

# Wellness Guide at 6-8 Years Old

Helpful tips to support your child's development at this stage of life.



## Development

- **Personal Growth:** Your child is developing prolonged concentration, more patience and more self-control. Yet, they are still learning how to handle setbacks and self-regulation and may still have the occasional meltdown/whining. At times, they may be a perfectionist and can often be their own worst critic. Your child may seem "all grown up" but still needs your help in feeling accepted, safe, and secure.
- **Communication:** Reading or sharing stories together encourages talking, and communicating/listening lets your child know you are there when they need you. Children who are comfortable talking about problems with their parents, and who know that they will be heard, are more likely to discuss problems with their parents before they become frustrations.
- **Emotions:** It is common for talking back, defiance,

and lying to be taken to a whole new level now that your child is more articulate, more intelligent, and able to express their thoughts. Continue to try to understand their feelings and point of view, but it is okay to have clear expectations for behavior.

- **Positive Reinforcement:** Remember not to criticize your child for their behavior. Help them learn to express themselves in an acceptable way. Find times to let them know you appreciate and have confidence in them. Try to use "do" statements instead of "don't" statements.
- **Quiet Time:** Children at this age may also seek quiet time or personal time to calm themselves, reflect, or recharge.
- **Rules:** Discuss rules for bedtime, homework, T.V., chores, etc.

## School



At this age, many children are feeling more comfortable in a classroom setting and are showing more attention and cooperation. Involvement with their school and communicating with their teacher shows that you value their education and development.



Learning disabilities and attention/behavior challenges can interfere with learning. Consider discussing concerns with your child's teacher or health care provider.

### ACADEMIC/BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS



A simple bedtime routine, proper sleep (at least 10 hours) and daily breakfast allow them to reach their academic potential.



Consider having your child help make their school lunch.

### CHILDREN & NUTRITION

## Peers

- Through peer groups, your child is recognizing that others have different viewpoints causing them to experience conflict between beliefs and values of peers versus family. As they are developing a sense of self-esteem, they are also navigating peer pressure, peer struggles, and possible bullying (verbal and physical).
- When your child has a peer struggle, listen initially without trying to fix the problem. What are their feelings about the struggle?
- Help them wonder why they are feeling this way. You can also try to support them in problem solving. When in a struggle, how could they communicate more effectively next time, or are they better off walking away to regroup? If your child is ready, how can they try to repair the relationship? What kind of support do they need from you?
- Consider contacting their teacher and principal for other ideas/support.

### IMPORTANT RESOURCES

POISON CONTROL: (800) 222-1222

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE: 988

WA MENTAL HEALTH REFERRAL LINE:  
(833) 303-5437

## Health

- Try to eat family meals together at home, and offer a variety of healthy foods the family eats, including one that your child likes. They have a better chance to eat in a healthy way if you eat healthy foods too. Avoid sugar sweetened beverages and snacks.
- Make a dentist appointment. Use toothpaste with fluoride and encourage flossing.
- Encourage daily physical activity for the whole family. We recommend 60 minutes of exercise every day.

### HEALTH RESOURCES

#### COMMON ILLNESS SUPPORT

#### CHRONIC CONDITION RESOURCES

## Digital Media Plan & Safety

- Guide, monitor, and limit screen time to 1-2 hours a day. Bedtime and mealtime should be electronic-free zones.
- Visit the AAP website to create a [Family Media Plan](#).
- Review with your child that it is never OK to give personal information online unless they have parental approval.

### THE 5 Cs OF MEDIA USE

## Overseas Travel

If you will be traveling with your family overseas, talk with your doctor about travel questions, or you can request an online pre-travel health consultation through our Pre-travel Clinic.

### PRE-TRAVEL CLINIC

## Safety

- Discuss plans for emergencies and how/when to call 911.
- Continue helmets when using bicycles, scooters, skis, and rollerblades.
- Concussions can occur when your child has a head injury, collision, or fall. Symptoms vary and most kids do not lose consciousness. We can evaluate your child for concerns and give advice on safe return to play. When in doubt, sit it out.

### CONCUSSION & INJURY RESOURCES [↗](#)

- Discuss and model street safety, water safety, animal safety, and safety around strangers.
- Children should ride in the back seat of the car (in a booster seat until 4'9" **and** 8 years old.)

### CAR SEAT SAFETY [↗](#)

- Never leave your child alone in the car or at home.
- Keep cleaners, vitamins, and medicines out of reach.
- Use sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher).
- Verify that smoke alarms are working properly and avoid smoke exposure.
- Remove/lock up guns. Children should learn that if they see a gun they should: Stop - Never touch it - Leave the area - Tell an adult immediately.
- Lock away cigarettes, lighters, alcohol, marijuana, and vaping devices.

## Physical Development

Various cultures/religions differ in their approach to puberty. If your child has accurate names, facts and guidance, then they are able to communicate more effectively with their questions or concerns. Answer questions simply and honestly, at a level that is appropriate to your child's understanding. If you are not open to discussing the topic of puberty with your child, they may get misinformation and unhealthy messages from other sources (peers/TV/internet).

Let your child know that no one should ask to see/touch their private parts, and no adult should ask for help with their private parts.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[DOSING TABLES \[↗\]\(#\)](#)

[SCHOOL, SPORTS, & CAMP FORMS \[↗\]\(#\)](#)

[PATIENT EDUCATION \[↗\]\(#\)](#)