8 Year Old Well Child Care

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE:

Talk to the child's teacher on a regular basis to see how the child is performing in school.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Your child may enjoy playing competitive games and playing on organized sports teams.
- Encourage social activities outside the home in play groups or sports teams. After school programs encourage social activity. Do not leave children unsupervised in the home after school.
- Make sure you know your child's friends and their parents.
- Talk to your child about sex education. Answer questions in clear, correct terms.

IMMUNIZATIONS:

By school entry, children should be up to date on their immunizations, but the health care provider may recommend catch-up immunizations if any were missed. Make sure your child has received at least 2 doses of MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) and 2 doses of varicella or "chicken pox." Note that these may have been given as a combined MMR-V (measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella. Annual influenza or "flu" vaccination should be considered during flu season.

TESTING:

Vision and hearing should be checked. The child may be screened for anemia, tuberculosis, or high cholesterol, depending upon risk factors.

NUTRITION AND ORAL HEALTH

- Encourage low fat milk and dairy products.
- Limit fruit juice to 8 to 12 ounces per day. Avoid sugary beverages or sodas.
- Avoid high fat, high salt and high sugar choices.
- Allow children to help with meal planning and preparation.
- Try to make time to eat together as a family. Encourage conversation at mealtime.
- Model healthy food choices, and limit fast food choices.
- Continue to monitor your child's tooth brushing and encourage regular flossing.
- Continue fluoride supplements if recommended due to inadequate fluoride in your water supply.
- Schedule an annual dental examination for your child.
- Talk to your dentist about dental sealants and whether the child may need braces.

ELIMINATION

Nighttime wetting may still be normal, especially for boys or for those with a family history of bedwetting. Talk to your health care provider if this is concerning for your child.

SLEEP

Adequate sleep is still important for your child. Daily reading before bedtime helps the child to relax. Continue bedtime routines. Avoid television watching at bedtime.

PARENTING TIPS

- Recognize the child's desire for privacy.
- Encourage regular physical activity on a daily basis. Take walks or go on bike outings with your child.
- The child should be given some chores to do around the house.
- Be consistent and fair in discipline, providing clear boundaries and limits with clear consequences. Be mindful to correct or discipline your child in private. Praise positive behaviors. Avoid physical punishment.
- Talk to your child about handling conflict without physical violence.

- Help your child learn to control their temper and get along with siblings and friends.
- **Limit television time to 2 hours per day!** Children who watch excessive television are more likely to become overweight. Monitor children's choices in television. If you have cable, block those channels which are not acceptable for viewing by 8 year olds.

SAFETY

- Provide a tobacco-free and drug-free environment for your child. Talk to your child about drug, tobacco, and alcohol use among friends or at friend's homes.
- Provide close supervision of your child's activities.
- Children should always wear a properly fitted helmet on your child when they are riding a bicycle. Adults should model wearing of helmets and proper bicycle safety.
- Restrain your child in the back seat using seat belts at all times. Never allow children under the age of 13 to ride in the front seat with air bags.
- **Equip your home with smoke detectors and change the batteries regularly!**
- Discuss fire escape plans with your child should a fire happen.
- Teach your children not to play with matches, lighters, and candles.
- Discourage use of all terrain vehicles or other motorized vehicles.
- Trampolines are hazardous. If used, they should be surrounded by safety fences and always supervised by adults. Only one child should be allowed on a trampoline at a time.
- Keep medications and poisons out of your child's reach.
- If firearms are kept in the home, both guns and ammunition should be locked separately.
- Street and water safety should be discussed with your children. Use close adult supervision at all times when a child is playing near a street or body of water. Never allow the child to swim without adult supervision. Enroll your child in swimming lessons if the child has not learned to swim.
- Discuss avoiding contact with strangers or accepting gifts/candies from strangers. Encourage the child to tell you if someone touches them in an inappropriate way or place.
- Warn your child about walking up to unfamiliar animals, especially when the animals are eating.
- Make sure that your child is wearing sunscreen which protects against UV-A and UV-B and is at least sun protection factor of 15 (SPF-15) or higher when out in the sun to minimize early sun burning. This can lead to more serious skin trouble later in life.
- Make sure your child knows to dial 911 in case of an emergency.
- Make sure your child knows the parents' complete names and cell phone or work phone numbers.
- **Know the number to poison control in your area and keep it by the phone.**

WHAT'S NEXT?

Your next visit should be when your child is 9 years old.

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