Caring for your 2-year-old child

Name _____ Weight _____ Height _____ Date _____

Keep Your Child Safe

Use a Car Seat

Rear-face to seat limits; then use a harness.

Prevent Drowning

- Don't leave your toddler alone around water.
- Learn child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Empty buckets, tubs and small pools as soon as you are done using them.

Prevent Burns

- Protect your toddler from sunburn. Use sunscreen.
- Keep your toddler away from hot stoves, fireplaces, irons, curling irons, and space heaters.
- Set the water heater thermostat so that the water is not hotter than 120ºF.

Prevent Poisoning

- Lock all poisons (medicines, pest killers, paints) out of reach and sight of your toddler.
- Tell your health care provider if you have peeling paint in your home.

Prevent Other Injuries

- Teach your child to respect animals and other living things.
- Make sure an adult is always watching your child.
- Make your home child-safe (see our "Child-Proofing Checklist").
- If your child is on a bike with you, make your baby wear a helmet.
- Make sure you have smoke detectors on your ceiling. Test alarms monthly.
- Use maintained, age-appropriate play equipment with protective surfacing.
- Never shake, toss or hit your toddler. Make sure other caregivers (like day care providers, aunts and uncles) don't either.

Provide Healthy Nutrition

- Feed your toddler at family mealtimes. Give your baby 2 to 3 nutritious snacks per day, but don't use them as rewards. Nutritious snacks are low in fat and sugar and high in fiber (like most fruits).
- As much as possible, let your baby practice self-feeding.
- Give your child nutritious foods but let your baby decide how much to eat. You should choose the menu, not your child.
- Avoid foods that your child might choke on (nuts, hot dogs, popcorn, whole beans, chunks of raw carrot, celery or apple, whole grapes, hard candies, raisins, corn, or tough meat).
- Do not allow a bottle at bedtime.

Practice Healthy Parenting and Care-giving

Encourage Healthy Development

- Encourage your toddler socially. Sing together. Encourage your baby to explore and play with other children. Limit television and videos to one hour per day.
- Excite your baby's mind. Read stories and rhymes with your baby. Help your baby use words to express feelings. Go to a library or a museum, but don't go too long.
- Help your baby be stronger and more coordinated. Take your baby to a park or play ground where your baby can run, jump and climb.
- Encourage self-confidence. When dressing, eating and playing, offer choices that are okay with you.
- Help your baby develop self-love and self-respect. Never yell at your baby. When your baby is upset, take time to try to understand why. Use correct words for genitalia (like "penis" and "vagina").
- Set limits by taking your baby away from the situation that is causing a problem. Try to see and prevent problems before they occur.

Encourage Healthy Behaviors

- Your 2-year-old is naturally self-centered. Do not expect your baby to share or take turns easily. Praise your baby for healthy behavior.
- Help your baby learn to calm down or settle. A favorite toy, stuffed animal or blanket can help. Teach your baby that hitting, biting and kicking others is not okay.
- Toddlers need structure. Create a schedule for your baby's day and try to keep to it. As a family, create a few rules that apply to everyone. Enforce them consistently.
- Use discipline as a way of teaching and protecting your toddler, not punishing your baby. Avoid screen time with your baby by limiting exposure to Cell Phones, Tablets, or Laptops.

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Encourage Self Care

- Your child needs a regular bedtime, and may need a nap each day. Help your baby sleep through the night in your baby's own bed.
- Help your baby brush your baby's teeth twice daily. Use toothpaste with fluoride. Take your baby to see a dentist.
- Encourage toilet training when your child is ready.

Prevent Sickness - Identify and Treat It Early

- Do not induce vomiting or use ipecac. For suspected poisoning, call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.
- Keep your toddler away from cigarette smoke. Don't smoke when your baby is in the car. Don't smoke in the home.
- Call the clinic promptly for frequent coughing or possible dehydration. Signs include much less urination, unusual tiredness, or a dry mouth. Do not use oral thermometers before age 4. Ask the clinician about fever medicine and the correct weight-based dose.

Development

All babies develop at their own rate. At this age you may notice that your baby:

- Jumps off of the floor with both feet
- Throws overhand
- Runs with ease
- Uses "I", "you" and two-word phrases
- Asks questions
- Uses your baby's own name for self-reference
- Plays alongside other kids
- Washes and dries your baby's hands
- Helps get dressed
- Wants to do things independently

Next well-child visit: 30 months (2 1/2 years), including developmental screening. Bring the immunization record.