



# Bright Futures Parent Handout Early Adolescent Visits

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

## Your Growing and Changing Child

PHYSICAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Talk with your child about how her body is changing with puberty.
- Encourage your child to brush his teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- Help your child get to the dentist twice a year.
- Serve healthy food and eat together as a family often.
- Encourage your child to get 1 hour of vigorous physical activity every day.
- Help your child limit screen time (TV, video games, or computer) to 2 hours a day, not including homework time.
- Praise your child when she does something well, not just when she looks good.

## Healthy Behavior Choices

RISK REDUCTION

- Help your child find fun, safe things to do.
- Make sure your child knows how you feel about alcohol and drug use.
- Consider a plan to make sure your child or his friends cannot get alcohol or prescription drugs in your home.
- Talk about relationships, sex, and values.
- Encourage your child not to have sex.
- If you are uncomfortable talking about puberty or sexual pressures with your child, please ask me or others you trust for reliable information that can help you.
- Use clear and consistent rules and discipline with your child.
- Be a role model for healthy behavior choices.

## Feeling Happy

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

- Encourage your child to think through problems herself with your support.
- Help your child figure out healthy ways to deal with stress.
- Spend time with your child.
- Know your child's friends and their parents, where your child is, and what he is doing at all times.
- Show your child how to use talk to share feelings and handle disputes.
- If you are concerned that your child is sad, depressed, nervous, irritable, hopeless, or angry, talk with me.

## School and Friends

SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC COMPETENCE

- Check in with your child's teacher about her grades on tests and attend back-to-school events and parent-teacher conferences if possible.
- Talk with your child as she takes over responsibility for schoolwork.
- Help your child with organizing time, if he needs it.
- Encourage reading.
- Help your child find activities she is really interested in, besides schoolwork.
- Help your child find and try activities that help others.
- Give your child the chance to make more of his own decisions as he grows older.

## Violence and Injuries

VIOLENCE AND INJURY PREVENTION

- Make sure everyone always wears a seat belt in the car.
- Do not allow your child to ride ATVs.
- Make sure your child knows how to get help if he is feeling unsafe.
- Remove guns from your home. If you must keep a gun in your home, make sure it is unloaded and locked with ammunition locked in a separate place.
- Help your child figure out nonviolent ways to handle anger or fear.



American Academy  
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DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

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# Bright Futures Patient Handout

## Early Adolescent Visits

### Your Growing and Changing Body

- Brush your teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- Visit the dentist twice a year.
- Wear your mouth guard when playing sports.
- Eat 3 healthy meals a day.
- Eating breakfast is very important.
- Consider choosing water instead of soda.
- Limit high-fat foods and drinks such as candy, chips, and soft drinks.
- Try to eat healthy foods.
  - 5 fruits and vegetables a day
  - 3 cups of low-fat milk, yogurt, or cheese
- Eat with your family often.
- Aim for 1 hour of moderately vigorous physical activity every day.
- Try to limit watching TV, playing video games, or playing on the computer to 2 hours a day (outside of homework time).
- Be proud of yourself when you do something good.

PHYSICAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

### How You Are Feeling

- Figure out healthy ways to deal with stress.
- Spend time with your family.
- Always talk through problems and never use violence.
- Look for ways to help out at home.
- It's important for you to have accurate information about sexuality, your physical development, and your sexual feelings. Please consider asking me if you have any questions.

### School and Friends

- Try your best to be responsible for your schoolwork.
- If you need help organizing your time, ask your parents or teachers.
- Read often.
- Find activities you are really interested in, such as sports or theater.
- Find activities that help others.
- Spend time with your family and help at home.
- Stay connected with your parents.

SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC COMPETENCE

### Violence and Injuries

- Always wear your seatbelt.
- Do not ride ATVs.
- Wear protective gear including helmets for playing sports, biking, skating, and skateboarding.
- Make sure you know how to get help if you are feeling unsafe.
- Never have a gun in the home. If necessary, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Figure out nonviolent ways to handle anger or fear. Fighting and carrying weapons can be dangerous. You can talk to me about how to avoid these situations.
- Healthy dating relationships are built on respect, concern, and doing things both of you like to do.

VIOLENCE AND INJURY PREVENTION

### Healthy Behavior Choices

- Find fun, safe things to do.
- Talk to your parents about alcohol and drug use.
- Support friends who choose not to use tobacco, alcohol, drugs, steroids, or diet pills.
- Talk about relationships, sex, and values with your parents.
- Talk about puberty and sexual pressures with someone you trust.
- Follow your family's rules.

RISK REDUCTION



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