

# PE D I A T R I C S

of  
Northeastern Pennsylvania

## School Age Child Handout Ages 5-10 Years of Age

Your child is "school age" now. This age is marked by increasing strides towards becoming an independent individual, with your child really being able to make decisions that influence their health. It's also an age at which we recognize the increasing importance of our children's lives outside the home and in the classroom. Time spent with friends in organized activities, viewing TV, activities with parents and chores all help our children develop the values that will play an important role in their future behaviors.

So here we are again at crossroads. Infancy to toddlerhood and now school age. We continue to grow and learn with our children.

### NUTRITION

A pleasant atmosphere at mealtime is still important and is created in great part through conversation. Talk to, not at your children, drawing them into conversation by asking questions, discussing the days events, sports, friends, etc. Then more importantly, listen to their answers.

Allow food choices of good nutritional value and limit carbohydrate snacking. Encourage meals and snacks to be eaten at the table - not "on the run" or while watching TV

EXTRA!! EXTRA!!

- Encourage three meals a day
- Encourage dental care including flossing and brushing frequently - oral fluoride supplements and routine dental visits
- Vitamin and fluoride supplements are still needed and should be increased to 1 milligram at age 6
- Encourage regular physical activity to maintain weight and promote good health

### SAFETY

Safety belts are still to be worn by both child and parent. Close supervision is still required around power tools, fire arms and any water activity. Teach your child bike safety. Please ask for our "Bike Safety" handout if needed. **Please, know where your child is at all times.** Even though they feel like very independent individuals, they are still ours to protect from harm, from bad choices, and sometimes even from bad people. Warn your child not to go with or accept things from strangers.

### SELF -HEALTH

Teach your child how to care for and respect their bodies. This will include good nutrition, proper dental care, (brushing, flossing and dental checks), and regular physical activity. You might consider community youth sports and family physical activity, like biking, running and swimming.

Continue to discuss sex education, answering all questions at the level of your child's understanding. Your five to six year old will be curious about where babies come from and about the differences between boys and girls. Please use the correct terms for genitals and understand that your child's sexual curiosity and exploration are normal.

### SELF-HEALTH (CONT.)

Your ten year old girl should be prepared for menses, and discuss with both boys and girls any questions about reproduction they may have - including changes they are experiencing or will experience as they go through adolescence.

### PARENTING TIPS

Encourage your child to be a family team player. Establish fair and understandable rules about chores, TV viewing, outside activities, homework and bedtime. Include your children in the formation of these rules and make them aware of the consequences of breaking them. Then, be consistent in enforcing these rules.

Communicate with your children. Encourage them to read and introduce them to the library. Talk to your children. Discuss controversial issues and shows. Some topics may include smoking, drug use and alcohol use. Another topic which might be discussed is family relations - divorce situations, step parenting, things like that. Show interest in your child's daily activities and friends. And PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE good behavior and decisions. This encourages your child's self-esteem. If your child gets positive reinforcement at home and feels good about themselves, they will be less likely to look for a quick ego boost, possibly involving bad choices, with friends or outside activities.

Arrange for adult supervision of your child, while you are away. Provide them with an allowance and offer guidance on spending it. Continue to show affection to your child. Don't expect them to just know how much you love and care for them - Show them and tell them frequently.

Encourage age appropriate independence and self responsibility. Allow your child to be an important part of your family by establishing chores to be done routinely and involving them in decision making that involves the family. Remember, you are still your child's greatest role model and your actions and behavior speak loudly.

### IMMUNIZATIONS

Refer to immunization chart in baby book for immunizations due.

Immunizations and their schedules change according to the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations. Check with your physician for changes/updates.

### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

5 Year Old

- skips, walks on tip toe, jumps
- cuts and pastes, can name 4-5 colors and
- identify coins
- can dress and undress without supervision
- can recognize letters in the alphabet

- can draw a person with head, body arms and legs
- is beginning to understand right from wrong,

School Age Child Handout  
Page 3

- fair from unfair
- enjoys playing with other children
- has gender identification

- 6 Year Old
- bounces a ball 4-5 times, throws and catches
  - ride a bike
  - tie his shoe laces
  - can count up to 10
  - print his first name and write his numbers up to ten
  - knows right from left
  - draws figures with body parts and the figure is wearing clothes

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)

- 8-9 Year Old
- he can tell time
  - reads for pleasure and uses the library
  - has a sense of humor, may tell jokes
  - concerned about rules, good vs. bad
  - cares for belongings
  - takes responsibility for home chores

- 10 Year Old
- displays self-confidence with sense of mastery and pride in school and extra-curricular activities
  - makes a few friends and participates in group activities
  - understands and complies with most rules at home and at school
  - assumes reasonable responsibilities for health, school, work and chores

\* An important reminder, these milestones are guidelines only. All children do not develop at the same speed, nor do they spend the same amount of time at each stage of their development. Usually a child is ahead in some areas and behind in others. The descriptions you found in this handout and future handouts is for a "typical" child. The concept of the "typical" child describes characteristics one would expect to find at a given age. If, however, you have concerns regarding your child's development, please discuss them with the Doctor.

Please call our office between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. with ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS. That's what OUR part of YOUR team is all about!