



## Children's Healthcare Medical Associates

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## Well Child Care at 2 Years

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### Nutrition

Family meals are important for your child. Letting your child eat with you makes her feel like part of the family. Let your child feed herself. Your toddler will continue to improve using the spoon, with fewer and fewer spills. It is good to let your child help choose what foods to eat. Be sure to give her only nutritious foods to choose from. For many children now is the time to switch from whole or 2% milk to either 1% or skim milk (8 to 10 ounces per day is plenty, more than 16 ounces is too much). It is very important for your child to be completely off a bottle, since prolonged bottle feeding can lead to more ear infections and dental caries.

### Development, Speech and Discipline

At this age, children often say “no” or refuse to do what you want them to do. This normal phase of development involves testing the rules that parents make. Parents need to be consistent in following through with reasonable rules. Your rules should not be too strict or too lenient. Enforce the rules fairly every time. Be gentle but firm with your child even when the child wants to break a rule. Many parents find this age difficult, so ask your doctor for advice if you are having difficulty managing behavior. Mild stuttering is common at this age. It usually goes away on its own by the age of 4 years. Do not hurry your child's speech. Ask your doctor about speech problems if it persists more than 6 months.

### Safety tips

#### Prevent Fires and Burns

- Practice a fire escape plan.
- Check smoke detectors. Replace the batteries if necessary.
- Don't smoke near children. Avoid smoking inside or in the car.
- Keep hot appliances and cords out of reach.
- Keep electrical appliances out of the bathroom.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
- Don't allow your child to use the stove, microwave, hot curlers, or iron.
- Turn the water heater down to 120°F (50°C).

#### Car Safety

- Use an approved toddler car seat correctly.
- Sometimes toddlers may not want to be placed in car seats. Gently but consistently put your child into the car seat every time you ride in the car.
- Give the child a toy to play with once in the seat.
- Parents wear seat belts.
- Never leave your child alone in the car.

#### Pedestrian Safety

- Hold onto your child when you are near traffic.
- Provide a play area where balls and riding toys cannot roll into the street.

#### Prevent Drowning

- Continuously watch your child around any water.

#### Avoid Falls

- Teach your child not to climb on furniture, televisions or cabinets. Avoid placing furniture (on which your child may climb) near windows or balconies.
- Install window guards on windows above the first floor (unless this is against your local fire codes).
- Lock doors to dangerous areas like basements.

#### Poisons

- Keep all medicines, vitamins, cleaning fluids, etc., locked away.
- Put the poison center number on all phones. Phone number: 1 (800) 222-1222
- Purchase all medicines in containers with safety caps.
- Do not store toxic substances in drink bottles, glasses, or jars.

## Immunizations

Routine infant vaccinations are usually completed by this age. However, some children may need to catch up on recommended shots at this visit. In some areas of the United States, Hepatitis A vaccination is given to children at age 2. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about whether your child needs any vaccines.

## Toilet Training Your Child: The Basics

Your child is toilet trained when, without any reminders, he walks to the potty, pulls down his pants, urinates or passes a bowel movement (BM), cleans himself and pulls up his pants. Some children will learn to control their bladders first. Others will start with bowel control. Both kinds of control can be worked simultaneously. Bladder control through the night normally happens several years later than daytime control. The gradual type of toilet training discussed here can usually be completed in 1 to 3 months, if your child is ready.

**How can I help my child get ready for toilet training?** Don't begin training until your child is ready. Readiness doesn't just happen. It involves concepts and skills you can begin teaching your child at 18 months of age or earlier. All children can be made ready for toilet training by 3 years of age, most by 2 1/2 years.

### How do I toilet train my child?

**1 Encourage practice runs to the potty.** A practice run (potty sit) is encouraging your child to walk to the potty and sit there with his diaper or pants off. Your child can then be told, "Try to go pee-pee in the potty." Only do practice runs when your child gives a signal that looks promising, such as a certain facial expression, grunting, holding the genital area, pulling at his pants, pacing, squatting, squirming, etc. Other good times are after naps, 2 hours without urinating, or 20 minutes after meals. Say encouragingly, "The poop and pee want to come out. Let's use the potty." If your child is reluctant to sit on the potty, you may want to read him a story. If your child wants to get up after 1 minute of encouragement, let him get up. Never force your child to sit there. Never physically hold your child there. Even if your child seems to be enjoying it, end each session after 5 minutes unless something is happening. Initially, keep the potty chair in the room your child usually plays in. This easy access greatly increases the chances he will use it without your asking him. Consider owning 2 potty chairs. During toilet training, children need to wear clothing that is conducive to using the potty. That means one layer, usually the diaper. Avoid shoes and pants. (In the wintertime, turning up the heat is helpful.) Another option (though less effective) is loose sweatpants with an elastic waistband. Avoid pants with zippers, buttons, snaps, or a belt.

**2 Praise or reward your child for cooperation or success.** All cooperation with these practice sessions should be praised. For example, you might say, "You are sitting on the potty just like Mommy." or "You're trying real hard to go pee-pee in the potty." If your child urinates in the potty, he can be rewarded with treats such as animal cookies or stickers, as well as praise and hugs. Although a sense of accomplishment is enough for some children, many need treats to stay focused. Big rewards (such as going to the toy store) should be reserved for when your child walks over to the potty on his own and uses it or asks to go there with you and then uses it. Once your child uses the potty by himself two or more times, you can stop the practice runs. For the following week, continue to praise your child frequently for using the potty. Practice runs and reminders should not be necessary for more than 1 or 2 months.

**3 Change your child after accidents.** Change your child as soon as it's convenient, but respond sympathetically. Say something like, "You wanted to go pee-pee in the potty, but you went pee-pee in your pants. I know that makes you sad. You like to be dry. You'll get better at this." If you feel a need to be critical, keep it to mild verbal disapproval and use it rarely (for example, "Big boys don't go pee-pee in their pants," or mention the name of another child whom he likes and is trained). Then change your child into a dry diaper or training pants in as pleasant and non-angry a way as possible. Avoid physical punishment, yelling, or scolding. Pressure or force can make a child completely uncooperative.

**4 Introduce underpants after your child starts using the potty.** Regular underwear can spark motivation. Switch from diapers to underpants after your child is cooperative about sitting on the potty chair and passes urine into the toilet spontaneously 10 or more times. Take your child with you to buy the underwear and make it a reward for his success. Buy loose fitting ones that he can easily lower and pull up by himself. Once you start using underpants, use diapers only for naps, bedtime and travel outside the home.

**5 Plan a bare bottom weekend.** If your child is older than 30 months and has successfully used the potty a few times with your help and clearly understands the process, commit 6 hours or a weekend exclusively to toilet training. This can usually lead to a breakthrough. Avoid interruptions or distractions during this time. Younger siblings must spend the day elsewhere. Turn off the TV and do not answer the phone. Success requires monitoring your child during these hours of training. The bare bottom technique means not wearing any diapers, pull-ups, underwear or any clothing below the waist. This causes most children to become acutely aware of their body's plumbing. Children innately dislike pee or poop running down their legs. You and your child should stay in the vicinity of the potty chair. This can be in the kitchen or other room without a carpet. A gate may help your child stay on task. During bare bottom times, supervise your child but refrain from all practice runs and most reminders, allowing the child to learn by trial and error with your support. Create a frequent need to urinate by offering your child lots of her favorite fluids. Have just enough toys and books handy to keep your child playing near the potty chair. Keep the process upbeat with hugs, smiles and good cheer. You are your child's coach and ally.

### What if toilet training isn't working?

There are some children who are resistant to toilet training. Your child is considered resistant if after trying to toilet train your child using the method described above:

- Your child is over 2 1/2 years old and has a negative attitude about toilet training.
- Your child is over 3 years old and not daytime toilet trained.

- Your child won't sit on the potty or toilet.
- Your child holds back bowel movements.
- The approach described here isn't working after 6 months.

If your child is resistant to toilet training, ask your health care provider for ideas and information about toilet training resistance.

#### **Toilet Training: Resource List of Books for children**

- En El Bano (Toilet Tales); by Andrea Wayne Von Koningslow; Ekare, Ediciones/Banco Del Libro, 1999
- Everyone Poops; by Taro Gomi; Kane/Miller, 1993
- Going to the Potty; by Fred Rogers; Putnam, 1997
- I Have to Go; by Robert Munsch; Econo-Clad Books, 1999
- I Want My Potty; by Tony Ross; Kane/Miller Book Pub., 2001
- I'm a Potty Champion!; by Kitty Higgins; Barrons Juveniles, 1999
- Lift the Lid: A Toilet Training Book; by Pam Adams; Child's Play Intl Ltd, 1995
- P.J. & Puppy; by Catherine Falwell; Clarion Books, 1997
- No More Diapers!; by Emma Thompson; CTW Books, 1999
- Once Upon a Potty; by Alona Frankel; HarperCollins, 1999
- Potty Time; by Anne Civardi; Simon and Schuster, 1993
- To Pee or Not To Pee; by Linda Johns, Dana Regan (illustrator); Infinity Plus One, 1998
- Uh Oh! Gotta Go!: Potty Tales from Toddlers; by Bob McGrath, Shelley Dietrichs (illustrator); Barron's, 1996
- What Do You Do With a Potty?; by Marianne Borgardt, Maxie Chambliss (illustrator); Western Pub. Co., 1994
- The New Potty; by Gina Mayer and Mercer Mayer; Western Pub., 1992
- On Your Potty!; by Virginia Miller; Candlewick Press, 2000
- Perry Poops; by Pittau and Gervais; Chronical Books, 1997
- The Princess and the Potty; by Wendy Lewison; Aladdin Paperbacks, 1998
- Too Big for Diapers; by John Barrett; Random House, 2000

#### **Books for Adults**

- American Academy of Pediatrics Guide to Toilet Training; by Mark Wolraich; Bantam Books, 2003
- Mommy! I Have to Go Potty!: A Parent's Guide to Toilet Training; by Jan Faull; Raefield-Roberts Pub., 1996
- Parent's Book of Toilet Teaching; by Joanna Cole; Ballantine, 1999
- Potty Training Your Baby: A Practical Guide for Easier Toilet Training; by Katie Warren; Square One Publ., 2005

## **Raising Children to Resist Violence, What You Can Do**

Research has shown that violent or aggressive behavior is often learned early in life. However, parents, family members, and others who care for children can help them learn to deal with emotions without using violence. Parents and others can also take steps to reduce or minimize violence. Parents play a valuable role in reducing violence by raising children in safe and loving homes. Here are some suggestions that can help. You may not be able to follow each one exactly, but if you do your best, it will make a difference in your children's lives.

### **Give your children consistent love and attention.**

Every child needs a strong, loving relationship with a parent or other adult to feel safe and secure and to develop a sense of trust. Without a steady bond to a caring adult, a child is at risk for becoming hostile, difficult, and hard to manage.

It's not easy to show love to a child all the time. It can be even harder if you are a young, inexperienced, or single parent, or if your child is sick or has special needs. If your baby seems unusually difficult to care for and comfort, discuss this with your child's pediatrician, a psychologist, or a counselor. He or she can give you advice and direct you to local parenting classes that teach positive ways to handle the difficulties of raising children.

It is important to remember that children have minds of their own. Their increasing independence sometimes leads them to behave in ways that disappoint, anger, or frustrate you. Patience and a willingness to view the situation through children's eyes, before reacting, can help you deal with your emotions. Do your best to avoid responding to your children with hostile words or actions.

### **Make sure your children are supervised.**

Children depend on their parents and family members for encouragement, protection, and support as they learn to think for themselves. Without proper supervision, children do not receive the guidance they need. Studies report that unsupervised children often have behavior problems.

- Insist on knowing where your child is at all times and who their friends are. When you are unable to watch your children, ask someone you trust to watch them for you. Never leave young children home alone, even for a short time.
- Accompany your children to supervised play activities and watch how they get along with others. Teach your children how to respond appropriately when others use insults or threats or deal with anger by hitting. Explain to your children that these are not appropriate behaviors, and encourage them to avoid other children who behave that way.

### **Show your child appropriate behaviors by the way you act.**

Children learn by example. The behavior, values, and attitudes of parents and siblings have a strong influence on children. Values of respect, honesty, and pride in your family and heritage can be important sources of strength for children, especially if they are confronted with negative peer pressure, live in a violent neighborhood, or attend a rough school.

Most children sometimes act aggressively and may hit another person. Be firm with your children about the use of aggressive behavior. Praise your children when they solve problems constructively without violence. Children are more likely to repeat good behaviors when they are rewarded with attention and praise.

You can teach your children non-aggressive ways to solve problems by:

- Discussing problems with them,
- Asking them to consider what might happen if they use violence to solve problems. This kind of “thinking out loud” together will help children see that violence is not a helpful solution.

Parents sometimes encourage aggressive behavior without knowing it. For example, some parents think it is good for a boy to learn to fight. Teach your children that it is better to settle arguments with calm words, not fists, threats, or weapons.

#### **Don't hit your children.**

Hitting, slapping, or spanking children as punishment shows them that it's okay to hit others to solve problems and can train them to punish others in the same way they were punished. Physical punishments stop unwanted behavior only for a short time. Even with very harsh punishment children may adapt so that it has little or no effect. Using even more punishment is equally ineffective. Non-physical methods of discipline help children deal with their emotions and teach them nonviolent ways to solve problems. Here are some suggestions:

- Giving children “time out” - making them sit quietly, usually 1 minute for each year of age.
- Taking away certain privileges or treats.

Children need to feel that if they make mistakes, they can correct them. Show them how to learn from their errors. Help them figure out what they did wrong and how they can avoid making similar mistakes in the future. It is especially important not to embarrass or humiliate your children at these times. Children always need to feel your love and respect.

A positive approach to changing behaviors is to use rewards for good behavior instead of punishments for bad behavior.

Remember that praise and affection are the best rewards.

#### **Be consistent about rules and discipline.**

When you make a rule, stick to it. Children need structure, with clear expectations for their behavior. Setting rules and then not enforcing them is confusing and sets up children to see “what they can get away with”.

Parents should involve children in setting rules whenever possible. Explain to your children what you expect, and the consequences for not following the rules. This will help them learn to behave in ways that are good for them and for those around them.

#### **Try to keep your children from seeing violence in the home or community.**

Violence in the home can be frightening or harmful to children. Children need a safe and loving home where they do not have to grow up in fear. Children who have seen violence at home do not always become violent, but they may be more likely to resolve conflicts with violence. Work toward making home a safe, nonviolent place, and always discourage violent behavior between brothers and sisters. Keep in mind as well that hostile, aggressive arguments between parents frighten children and set a bad example for them.

If the people in your home physically or verbally hurt and abuse each other, get help from a psychologist or counselor in your community. He or she will help you and your family understand why violence at home occurs and how to stop it.

#### **Try to keep your children from seeing violence in the media.**

Seeing a lot of violence in the movies and in video games can lead children to behave aggressively. As a parent, you can control the amount of violence your children see in the media.

#### **Help your children stand up against violence.**

Support your children in standing up against violence. Teach them to respond with calm but firm words when others insult, threaten, or hit another person. Help them understand it takes more courage and leadership to resist violence than to go along with it.

Help your children accept and get along with others from various racial and ethnic backgrounds. Teach them that criticizing people because they're different is hurtful, and that name-calling is unacceptable. Make sure they understand that using words to start or encourage violence - or to quietly accept violent behavior - is harmful. Warn your child that bullying and threats can be a setup for violence.

#### **Warning Signs in the Toddler and Preschool Child:**

- Has many temper tantrums in a single day or several lasting more than 15 minutes, and often cannot be calmed by parents, family members, or other caregivers.
- Has many aggressive outbursts, often for no reason.
- Is extremely active, impulsive, and fearless.
- Consistently refuses to follow directions and listen to adults.
- Does not seem attached to parents, for example, does not like to be touched or if your toddler does not look for, or return to parents in strange places.
- Frequently watches violence on television, engages in play that has violent themes, or is cruel toward other children.

**Next Visit:** A once-a-year check-up is recommended. Before starting school your child will need more vaccinations. Please remember to bring your child's shot card.