



## Development & Behavior

Your child is more interactive, involved with friends, and developing emotionally. 9 and 10–year olds are moving towards mature independence and autonomy. At this age he has developed a conscience that allows for understanding of rules, relationships, and social rules. He is developing coping skills. Experiences with school and social activities foster individualization. Her peer group continues to grow in importance and he will identify with children of the same gender who have similar interests and abilities. Having a best friend at this age is a milestone in interpersonal development. Your child will likely encounter beliefs and practices in his peer group that differ from those of your family. He will try to make sense of the differences, which may lead to conflict in beliefs and values. Teach your child non–violent conflict resolution techniques.

At this age your child should have household responsibilities which help to foster a sense of personal competence. Responsibilities such as making his bed, picking up clothes, setting the table, and helping with meals are some examples that can not only help the family but also help him become confident by gaining responsibility. School performance remains a good marker of a child's development. Success or difficulty in school may affect self–esteem in positive or negative ways.

Puberty entails dramatic changes in physical, emotional, and cognitive aspects of development. A discussion of changes with puberty and education within the family is appropriate at this age. Answer questions simply and honestly at the level of your child's understanding. Puberty may have begun in some children with breast development and pubic hair in girls and enlargement of the testes in boys.

## Media

Inappropriate or excessive media use has been associated with attention problems, impaired sleep, school difficulties, vision changes, and obesity. Any media exposure should be limited to 90 minutes per day and be of good–quality. Check out [www.commonsemmedia.org](http://www.commonsemmedia.org) for recommendations. Do not use TV, phone or iPad as a substitute for interaction with your child. Turn off devices during meals. Children at this age are naive when it comes to the digital world. Provide parental supervision and monitoring to ensure she is not exposed to inappropriate material. Use internet safety tools with filtering to limit access to appropriate material. Start the discussion of the risks of sharing personal information.

Children at this age do not need their own phone. We embrace the "wait until 8th" campaign. More information can be found at <https://www.waituntil8th.org/>. Current recommendations are for children this age to be physically active for 60 minutes or more per day.

## School

A child that arrives to school fed and rested is ready to learn and performs better. Give him a healthy breakfast and establish bedtime routines to get at least 10–11 hours of sleep. Talk with him about his school day, which may include asking both specific and open ended questions. After–school activities, sports, social activities, and clubs can place a big demand on your child's time. Be cautious not to over–scheduled him and allow for some unstructured time. If your child has special needs, keep an active role in the IEP process. Stresses, changes in family, loss in families, or family violence can contribute to poor performance. If you are experiencing these kinds of stresses please talk to your child's doctor.

## Diet

Continue healthy eating habits for your child. Give her a healthy breakfast every day. Help her recognize and respond to hunger and fullness cues. Do not allow her to snack in front of a TV or device. Have nutritious foods and drinks readily available and the expected options for meals and snacks in your house. Examples of nutritious foods include: vegetables; fruits; whole grains; lean protein (lower fat meat, fish, poultry, eggs, legumes, nuts & seeds); and low-fat or non-fat dairy products. Limit food and drinks high in calories, fats, sugars and refined grains which are low in nutrients. Examples of low nutrient foods include: ice cream, baked goods, salty snacks, fast food, pizza, soda, Gatorade/Power-aide, and other sweetened beverages. Make sure your child gets calcium & Vitamin D containing foods or beverages. 12-16 oz of low-fat or fat-free milk a day plus an additional serving of low-fat yogurt or cheese is recommended. If your child does not drink milk or other dairy products then aim for foods and beverages fortified with calcium and Vitamin D.

## Oral health

Use a soft toothbrush with a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste twice a day. Aim for 2 minutes per day with flossing once a day. Your child should be seeing a dentist regularly and have fluoride applied every 6 months. Limit your child's consumption of sweetened beverages and snacks with sugar. Discuss the importance of taking care of his teeth. If your child is playing contact sports, have him wear a mouth guard.

## Safety

Keep firearms stored unloaded and locked in a safe with ammunition stored separately. Do not show your child where you have stored the firearm, ammunition, or key. Children simply do not understand how dangerous firearms can be despite your warnings. Exposure to second hand smoke greatly increases the risk of heart and lung diseases in your child. For your health as well as your child's health, please stop smoking. Vapor from e-cigarettes may also be harmful, so avoid second hand exposure by not vaping or smoking around your child or in the car.

Your child should be using a belt-positioning booster-seat, regardless of age, until she is 4'9". This positions her correctly with the seat-belt crossing her chest rather than her neck and the lap belt across her hips rather than her abdomen. The correct position of the seat-belt is important in prevention of serious injuries. Children should not ride in the front seat until 13 years old. Your own safe driving behaviors are important as well. Use a seat belt. Do not put the car in drive until everyone is buckled in. Do not drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and do not text or use mobile devices while driving. Children should use a properly fitted, approved helmet every time when riding a bike or skating. Children this age are not old enough to ride a bike at or after dusk, instruct your child to come back home when the sun begins to set.

## What to expect at this visit

No immunizations are scheduled for this visit but Flu vaccine may be given if in season. Nine year olds will have vision checked. 10 year olds will have hearing checked and be screened for high cholesterol. See our [Medication Dosing Guide](#) for recommended dosing of acetaminophen/ibuprofen.

Influenza injection



Nasal Influenza

