



Bright Futures™

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

The Bright Futures Guidelines,
Third Edition
Health Promotion Information Sheet
**PROMOTING
COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS
AND RESOURCES**

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 Community Relationships and Resources" chapter

Overview: Setting the stage

Beyond the traditional primary care that is essential for all children, families also may benefit from a broad range of community-based services, such as housing, employment, and social services; educational services; family support; mental health services; substance abuse treatment; language assistance; respite care; recreation opportunities, and; services for children and youth with special health care needs. These services, coupled with primary care provided in a medical home, constitute a community-based system of care and are critical to promoting family well-being.

In-depth: Exploring the topic

The introductory section of this chapter discusses the health care professional's roles in promoting community relationships. Learning about the community and collaborating with community partners is one essential role; another is recognizing the unique needs of special groups, such as recent immigrants, those with limited proficiency in English, and children and youth with special health care needs. Encouraging informal support among families, consulting, and advocating are important, as well.



The chapter also looks at ways to promote community relationships and resources at each developmental stage, along with evidence on the effectiveness of relevant health promotion interventions.

Infancy: Birth to 11 Months

Connecting with groups that address issues such as community or domestic violence, inadequate or unsafe housing, environmental hazards, poverty, substance abuse, or unemployment is vitally important to ensuring that families can meet their basic needs. Involvement in parent education, family support, and child care programs can help parents have positive and nurturing early experiences, while improving the quality of care for their children.

Early Childhood: 1 to 4 Years

Health care professionals should view early education and child care programs as access points for ensuring that children have a medical home. Health care professionals can help families assess the quality of child care for their young children.

Middle Childhood: 5 to 10 Years

During the middle childhood years, children become increasingly aware of the outside world and its opportunities and challenges. Communities play an essential role in promoting development and socialization, and provide children with opportunities to explore the wider world.

Adolescence: 11 to 21 Years

Research demonstrates that reports of risk-taking behavior decrease when the number of assets an adolescent is exposed to is increased. Community contributions that enhance the adolescent's sense of being a needed, valued, and responsible member of the community firmly fit within the assets that support this stage of a young person's development.



How the theme of “Promoting Community Relationships and Resources” 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 community relationships and resources during each developmental stage:

Infancy: 1 Month Visit

Family adjustment issues, such as family resources, family support, parental roles, domestic violence, and community resources

Early Childhood: 2 Year Visit

Preschool considerations, including readiness for early childhood programs, playgroups, or playdates

Middle Childhood: 7 and 8 Year Visits

School issues, including adaptation to school; school problems, such as behavior or learning issues; school performance and progress; involvement in school activities and after-school programs; bullying; parental involvement, and; the Individualized Education Program or other special education services

Early Adolescence: 11 to 14 Year Visits

Social and academic competence, including connectedness with family, peers, and community; interpersonal relationships, and; school performance

Additional Resources on Promoting Community Relationships and Resources

- American Academy of Pediatrics www.aap.org
- Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration <http://mchb.hrsa.gov>
- Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation: www.kff.org
- National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE): www.serve.org/nche
- National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center www.safeyouth.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
- The President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports <http://fitness.gov>

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	Physical Activity
Child Development	Oral Health
Mental Health	Safety and Injury Prevention
Healthy Weight	Community Relationships and Resources
Healthy Nutrition	Healthy Sexual Development and Sexuality

To learn more about Bright Futures, visit www.brightfutures.aap.org.

