

Ht:

Wt:

BMI:

7-9 YEAR VISIT

You are well into elementary school now. Your child should be confident and fine, if not eager, to go to school.

Development

1. Sex Education? Yes! Sex Education!
 - Answer questions about sex factually AT THE LEVEL of your child's understanding. Keep answers brief and simple. Follow your answer with "does that answer your questions?"
 - It is normal for children to be interested in their own body and their playmate's body. Children this age are curious about where babies come from and about the differences between boys and girls.
 - Begin to talk with your children about the changes his/her body will undergo during puberty. Begin to prepare your daughter for the onset of menarche and her periods.
2. Actively discourage harmful habits like smoking, alcohol, and drugs. Talk with your child about peer pressure and how to say no.
3. Talk to your children about bullying. Be involved at their school and keep open communication with teachers to ensure your child is safe at school.
4. Organized sports are a great way to boost confidence and establish healthy habits. Be careful of year round sports, which increases injury risk. It's best to move from one sport to another rather than simply concentrating on one sport year round.

Injury Prevention

1. Your child can move out of the booster and into a regular lap belt when they are 4 feet 9 inches tall.
2. Teach your child to **ALWAYS** wear seat belts even if others in the car do not. By this age, buckling up should be an almost automatic reflex. No front seat yet!
3. Your child should be actively involved in preventing injuries. Your child should have appropriate safety equipment for activities and must be required to use it.
 - Helmets for bikes and any wheeled activity, including scooters.
 - Elbow and knee pads, helmets, and wrist guards for skates and skateboarding.
4. Teach your child about firearm safety. Your child should **NEVER** handle firearms, even pellet and BB guns, unless you are present. Teach your child that if another child asks him to "look at" or "play with" guns, he is to come home at once.
5. Trampolines and all terrain vehicles are great fun but cause serious injuries. Extreme caution should be used when undertaking these activities.

Good Health Habits and Self Care

1. Continue to maintain a regular bedtime routine. Children these ages need 10-12 hours a night.
2. Set limits on TV viewing and video games. Establish these expectations early.
3. Your child should practice good dental care and self-hygiene.
4. Obesity is a significant health threat. If you are worried, PLEASE bring it up at your visit.
5. Here are some easy rules to remember: 5-2-1-0
 - FIVE servings of fruits/veggies a day
 - Less than TWO hours of total screen time a day
 - ONE hour of outdoor activity a day
 - ZERO calories from sugary drinks

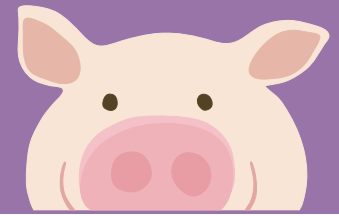
Next Visit

Continue yearly visits, which also serve as sports and camp physicals. Some parents come around the birthday. Some come every fall break or other convenient time. It is a good idea to avoid late June until early August for your yearly check. These are especially busy times here at the office.

I recommend the HPV vaccine at age 9 along with a finger poke to screen cholesterol. We will talk about it then.

Don't forget to get a flu vaccine.

Parent Handout



WHEN IS ENOUGH TOO MUCH?

MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT TV VIEWING AND VIDEO GAMES

I really needed a break. I had a long week and just wanted some Saturday morning down time. You know, just a little extra sleep. So, I got my four year old a bowl of cereal and sat her down in front of the TV. Then I went back to bed. That's okay, right?

I really don't like a lot of the images on TV and on those video games. But, it's hard because he's just started making friends at his new preschool. He's had a few play dates recently. Some of his friends have older brothers and sisters. I know he plays those games at their houses and he asks if we can have them at our house. I want him to be able to fit in with the other kids. It's really hard to know where to draw the line."

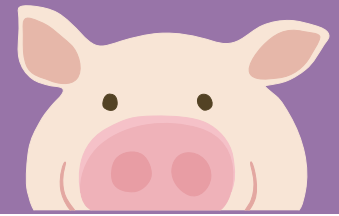
Making decisions about TV viewing and playing video games is a challenge faced by almost all parents. Add computer games and the internet to the list and mothers and fathers can feel overwhelmed by the number of media choices that are available and may need to be monitored. Many of us are making decisions that our parents never had to make. Our children seem magnetically attracted to all of these media, learning new skills and knowing how things work before the grownups have a chance to catch up.

Why are some parents and professionals so worried about TV, the internet, video and computer games?

Here are some reasons why the American Academy of Pediatrics and other child friendly agencies are concerned:

- Children spend about 4 hours each day watching TV. This does not include watching videos, playing video games, or using a computer. Children may be missing out on too many other opportunities to play with friends and spend time with family members. These relationships help children explore, learn, and grow.
- Children are inactive when they are watching TV and may have a greater tendency to be overweight.
- Children may be exposed to violence and sexual material on TV and through the internet for which they are not prepared. Children may begin to imitate these behaviors as a way to figure out what they mean, because they think they will be more grown-up, as a way to settle conflicts, or as a way to try and make friends.
- Commercials and ads make sex, smoking cigarettes, and drinking alcohol look like fun without emphasizing the negative consequences. Commercials on TV and ads on the internet often try to attract children to specific toys or food products that may not have the educational or nutritional value which mothers and fathers may want for their children.
- The AAP reports that a child who watches "3-4 hours of non-educational TV each day" may see about "8000 murders on TV by the time he finishes grade school." TV violence includes "real life" violence seen on news programs and the violence seen in cartoons, movies, and other TV shows. There are many studies that link TV violence with aggressive behavior in young children. Young children may be learning that violence is a way to solve conflicts, that "good guys" always win by using violence, and that violence doesn't really hurt people - after all those same super heroes keep coming back!

Parent Handout



"Are all TV programs or computer games bad for my child?"

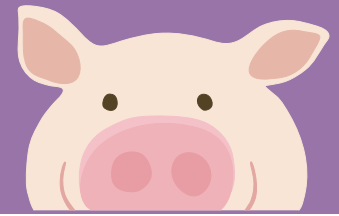
The short answer to this question is, "NO!" There are many high quality educational TV programs, computer games, and websites that will provide your child with enjoyment and opportunities for learning.

"How can I provide the right balance for my family?"

Here are some ideas from the AAP and others that may help you make good choices for you and your family:

- Establish firm clear limits about how much time children watch TV, use video games, or use the internet. The AAP recommends no more than 1-2 hours each day for young children over the age of 2 years and no screen time for children 2 and under.
- Become familiar with the ratings for TV, websites, and video games. You and your child can choose activities that have the rating that is best for your family.
- Watch TV or use the computer together. Talk about what you are seeing or reading. Ask and answer questions. No matter how careful you are, children may get messages from TV programs, video games, or websites with which you disagree. Use simple words to let your child know that you have different ideas. This is one way that children can learn from you about stereotypes or what you think about smoking, violence, or drinking alcohol.
- Children between the ages of 4-5 need to learn about safety outside the home. Mothers and fathers often teach children not to talk to strangers. These safety messages can also apply to the internet. Teach young children not to give out personal information such as names, addresses, phone numbers, passwords, or credit card numbers on the internet. While your child may be too young to have all of these skills now it may not be too far in the future before these will be important messages. Help your child understand that sometimes people use the internet to give out false information about themselves and that you don't want your child to set up a meeting with someone that they meet on the internet.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner about the right balance of nutrition and exercise for your child. Find time when your whole family can be active together. Biking, taking a walk, or going to the playground are times when children can explore, build strength, develop coordination, use up extra energy, and just have fun being with you.
- Preview videos, TV shows, and websites before your child views them. When choosing websites, check out the links to other sites to make sure that they are appropriate too.
- Find out about new ways to block websites or TV channels that are inappropriate for your child.
- Young children may not know the difference between commercials and the TV show. Help them learn the difference. The AAP recommends playing a game called "Spot the Commercial." You can also help children understand that commercials can "make you want things."
- Watch programs "On Demand" or DVR or DVD's to avoid having to expose your child to commercials.
- You can be a good model for children by turning the TV off after you have finished watching a program or by reading rather than watching TV. Children will see that reading is fun and important to you.

Parent Handout



- Time with friends is important for young children. Just as you and your child schedule time for a favorite TV show, setting up play dates is an important part of your child's routine. Playing with friends helps children learn how to share ideas, to cooperate, and to build strong relationships.

For more information:

Visit the HealthyChildren.org website by AAP website at www.healthychildren.org.

You can get information about the Children's Television Act from the Mass Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, <http://www.fcc.gov>

You may encounter child pornography on the internet. These websites are illegal. You can make a report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-THE LOST (843- 5678) or visit its Website at <http://www.missingkids.org>

Parent Handout

