



BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PARENT

15 MONTH VISIT

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

✓ TALKING AND FEELING

- Try to give choices. Allow your child to choose between 2 good options, such as a banana or an apple, or 2 favorite books.
- Know that it is normal for your child to be anxious around new people. Be sure to comfort your child.
- Take time for yourself and your partner.
- Get support from other parents.
- Show your child how to use words.
 - Use simple, clear phrases to talk to your child.
 - Use simple words to talk about a book's pictures when reading.
 - Use words to describe your child's feelings.
 - Describe your child's gestures with words.

✓ A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

- Put your child to bed at the same time every night. Early is better.
- Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- Have a simple bedtime routine that includes a book.
- Try to tuck in your child when he is drowsy but still awake.
- Don't give your child a bottle in bed.
- Don't put a TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone in your child's bedroom.
- Avoid giving your child enjoyable attention if he wakes during the night. Use words to reassure and give a blanket or toy to hold for comfort.

✓ TANTRUMS AND DISCIPLINE

- Use distraction to stop tantrums when you can.
- Praise your child when she does what you ask her to do and for what she can accomplish.
- Set limits and use discipline to teach and protect your child, not to punish her.
- Limit the need to say "No!" by making your home and yard safe for play.
- Teach your child not to hit, bite, or hurt other people.
- Be a role model.

✓ HEALTHY TEETH

- Take your child for a first dental visit if you have not done so.
- Brush your child's teeth twice each day with a small smear of fluoridated toothpaste, no more than a grain of rice.
- Wean your child from the bottle.
- Brush your own teeth. Avoid sharing cups and spoons with your child. Don't clean her pacifier in your mouth.

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

15 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. In most cases, this will be well past 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. Don't make your child vomit.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Install operable window guards on windows at the second story and higher. Keep furniture away from windows.
- Turn pan handles toward the back of the stove.
- Don't leave hot liquids on tables with tablecloths that your child might pull down.
- Have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on every floor. Test them every month and change the batteries every year. Make a family escape plan in case of fire in your home.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR CHILD'S 18 MONTH VISIT

We will talk about

- Handling stranger anxiety, setting limits, and knowing when to start toilet training
- Supporting your child's speech and ability to communicate
- Talking, reading, and using tablets or smartphones with your child
- Eating healthy
- 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>.

Toddlers move fast! Add this number to your phone contacts just in case:
POISON CONTROL: 1-800-222-1222.

Call 911 immediately if your child is unconscious, not breathing, or having convulsions or seizures due to poison contact or swallowing.

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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.

Inclusion in this handout does not imply an endorsement by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The AAP is not responsible for the content of the resources mentioned in this handout. Web site addresses are as current as possible but may change at any time.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) does not review or endorse any modifications made to this handout and in no event shall the AAP be liable for any such changes.

© 2019 American Academy of Pediatrics. All rights reserved.

Feeding Your Toddler

Answers from the Ellyn Satter Institute

The child who doesn't eat fruits and vegetables

Parents consider vegetables and fruits tremendously important and feel they have to get their children to eat them. As a result, many children don't eat vegetables; others don't eat fruits. Still others don't eat either. Settle down! Your child will not experience nutritional catastrophe if he doesn't eat them. If he gets sick, it is from something else.

Relax and enjoy your *own* fruits and vegetables

- Fruits and vegetables carry the same nutrients, so you and your child can be well-nourished on either.
- Eventually, if you eat them, your child will learn to eat them, too.
- Tone down strong vegetable flavors with salt, fat, sauces, bread crumbs, herbs and spices.
- Tone down fruit textures by making sauces, desserts, using canned rather than fresh.

Pressure doesn't work – ever

- Your child sees through even sneaky pressure such as bribes, cheer-leading, and your acting like you *love* them.
- He assumes, "if they have to do all that to get me to eat it, it can't be good."
- What works is minding your own business. Eat and enjoy your own vegetables. Your child assumes, "someday I will eat them too."

How to parent so your child eats fruits and vegetables

- Follow the division of responsibility in feeding. Do your jobs with feeding and let your child do his with eating.
- Get started with family meals, if you aren't having them already.
- Observe how your child learns to eat unfamiliar food. He watches you eat it but doesn't eat; he helps you cook and garden but doesn't eat; he puts it in his mouth and takes it out again.
- Hang in for the long haul. Food may show up at mealtime 15 or 20 times before your child eats it.
- Stop counting. It could take *years*. Enjoy your own food!

The picky eater

All young children are more-or-less picky about food. To them, all foods are new, and it takes time and experience for them to learn to eat them. Maintain a division of responsibility in feeding and adjust your expectations! Avoid pressure, be considerate without catering with meal-planning, and don't hold your breath! The goal for your child is to be relaxed and comfortable at mealtime and around food in general. If you achieve that, sooner or later (it could be months or even years later) she will eat almost everything that you eat.

Is your child stuck with learning to eat unfamiliar food?

- Does she get upset when she sees unfamiliar food?
- Does she only, ever, eat her few and ever-shrinking list of favorite foods?
- Does she worry she will be unable to eat away from home?
- Do you make special food for her in order to get her to eat?
- Are you upset about her eating?

Make it possible for your child to please you – and please herself

- Have regular meals and sit-down snacks so your child can be hungry but not starved at mealtime. Don't let her eat or drink (except for water) between times.
- Be considerate without catering with meal planning. Include 1 or 2 side-dish foods she usually eats. Don't make special food for her.
- Tell her, "you don't have to eat," and show her you mean it. Don't pressure her in any way to eat. Don't talk about her food likes and dislikes.
- Make meals a pleasure and a privilege. Tell her, "you do have to behave at mealtime. Say 'yes please' and 'no thanks.' No whining, asking for special food, or saying 'yuk.'" Show her you mean it.

What will happen next

- Your child will test the rules, then behave well and feel good about her eating.
- She will be relaxed and happier at mealtimes and other times.
- You will like her better and enjoy family meals.
- If all goes well, you will stop worrying about what she eats.

The child who eats “too little”

All children know how much they need to eat in order to grow in the way nature intended for them. Why do you think your child doesn't eat enough? Does he eat less than other children? Is he smaller than other children? Do you continually try to get him to eat or drink, and feel grateful when he does?

Chances are, there is no problem

- Some children don't eat much, others eat a lot.
- Some children who eat a lot are still small and slim.
- Some children are just small, others are just big.

Evaluate your child's growth

- As long as his weight follows near the same percentile, he is growing well.
- But if his weight percentiles go down a lot over a short time, he may be getting too thin.

Feed as if you weren't worried about his weight

- Don't let him have food or drinks between times, except for water. Food handouts will make him eat less, not more.
- Maintain a division of responsibility in feeding, keep your nerve, and let him eat and grow his way. Do not get pushy with food.
- Get started with family meals, if you aren't having them already. Feed in the best way for his stage of development.
- Have your child join in with family meals and sit-down snacks at set times. Have the same meal for everyone.
- Include high-fat food, such as butter, salad dressing, and mayonnaise, but don't try to get your child to load up on it or any other food.

More information at: www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/how-to-feed

The child who eats “too much”

Children only eat too much when they are afraid of going hungry. When you follow a division of responsibility in feeding, your child will eat as much as she needs in order to grow in the way nature intended for her. As long as her weight follows close to the same percentile on the growth curve, she is growing well. There could be a problem if her weight percentiles go up a lot over a short time, but the solution is the same: Do an excellent job with feeding.

Don't be spooked by your child's eating and weight

- Some babies and children eat a lot and love to eat: they still know how much they need to eat.
- From birth, some children are just normally big. As long as their growth is consistent, that is okay.
- Some big babies and children don't eat much: they are satisfied on less food and continue to weigh what they weight.

Feed as if you weren't worried about her weight








- Feed on demand from birth. Introduce solid food when she is ready. Follow her cues to determine when and how much to feed.
- Get started with family meals, if you aren't having them already. Toward the end of her first year, she is likely to be ready to join in.
- Have family meals and sit-down snacks at set times. Don't let her have food or drinks between times, except for water.
- Have the same meal for everyone. Include high-fat and low-fat food.
- Include “forbidden” foods at meals and snacks. Trying to restrict those foods will make her eat more of them in the long run.

Your child will feel hurt, get scared, and genuinely eat too much if you . . .

- Try to get her to eat less than she wants.
- Restrict either amounts or types of food. Control her portion size. Push low-calorie food.
- Feed her differently from other family members.
- Give her *the look* when she seems to eat a lot.

Parent Resources for Toddlers

There are so many resources available online for parents. Who do you trust? Here are some links approved by your pediatrician, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

<p>Healthy Children.org has a wealth of information for parents, including a Symptom checker, ideas for challenging your child to grow in development, and answers to questions about care of your child. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx</p>	
<p>When Your Child Needs Emergency Care – What to do? https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/When-Your-Child-Needs-Emergency-Medical-Services.aspx</p>	
<p>How do I encourage healthy eating? What do I do with a picky eater? This website has ideas our pediatricians use with their own children. https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/how-to-feed/</p>	
<p>When does my baby need a new car seat? All the things you need to know about rear-facing car seats for infants and toddlers. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go/Pages/Rear-Facing-Car-Seats-for-Infants-Toddlers.aspx</p>	
<p>How do I safely take my baby for a bike ride? When are they old enough? https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Baby-On-Board-Keeping-Safe-On-A-Bike.aspx</p>	
<p>Choking Hazards for young children – babies and toddlers are at a higher risk for choking than older children. Here’s a short video on what you can do to prevent it, and how you can help if your baby starts to choke on something. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Choking-Hazards-Parents-of-Young-Children-Should-Know-About.aspx</p>	
<p>Watch your young toddler near the water! Children don’t understand the danger. Here are some tips to keep them safe. https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Swimming-Pool-Safety.aspx</p>	

If you don’t have a QR code reader on your phone, try these:

Apple iPhone: Go to the App Store and search for “QR Reader”. It’s free; no ads.

Android: Go to Google Play Store and search for “QR Code Reader”. It’s free; no ads.