New Health and Wellness Pocket Guide for Families!
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Family Voices IMPACT Announces Release of

Raising healthy children is a challenging, round-the-clock job. This new family-friendly publication reminds and encourages parents to remember that “What you do every day matters and will have life-long impact on your child’s health and well-being.”

Using the American Academy of Pediatrics’ *Bright Futures Guidelines for the Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents, 3rd Edition* as its starting point, Family Voices IMPACT has taken hundreds of health and wellness recommendations found in the AAP’s 600-page volume (designed for clinicians) and distilled them into 168 pocket- or purse-sized pages that are culturally competent, colorful, accessible and easily transportable. Health plans can offer the guide directly to members or encourage providers in their networks to share this guide with their patients.

An Introduction to Bright Futures

Bright Futures has long been an important initiative of the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). The intent of MCHB and its partners is to improve the quality of health promotion and preventive services for children. Bright Futures is designed to promote children’s current and future health. The centerpiece is the *Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, first published in 1994. The third edition, the most recent, was published by the American Academy of Pediatrics in 2008. The purposes of Bright Futures are to

- Increase health care professionals’ knowledge, skills, and practice;
- Promote social, developmental, and health outcomes of children;
- Foster partnerships between families, health care professionals, and communities;
- Increase family knowledge, skills, and participation in health-promoting and prevention activities; and
- Address the needs of children and youth with special health care needs through improved identification and services.

The importance of families as partners in promoting the health of their children is central to Bright Futures. As the initiative has evolved, families have taken substantive roles. With support from MCHB, Family Voices engaged families in every aspect of the development of the AAP’s *Bright Futures Guidelines*. Family representatives served alongside their professional partners as writers and reviewers and continue to be involved in all aspects of Bright Futures.
The Bright Futures *Family Pocket Guide: A Tour*

The *Family Pocket Guide* is intended to be an on-the-go, concise guide to help families navigate health and wellness information for *all* children, including children and youth with special health care needs. The *Guide* is divided into three major sections: Introduction, Ages and Stages/Health Visits, and Resources.

*Introduction:* These pages introduce the reader to Bright Futures and some important health and wellness topics, including health literacy, medical and dental homes, cultural competency, and children and youth with special health care needs.

The key roles that families play in promoting health and wellness—at home, in the wider community, and in creating partnerships with all those involved in a child’s life—are emphasized. Included is the important concept that the child is an important partner in his or her own health and that parents can help the child assume increasing responsibility as he or she is able.

A chart lists the schedule of well-child visits as recommended by the AAP, including the new visit at two and a half years.

*Ages and Stages/Health Visits:* Much of the *Family Pocket Guide* is devoted to the four color-coded Age/Stage sections: Infancy (Prenatal to 11 months), Early Childhood (1-4 years), Middle Childhood (5-10 years), and Adolescence (11-21 years). Each section begins with an overview of what children are like at that age and includes specific issues important to families with children with special health care needs. Subsequent pages give recommendations from the AAP *Bright Futures* book, in family-friendly bullets, for each of the ten Bright Futures themes.

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**Bright Futures Themes**

Bright Futures is organized around both ages and stages and also ten themes:

- Promoting Family Support
- Promoting Child Development
- Promoting Mental Health
- Promoting Healthy Weight
- Promoting Healthy Nutrition (Healthy Food & Eating)
- Promoting Physical Activity
- Promoting Oral Health
- Promoting Healthy Sexual Development and Sexuality
- Promoting Safety and Injury Prevention
- Promoting Community Relationships and Resources

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Following these health and wellness tips and recommendations is a visit-by-visit age-specific description. Each visit includes the following:

- **Getting Ready for this Visit:** Reminders to write down questions and comments to share as partners with the health care provider; age-specific issues a family with a child with special health care needs may wish to discuss.
- **At this age, your child may:** Developmental milestones parents can use to help gauge how their child is progressing.
- **What’s Important for this Visit:** Five priority age-specific topics that match the AAP Bright Futures materials. Parents are reminded that THEIR questions and concerns (and later those of their child) are always the number one priority.
- **What to Expect:** A brief listing of the kinds of tests and procedures the health care professional may perform during these exams.

**Resources:** The last major section of the Family Pocket Guide contains nearly 30 pages of over 150 resources—organizations and websites that families may find helpful in raising healthy children and adolescents. Resources are grouped by topic, and those with substantial information in Spanish are noted:

- Bright Futures Family Resources
- Family Voices Resources
- Family Resource Organizations
- Resources for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs
- Financial Resources
- Bright Futures Theme Resources
- Transition to Adulthood Resources

**Ordering Information**

To order large quantities of the Family Voices Bright Futures Family Pocket Guide, 2nd Ed and for bulk pricing, please call toll-free, 1-888-835-5669. Smaller quantities (1-10 copies) may be ordered on the Family Voices website at: [https://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6739/t/11331/shop/shop.jsp?storefront_KEY=347](https://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6739/t/11331/shop/shop.jsp?storefront_KEY=347). For more information about the Pocket Guide, please contact [bfpocketguide@familyvoices.org](mailto:bfpocketguide@familyvoices.org)

**About Project IMPACT:**

With an Alliance for Information on Maternal and Child Health (AIM) cooperative agreement, Family Voices IMPACT works to develop ways to improve health and wellness for all children and families, address life course health development issues from the family perspective, and encourage partnerships between families and professionals for children’s good health. IMPACT is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Health Resources and
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For more information about Family Voices, go to: www.familyvoices.org. To learn more about the work of Project IMPACT, go to their companion website: www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org.