

In this letter you'll find helpful resources and learn about:

- How to prepare for your child's 2 year well-child visit.
- How vaccines help protect your child.
- How to be active together.
- Fluoride toothpaste.
- New skills to practice with your child.
- Temper tantrums.
- Toilet training.
- Car seats.
- How to choose safe toys.
- How to keep your house safe.

Happy reading!

Well-Child Visits

Happy 2nd birthday!

It's time to schedule checkups with your child's doctor and dentist. Prepare for the visits by making a list of what you want to talk about, such as changes in your child's eating, sleeping, or behavior and any recent illnesses or injuries your child has had. Use this letter as a guide when you make your list.

Vaccines

Vaccines are your child's best protection.

If your child is up to date on vaccines, congratulations! Your 2 year old is likely to be around other children and adults, which puts them at more risk for getting sick, especially from diseases vaccines can prevent. Many diseases spread easily from person to person. Vaccinate your child to protect them, your family, and those who:

- Can't get vaccinated because they're either too young or too old.
- Have certain medical conditions.
- Have weak immune systems.

By age 2, your child should have the following vaccines:

- Hepatitis B, 3 doses
- Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (DTaP), 4 doses
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib), 3 or 4 doses
- Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV), 4 doses
- Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV), 3 doses
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), 1 dose
- Chickenpox (varicella), 1 dose
- Hepatitis A, 2 doses
- Flu, every year
- COVID-19, 2 or 3 doses

Some children with certain medical conditions may need other vaccines. Ask your child's doctor or nurse if other vaccines are recommended for them.

Ask your child's doctor or nurse for a copy of your child's vaccine records during your well-child visit. You can also check to make sure your child's vaccines are in the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIS). WAIS helps health care providers keep track of your child's vaccine records. It also makes sure records are complete in case you change doctors or clinics and when your child starts child care, school, or camp.

To see and download your family's vaccine records online, go to myirmobile.com.

Nutrition and Physical Activity

Encourage your child to be active.

Help your toddler use their body and muscles. Play outside together. Your child may enjoy swinging or throwing and rolling a ball. You may also try simple games of tag, hide-and-go-seek, or other games you know your child enjoys playing with you and with other children.

Oral Health

Keep baby teeth healthy!

Baby teeth are important for smiling, eating, speaking clearly, and guiding adult teeth into place. Be sure to brush your child's teeth twice a day.

Use a rice-size amount of fluoride toothpaste and be sure your child spits it out when done brushing. Limit sweet drinks, juice, and frequent snacking, which may cause tooth decay. Toddlers need a dental checkup at least once a year. If your child is at risk for tooth decay, the dentist may recommend a fluoride supplement.

Growth and Development

Help your child learn new skills.

Children learn by trying new things and practicing what they've learned. By age 2, your child will start to do things on their own. Give your child plenty of chances and lots of time to practice. Your child may be more excited about playing with other children and get better at taking turns. Over the next year, your child will learn to:

- Jump with both feet off the ground.
- Draw circles and lines.
- Tell you and others about their experiences.
- Ask many questions.
- Put clothes on and take them off.

Each child develops at their own pace. It's important to find out if your child is on track for development or if they may need some support. If you have any questions about your child's development, help is available. Talk with your doctor or nurse or call the Help Me Grow Washington Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 to learn more. They can help you check your child's development and connect you with the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers program in your area. Learn the signs. Act early.

To find out which milestones your child has reached by age 2, visit bit.ly/CDC-development.

Find ways to help with temper tantrums

Toddlers often kick and scream when they are not able to express their feelings. Tantrums may happen when a child is:

- Frustrated, angry, disappointed, or scared.
- Stressed, needing attention, or showing independence.
- Tired, hungry, or sick.

Try to stay calm when your child has a tantrum. If you get mad, your child may get more upset. If you are in public, pick up your child and take them somewhere quiet. Stay with your child while they calm down. Let your child know you will stay nearby until they feel better. Help your child talk about what they are feeling. This may help your child calm down more quickly.



Comfort and talk to me when I am upset.

Don't rush toilet training.

Parents often want children to use the toilet at an early age, but many children are not ready until age 3 or older. Your child will learn more quickly if you wait until they are ready. Look for signs that your child may be ready, such as:

- Wanting to do the things you do.
- Staying dry during naps or for a few hours at a time.
- Telling you when they need a diaper change.

When your child meets the maximum weight or height for the car seat in rear-facing position, switch to a forward-facing seat with a 5-point harness. Children under 13 should always ride in the backseat and everyone in the car must be buckled up. It's the law. For more information to keep your family safe in the car or about Washington child's passenger safety laws contact Washington's Child Passenger Safety Program at 360-725-9860 or visit wacarseats.com.

Choose toys carefully.

Keep your child's age, abilities, and interests in mind when choosing toys. Toys meant for older children may be dangerous for your child. Teach older children to pick up their toys and put them out of reach when done playing with them. Avoid toys with small parts that could cause choking. Broken or empty latex balloons cause more choking deaths than any other children's product. Consider choosing Mylar balloons, which are less dangerous.

Safety

Find the right car seat for your child's size.

Many parents move their child from a car seat with a harness to a booster seat or adult seat belt too soon. Your child needs the protection of a car seat with a harness until they can sit up properly for the entire ride. This is usually sometime between 5 and 7 years old. Snug harness straps keep your child secure during normal driving and in a crash.

Environmental Health

Keep your home safe.

Children are naturally curious! Even though your child is getting older, you must still watch them every minute. Make sure your child's other caregivers (grandparents, friends, and other family members) also keep their homes safe for your child. Here are some tips to make your home safer:



Save this phone number:
Washington
Poison Center
1-800-222-1222



Put away purses and backpacks that may contain dangers.



Install stairway gates. Secure TVs and furniture to the wall using anchors to prevent them from tipping over.



Keep watch when ovens, stoves, irons, curling irons, fireplaces, and heaters are in use.



Keep medicines in child-resistant containers and locked up and out of reach.



Keep items with button batteries away from children. They are very harmful if swallowed.



- Install window stops or guards to keep windows from opening more than 4 inches.
- Keep window blind cords away from your child's bed and out of reach.
- Keep things your child can climb on away from windows.
- Window screens will not keep your child from falling out.



Safely store and keep out of reach: chemicals, detergents, nicotine and marijuana products (including edibles), knives and guns.

Resources

- **CDC Childhood Vaccine Assessment Tool:** cdc.gov/vaccines/childquiz
- **Online vaccine records:** myirmobile.com
- **Child development resources:** Help Me Grow Hotline 1-800-322-2588 (711 TTY relay) and bit.ly/CDC-development
- **Car seat inspection service:** wacarseat.com or 360-725-9860 (Traffic Safety Commission)
- **Child falls:** safekids.org/falls
- **Washington Poison Center:** 1-800-222-1222 (711 TTY relay) and wapc.org

Thanks for reading! Share this letter with other caregivers in your child's life. You'll hear from us again before your child is 2.5 years old with information on:

- Complementary medicine.
- How to lock up guns.
- Water and fire safety.

For the Health of All Our Children

Watch Me Grow Washington is a program of the Washington State Department of Health

@WatchMeGrowWA www.watchmegrowwa.org



DOH 920-921E August 2023

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