

HEALTHY *and* SAFE at 3 Years

Tips for Keeping Your Child Healthy and Safe

Taking Care of Yourself

- Parents need to stay connected to friends, their personal interests, and work.
- Take time for yourself and your partner.
- Your parents might have different parenting styles than you do. This is normal.

Your Active Child

- Apart from sleeping, children should not sit still for longer than 1 hour at a time.
- Find fun, active things to do together as a family.
- Be sure your child is active at home and preschool or child care.
- Have regular playtimes and mealtimes together as a family.
- Let your child's doctor or nurse know if you need help getting your child enrolled in preschool or Head Start.

Playing With Others

- Playing with other preschoolers helps get your child ready for school.
- Help your child learn to take turns while playing games with other children.
- Give your child a variety of toys for dress-up and make-believe.

Outdoor Safety

- Watch children when they play near streets and driveways.
- Do not let young brothers and sisters watch over your child.
- Your child is too young to cross the street alone.



Reading and Talking With Your Child

- Ask your child to tell you about his or her day, friends, and activities.
- Read books, sing songs, and play rhyming games with your child each day.
- Reading together and talking about a book's story and pictures helps your child learn. Ask your child to tell a part of the story.
- Use books as a way to talk together.
- Look for ways to practice reading everywhere you go. Read street signs, or signs and labels in the store.

Your Child and TV

- Limit TV, video, and video game time to no more than 1–2 hours each day.
- Do not put a TV in your child's bedroom.
- Don't let children watch shows and ads that may make them want things that are not healthy.

Your Child's Behavior

- Give your child the chance to make choices.
- Show your child how to handle anger well.
- Healthy ways to deal with anger: spend time alone, use respectful words, or burn off anger by being active.
- Stop hitting, biting, and fighting right away.
- Reinforce rules. Encourage good behavior.
- Use time-outs or take away what is causing a problem.

Car Safety

- Use a forward-facing car safety seat in the back seat of all vehicles.
- Switch to a belt-positioning booster seat when your child outgrows the forward-facing seat.
- Never leave your child alone in the car, house, or yard.

Home Safety

- Make sure there are window guards on every window on the second floor and higher. Move furniture away from windows.
- Never have a gun in the home. If you must have a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Ask if there are guns in homes where your child plays. If so, make sure they are stored safely.

What to Expect at your Child's 4 Year Visit:

Your child's doctor will talk about -

- Getting ready for school
- Community involvement and safety
- Promoting physical activity and limiting TV time
- Keeping your child's teeth healthy
- Safety inside and outside
- How to be safe with adults

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