

# A to Z Guide to Help Kids Be Healthy & Safe



## **A** is for **Always use car safety.**

- When riding in a car, always use seat belts. Use an approved child-safety seat that is right for your child's age and weight. Install and use it as directed.
- Children should ride in the back seat until they are older than age 12 years.



## **B** is for **Back to sleep.**

To lower the risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS):

- Place a baby (up to 12 months old) on his or her back to sleep. The mattress should be firm and fit tightly in the crib.
- Make sure the baby's face is not covered during sleep. Do not have pillows, quilts, stuffed toys and other soft products in the crib.

## **C** is for **Cross the street safely.**

- Teach your child to cross at street corners and obey safety signs.
- Look left, then right, then left again before crossing the street. Look straight and left and right while crossing the street.

## **D** is for **Dental health.**

- *Don't* lay a baby down with a bottle left in the mouth.
- Start brushing your child's teeth when his or her first tooth appears. Brush the teeth 2 or more times a day. At age 3 or 4, teach your child how to brush. A child younger than 7 years old may need your help to do a thorough job.
- Take your child for dental checkups every 6 months. Follow the dentist's advice for flossing and how to get enough fluoride.
- Limit sticky, chewy, and sweet food and drinks.



## **E** is for **Exercise.**

- Make exercise a family activity. Walk. Bike. Dance. Swim. Play basketball and other sports. Include children in household activities like cleaning, dog-walking, and lawn work.
- Experts suggest at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity a day for most children.
- Limit TV and computer time.

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**F** is for **Feed your child healthy foods.**

- See Healthy Eating Tips at [www.HealthyLearn.com](http://www.HealthyLearn.com).

**G** is for **Give positive feedback.**

- Praise good behaviors.
- Hug, read, and play together.

**H** is for **Hand washing.**

- Teach your child to wash his or her hands often. Show them how to do it the right way. Use soap and running water. Take at least 20 seconds to wash the hands. This is the amount of time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” two times. Dry the hands with clean paper towels that can be thrown away.
- Hand washing is important before your child eats and after he or she goes to the bathroom, plays, handles pets, and sneezes or coughs.



**I** is for **Install.**

- Install smoke alarms. Install carbon monoxide detectors, too.
- Follow the rules of the city you live in.

- Check to see that they work well. Do this every month.
- Ask your local fire department for help, if you need it.

**J** is for **Join.**

- Join your child in being physically active and in eating healthy foods.
- Join group activities as a family.

**K** is for **Keep harmful things out of children’s reach.** These include:

- Medicines and vitamins. Store these in “child-safe” bottles.
- Bleach and other household products. Read labels to find out which ones can harm a child and for first aid information.
- Matches, lighters, guns and bullets.
- All knives and sharp utensils.



**L** is for **Listen and Learn.**

- Listen to your child.
- Learn about your child’s interests. Learn who their friends are, too.
- Learn child first aid and CPR.

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**M** is for **Medicine safety.**

- When you give medicine to your child, make sure it is the right kind and dose for your child's weight.
- Give medicine as advised by your child's doctor.
- Do not give aspirin to anyone under 19 years of age due to its link to **Reye's Syndrome**. (See at [www.HealthyLearn.com](http://www.HealthyLearn.com).)

**N** is for **Never leave a baby, toddler, or young child unattended.**

- Never leave a baby alone on a bed or table.
- It takes only seconds for a toddler or curious children to get into something they should not be into.
- Never leave a child alone in a bathtub or baby bath.
- Never leave a child alone in a car and around cars.

**O** is for **Obey traffic laws and other rules.**

- Laws and rules are made to keep people safe. Teach your child to obey them.
- Set rules that your child needs to follow.



**P** is for **Poison Control Center hotline.**

- This number is 800.222.1222.
- Keep it by each phone. Program it in your cell phone.

**Q** is for **Quit Smoking!**

- Smoking and secondhand smoke are very harmful to you and your child.
- Don't smoke. Don't let your child smoke.
- Do not allow smoking in your home.
- If needed, get help to quit smoking. Get help from your doctor or from 800.QUIT.NOW (784.8669) and [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov).

**R** is for **Role model.**

- Children copy what they see.
- Eat healthy foods. Do regular exercise.

**S** is for **Safety-proof the house.**

- Set the thermostat on your water heater to 120°F or less.
- Put safety plugs in outlets.
- Teach your child to stay away from the stove.
- Keep guard rails around space heaters. Gate off unsafe areas.

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- Do not let young children get toys or other things with small parts. They could choke on them.
- Never leave a child alone near water. Wear life jackets when boating or near a lake. Empty buckets with water, etc. right away after use.
- Get more safety tips from Safe Kids Worldwide at [www.usasafekids.org](http://www.usasafekids.org).

## **T** is for **Talk to your child.**

- Talk about ways to be healthy and safe.
- Tell your child what you expect of him or her.
- Tell your child often that you love him or her.



## **U** is for **Use products that are safety approved for kids.**

- These include: Car seats, cribs, playpens, toys, and sleepwear.
- Find out if a product is safe or has been recalled from The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

## **V** is for **Vaccines.**

- See **Vaccine Schedule** at [www.HealthyLearn.com](http://www.HealthyLearn.com).

## **W** is for **Wear protective gear.**

- Wear a helmet when riding a bike, rollerblading, skating, etc.
- Wear the right gear when practicing and playing team sports.
- Wear clothes or material that reflects the light when outdoors in the dark.

## **X** is for **eXams from a health care provider.**

- Children age 3 years and older should get a yearly checkup.
- Children under age 3 years need checkups when they are 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 24 months old.

## **Y** is for **Yearly flu vaccine.**

- A yearly flu vaccine is the single best way to prevent getting the flu.
- All children ages 6 to 59 months should get a flu vaccine. So should others as advised by their doctors.

## **Z** is for **ZZZZs** (sleep).

Get enough sleep each night:

- Adults need at least 7 to 9 hours.
- Teens need at least 8½ to 9½ hours.
- After 6 months of age, most children need 9 to 12 hours. Up to age 5 years, children may also take daytime naps for a total of ½ to 2 hours a day.