Tips for Keeping Your Child Healthy and Safe

Talking With Your Child
- Ask your child to tell you about his or her day, friends, and activities.
- Give your child plenty of time to finish sentences.
- Listen to and treat your child with respect. Insist that others do so as well.
- Show your child how to say “I’m sorry.” Help your child apologize after hurting someone’s feelings.

Reading With Your Child
- Read books together each day. Ask your child questions about the stories.
- Take your child to the library to pick out books.

Healthy Habits
- Have relaxed family meals without TV.
- Create a calm bedtime routine.
- Have your child brush his or her teeth twice each day using a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride.
- Have your child spit out toothpaste, but do not rinse the mouth with water.

Indoor and Outdoor Safety
- Never leave your child alone in the car, house, or yard.
- Watch children when they play near streets and driveways.
- Do not let your child cross the street alone.
- Never have a gun in the home. If you have a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Ask if there are guns in homes where your child plays. If so, make sure they are stored safely.
Your Child's Interactions
- Praise your child for being kind to others.
- Help your child express feelings.
- Give your child the chance to play with others often.
- Think about signing your child up for preschool, Head Start, or a community program. Let your child’s doctor or nurse know if they can help.

Car Safety
- Use a forward-facing car safety seat in the back seat of all vehicles.
- Switch to a belt-positioning booster seat when:
  - Your child is over the weight or height limit for the car safety seat,
  - Shoulders are above the top harness slots, or
  - Ears come to the top of the car safety seat.

Keeping Your Child Safe
- Use correct terms for all body parts as your child becomes interested in how boys and girls are different.
- Teach your child about how to be safe with other adults.
  - No one should ask for a secret to be kept from parents.
  - No one should ask to see private parts.
  - No adult should ask for help with his or her private parts.
- Know that help is available if you don’t feel safe.

TV and Being Active
- Find fun, active things to do together as a family.
- Get involved in your community. Join activities when you can.
- Limit TV time to no more than 2 hours per day.
- Talk about the TV programs you watch together as a family.
- Do not put a TV in your child’s bedroom.
- Play with your child daily. Praise your child for being active.

What to Expect at your Child’s 5 and 6 Year Visits:
Your child’s doctor will talk about -
- Keeping your child’s teeth healthy
- Getting ready for school
- Dealing with child’s temper problems
- Eating healthy foods and staying active
- Safety outside and inside

To Learn More
- Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222
- Child Safety Seat Inspection 1-866-SEATCHECK, 1-866-732-8243 or www.seatcheck.org
- Immunizations at aap.org/immunization
- Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital www.bbch.org
- American Academy of Pediatrics healthychildren.org
- 2-1-1 Maine (a directory of local services) 211 or 1-877-463-6207 or 211maine.org
- MaineHealth mainehealth.org