



Care Tips: Kindergarten

Child can:

- Tell right from left.
- Understand differences in weights, colors, sizes, textures and shapes.
- Enjoy hearing and telling jokes, riddles and rhymes.
- Draw a man with six parts; count five blocks.
- Skip.
- Speak in five to six word sentences that everyone can understand.
- Dress without help.

Safety

Check your child's play area for hazards that may catch his interest, such as old refrigerators, deep holes, building sites and trash piles. Teach safety rules for games. Teach your child to wear proper equipment for sports and bicycling. Teach safe ways to handle tools and kitchen equipment. Teach how to call 9-1-1 and what to say. Make sure your child learns how to swim. Teach him to never cross the street without a grown-up. Your child should still be in a booster seat for the best protection in your vehicle. Don't put children near air bags; the back seat is safest. Parents should learn CPR – be prepared!

Nutrition

Since your child will be going to school, perhaps you could use some ideas for fixing healthy lunches that your child will eat! Check out these lunch box stuffers:

- Tuna fish on whole grain bread.
- Muffins and crackers.
- Fresh raw veggies.
- Homemade soup.
- Fresh and dried fruit.
- Low-fat milk; 100% fruit juices.

Dental Care

Even though your child is school age, parents should still be in charge of tooth brushing. Parents need to make sure all tooth surfaces are cleaned adequately. Parents should still brush and floss the child's teeth after they brush, at least once a day, preferably at bedtime. Encourage brushing every morning and at bedtime and any time the child eats something sticky. Do not ignore injuries, falls or bumps or any kind. Your dentist should look at a fractured tooth or one that has changed color or position. Children should have regular dental visits once or twice a year.

Immunizations

Ask your child's health care provider for information regarding the influenza (flu) vaccine.

Age

4 to 6 years

Vaccines

DTaP, IPV, MMR, Varicella

Exercise

Now is the time to develop fitness habits that last a lifetime. Children enjoy physical activities, especially if other family members join in. Encourage at least 30 minutes a day of walking, bicycle riding, swimming or vigorous play.

Symptoms of Illness

A school age child can usually tell how he feels and where it hurts. If they feel bad enough to stop playing and prefer to lie down, they may be getting sick. Most minor illnesses of childhood are self-limiting and can be handled by parents and caregivers. Call your child's health care provider if he needs to be seen.

Discipline

Children are happier family members when limits are set and the rules are clear. When your child misbehaves, talk with him about his behavior and try withholding a privilege (e.g. no TV or video/computer games the rest of the day). If you are angry yourself, take a few minutes to "cool off" before talking to your child. As always, find ways to reward good behavior.

Sexuality

Your child should learn about sex from you. How you respond to your child's questions and interest in sex, how you limit their actions, and how you feel about yourself and the rights of others determines how you help your child develop healthy feelings about sex. Preschool and school-age children ask questions. These questions should be answered simply and at the time they are asked. Using the correct names of body parts is important.

School readiness

Your child will need a physical assessment (physical exam) before starting school. This is a state law. Help prepare your child by making sure he:

- Knows his last name; know and can write his first name.
- Can count to ten.
- Can take care of his own bathroom needs.
- Can recognize at least 13 upper and lower case letters.

The first day of school is an important day in your child's life. You can play a major role in your child's growth by building up his self-confidence. Here are some tips to improve how your child feels about himself.

- Make the first day of school special.
- Prepare your child by answering questions they may have about school (e.g. how many days, length of day, how to get to school).
- Give your child free playtime at home since most of the school day is structured.
- Avoid comparing child's performance or experience with others.
- Get to know your child's teacher.
- Praise your child for the good things he does.
- Explain to child after first week of school, he will walk into the classroom alone.

TV

Choose TV programs with your child. Choose the number of programs your child can watch. Talk about the programs with your child. Talk about the differences between make-believe and real life. Look out for TV behavior your child might copy. Look for other things to do instead of watching TV, such as reading a book, drawing a picture, playing a game. Limit TV watching to no more than one or two hours of quality programming a day. Use DVDs to show higher quality children's programs.

For more information contact Guilford County Public Health at 336-641-7777 or www.myguilford.com