



BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

3 YEAR VISIT

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

✓ HOW YOUR FAMILY IS DOING

- Take time for yourself and to be with your partner.
- Stay connected to friends, their personal interests, and work.
- Have regular playtimes and mealtimes together as a family.
- Give your child hugs. Show your child how much you love him.
- Show your child how to handle anger well—time alone, respectful talk, or being active. Stop hitting, biting, and fighting right away.
- Give your child the chance to make choices.
- Don't smoke or use e-cigarettes. Keep your home and car smoke-free. Tobacco-free spaces keep children healthy.
- Don't use alcohol or drugs.
- If you are worried about your living or food situation, talk with us. Community agencies and programs such as WIC and SNAP can also provide information and assistance.

✓ PLAYING WITH OTHERS

- Give your child a variety of toys for dressing up, make-believe, and imitation.
- Make sure your child has the chance to play with other preschoolers often. Playing with children who are the same age helps get your child ready for school.
- Help your child learn to take turns while playing games with other children.

✓ READING AND TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD

- Read books, sing songs, and play rhyming games with your child each day.
- Use books as a way to talk together. Reading together and talking about a book's story and pictures helps your child learn how to read.
- Look for ways to practice reading everywhere you go, such as stop signs, or labels and signs in the store.
- Ask your child questions about the story or pictures in books. Ask him to tell a part of the story.
- Ask your child specific questions about his day, friends, and activities.

✓ EATING HEALTHY AND BEING ACTIVE

- Give your child 16 to 24 oz of milk every day.
- Limit juice. It is not necessary. If you choose to serve juice, give no more than 4 oz a day of 100% juice and always serve it with a meal.
- Let your child have cool water when she is thirsty.
- Offer a variety of healthy foods and snacks, especially vegetables, fruits, and lean protein.
- Let your child decide how much to eat.
- Be sure your child is active at home and in preschool or child care.
- Apart from sleeping, children should not be inactive for longer than 1 hour at a time.
- Be active together as a family.
- Limit TV, tablet, or smartphone use to no more than 1 hour of high-quality programs each day.
- Be aware of what your child is watching.
- Don't put a TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone in your child's bedroom.
- Consider making a family media plan. It helps you make rules for media use and balance screen time with other activities, including exercise.

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

3 YEAR VISIT—PARENT

✓ SAFETY

- Continue to use a car safety seat that is installed correctly in the back seat. The safest seat is one with a 5-point harness, not a booster seat.
- Prevent choking. Cut food into small pieces.
- Supervise all outdoor play, especially near streets and driveways.
- Never leave your child alone in the car, house, or yard.
- Keep your child within arm's reach when she is near or in water. She should always wear a life jacket when on a boat.
- Teach your child to ask if it is OK to pet a dog or another animal before touching it.
- If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately.
- Ask if there are guns in homes where your child plays. If so, make sure they are stored safely.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CHILD'S 4 YEAR VISIT

We will talk about

- Caring for your child, your family, and yourself
- Getting ready for school
- Eating healthy
- Promoting physical activity and limiting TV time
- Keeping your child safe at home, outside, and in the car

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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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Developmental Milestones: 3 to 4 Year Olds

What are some of the developmental milestones my child should reach by three to four years of age?

With your child's third birthday, the "terrible twos" are officially over and the "magic years" of three and four begin—a time when your child's world will be dominated by fantasy and vivid imagination. During the next two years, he'll mature in many areas.



Here are some milestones to look for.

Movement milestones

- Hops and stands on one foot up to five seconds
- Goes upstairs and downstairs without support
- Kicks ball forward
- Throws ball overhand
- Catches bounced ball most of the time
- Moves forward and backward with agility

Milestones in hand and finger skills

- Copies square shapes
- Draws a person with two to four body parts
- Uses scissors
- Draws circles and squares
- Begins to copy some capital letters

Language milestones

- Understands the concepts of "same" and "different"
- Has mastered some basic rules of grammar
- Speaks in sentences of five to six words
- Speaks clearly enough for strangers to understand
- Tells stories

Cognitive milestones

- Correctly names some colors
- Understands the concept of counting and may know a few numbers
- Approaches problems from a single point of view
- Begins to have a clearer sense of time
- Follows three-part commands
- Recalls parts of a story
- Understands the concept of same/different
- Engages in fantasy play

Social and emotional milestones

- Interested in new experiences
- Cooperates with other children
- Plays "Mom" or "Dad"

- Increasingly inventive in fantasy play
- Dresses and undresses
- Negotiates solutions to conflicts
- More independent
- Imagines that many unfamiliar images may be "monsters"
- Views self as a whole person involving body, mind, and feelings
- Often cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality

Developmental health watch

Because each child develops in his own particular manner, it's impossible to tell exactly when or how he'll perfect a given skill. The developmental milestones listed here will give you a general idea of the changes you can expect as your child gets older, but don't be alarmed if his development takes a slightly different course. Alert your pediatrician, however, if your child displays any of the following signs of possible developmental delay for this age range.

- Cannot throw a ball overhand
- Cannot jump in place
- Cannot ride a tricycle
- Cannot grasp a crayon between thumb and fingers
- Has difficulty scribbling
- Cannot stack four blocks
- Still clings or cries whenever his parents leave him
- Shows no interest in interactive games
- Ignores other children
- Doesn't respond to people outside the family
- Doesn't engage in fantasy play
- Resists dressing, sleeping, using the toilet
- Lashes out without any self-control when angry or upset
- Cannot copy a circle
- Doesn't use sentences of more than three words
- Doesn't use "me" and "you" appropriately

Last Updated 11/2/2009

Source Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5 (Copyright © 2009 American Academy of Pediatrics)

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Start Reading to Your Child Early

How to Help Your Child Learn to Read

A baby can enjoy books by 6 months of age! Here are things you can do with your child at different ages to help your child learn to love words and books.

Birth to Age 1

- Play with your baby often. Talk, sing, and say rhymes. This helps your baby learn to talk.
- Talk with your baby, making eye contact. Give your baby time to answer in baby talk.
- Give your baby sturdy board books to look at. It's OK for a baby to chew on a book.
- Look at picture books with your baby and name things. Say "See the baby!" or "Look at the puppy!"
- Babies like board books with pictures of babies and everyday objects like balls and blocks.
- Snuggle with your baby on your lap and read aloud. Your baby may not understand the story, but will love the sound of your voice and being close to you.
- Don't let your child watch TV until age 2 or older.

1 to 3 Years of Age

- Read to your child every day. Let your child pick the book, even if it's the same one again and again!
- Younger toddlers (1 to 2 years of age) like board books with pictures of children doing everyday things (like eating and playing). They also like "goodnight" books and books with rhymes. Books should only have a few words on each page.



- Older toddlers (2 to 3 years of age) like board books and books with paper pages. They love books with rhymes and words that are repeated. Books about families, friends, animals, and trucks are also good.
- Let your child "read" to you by naming things in the book or making up a story.
- Take your child to the library. Celebrate your child getting a library card!
- Keep talking, singing, saying rhymes, and playing with your child.
- Don't let your child watch TV until age 2 or older.

Reading Tips

- Set aside time every day to read together. Reading at bedtime is a great way to get ready for sleep.
- Leave books in your children's rooms for them to enjoy on their own. Have a comfortable bed or chair, bookshelf, and reading lamp.
- Read books your child enjoys. Your child may learn the words to a favorite book. Then, let your child complete the sentences, or take turns saying the words.
- Don't drill your child on letters, numbers, colors, shapes, or words. Instead, make a game of it.

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3 to 5 Years of Age

- Read ABC books with your child. Point out letters as you read.
- Preschool children like books that tell stories. They also love counting books, alphabet books, and word books. Like toddlers, they love books with rhymes and words they can learn by heart.
- Help your child recognize whole words as well as letters. Point out things like letters on a stop sign or the name on a favorite store.
- Ask your child questions about the pictures and story. Invite him or her to make up a story about what's in the book.
- Some public TV shows, videos, and computer games can help your child learn to read. But you need to be involved too. Watch or play with your child and talk about the program. Limit TV time to 1 or 2 hours per day. Avoid violent shows and movies. Try to stick to educational shows.
- Give your child lots of chances to use written words. Write shopping lists together. Write letters to friends or family.



Read Aloud With Your Child

Reading aloud is one of the best ways to help your child learn to read. The more excited you act when you read a book, the more your child will enjoy it.

- Use funny voices and animal noises!
- Look at the pictures. Ask your child to name things in the pictures. Talk about how the pictures go with the story. Ask what is happening in the story.

- Invite your child to join in when a line is repeated over and over.
- Show your child how things in the book are like things in your child's life.
- If your child asks a question, stop and answer it. Books can help children express their thoughts and solve problems.
- Keep reading to your child even after he or she learns to read. Children can listen and understand harder stories than they can read on their own.

Listen to Your Child Read Aloud

Once your child starts reading, have him or her read out loud. Take turns reading.

If your child asks for help with a word, give it right away. But let your child sound out words if he or she wants to.

Know when your child has had enough. Stop if your child is tired or frustrated.

Most of all, give lots of praise! You are your child's first, and most important, teacher!

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is grateful for the Reach Out and Read program's help with this handout. Reach Out and Read works with children's doctors to make promoting literacy and giving out books part of children's basic health care. This program is endorsed by the AAP. To learn more about Reach Out and Read, go to www.reachoutandread.org.



To learn more, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Web site at www.aap.org.

Your child's doctor will tell you to do what's best for your child. This information should not take the place of talking with your child's doctor.

We hope the resources in this handout are helpful. The AAP is not responsible for the information in these resources. We try to keep the information up to date but it may change at any time.

Adaptation of the AAP information in this handout into plain language was supported in part by McNeil Consumer Healthcare.

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2 TO 4 YEARS

Safety for Your Child

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

Often, injuries happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. Children *learn quickly*, and before you know it your child will be *jumping, running, riding* a tricycle, and *using tools*. Your child is at special risk for injuries from falls, drowning, poisons, burns, and car crashes. Your child doesn't understand dangers or remember "no" while playing and exploring.

Falls

Because your child's abilities are so great now, he or she will find an endless variety of dangerous situations at home and in the neighborhood.

Your child can fall off play equipment, out of windows, down stairs, off a bike or tricycle, and off anything that can be climbed on. **Be sure the surface under play equipment is soft enough to absorb a fall.** Use safety-tested mats or loose-fill materials (shredded rubber, sand, wood chips, or bark) maintained to a depth of at least 9 inches underneath play equipment. Install the protective surface at least 6 feet (more for swings and slides) in all directions from the equipment.

Lock the doors to any dangerous areas. **Use gates on stairways and install operable window guards** above the first floor. Fence in the play yard. **If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally after a fall, call your doctor.**

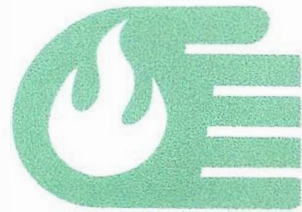
Firearm Hazards

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

Burns

The kitchen can be a dangerous place for your child, especially when you are cooking. If your child is underfoot, hot liquids, grease, and hot foods can spill on him or her and cause serious burns. Find something safe for your child to do while you are cooking.

Remember that kitchen appliances and other hot surfaces such as irons, ovens, wall heaters, and outdoor grills can burn your child long after you have finished using them. Also, when you use the microwave stay nearby to make sure your child does not remove the hot food.



(over)



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

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

Poisonings

Your child will be able to *open* any drawer and *climb* anywhere curiosity leads. Your child may *swallow anything* he or she finds. Use only household products and medicines that are absolutely necessary and keep them safely capped and out of sight and reach. Keep all products in their original containers. Use medications as directed and safely dispose of unused medicine as soon as you are done with it.

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



And Remember Car Safety

Car crashes are the **greatest danger** to your child's life and health. The crushing forces to your child's brain and body in a collision or sudden stop, even at low speeds, can cause injuries or death.

To prevent these injuries, correctly USE a car safety seat EVERY TIME your child is in the car. It is safest for children to ride rear facing as long as possible, until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer. Many convertible seats have limits that will permit children to ride rear facing for 2 years or more. When they outgrow rear facing, children should ride forward facing in a car safety seat with a harness. Many of these can be used up to 65 pounds or more, and this will help provide the most protection possible.



The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat. In an emergency, if a child **must** ride in the front seat, move the vehicle seat back as far as it can go, away from the airbag.

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

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

From Your Doctor

The information in this publication 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.