

# Early Adolescent Visit (11-14 Years) – Parent Handout

## Your Growing and Changing Child

- Talk with your child about how her body is changing with puberty.
- Encourage your child to brush his teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- Help your child get to the dentist twice a year.
- Serve healthy food and eat together as a family often.
- Encourage your child to get 1 hour of vigorous physical activity every day.
- Help your child limit screen time (TV, video games, tablets/phone or computer) to 2 hours a day, not including homework time.
- Praise your child when she does something well, not just when she looks good.

## Healthy Behavior Choices

- Help your child find fun, safe things to do.
- Make sure your child knows how you feel about alcohol and drug use.
- Consider a plan to make sure your child or his friends cannot get alcohol or prescription drugs in your home.
- Talk about relationships, sex, and values.
- Encourage your child not to have sex.
- If you are uncomfortable talking about puberty or sexual pressures with your child, please ask me or others you trust for reliable information that can help you.
- Use clear and consistent rules and discipline with your child.
- Be a role model for healthy behavior choices.

## School and Friends

- Check in with your child's teacher about her grades on tests and attend back-to-school events and parent-teacher conferences if possible.
- Talk with your child as she takes over responsibility for schoolwork.
- Help your child with organizing time, if he needs it.
- Encourage reading.
- Help your child find activities she is really interested in, besides schoolwork.
- Help your child find and try activities that help others.
- Give your child the chance to make more of his own decisions as he grows older.

## Feeling Happy

- Encourage your child to think through problems herself with your support.
- Help your child figure out healthy ways to deal with stress.
- Spend time with your child.
- Know your child's friends and their parents, where your child is, and what he is doing at all times.
- Know who your child talks to online or texts on her cell phone.
- Show your child how to use talk to share feelings and handle disputes.
- If you are concerned that your child is sad, depressed, nervous, irritable, hopeless, or angry, talk with me.

## Violence and Injuries

- Make sure everyone always wears a seat belt in the car.
- Do not allow your child to ride ATVs.
- Provide a good-fitting helmet and safety gear for biking, skating, skiing and snowboarding.
- Make sure your child knows how to get help if he is feeling unsafe.
- If you keep a gun in your home, make sure it is unloaded and locked with ammunition locked in a separate place.
- Help your child figure out nonviolent ways to handle anger or fear.



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