Well Child Handout: Your School Aged Child

IMMUNIZATIONS
HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) may be given as early as 9 years old. Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) and Menactra (meningococcal) vaccines are generally given at age 11-12 years. Possible vaccine side effects include:

- Fever
- Discomfort, redness or swelling at the site of shot

** Your clinician may recommend screening for elevated Lipids (Cholesterol), anemia or tuberculosis.

Next Visit: In one to two years

NUTRITION AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES:
Eating well and exercising regularly helps maintain a healthy weight. Here are simple ideas that everyone should follow to lead a healthier life:

- Eat regular meals and if your child snacks, limit them to healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grain crackers.
- Start every day with a healthy breakfast.
- Help your child recognize and respond to hunger and fullness.
- Continue to avoid juices, sodas, sports drinks and caffeine.
- Drink non- or low-fat milk and lots of water.
- Avoid processed foods by preparing meals with fresh ingredients.
- Limit fast food, special treats and desserts.
- We tend to eat more calories at restaurants. Try to cook at home and share meals with family as much as possible.
- Make meals a screen-free time.
- Children continue to need 600 IU of Vitamin D and 800 mg of Calcium (aged 5-8) or1300mg  (over age 9)
- Brush teeth for two minutes twice a day and see a dentist twice a year.
- Aim for 10-11 hours of sleep each night.

Turn off the TV and electronics. Encourage kids to get up and play. Limit screen time to less than 2 hours per day. Develop a family media plan. [www.HealthyChildren.org/mediauseplan](http://www.HealthyChildren.org/mediauseplan)

SAFETY

- Car safety: Booster seats are required until 8 years of age or until your child reaches 4 feet 9 inches tall. Weight is irrelevant. Children should always ride in the back seat of the car until age 13.
- Bicycle and skating safety: Wear a helmet and other protective gear if indicated.
- Water safety: Follow safety guidelines when your child is around water. Teach your child to swim.
- Make sure your child knows what to do in case of a fire or other emergency and can recite their name, address and phone number. Put emergency numbers by your phone.
- Apply sunscreen with SPF 30 or greater when they are outdoors and reapply every two hours. Have your child wear a hat.
- If you have guns in your home, keep them unloaded, locked and stored away from ammunition.
- Keep your home smoke and vape free.
- If you are worried about violence in your home, speak with your doctor or contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or ndvh.org.
MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION

Expectations from school often increase during this time. Your child will be expected to take on more responsibility for school work and may have larger amounts of homework each night. Encourage your child to read every day and provide guidance and assistance for healthy school and homework routines. Remember to make sure your expectations are appropriate for your child's age.

Sometimes children face challenges such as school refusal, difficulty making friends, bullying, or peer pressure. Some children may show signs of problems with attention or hyperactivity. If you are concerned about the school environment or your child's behavior and performance at school, schedule a meeting with their teacher, and discuss your concerns with your child's health care provider. Talking openly with them, at this age, about topics such as these encourages children to feel more comfortable talking to their parents when difficulties arise.

BODY CHANGES

As your child grows, you will begin to see the first signs of puberty. For girls, this is usually developing breasts. For boys, this is usually testicular enlargement. Puberty generally takes two to five years to complete. Children generally grow about 2 inches per year until puberty and then about 3-5 inches per year during puberty. If you see signs of puberty before age 8 in girls or before age 9 in boys, it is a good idea to talk to your health care provider. Your child may begin to ask questions about puberty. Try to talk openly and honestly to them.

MENTAL HEALTH

- Friends begin to take on a bigger role in your child’s life. Ask your child about who their friends are and what they talk about. Make time to get to know other parents. Encourage play dates at home so you can observe how your child interacts with their peers.
- Talk to your kids about internet safety.
- Encourage self-discipline and impulse control by modelling these behaviors. Talk with your kids openly, let them know that there should be no secrets they keep from their parents.
- Your child may experience depression and/or anxiety during these years triggered by sad or stressful events or other problems with no obvious precursor. If your child is consistently sad, lacks energy, no longer enjoys activities that used to be pleasurable, starts to withdraw from family and friends, is more irritable, angry or anxious, has sleep or appetite disturbances, bring these concerns to your child’s doctor.
- This is an appropriate time to start discussing drugs, alcohol and smoking with your kids.

RESOURCES

- www.pamf.org/preteen
- www.talkingwithkids.org
- www.dosomething.org/bullying
- www.stopbullying.gov
- www.kidshealth.org

- The Boy’s Body Book: Everything You Need to Know for Growing Up YOU by Kelli Dunham
- The Body Book for Boys by Jonathan Mar
- It’s So Amazing! A Book about Eggs, Sperm, Birth and Babies, and Families by Robie Harris