

HEALTHY *and* SAFE at 2 Years

Tips for Keeping Your Child Healthy and Safe

Preventing Accidents

- Never leave your child alone in your home or yard without a mature adult in charge, especially near cars.
- When you back out of the garage or drive in the driveway, have another adult hold your child a safe distance away.
- Keep your child away from streets, driveways, lawn mowers, and garage doors.
- Have your child wear a helmet that fits well on bikes and trikes.
- Never have a gun in your home. If you must have a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.

Car and Safety

- Be sure your child's car seat is correctly installed in the back seat of all vehicles.
- Follow the owner's manual if you are switching the car safety seat to the forwardfacing position.
- There should be no more than a finger's width of space between your child's collarbone and the harness strap.
- Everyone should wear a seat belt in your car.

Talking With Your Child

- Talk with your child about pictures in books and the things that you see and hear.
- Let your child lead when you play together. This helps toddlers learn to talk.
- Use correct language; be a good model for your child.
- Talk slowly. Remember that it may take a while for your child to respond.



Reading To Your Child

- Read and sing to your child every day.
- Your child may love hearing the same story over and over. This is normal.
- Ask your child to point to things as you read.
- Let your child be part of the story. Your child might make sounds or finish part of the story.

Your Child's Feelings

- Let your child pick from 2 good choices for snacks, books, or toys.
- Help your child express feelings and name them.
- Listen to your child and treat him or her with respect. Expect others to do as well.
- It is normal for your child to protest being away from you or meeting new people.
- Watch how your child responds to new people or situations.
- Never make fun of your child's fears. Don't let others scare your child.

Toilet Training

- If your child is ready for toilet training, your child may:
 - Be able to stay dry for 2 hours
 - Know if he or she is wet or dry
 - Pull pants down and up
 - Want to learn
 - Tell you if he or she is going to have a bowel movement
- Plan for toilet breaks often. Children use the toilet as many as 10 times each day.
- Help your child wash his or her hands after toileting and diaper changes and before meals.
- Clean potty chairs after every use
- Take your child to choose underwear when he or she feels ready.

Your Child and TV

- It is better for toddlers to play than watch TV.
- Watch TV together and talk about what you see and think.
- Be careful about the programs and advertising your young child sees.
- Do other activities with your child such as reading, playing games, and singing.
- Be active together as a family. Make sure your child is active at home, at childcare, and with babysitters.
- Limit TV to 1–2 hours or less each day.

How Your Child Behaves

- Praise your child for behaving well.
- Help your child play with other children, but don't expect your child to share.
- Play with your child each day, joining in things the child likes to do.
- Hug and hold your child often.

What to Expect at your Child's 2½ Year Visit:

Your child's doctor will talk about -

- Your talking child
- Getting ready for preschool
- Family activities
- Home and car safety
- Getting along with other children

To Learn More

- **Poison Control Center** 1-800-222-1222
- **Child Safety Seat Inspection** 1-866-SEATCHECK, 1-866-732-8243 or www.seatcheck.org
- **Immunizations** at aap.org/immunization
- **MaineHealth Learning Resource Center** 1-866-609-5183 or <https://mainehealth.org/healthy-communities/learning-resource-center>
- **Barbara Bush Children's Hospital** www.bbch.org
- **American Academy of Pediatrics** healthychildren.org
- **2-1-1 Maine** (a directory of local services) 211 or 1-877-463-6207 or 211maine.org
- **MaineHealth** mainehealth.org