



# Bright Futures™

prevention and health promotion for infants,  
children, adolescents, and their families™

The Bright Futures Guidelines,  
Third Edition  
Health Promotion Information Sheet  
**PROMOTING  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

*The Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents, Third Edition* features 10 health promotion themes. These state-of-the-art discussions focus on topics of key importance to families and health care professionals in their common mission to promote the health and well-being of children from birth through adolescence. These 10 themes are also woven into the 31 health supervision visits.



## What you'll find in the “Promoting Child Development” chapter

### Overview: Setting the stage

Any health supervision encounter with children involves promoting healthy child development. Understanding and applying child development principles set the care of children apart from that of adults. Infants must grow to be children, then adolescents, and then adults. Health promotion to ensure physical, cognitive, and social-emotional health — as well as to protect the child from infectious diseases and injuries — supports healthy development. Successful health promotion efforts should take into account the developmental reality of the child patient now, as well as her developmental expectations for the near future and her developmental potential over time.

### In-depth: Exploring the topic

Each stage of life has its own child development issues and challenges. These are covered in detail, along with evidence on the effectiveness of relevant health promotion interventions.

#### Infancy: Birth to 11 Months

- Infants with special health care needs
- Domains of development, including gross and fine motor skills; cognitive, linguistic, and communication skills, and; social-emotional skills
- Developmental highlights of infancy, such as the influence of culture on development, self-regulation, sleep, SIDS, and discipline, behavioral guidance, and teaching

#### Early Childhood: 1 to 4 Years

- Young children with special health care needs
- Domains of development, including gross and fine motor skills; cognitive, linguistic, and communication skills; and social-emotional skills
- Developmental highlights of early childhood, such as self-regulation and daily living tasks; sleep; toilet training; socialization; discipline, behavioral guidance, and teaching; literacy; play; separation and individuation; child care, and; school readiness

#### Middle Childhood: 5 to 10 Years

- Children and youth with special health care needs
- Domains of development, including gross and fine motor skills; cognitive, linguistic, and communication skills, and; social-emotional skills
- Developmental highlights of middle childhood, including moral and spiritual development

#### Adolescence: 11 to 21 Years

- Youth with special health care needs
- Stages of adolescence, including physiological, psychological, and social development
- Domains of development, including gross and fine motor skills; cognitive, linguistic, and communication skills, and; social-emotional skills
- Developmental highlights of adolescence, including assets and models of care



## How the theme of “Promoting Child Development” fits into Bright Futures visits

Each Bright Futures health supervision visit is structured around *five priority topics* that help focus the health care professional’s guidance to parents and children. Some priorities are unique to a particular visit; others are featured often and their components evolve in concert with the child’s development.

These examples of priorities, taken from selected visits, show how Bright Futures helps health care professionals talk to families about healthy child development during each developmental stage:

### Infancy: Newborn Visit

*Infant behaviors*, such as infant capabilities, parent-child relationship, sleep, and sleep/wake states

### Early Childhood: 4 Year Visit

*School readiness*, including structured learning experiences, opportunities to socialize with other children, fears, friends, and fluency

### Middle Childhood: 9 and 10 Year Visits

*School issues*, such as school performance, homework, and bullying

### Late Adolescence: 18 to 21 Year Visits

*Physical growth and development*, including physical and oral health, body image, healthy eating, and physical activity

## Additional Resources on Promoting Child Development

- American Academy of Pediatrics [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)
- Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration <http://mchb.hrsa.gov>
- Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs and National Network of State Adolescent Health Coordinators, A Conceptual Framework for Adolescent Health [www.amchp.org/aboutamchp/publications/conc-framework.pdf](http://www.amchp.org/aboutamchp/publications/conc-framework.pdf)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)
- National Society of Genetic Counselors [www.nsgc.org/consumer/familytree](http://www.nsgc.org/consumer/familytree)
- Reach Out and Read [www.reachoutandread.org](http://www.reachoutandread.org)
- The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) [IDEA Part C eligibility assessment for infants and toddlers with disabilities] [www.nectac.org/topics/earlyid/partcelig.asp](http://www.nectac.org/topics/earlyid/partcelig.asp)

*Bright Futures is a national health care promotion and disease prevention initiative that uses a developmentally-based approach to address children’s health needs in the context of family and community.*

## Other Bright Futures Health Promotion Themes

Family Support

Child Development

Mental Health

Healthy Weight

Healthy Nutrition

Physical Activity

Oral Health

Safety and Injury Prevention

Community Relationships and Resources

Healthy Sexual Development and Sexuality

*To learn more about Bright Futures, visit [www.brightfutures.aap.org](http://www.brightfutures.aap.org).*

