

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET FOR 6-8 YEAR-OLDS

VACCINES:

- * Most children do not receive routine vaccines at these ages. Your child may receive a vaccine if needed to catch up.
- * Flu vaccine may be offered during the months of October – March.

SCREENING TESTS:

- * Complete Blood Counts (CBC) or Hemoglobin (Hgb) – a test for anemia, or low red blood cell counts. In children, anemia usually is from not eating foods with enough iron. At this age, only children who are at high risk are tested.
- * Tuberculosis skin test (for “TB” – also called the “PPD test”) – This is only done for children who are at high risk of TB infection. Please bring your child back to the clinic in 2-3 days to document the results. Children who are 5 years of age or older may be eligible to have TB testing done as a blood test instead of the PPD.
- * Vision Test – is done to check for vision problems. It is done routinely at 6 and 8 years of age and at other ages only if there is a concern about the child’s vision.
- * Hearing Test – is done to check for hearing problems. It is done routinely at 6 years of age and at other ages only if there is concern about the child’s hearing or language development.

DEVELOPMENT and PARENTING TIPS:

Your child is adjusting to life at school! This is an exciting time to help him or her learn to interact with the outside world!!

Here are some developmental milestones and parenting tips for typical 6-8 year old children:

School:

- * Encourage your child to think of school as fun. Emphasize that going to school and working hard there is an important responsibility.
- * Show your child that you take school seriously by insisting on good attendance, keeping them home only when it is appropriate. Show your child you care about what is happening at school by talking to them daily about what happened at school that day.
- * Be as involved as you can with school. Attending back-to-school night, parent-teacher events, and other school activities. Stay in touch with your child’s teachers, especially if you think he or she needs extra help, tutoring, or other forms of special help.

- * Talk with your child's school if you are concerned about bullying.

Home:

- * Teach your child responsibility by having him or her help with household chores (cleaning, trash, dishes)
- * Make sure household rules are clear and fair. In particular, it can be helpful to have firm rules about things like television watching, video games, homework, allowance, bedtime, etc...
- * Keep televisions and computers out of your child's bedroom and consider limiting screen time to less than 1 hour per day. That includes video games, too!

Social Development:

- * Allow your child to take part in after school activities (sports, music/theater, church groups, etc...). These can give children a chance to meet new friends and develop new interests.
- * Do not hit or allow others to hit. Be a good role model in your interactions with others.
- * Help your child learn how to do things for themselves and teach him or her to help others.
- * Discuss rules and consequences with your child.

Behavior:

- * Praise and rewards for good behavior are still the best ways to teach your child what you expect.
- * Model good behavior: your child will copy the behavior he or she sees at home!
- * Consider taking away privileges for unacceptable behavior.
- * Matching the consequence to the problem behavior is often most effective; for example, failure to wear a helmet may lead to taking away the bike for short amount of time.

NUTRITION and EATING BEHAVIORS:

- * For children who are growing normally, try to focus on helping your child develop healthy eating habits (diets high in fruits and vegetables and low in fats).
- * Offer 5 servings of vegetables and fruits at meals and snacks every day.
- * Avoid juice: juice is not necessary, and one cup per day is enough. Limit candy, soft drinks and sweets.
- * Serve milk with meals. Buy fat-free milk and low-fat dairy foods.
- * Children who do not drink at least 32 ounces of milk fortified with vitamin D each day will need extra vitamin D. If you have concerns

that your child is not getting enough vitamin D, ask us to recommend a multivitamin or vitamin D supplement. For children who cannot drink milk, be sure that alternatives like soy milk are fortified with vitamin D.

- * As much as possible, try to have relaxed family meals, avoiding TV during meals.
- * Treats or fun foods (pizza, ice cream, etc...) do not have to be excluded, but should not be a main part of the diet.
- * If changes in your child's diet are needed, try making those changes for the whole family. If everyone in the family follows the same eating habits, your child is more likely to follow those examples.
- * Be careful not to let your child overeat. Obesity is becoming a serious problem for many children. The palm of your child's hand is an appropriate portion size. Limit starchy foods like rice, pasta, bread, and potatoes to one portion size per meal.

HYGIENE:

- * Bring your child to the dentist every 6 months.
- * Your child should be brushing his teeth and flossing at least two times per day. Be sure to use toothpaste that contains fluoride. Make sure your child is seeing the dentist at least once per year. Most dentists want to see children every six months.
- * Drink your tap water! Most of the towns in our area have clean and safe tap water that comes from state reservoirs. This water contains fluoride to make your teeth strong. If you're not sure about your town's water supply or whether it has fluoride, ask your child's doctor. Bottled water usually is NOT necessary.
- * Most children have finished toilet training. Most are dry at night as well as the day now. Some children still have accidents, especially at night. In this age range, bed wetting is not usually considered a serious problem. Children can be very sensitive about bedwetting – punishing or embarrassing them about it won't help. Let us know if bedwetting is causing difficulties at home. We can suggest some simple things that you can try to help your child.

SAFETY ISSUES:

- * Your child should always be in the back seat and seat belts should always be used. Booster seats should be used at least until age 8 years or until your child is 4 feet and 9 inches tall.
- * Your child should wear a helmet every time he or she rides a bicycle or skateboard or rollerblades. Parents should provide a good example and also wear helmets. Wrist guards are a good idea for skateboarding and rollerblading too.

- * Teach your child how to be safe near the water. Swimming lessons are a good idea.
- * Talk to your child about strangers: no one should tell them to keep a secret from their parents. No one should ask to see a child's genitals. Also teach your child not to accept food or candy from strangers and never to get in a car with a stranger.
- * Children should know what to do in case of a fire or emergency. Teach them how and when to dial 911.
- * If you must own a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition stored separately from the gun.
- * Children younger than 12 are not old enough to be home alone except for very short amounts of time.
- * No smoking in the house! We strongly encourage parents who smoke to try to quit. Even the smoke on your clothes, hair, and breath can affect your child. Ask us for information on how to quit.

NEXT VISIT: once per year for check-ups/physicals and as needed for other problems, illnesses, or injuries

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

The internet can be an excellent source of information on child health and development. Be sure that the websites you visit are reputable! If you have questions, please ask us.

Check out *Bright Futures* parent information from the American Academy of Pediatrics at:

For 6 years of age:

<http://brightfutures.aap.org/pdfs/Visit%20Forms%20by%20Age%20110/5,%206%20Year/C.MCh.PH.5,6yr.pdf>

For 7 – 8 years of age:

<http://brightfutures.aap.org/pdfs/Visit%20Forms%20by%20Age%20110/7,%208%20Year/C.MCh.PH.7,8yr.pdf>

Check out *Healthy Children* parent information from the American Academy of Pediatrics at:

www.healthychildren.org/

Find more information and tools on our CHA website page for parent resources at:

<http://www.challiance.org/Services/PediatricsResourcesforParents.aspx>

Find us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/CHAPediatrics>

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