

Health and Wellness: 6 to 7 Years

Development

Your child should:

- enjoy school
- read and do math at his or her grade level
- have friends at school
- help with simple chores at home
- control his or her own emotions most of the time
- participate in activities outside of school.

Feeding Tips

- Teach your child to wash his or her hands and face often. This is especially important before eating and drinking.
- Offer your child healthful snacks such as fruits, vegetables, yogurt, turkey, peanut butter sandwich, or cheese and whole grain crackers. Avoid processed foods as much as possible.
- Do not make “special” separate meals for your child.
- Let your child help make good choices at the grocery store, help plan and prepare meals, and help clean up. Always supervise any kitchen activity.
- Your child should only be drinking milk or water. Other beverages, including juice, are not recommended.
- Limit sweets, treats and snack foods (such as chips), fast foods and fried foods.

- Milk is an excellent source of calcium and vitamin D.
- Your child should only eat when sitting at the table.

Physical Activity

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day. This time can be spread throughout the day. Encourage your child to go outdoors as much as possible, even in the wintertime.
- Physical activity is important for physical and emotional development.

Sleep

- Your child needs between 9 and 12 hours of sleep each night.
- Set an early enough bedtime so that your child wakes up on his or her own, well rested, and in time for school.
- Children thrive on routine. Continue a bedtime routine which includes bathing, teeth brushing and reading.
- Avoid active play and screen time at least 30 minutes before settling down.

(over)

Safety

- **Never shake or hit your child.**
 - If you are losing control, take a few deep breaths, put your child in a safe place and go into another room for a few minutes. If possible, have someone else watch your child so you can take a break. Call a friend, your local Crisis Nursery or United Way at 651-291-0211 or dial 211.
- Use an approved booster seat for the height and weight of your child every time he or she rides in a vehicle.
 - Your child needs to stay in a booster seat until he or she is at least 4 feet 9 inches or taller. The lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snugly across the shoulder and chest and not across the neck or face.
 - Your child should be buckled and ride in the back seat until age 13.
- Do not talk or text on your cellphone while driving.
- Do not allow your child to play around dogs or other animals unsupervised.
- Make sure your child always wears a helmet when riding a tricycle, bicycle or scooter, or when skating or sledding.
- When your child is outside, use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15. Use a brand with the active ingredients titanium dioxide or zinc oxide. Avoid any that contain oxybenzone.
- Keep all medicines, cleaning supplies and poisons locked and out of your child's reach.
- Call the poison control center or your health provider for instructions in case your child swallows poison. Have these numbers handy by your phone or program them into your phone.
- Consider enrolling your child in swimming lessons. Knowing how to swim is an important life skill. Your child still needs supervision when playing in or near any open water, even when he or she is not swimming. Your child should wear a life jacket when near a lake, river, ocean, or on a boat.

- Warn your child never to go with or accept anything from a stranger. Teach your child to say "no" if he or she is uncomfortable. Also, talk about "good touch" and "bad touch."
- Keep all knives, guns or other weapons out of your child's reach. Lock and store guns and ammunition in separate locations.
- Have a fire safety plan for your home.
- Teach your child how to dial and use 911 from a landline and a cellphone.
- Do not let anyone smoke or vape in your house or car at any time.

What To Know About Screen Time

- Screen time includes watching television and using devices such as cellphones, video games, computers and other electronics.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends setting consistent limits on screen times. Make sure screen time does not get in way of sleeping, physical activity, homework and family time. Children need screen-free playtime for social and emotional development.
- Keep bedrooms and mealtimes screen-free. Turn off all screens at least 1 hour before bed.
- Teach your child about the importance of privacy and not sharing passwords or any personal information. Supervise the online content that your child accesses. Parental controls can be helpful but do not replace proper supervision.

What Your Child Needs

- Read to your child each day. Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together. This time should be free of television, texting and other distractions.
- Discipline starts with a positive, loving relationship with your child.
- Your child wants your attention, so praise him or her whenever you witness good behaviors. This will encourage continued good behavior.

- Rules and boundaries are important for your child's physical safety and emotional security.
- Consistent follow through of discipline will teach your child that there are consequences for his or her actions.
- Do not use physical punishment. It encourages aggressive behavior and becomes ineffective over time.
- Appropriate types of discipline can include taking away privileges, experiencing consequences, or taking a break.
- Focus on the negative behavior instead of speaking negatively about your child such as saying he or she is naughty or bad.
- Provide support, attention and enthusiasm for your child's abilities and achievements.
- Create a schedule of simple chores for your child such as cleaning his or her room, helping to set the table, helping to care for a pet, etc. Chores are part of being a family and help teach responsibility.

Dental Care

- Make regular dental appointments for cleanings and checkups. Your child may need fluoride supplements if you have well water.
- Remind your child to brush and floss his or her teeth when he or she wakes up and before he or she goes to bed.

Community and Health Information Resources

- **Healthy Children**
— healthychildren.org
- **Poison Control**
— 1-800-222-1222 or poison.org
- **Common Sense Media**
— commonsensemedia.org
- **Health Powered Kids**
— healthpoweredkids.org

Minnesota

- **MinnesotaHelp.info**[®]
— mnhelp.info
- **United Way**
— 211unitedway.org
— dial 211 or 651-291-0211

Wisconsin

- **211 Wisconsin**
— 211wisconsin.communityos.org
— dial 211 or 1-877-947-2211

Your Child's Next Well Checkup

- Your child's next well checkup will be in 1 year.
- Your child may need this vaccination:
 - influenza.

Information about the Vaccines For Children (VFC) program is available if your child is eligible for the program. VFC is a federally funded program that offers vaccines at no cost.

Talk with your health care provider about giving acetaminophen (Tylenol[®]) after your child's immunizations.