

## 7-8 YEAR OLD WELL CHILD VISIT

### What do 7-8 Year Olds do?

- You will notice that by now, she is very interested in the world around her and takes an active role in it. She goes to school, has hobbies and takes part in more school activities. She is also more mature; she understands rules, knows right vs. wrong, thinks about fair vs. unfair. She will start to show you her special strengths. Take pride in these and show her lots of affection and encouragement.
- She has caring, supportive relationships with her family and friends. She may even have a best friend. Stay involved with her friends because they will have more influence on her as she gets older and spends more time with them.
- Her speech should be easy to understand. Help build her language skills by asking her to tell you about her experiences. This will also help keep her relationship with you close.
- She may have a sense of humor, can tell time and takes responsibility for her room, belongings and chores.
- She understands gender differences and may be curious about her body and gender differences.
- School can be hard for some children. At this age, they can have a hard time with learning, discipline or attention. They can also have problems with other children. If your child is nervous or anxious about going to school, talk to her and make sure she is not being bullied at school. If she is having trouble learning, talk to her teacher and us about evaluating her for special help or tutoring.

## Things to Know about Caring for 7-8 Year Olds

### Meals:

- In order to build healthy bones and teeth, your child needs plenty of calcium. Calcium comes from dairy foods, like milk, cheese, and yogurt. Make sure he gets 2 cups of low fat milk and other dairy products like low-fat cheese and yogurt every day.
- He needs at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. They have vitamins and minerals that he needs throughout life.
- Avoid giving him sweet and salty foods, fast foods, sugary drinks and sodas. These can damage his teeth and lead to being overweight and having health problems later in life. Limit his juice intake to less than 6 ounces per day and try to give him water or milk instead of juice.
- Try to make sure he eats breakfast every day; it will help him concentrate do well in school and sports.

**Oral Hygiene:** Your child should brush his teeth twice a day with a soft brush and a pea-sized amount of fluoride-containing toothpaste. You also need to help him start flossing daily. Make sure he sees his dentist yearly.

**Sleeping:** Your child needs 8-10 hours of sleep every night. Keep a regular routine so that she gets the best sleep possible. If she is having nightmares regularly, limit her exposure to violent television or video games and talk to her about her fears. Avoid caffeine and sweets, especially in the hours before bed.

**“Screen time” (TV, computer, and video games):** What children see on TV and how long they watch TV can cause sleeping problems, behavior problems, weight problems and violence. Think of other things he can do instead of watching TV, like going for walks, reading, going to a park, going to the zoo or going to story time at the library. Have fun as a family; both children and adults need active playtime! If you do let your child watch TV, pick educational programs and only let him watch for 1-2 hours a day. Talk about what you see together and remember that the commercials may be bad for him. Try not to watch TV during dinner and don't let him have a TV in his room.

**Discipline:**

- Be calm when she does something wrong. Screaming at her, shaking her or spanking her won't work.
- Create a "reward system" - give her a reward when she has good behavior or finishes a chore, take away a reward when she does something wrong. Rewards (like stickers on a chart) encourage good behaviors and give her a goal to work towards (20 stickers = a prize).
- If you need to correct your child, try not to do it in front of other people; take her out of the room and talk to her privately.
- Don't let her hit, bite or use other violent behaviors towards others. Stop the behavior immediately and tell your child how it makes the other person feel. Show her how to apologize and handle anger constructively with discussion, exercise, or time alone to cool off.