



What You Need to Know: Adolescent

Nutrition and Exercise

- Eat meals as a family whenever possible.
- Model healthy eating in your own diet.
- Offer healthy choices. Limit fatty foods, sweets, and sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Encourage your teen to eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Dairy products like yogurt & cheese, are important for calcium, Vitamin D, protein, and overall nutrition.
- Drink plenty of water and limit sugary beverages like soda, juice, and sports drinks.
- Energy drinks are not recommended
- Encourage your teen to get 1 hour of vigorous physical activity every day.

Parenting

- Be honest and direct with your teen when talking about sensitive subjects such as drugs, drinking, smoking, vaping, and sex.
- Meet and get to know your teen's friends.
- Show interest in your teen's school life.
- Help your teen make healthy choices while encouraging him to make his own decisions.
- Respect your teen's opinions and take into account her thoughts and feelings. It is important that she knows you are listening to her.
- When there is a conflict, be clear about goals and expectations (like getting good grades, keeping things clean, and showing respect), but allow your teen input on how to reach those goals (like when and how to study or clean).
- Praise your child for success in school and making healthy decisions.
- Talk with your teen about the importance of having friends who are interested in positive activities. Encourage her to avoid peers who pressure her to make unhealthy choices.
- Set clear rules for your teen when she is home alone. Talk about such issues as having friends at the house, how to handle situations that can be dangerous (emergencies, fire, drugs, sex, etc.), and completing homework or household tasks.

Sleep

Understand the importance of getting enough sleep and how sleep affects the overall health of you and your children. Teenagers require 8-10 hours of sleep per night. Sleep deprivation may lead to difficult behaviors and health problems—irritability, difficulty concentrating, hypertension, obesity, headaches, and depression. Children who get enough sleep have a healthier immune system, and better school performance, behavior, memory, and mental health. The AAP recommends keeping all screens—TVs, computers, laptops, tablets, and phones out of children's bedrooms, especially at night. To prevent sleep disruption, turn off all screens 30-60 minutes before bedtime.

Safety

- Make sure your teen knows about the importance of wearing seatbelts. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among 12-14 year-olds.
- Set expectations for safe driving.
- Know where your teen is and whether an adult is present. Make plans with him for when he will call you, where you can find him, and what time you expect him home.
- Encourage your teen to wear a helmet when riding a bike, skateboarding, skating, skiing, or riding off-road vehicles. Injuries from sports and other activities are common.
- Make sure your teen understands that a healthy dating relationship is based on respect and that saying “no” is ok.
- If you have a gun in the home, make sure it is in a locked safe, unloaded, and separate from ammunition.
- Develop a fire escape plan for your home and teach your child. Check smoke detector batteries every 6 months.

Other Things....

- Dental care – schedule dental visits every 6-12 months.
- Brush teeth twice a day and floss daily.
- Limit the amount of screen time (no more than 2 hours a day) and monitor the types of shows your child watches. Limit computers and video games. Avoid violent games and stick to age-appropriate content.
- Do not over-schedule your child. Too many activities can add stress to a child and family.
- Wear sunscreen with at least SPF 30 during outside play, even in winter months, and reapply frequently.

Vaccines Given at Your Child's Next Well Visit (yearly)

- HPV #2
- Meningococcal B

Suggested Reading

[How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk](#)
[By Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish](#)

[Parenting with Love and Logic by Foster Cline and Jim Fay](#)

[The Five Love Languages of Children by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell](#)

[The Whole Brained Child 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind by Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson](#)

[The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed by Jessica Lahey](#)

[Parenting from the Inside Out: How a Deeper Self-Understanding Can Help You Raise Children Who Thrive by Daniel J. Siegel and Mary Hartzell](#)

[United Way of Utah County: Everyday Strong Resilience Handbook](#)

Useful Websites

[www.canyonviewpediatrics.com](#)

[www.cdc.gov/vaccines](#)

[www.aap.org](#)

[www.healthychildren.org](#)