

Developing Healthy Children

Overview

Physical changes occur anywhere between 9 and 14 years of age. Everyone is different. Girls usually 2 years ahead of boys. With puberty come both physical and emotional changes.

Puberty

Physical changes

- Breast development for girls
- Vocal cord thickens which causes voice change
- Testicular and scrotum growth in boys
- Increased hair growth
- Increase sweat production
- Menstruation
- Nocturnal emissions

Emotional changes

- Mood swings caused by hormones
- Change in self confidence
- Emotional instability
- Need for independence
- Need rules, routines, and structure
- Parents can help the child feel more responsible by having clear expectations of starting and completing chores and homework
- Need to know limits in home
- Become more aware of their health issues
- Physical signs of emotional stress may increase
- Let your child know that you are sensitive to difficult situations for them. Let them know that you will find ways to help them

Personal Hygiene

- Shower daily
- Use deodorant
- Acne is a normal part of puberty
- Shaving

Nutrition

- Calcium and Iron are important during puberty
- Girls need 1800 calories per day and boys need 2200
- Need 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day
- Need 2 servings of milk or dairy products
- Need 2 servings of meat
- Need 5 servings of whole grains and cereal per day
- Limit sweets, fats, and caffeine intake



Personal Safety

- Need to wear protective gear such as seat belts and helmets because accidents are the leading cause of death and injury at this age
- Encourage discussion about smoking, drugs, and alcohol in the home
- Prone to accidents because of rapid growth
- Keep computer in family room for internet safety

Sleep

- Need at least 10 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night
- Television should be kept out of the bedroom

Temperament

- Be aware of child's natural personality (temperament)
- Your child's style of interacting may be different

from the parents and siblings. It is important to recognize the difference and adjust your expectations to meet their capabilities

Physical activity

- At least one hour of physical activity per day
- No more than two hours of television or computer time per day
- Encourage extracurricular activity
- Sports are a good thing, as long as the kids are having fun
- Alternative activities can be other hobbies or music if your child is not interested in sports
- They are very self conscious of their physical abilities
- Children at this age can learn the basics of sports but parental expectations

of high level of performance at this age can be stressful

Resources for Parents

www.healthychildren.org

www.cdc.org

www.myparymid.gov

www.microsoft.org/education.conceptbooks

www.capta.org

www.p&g.org



February 18, 2010