

*the*

# Essentials *of* Successful Parenting



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

# Introduction

**T**he *5 Essentials of Successful Parenting* is a five-volume series that empowers parents and caregivers to be positive role models and interact in appropriate ways with their children. Hosted by the real-life parents of two young boys, each volume follows a variety of families as they put the five essentials into action.

VOLUME 1: Love & Stability – consistently nurturing their children

VOLUME 2: Time Together – spending special time together

VOLUME 3: Inspire & Challenge – encouraging their children’s learning and growth

VOLUME 4: Positive Discipline – practicing knowledge- and compassion-based discipline

VOLUME 5: Safety & Health – ensuring their family’s safety and health

In each volume, parents learn to practice the basics of good parenting and are given activities to show how to incorporate them into daily life. Clear graphics, simple language, upbeat hosts, and a quick pace will keep viewers entertained while they absorb the comprehensive information each volume has to offer.

## SUGGESTED USE OF MATERIALS

- Preview video and guide.
- Make copies of the activities section for the parents to take home.
- Present the video to parents.
- Go over terms from the video, found in the guide.
- Facilitate a group discussion using discussion questions.
- Distribute activities to parents and review.

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# Volume 1: Love & Stability

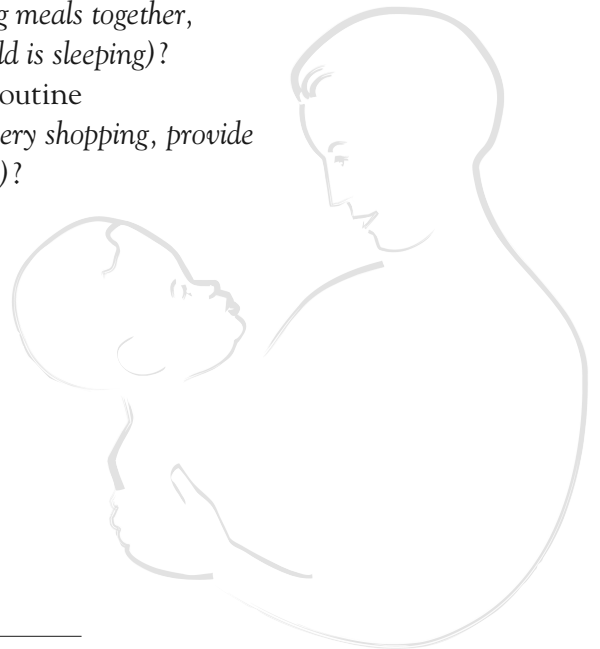
**1** In *Volume 1: Love and Stability*, parents learn that showing love to their children and being available on a regular basis creates a bond based on trust and security. This builds a healthy parent/child relationship that continues far beyond childhood, positively affecting the child's self-esteem, friendships, and success in life.

## TERMS

- UNCONDITIONAL LOVE – Demonstrating your love for your child through words and actions, no matter what the situation.
- READING CUES – Recognizing the signals from your child that tell you what they need.
- RESPONDING TO NEEDS – Getting your child what they need as soon as possible.
- ROUTINE – A set structure and schedule that helps children learn what to expect.
- SPEAK OFTEN AND WITH LOVE – Using words frequently to express love and interest in your child.
- GENTLE TOUCH – Making any physical contact safe and nurturing so your child feels secure and valued.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When is it difficult to express love for your child (*e.g. while making dinner, because everyone's tired and hungry*)?
2. How can you change that situation?
3. What are your child's most important needs?
4. What are some behaviors/cues that tell you that your child needs something?
5. When is it difficult to respond to your child's needs quickly (*e.g. when you are tired and hungry, during the night, when child is at daycare*)?
6. What are some ways to make it easier to quickly respond to those needs?
7. What is your daily routine?
8. How can your routine be more child-centered (*e.g. eating meals together, regular naptimes, time playing together, doing work when child is sleeping*)?
9. What are some ways to meet two needs at once in your routine (*e.g. sing songs in the car, play games while diapering or grocery shopping, provide child-size cleaning tools so they can "help" you do housework*)?
10. When do you use "No" a lot with your child?
11. What is a positive way to deal with the situation? (*e.g. instead of saying "No, you can't have any candy now," say "Yes, one piece after you finish your lunch"*)
12. What are some behaviors that you can change to set a better example for your child?
13. What games do you play that include touch?
14. When do you tend to treat your child roughly?
15. How can you make your treatment of your child better?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

### ♥ Calm Down When You Are Losing Patience

- Take a few deep breaths.
- Slowly count to ten.
- Talk to a family member or close friend about the situation.
- If you are really frustrated, take a time-out. You can leave your child with someone you trust or put your child in a safe place, such as a crib or a playpen.
- Write down what worked.

### ♥ Read Your Child's Cues for a Day

<i>Common Baby Cues</i>	<i>Common Toddler Cues</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• mouthing fist</li><li>• crying</li><li>• exhaustion</li><li>• clenching body</li><li>• fever</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• crying, whining, screaming</li><li>• biting, hitting and kicking</li><li>• separating themselves</li></ul>

- How does your child appear? Do they have flushed cheeks or are they pouting?
- What do they sound like? Are they sniffing or not talking as much as usual?
- Try to figure out what's needed by responding to those cues.
- After you take care of them, write down which cue signaled which need.

### ♥ Create a Daily Routine

- Write down a daily routine that includes:
  - Your child's important needs (*e.g. resting, feeding, daycare, playing*).
  - Your important needs (*e.g. working, personal time, shopping*).
- Discuss the routine with other family members.

### ♥ Talk Every Day

- Tell your child a story.
- Ask about their day.
- Tell them about your day (only what's appropriate).
- Talk about feelings like sad, glad, and mad.

### ♥ Hug, Hold, and Cuddle Your Child Every Day

- First thing in morning.
- When your child is upset.
- During transition times, like picking up at daycare.
- Before bed.
- Any time it suits your child.

# Volume 2: Time Together

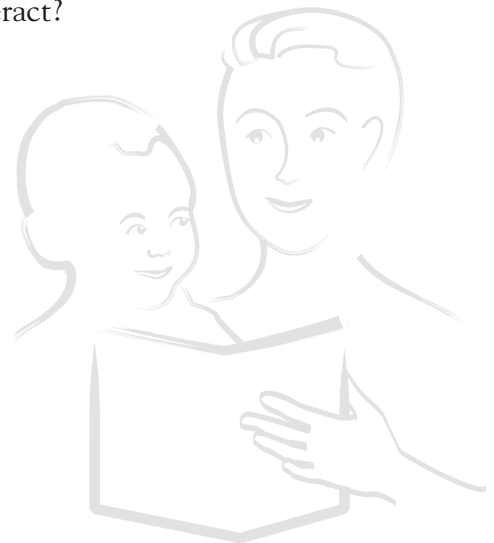
**2** In *Volume 2: Time Together*, parents learn that spending special time with their child on a daily basis sends the message that their child is loved and valued. Parents learn what activities are appropriate for children of different ages and interests, how to pick the best together times, and how to maximize their time so they can spend more of it with their child.

## TERMS

- **INTERACTING WITH YOUR CHILD** – Spending time focused on your child; lets them know you value them.
- **FOLLOWING CHILD'S DIRECTION** – Doing what your child is interested in, as long as the activity is safe and harmless; honors your child's curiosity and uniqueness.
- **INTERACTING THROUGH LANGUAGE** – Talking, storytelling, singing, and reading with your child; helps you get to know them and teaches them about language.
- **READING ACTIVE AND ALERT CUES** – Interacting when your child is ready and interested.
- **OVERSTIMULATED** – When your child is tired of interacting and ready for a break.
- **MAXIMIZING TIME** – Organizing your time so you can spend more of it with your child.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What keeps you from being able to focus completely on your child when you're spending time with them?
2. How can you minimize those distractions?
3. What activities does your child enjoy doing with you?
4. What activities do you enjoy doing with your child?
5. What are some ways to encourage language development and self-expression in your child?
6. If some of these ideas feel awkward to you, how can you make yourself feel more comfortable?
7. Mornings are typically a good time to spend time together. How can you create time in the morning to interact with your child?
8. At what other times of day is your child alert and ready to interact?
9. How often are you able to spend time focused on your child?
10. What are some ways you could put aside more time to interact with your child?
11. What are some ways to use everyday tasks as opportunities to spend special time with your child?
12. What are some ways to use support from the community to maximize your time (*e.g. attending parent groups or classes at religious centers, hospitals, public health departments, and schools*)?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

### ♥ Explore Different Kinds of Fun With Your Child

#### *Physical Fun*

- Playing on the floor with them.
- Dancing with them.
- Running, climbing, and playing outdoors with them.

#### *Hand-Oriented Fun*

- Picking up objects of different sizes and textures.
- Building with blocks and other toys.
- Playing with sand.

#### *Creative Fun*

- Simple arts and crafts (e.g. *clay, crayons/markers, paper and glue*).
- “Helping” you around the house (e.g. *holding the dustpan for you, snapping beans, sorting out the whites in the laundry*).
- “Pretend” play (e.g. *animals, princess, knights, fairy, farmer, builder*).

### ♥ Make Language Personal

- Tell a story starring your child.
- Tell a story about yourself from your childhood.
- Sing a favorite song to your child. When they know it, sing it together.

### ♥ Interact Several Times a Day With Your Child

- When they are active and alert.
- Good times for interaction are mornings, after meals and naps, and before bed.

### ♥ Spend Time With Your Child After You’ve Been Away From Each Other

- Focus on them for 20-30 minutes before doing anything else.
- Take care of their needs first.
- Do an activity together, talk, or cuddle.

### ♥ Find Ways to Maximize Your Time Together

- Eat meals together.
- Do tasks together (try to make them fun!).
- Let the housework go (the house doesn’t have to be perfectly clean all the time).
- Use routines and lists to be efficient with your time.
- Take time off from work once in a while to be with your child.
- If you have many outside activities, try to cancel one of those for a while.

# Volume 3: Inspire & Challenge

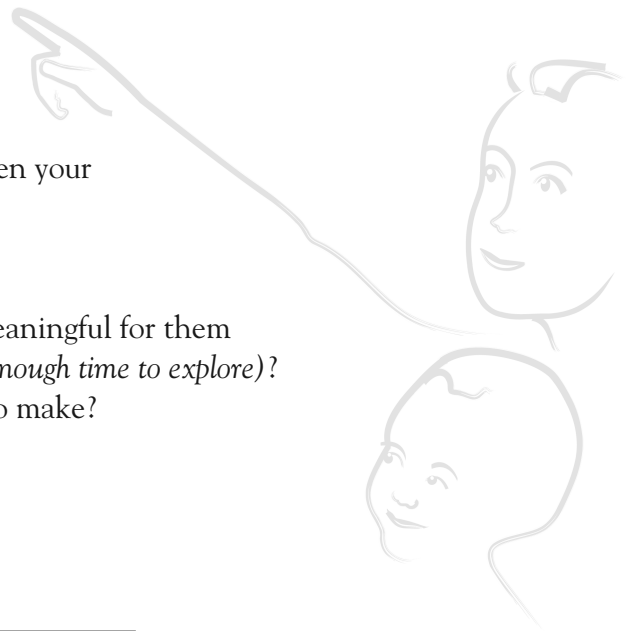
**3** In *Volume 3: Inspire and Challenge*, parents learn to cultivate their child's curiosity and love of learning by understanding their capabilities, providing a variety of experiences, and allowing their child enough time to fully explore what he or she is focused on.

## TERMS

- DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE – When an experience or activity matches your child's ability level.
- CHALLENGE – When a child uses their abilities to accomplish something difficult.
- VARIETY OF EXPERIENCES – A mixture of activities that challenge different kinds of skills (*e.g. verbal, cognitive, creative, physical, social*).
- READY TO LEARN – When a child is alert, active, and comfortable enough to start something challenging.
- FOLLOWING THEIR INTERESTS – Letting a child decide what, how, or where to play, as long as it's safe, because that is what they are curious about at the moment.
- PRAISING THEIR EFFORTS – Encouraging a child's willingness to attempt something new or challenging.
- EXPLORING – Discovering how something works and its usefulness.
- ALLOWING TIME – Giving a child enough time to satisfy their curiosity about something.
- MAKING CHOICES – Stating a preference for one thing over another.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways to learn what skills and experiences are developmentally appropriate for your child?
2. What skill is your child working on right now?
3. How can you help your child meet that challenge?
4. What games, activities, and toys are right for your child at this stage in their growth?
5. What are some safe, inexpensive toys for your child?
6. What are some things you can do with your child outside of the home?
7. What are some dangerous situations to watch out for (*e.g. cars, water, crowds*)?
8. What are some positive things you can do or say when your child is unable to meet a challenge successfully?
9. What makes a child comfortable and ready to learn?
10. How do you know what is interesting to your child?
11. How can you make your child's exploration more meaningful for them (*e.g. explain in simple terms, explore with them, allow enough time to explore*)?
12. What are some choices you could allow your child to make?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

### ♥ Learn About Your Child's Development

- Check out a book or video on child development or parenting from the library.
- Ask for development information from your health care professional.

### ♥ Take a Walk With Your Child

- Let them dawdle and explore.
- Point out things they might not notice.
- Help them try out new things, as long as they are safe and harmless.
- Let them get dirty.

### ♥ While On an Errand

- Allow extra time for your child to explore something.
- Ask questions about what they are exploring.
- Show and explain in simple ways how things work and what makes them useful.
- Let them try something, with your help if necessary, as long as it's safe and harmless.
- Let them satisfy their curiosity.

### ♥ Offer Choices

- For babies: a choice between two toys.
- For toddlers: a choice between two snacks or two books.
- For children: a choice between two activities or two meals.

### ♥ Age-Appropriate Activities for Parents to Do With Their Child

#### *New Babies*

- floor play
- holding curious baby over your shoulder
- singing and dancing
- imitating their sounds
- talking to them
- playing peek-a-boo

#### *Older Babies and Toddlers*

- picture books
- playing find the toy
- dropping balls and other objects
- exploring safe spaces
- simple books with large pictures
- short walks
- stairs to climb
- sticks and rocks
- seeing/petting safe animals
- playing alongside friends/siblings

#### *Preschoolers*

- imitating and helping you
- pretend play
- simple arts and crafts
- library/museum
- beach/pond
- zoo
- playground
- parks
- street fairs/performers
- playing with friends



# Volume 4: Positive Discipline

**4** In *Volume 4: Positive Discipline*, parents learn how to guide their child towards acceptable behavior and how to set and enforce reasonable limits. Parents will learn the importance of observing the causes of conflict and how they respond to it, while modeling the behavior they would like to see in their child: respect, kindness, and understanding.

## TERMS

- AGE-APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR – The behavior you can reasonably expect from your child.
- POSITIVE GUIDANCE – Teaching what actions and language are acceptable, rather than telling a child not to do something or that they are doing it wrong.
- PRAISING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR – Telling your child what you like about his or her behavior.
- PROBLEM SOLVING TOGETHER – Talking with and listening to your child to encourage understanding.
- OFFERING CHOICES – Giving your child the chance to make simple decisions.
- UNDERLYING CAUSES – Reasons a child may be acting inappropriately (*e.g. hunger, discomfort, illness*).
- LIMITS – Guidelines or rules for behavior. Ask the question: “Is it harmful to anyone or anything?”
- NATURAL CONSEQUENCES – What naturally happens when your child does something.
- LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES – A reasonable action that you decide should happen as a result of your child’s behavior (*e.g. they clean up a mess that they made*).
- TIME-OUT – When your child sits apart from an activity for a short amount of time.
- MODELING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR – Setting an example for acceptable behavior.
- OBSERVING YOUR REACTIONS – Noticing how you respond to your child.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What behavior is age-appropriate for your child in terms of self-control?
2. What are some physical and/or verbal limits you have set up for your child?
3. What are some positive ways that you can guide your child towards acceptable behavior (*e.g. redirecting, giving appropriate words*)?
4. How can you problem-solve with your child?
5. What are some ways to minimize using “NO” with your child?
6. Why is it helpful to give your child simple choices?
7. Why is it important to enforce limits consistently?
8. What are some possible underlying causes of unacceptable behavior?
9. What are some examples of logical and natural consequences?
10. Why and how do you give a time-out?
11. How do you model positive behavior for your child?
12. What are some positive ways to deal with normal emotions like anger or frustration?
13. How can you give yourself a time-out while ensuring that your child will be safe?
14. What are some possible results of yelling at, humiliating, or hitting your child?
15. What can you do if you yell at, humiliate, or hit your child?
16. Why is it helpful to notice how you react to your child?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

### ♥ House Rules

- Create three or four simple house rules with your family.
- Make sure everyone can understand and follow them.
- Make them general so they can be used in many situations (*e.g. respect each other, be honest, be safe*).
- Keep the rules positive.

### ♥ Instead of Saying “NO”:

- Show your child how to do something.
- Tell your child when they can do something.
- Tell your child what they can do instead.
- Say “no” when you need to enforce reasonable limits.

### ♥ Use Consequences to Enforce a Limit That is Challenged Often

- Let your child learn from a natural consequence, if no one or thing will be harmed.
- Think of a logical consequence that is reasonable and suits the deed.
- Use the consequence consistently.
- Talk about the limit and consequence so your child understands it.
- Use consequences with love and respect.

### ♥ If You Give Your Child a Time-Out:

- Have them sit outside of an activity to collect themselves, with or without you.
- Help them calm down so they can try again.
- Keep it within a reasonable time frame (two minutes for a two-year-old, three minutes for a three-year-old).
- Choose a safe place that is removed but within your sight and earshot.

### ♥ Handle Anger in a Mature, Responsible Way

- Never shake a baby, since it could cause irreversible brain damage.
- Use words calmly to explain what’s happening.
- Take a few deep breaths to help you calm down.
- Put your child in a safe place, such as in the care of a trusted friend or in a crib, and take a brief time-out to collect yourself.
- Talk with a friend, family member, or professional about the situation.

### ♥ Observe Your Automatic Reactions to Your Child

- Do they reflect how you were treated as a child?
- Was your reaction fair or effective?
- What are other ways to respond?
- Write down your thoughts and talk to a friend or professional about it.

# Volume 5: Health & Safety

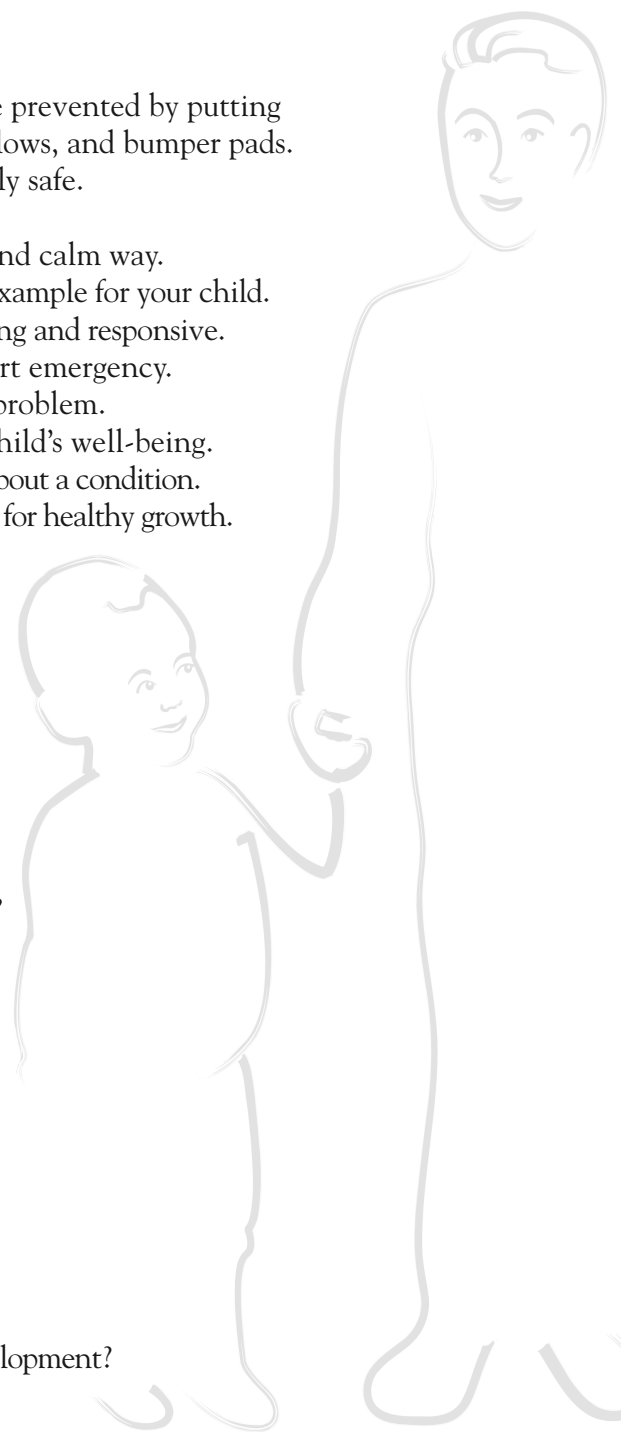
**5** *Volume 5: Health and Safety* will show parents how to make the most of regular doctor visits, create and choose safe home and daycare environments for their child, set a safe and healthy example, and value their own parenting instincts.

## TERMS

- **CHILDPROOFING** – Keeping an area safe for a child.
- **SIDS** – Sudden Infant Death Syndrome; child death that can be prevented by putting children to sleep on their backs without fluffy bedding, toys, pillows, and bumper pads.
- **SAFETY RULES** – Rules that you all follow to help keep your family safe.
- **WITHIN SIGHT** – Being able to see your child at all times.
- **USING A POSITIVE TONE** – Discussing rules or danger in a clear and calm way.
- **MODELING SAFE BEHAVIOR** – Living in a safe manner that sets an example for your child.
- **HIGH-QUALITY DAYCARE** – A person or facility that is safe, nurturing and responsive.
- **CPR TRAINING** – Being trained to respond to a breathing or heart emergency.
- **WARNING SIGNS** – Unusual behavior that could signal a health problem.
- **PARENTAL INSTINCTS** – A gut feeling that you have about your child's well-being.
- **SECOND OPINION** – Having another health practitioner give advice about a condition.
- **BALANCED DIET** – A diet that supplies enough vitamins and minerals for healthy growth.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where can you find information on childproofing your home?
2. What are some hidden hazards in your home?
3. What makes your child's sleeping arrangement SIDS-safe?
4. What are some safety hazards to check for wherever you are?
5. How can you ensure that your child's carseat is safe?
6. What safety rules apply to your lifestyle and family?
7. When can you let your child out of your sight?
8. What are some things to look for when seeking high-quality daycare?
9. How can you determine the quality of your daycare facility?
10. Why are regular visits to your dentist and doctor important?
11. What should you do if you notice sudden health changes in your child?
12. Why are your instincts about your child important?
13. If you disagree with your doctor's diagnosis or advice, how can you find answers to your questions?
14. How much rest does your child need?
15. What does a balanced diet consist of for your child?
16. How can you help your child develop strong muscles?
17. Why is it important to wash hands?
18. Where can you find out more about CPR, nutrition, and child development?



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

### ♥ Look for Safety Hazards Wherever You Are

- Make sure toxic chemicals are locked and out of reach.
- Look for any water deeper than two inches (*e.g. toilets, water in buckets, etc.*).
- Peeling lead-based paint (*e.g. on window sills and doors in houses older than 1978*).
- Hot water temperatures in restaurants and homes that exceed 120° F.
- Childproof your home.

### ♥ Check for Proper Carseat Installation

- Read instructions on side of carseat, the carseat manual, and car manual.
- Install the seat properly.
- Call your local precinct, fire rescue, or health department for carseat inspection sites.
- Call the U.S. Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772 for carseat recalls.

### ♥ Make a List of Safety Rules

- Make them simple and easy to follow.
- Choose rules that are most important to your lifestyle (*e.g. transportation, where you live, caretakers*).
- Talk about the rules in a positive way so you don't scare your child.
- Praise your child's safe behavior.
- Post the rules and follow them (you can use pictures to help them understand).

### ♥ Choose High-Quality Daycare

- Check for licensure.
- Ask how long teachers have been at the facility.
- Ask about the teachers' previous experience.
- Check the child-to-adult ratios with your state's Childcare Regulatory Agency.
- Check for emergency exits and procedures and safe playground equipment.

### ♥ Choose a High-Quality Babysitter

- Ask for a list of their previous babysitting jobs and check for references.
- Look for sitters with first aid and CPR training.
- Leave emergency numbers where they can reach you and someone you trust.
- Ask them to keep a record of your child's day (*e.g. meals, naptimes, play*).
- Discuss any problems.

### ♥ Start Healthy Habits Now

- Provide your child and yourself with a well-balanced diet.
- Make sure they get enough rest and exercise.
- Make sure they wash hands after daycare and toileting, and before meals and bed.
- Take child health classes from local Red Cross, hospital, or social service agency.

# Resource List

## Parenting and Child Development

- BabyCenter at [www.babycenter.com](http://www.babycenter.com) – Information on baby development
- The National Parenting Center at [www.tnpsc.com](http://www.tnpsc.com) – Information on child development
- Zero to Three at [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org) – Information on child development birth to age three
  - *The Field Guide to Parenting* – A book on parenting by Shelley Butler and Deb Kratz
  - *Touchpoints* – A book on child development by T. Berry Brazelton, MD

## Child Health

- KidsHealth at [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) – Children's health website
- *Dr. Spock Baby and Child Care* – Classic child health book by Benjamin Spock, MD

## Child Abuse and Parental Depression

- Childhelp: USA-National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
  - Girls & Boys Town National Hotline: 1-800-448-3000Trained counselors who can help with any type of crisis
- Parents Anonymous [www.parentsanonymous.org](http://www.parentsanonymous.org) – Helps combat child abuse and parental depression
- Center for Effective Discipline/End Physical Punishment of Children (EPOCH – USA)  
[www.stophitting.com](http://www.stophitting.com)

## Safety

- National Safe Kids Campaign at [www.SafeKids.org](http://www.SafeKids.org)
  - Babysitter Safety at [www.safenetwork.org](http://www.safenetwork.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): – 1-800-311-3435 at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
Information on preventing disease
- CPSC Consumer Product Safety Commission: – 1-800-638-2772 at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)  
Information on recalls and product safety
- SIDS Alliance: – 1-800-221-SIDS (7437) at [www.sidsalliance.org](http://www.sidsalliance.org)  
Information on preventing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- *The Panic-Proof Parent: Creating a Safe Lifestyle for Your Family* – A book by Debra Smiley Holtzman

## Nutrition

- WIC (Women, Infants and Children): Contact your local chapter  
Information on child nutrition



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