

# 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](http://www.safercar.gov/parents) | Toll-free Auto Safety Hotline: 888-327-4236

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## 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>.

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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