

Healthy Child Development and Behavior



Below are milestones your child may experience between now and 11 years of age. Talk with your doctor at your child's next well-visit if you have any questions or concerns about your child's development or behavior.

Social and Emotional Milestones

- Relationships with friends and peers become stronger and more complex. It becomes more emotionally important to have friends, especially of the same sex.
- May experience more peer pressure.
- Becomes more aware of their own body as puberty approaches.

Thinking and Learning Milestones

- May face more academic challenges at school.
- Becomes more independent from the family.
- Begins to see the point of view of others more clearly.
- Has an increased attention span.

Healthy Ways to Help Your Child Learn and Grow

Development

- Spend time with your child. Talk with your child about friends, accomplishments and struggles.
- Hug and praise your child for their work and good behavior. When praising them, help your child to think of their own accomplishments by saying "You must be proud of yourself" rather than "I'm proud of you." Your child will be encouraged to make good choices to be proud of, even when no one else is around to offer them praise.
- Help your child develop a sense of right and wrong. Talk with your child about risky things friends might encourage your child to do, such as smoking or accepting a dangerous dare.
- Help your child develop a sense of responsibility by involving them in household tasks, such as cleaning and cooking. Teach your child about money, how to save and spend it wisely.

- Make time for family activities, such as attending community events, playing games and reading. Get to know your child's friends and their families.
- Talk with your child about puberty, including physical and emotional changes they will experience.

Behavior

- Make clear rules and discuss consequences with your child. Talk with your child about the behavior you expect when no adults are around. Help your child understand the reasons behind the rules you make.
- Use discipline to teach your child, not to punish or to make them feel bad about themselves.
- Teach your child to respect others. Talk about what to do when others are unkind.
- Teach your child the importance of delaying sexual behavior. Early and often, talk with your child about sex and sexting. Get helpful, age-appropriate conversation tips. *Scan the QR code on side 2*

School

- Praise your child for working hard at school. Find ways to get involved, such as attending school events and meeting your child's teachers. Encourage your child to join school clubs, sports teams or volunteer opportunities.
- Talk with your child about bullying. If your child is being bullied, talking with your child's school can help stop it. Learn helpful tips from a Cincinnati Children's expert. *Scan the QR code*

Healthy Habits

- Together as a family, eat healthy meals that include foods from the basic food groups. Include at least 3 servings of calcium (low-fat or fat-free dairy) and 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Limit sugary, salty and low-nutrient foods.
- Have your child brush their teeth twice each day (after breakfast and before bed) and floss their teeth once per day. Take your child to the dentist twice each year.
- Encourage at least 1 hour of physical activity each day.

Vaping & E-Cigarettes

- Vaping is dangerous, highly addictive and harmful to a child's health and brain development. Learn how to talk with your child about the harmful effects of vaping from a Cincinnati Children's clinical toxicologist. *Scan the QR code*

Suicide Prevention

- According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, suicide is the second leading cause of death among people ages 10–34 years. Learn from a Cincinnati Children's child and adolescent psychiatrist how to have a conversation with your child about suicide and when to seek help. *Scan the QR code*

Vehicle Safety

- Have your child ride in the back seat (until at least 13 years of age) and use a booster seat until your child reaches 4 feet 9 inches tall.

Digital Safety

- Have your child use digital devices in a central place in the home. Be aware of the types of media your child watches and the music your child listens to. Learn how to protect your child online. *Scan the QR code*

Find more useful, healthy tips for your family:

Cincinnati Children's Blog

Visit: blog.cincinnatichildrens.org

Young & Healthy Podcast

Listen on:



This information is meant to support your visit with your child's doctor. It should not take the place of the advice of your pediatrician.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents, 4th Edition* | American Academy of Pediatrics

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