

Bright Futures Information for Parents: 11-14 Year Visit

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

How Your Family Is Doing

Encourage your child to be part of family decisions. Give your child the chance to make more of her own decisions as she grows older.

Encourage your child to think through problems with your support.

Help your child find activities she is really interested in, besides schoolwork.

Help your child find and try activities that help others.

Help your child deal with conflict.

Help your child figure out nonviolent ways to handle anger or fear.

If you are worried about your living or food situation, talk with your health care professional. Community agencies and programs such as SNAP can also provide information and assistance.

Your Growing and Changing Child

Help your child get to the dentist twice a year.

Give your child a fluoride supplement if the dentist recommends it.

Encourage your child to brush her teeth twice a day and floss once a day.

Praise your child when she does something well, not just when she looks good.

Support a healthy body weight and help your child be a healthy eater.

- Provide healthy foods.
- Eat together as a family.
- Be a role model.

Help your child get enough calcium with low-fat or fat-free milk, low-fat yogurt, and cheese.

Encourage your child to get at least 1 hour of physical activity every day. Make sure she uses helmets and other safety gear.

Consider making a family media use plan. Make rules for media use and balance your child's time for physical activities and other activities.

Check in with your child's teacher about grades. Attend back-to-school events, parent-teacher conferences, and other school activities if possible.

Talk with your child as she takes over responsibility for schoolwork.

Help your child with organizing time, if she needs it.

Encourage daily reading.

Your Child's Feelings

Find ways to spend time with your child.

If you are concerned that your child is sad, depressed, nervous, irritable, hopeless, or angry, let your health care professional know.

Talk with your child about how his body is changing during puberty.

If you have questions about your child's sexual development, you can always talk with your health care professional.

Healthy Behavior Choices

Help your child find fun, safe things to do.

Make sure your child knows how you feel about alcohol and drug use.

Know your child's friends and their parents. Be aware of where your child is and what he is doing at all times.

Lock your liquor in a cabinet.

Store prescription medications in a locked cabinet.

Talk with your child about relationships, sex, and values.

If you are uncomfortable talking about puberty or sexual pressures with your child, please ask your health care professional or others you trust for reliable information that can help.

Use clear and consistent rules and discipline with your child.

Be a role model.

Safety

Make sure everyone always wears a lap and shoulder seat belt in the car.

Provide a properly fitting helmet and safety gear for biking, skating, in-line skating, skiing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding.

Use a hat, sun protection clothing, and sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher on her exposed skin. Limit time outside when the sun is strongest (11:00 am–3:00 pm).

Don't allow your child to ride ATVs.

Make sure your child knows how to get help if she feels unsafe.

If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.

Helpful Resources:

- Family Media Use Plan: www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan

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

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

For more resources for families, go to <https://brightfutures.aap.org/families>.

The information contained in this webpage 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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