

## Caring for Your 2-Year-Old Child

### Keep Your Child Safe

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Use a Car Seat

- Install it properly in the back seat facing backward.

#### Prevent Drowning

- Don't leave your toddler alone around water.
- Learn child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Empty buckets, tubs and small pools as soon as you are done using them.

#### Prevent Burns

- Protect your toddler from sunburn. Use sunscreen.
- Keep your toddler away from hot stoves, fireplaces, irons, curling irons, and space heaters.
- Set the water heater thermostat so that the water is not hotter than 120°F.

#### Prevent Poisoning

- Lock all poisons (medicines, pest killers, paints) out of reach and sight of your toddler.
- Tell your health care provider if you have peeling paint in your home.

#### Prevent Other Injuries

- Teach your child to respect animals and other living things.
- Make sure an adult is always watching your child.
- Make your home child-safe (see our "Child-Proofing Checklist").
- If your child is on a bike with you, make him wear a helmet.
- Make sure you have smoke detectors on your ceiling. Check twice a year to make sure they work.
- Make sure playground equipment is not over 3 feet tall and not made of wood.
- ***Never shake, toss or hit your toddler.*** Make sure other caregivers (like day care providers, aunts and uncles) don't either.

### Provide Healthy Nutrition

- **Feed your toddler at family mealtimes. Give her 2 to 3 nutritious snacks per day, but don't use them as rewards. Nutritious snacks are low in fat and sugar and high in fiber (like most fruits).**
- **As much as possible, let your child feed himself.**
- **Give your child nutritious foods but let her decide how much to eat. You should choose the menu, not your child.**
- **Avoid foods that your child might choke on (nuts, hotdogs, popcorn, whole beans, chunks of raw carrot, celery or apple, whole grapes, hard candies, raisins, corn, or tough meat).**
- **Do not allow a bottle at bedtime.**

# Practice Healthy Parenting and Care-giving

## Care for Yourself

- Make some time for yourself each week by letting someone else care for the child.

## Remember the Family

- Try to set aside special time for other important people in your life.
- Talk with your sex partner about birth control. Ask yourselves, "How many children can we care for?"

## Encourage Healthy Development

- Encourage your toddler socially. Sing together. Encourage him to explore and play with other children. Limit television and videos to one hour per day.
- Excite his mind. Read stories and rhymes with him. Help him use words to express feelings. Go to a library or a museum, but don't go too long.
- Help her be stronger and more coordinated. Take her to a park or play ground where she can run, jump and climb.
- Encourage self-confidence. When dressing, eating and playing, offer choices that are okay with you.
- Help him love and respect himself. **Never yell at him.** When he is upset, take time to try to understand why. Use correct words for genitalia (like "penis" and "vagina").
- Set limits by taking him away from the situation that is causing a problem. Try to see and prevent problems before they occur.

## Encourage Healthy Behaviors

- Your 2-year-old is naturally self-centered. Do not expect her to share or take turns easily. Praise her for healthy behavior. See our "Encouraging Good Behavior" handout.
- Help him learn to calm or quiet himself. A favorite toy, stuffed animal or blanket can help. Teach him that hitting, biting and kicking others is not okay.
- Toddlers need structure. Create a schedule for her day and try to keep to it. As a family, create a few rules that apply to everyone. Enforce them consistently.
- Use discipline as a way of teaching and protecting your toddler, not punishing him.

## Encourage Self Care

- Your child needs a regular bedtime, and may need a nap each day. Help him sleep through the night in his own bed.
- Help her brush her teeth at least daily. Use toothpaste with fluoride. Take her to see a dentist.
- Encourage toilet training when your child is ready.

## Prevent Sickness— Identify and Treat It Early

- Learn how to find quickly the Poison Control Center telephone number. It is on the inside cover of the phone book. Keep syrup of ipecac in your home.
- Keep your toddler away from cigarette smoke. Don't smoke when he is in the car. Don't smoke in the home.
- Call the clinic right away if your toddler is coughing a lot or may be dehydrated. Use acetaminophen or ibuprofen for children to treat fever or minor injuries. A fever is an oral temperature of 100.4°F or higher. A dehydrated toddler has fewer than five wet diapers a day, is much less active than usual, or has dry lips and a pasty mouth.

**Your child's next visit is when he is about 3-years-old. At this visit she may be checked for infection with the tuberculosis bacteria. We will need your help to find out if she is developing normally.**