutes to cool it off. Then cover the burn loosely with a dry bandage or clean cloth. Call your doctor for all burns. To protect your child from tap water scalds, the hottest temperature at the faucet should be no more than 120°F. In many cases you can adjust your water heater.

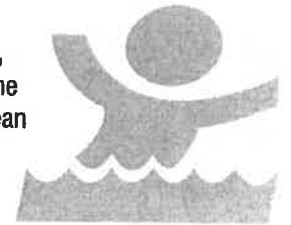
Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, especially in furnace and sleeping areas. Test the alarms every month. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries at least once a year.



Drowning

At this age your child loves to play in water. **NEVER leave your child alone in or near a bathtub, pail of water, wading or swimming pool, or any other water, even for a moment.** Empty all buckets after each use. Keep the bathroom doors closed. Your child can drown in less than 2 inches of water. Knowing how to swim does NOT mean your child is safe near or in water. Stay within an arm's length of your child around water.

If you have a swimming pool, fence it on all 4 sides with a fence at least 4 feet high, and be sure the gates are self-latching. If possible, lock doors that could lead to the pool area. Most children drown when they wander out of the house and fall into a pool that is not fenced off from the house. You cannot watch your child every minute while he or she is in the house. It only takes a moment for your child to get out of your house and fall into your pool.



And Remember Car Safety

Car crashes are a great danger to your child's life and health. The crushing forces to your child's brain and body in a crash or sudden stop, even at low speeds, can cause severe injuries or death. **To prevent these injuries USE a car safety seat EVERY TIME** your child rides in the car. All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car safety seat until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car safety seat's manufacturer. Be sure that the safety seat is installed and used correctly. Read and follow the instructions that come with the car safety seat and the instructions for using car safety seats in the owners' manual of your car. **The safest place for all infants and children to ride is in the back seat.**



Do not leave your child alone in or around the car. Keep vehicles and their trunks locked. Children who are left in a car can die of heatstroke because temperatures can reach deadly levels in minutes. They can be strangled by power windows or knock the vehicle into gear.

Always **walk behind your car** to be sure your child is not there before you back out of your driveway. You may not see your child behind your car in the rearview mirror.

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

From Your Doctor

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