

# FAMILY INFORMATION

## WATCH ME MOVE MY BODY!

Children grow and develop at different rates. Some children are tall or short for their age. Some children seem thin, and some seem stout. Differences are normal and part of growing up, but if you are concerned about your child's physical development, talk with your child's doctor.

Children also develop movement skills at different rates.

As children's body proportions change, they begin to develop a greater sense of balance. They also gain more control of their large-muscle movements, such as those used in running, jumping, and climbing. Differences in rates of development are normal. For example, a few children may be able to ride a two-wheel bicycle at age three,

but most children will not develop this skill until age five, six, or even older!

Children do not develop movement skills just from growing older. Movement and physical skill development takes time, instruction, and lots of practice.

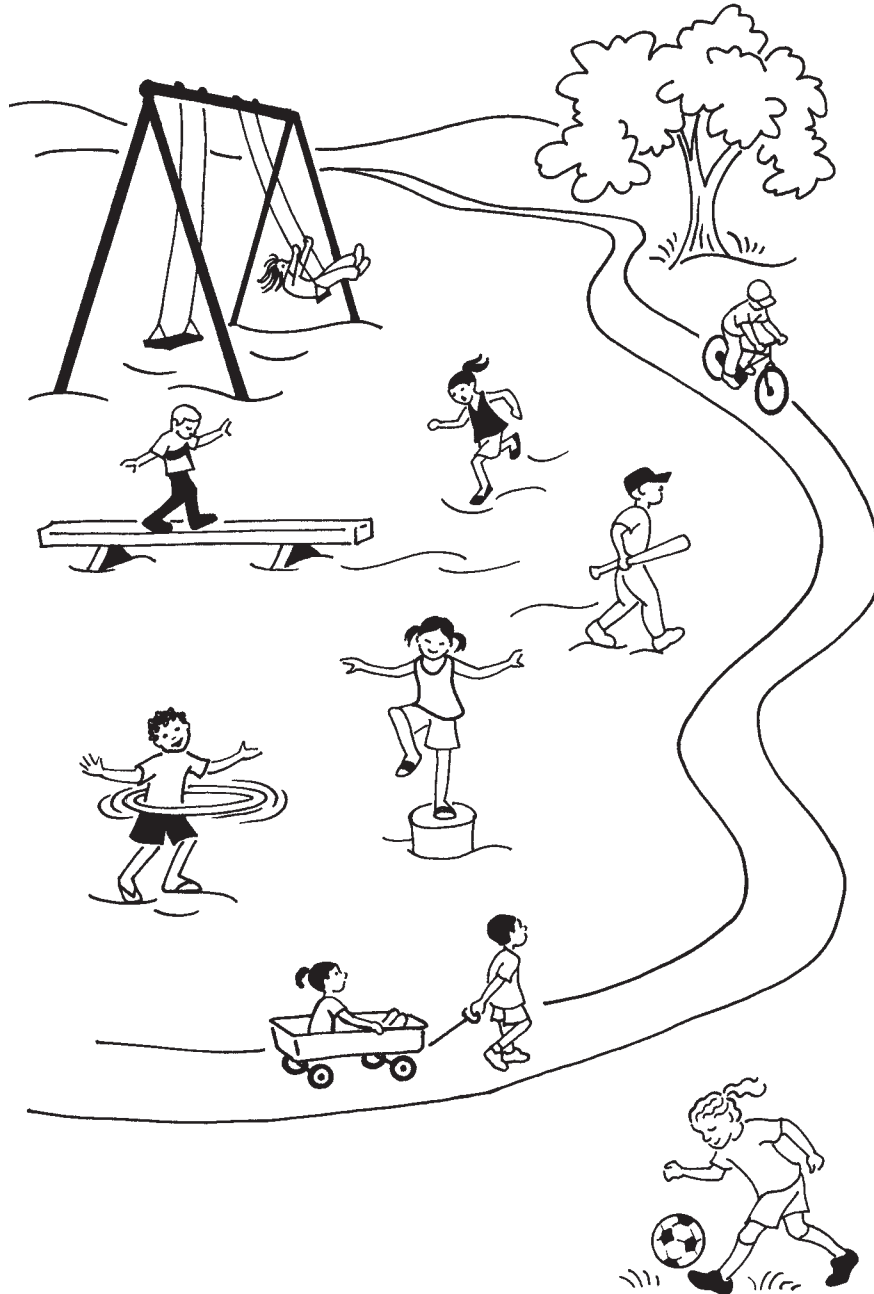


## ENCOURAGE ACTIVE PLAY

Play with your child, and offer encouragement as he or she practices new movement skills. Learning a new movement begins when your child sees the movement demonstrated by you or other children. New movements might include throwing a ball, jumping rope, or climbing the ladder on the slide. As your child tries new movements, support her or his efforts, and challenge her or him to explore ways to be successful. Your budding ball player may start by rolling a ball and tossing it underhand before trying to throw an overhand pitch. Start slow and easy, and offer lots of praise and encouragement! Encourage your child to run, play, and be active whenever possible—both indoors and outdoors.

# FAMILY ACTIVITY

Look at the activities in the picture below. Help your child name each activity and the body parts used for each one. Ask your child which activities he or she would like to try. Discuss how being active helps make the body strong and healthy.



# FAMILY INFORMATION

## I MOVE TO BE STRONG!

Children are naturally active and learn through movement and play. Running, jumping, crawling, and climbing help children develop strong muscles and bones. Regular physical activity helps their bodies stay healthy and fight off germs that cause sicknesses. While children are moving and having fun, they are also releasing energy and stress. Overall, children feel better when they are moving their bodies!

Children need several opportunities for physical activity each day. Young children may be able to run and jump vigorously for about fifteen minutes before they need time to relax. Later, they will be ready to run and jump again!

## SAFE PLAY AREAS

Be sure your child's play area is safe. Teach your child to play away from streets and parking lots. If your child plays in a driveway or alley, always walk all around your vehicle and look for your child before starting your vehicle.

You or another adult should always watch your child when she or he is playing outdoors. It is even better if you play with your child! Here are some fun ideas:

- Walk to explore your neighborhood, or hike in the woods.
- Practice throwing, kicking, and catching a large ball.
- Dance to your favorite music.
- March around the house, or play Follow the Leader.
- Jump through sprinklers and water hoses on hot days.
- Run, jump, and play tag.
- Roll down a grassy hill.



# FAMILY ACTIVITY

Make multiple copies of this page, or put a clear wrap over the top of this page so you can reuse the table each month. Work with your child to circle two or three activities he or she might enjoy doing each week. Help your child decide how many times or how long each activity will be performed daily, and put that number in the activity box for the day. If needed, help your child keep count or keep time during the activity. Each week suggest adding another activity or increasing the amount of time or number of times the activity is performed.

Week \_\_\_\_\_ or Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Monday    Tuesday    Wednesday    Thursday    Friday    Saturday    Sunday



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

# FAMILY INFORMATION

## MY BODY NEEDS REST!

Children need more sleep than adults. Most young children need ten to twelve hours of sleep each night and a short nap during the day. Children need a schedule that allows them to get enough sleep. For example, if you must wake your child at seven o'clock each morning, then bedtime should be by eight-thirty each evening. Stay on schedule as much as possible, even on weekends.

Some children resist bedtime and sleep. Often the more tired they are, the more they try to stay awake. Children will fall asleep more quickly if they have a routine that allows them to relax before bedtime. This routine may include taking a bath, brushing teeth, reading a story, getting a last drink of water, and lots of hugs.

## Lower the Lights

Many children are afraid of the dark, of noises, and of thunderstorms. These fears are very real to children. A night-light or lamp can help some children feel more secure. Playing soft music may help a child who is afraid of "monsters," as may closing closet doors and checking under the bed.



Assure your child that you will be home while he or she sleeps. Leave your child's bedroom door open so your child knows you can hear her or him if needed. Allow your child to sleep with a favorite washable toy or blanket.

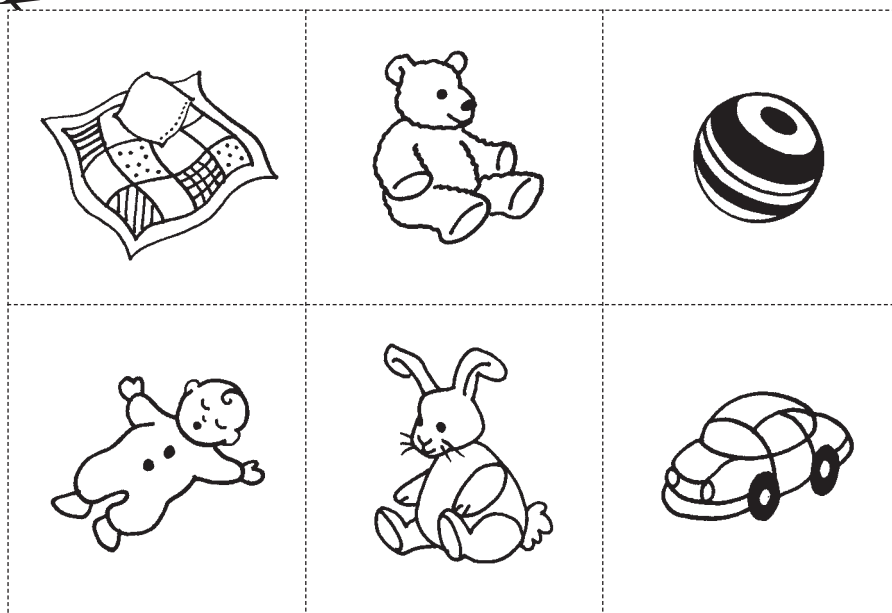
## Bad Dreams

Some children have difficulty sleeping because of bad dreams or night terrors. These dreams may be caused by seeing or experiencing a frightening event. Watching scary television shows or hearing adults talk about violent or dangerous events can scare children. Even children's stories and fairy tales can frighten some children.

Nightmares are very real to a child. If you know what frightens your child, you can probably prevent some bad dreams in the future.

# FAMILY ACTIVITY

Cut out the items at the bottom of the page. Allow your child to color the large picture below. Once your child has finished coloring, talk to him or her about bedtime and rest time and how we all need rest to have energy and feel good. Discuss items your child likes to have when lying down to rest, and then let your child place the cut-out pictures on the large picture to help the child in the image rest too!



# FAMILY INFORMATION

## **SOMETIMES I RUMBLE AND ROAR!**

Children need breakfast to get through the busy morning. After all, it has been ten or twelve hours since they last ate. Skipping breakfast can mean growling stomachs and grumpy children, and it can make doing well in school difficult.



Most young children need to eat about every two and a half to three hours. Give your child small, nutritious snacks between meals, such as fruit or peanut butter and crackers. It is okay to occasionally give your child sweets, like cookies or cake, if your child has eaten healthful foods during meals.

Young children need small servings of food (about one-fourth cup per serving). If children are served large portions of food and forced to clean their plates, they may become overweight or learn to dislike some foods.

## **HUNGER AND FULLNESS**

Learning the signs of hunger and fullness is an important lesson for children. Adults are responsible for serving nutritious and appetizing food. Children are responsible for deciding how much they eat.

Teach your child to take small servings of foods. If he or she is still hungry, allow a second serving of some foods. Do not insist that your child eat everything on his or her plate.



## **DRINK WATER**

Children lose fluid from their bodies when they play, especially in warm weather. Have water available for your child all day. Water is the best fluid for your child's body.

# FAMILY ACTIVITY

Help your child choose the pictures that he or she thinks shows each of the following: hungry, full, thirsty, and empty. Ask questions such as “Why do you think this picture shows being hungry?” and “What does hungry feel like?” Use these descriptive words when asking questions about food and drinks. Talk with your child about trying to recognize when she or he is hungry, thirsty, and full, and about eating, drinking, or stopping when his or her body says it’s time.





# FAMILY INFORMATION

## MY BODY NEEDS FOOD TO GROW AND GO!

Children need basic nutrients—protein, carbohydrates, and fats—as well as vitamins and minerals to grow strong and healthy. By eating a variety of foods, most children will get what they need. It is okay if your child wants a serving of macaroni and cheese every day; just make sure he or she also eats fruits, vegetables, and other dairy and protein foods throughout the week.

Milk, cheese, eggs, peanut butter, yogurt, and lean meats are good sources of protein. Bread, oatmeal, grits, rice, cereal, and pancakes provide carbohydrates. Fruits and vegetables are loaded with vitamins and minerals. Choose fruits and vegetables in a variety of colors: yellow, green, red, white, purple, orange, and more!

All foods contain nutrients, but some foods are healthier than others. For example, a potato provides carbohydrates, fiber, and vitamin C plus small amounts of other nutrients. Potato chips, however, may also be loaded with more sugar, salt, and fat than the body needs. Most children do not eat large amounts of food, so provide foods that are nutritious.

## TRYING NEW FOODS

Food preferences are learned. Your child may dislike a food at one time but then like that food several weeks later, or vice versa. Try to get a new food on your child's tongue at least eighteen times, even for just a tiny taste of the food. Start with one or two bites of a new food. If your child does not like it, try it again another day.

Try preparing and offering foods in various ways. For example, vegetables can be served lightly steamed, raw with dip, and as part of other foods, such as soups.

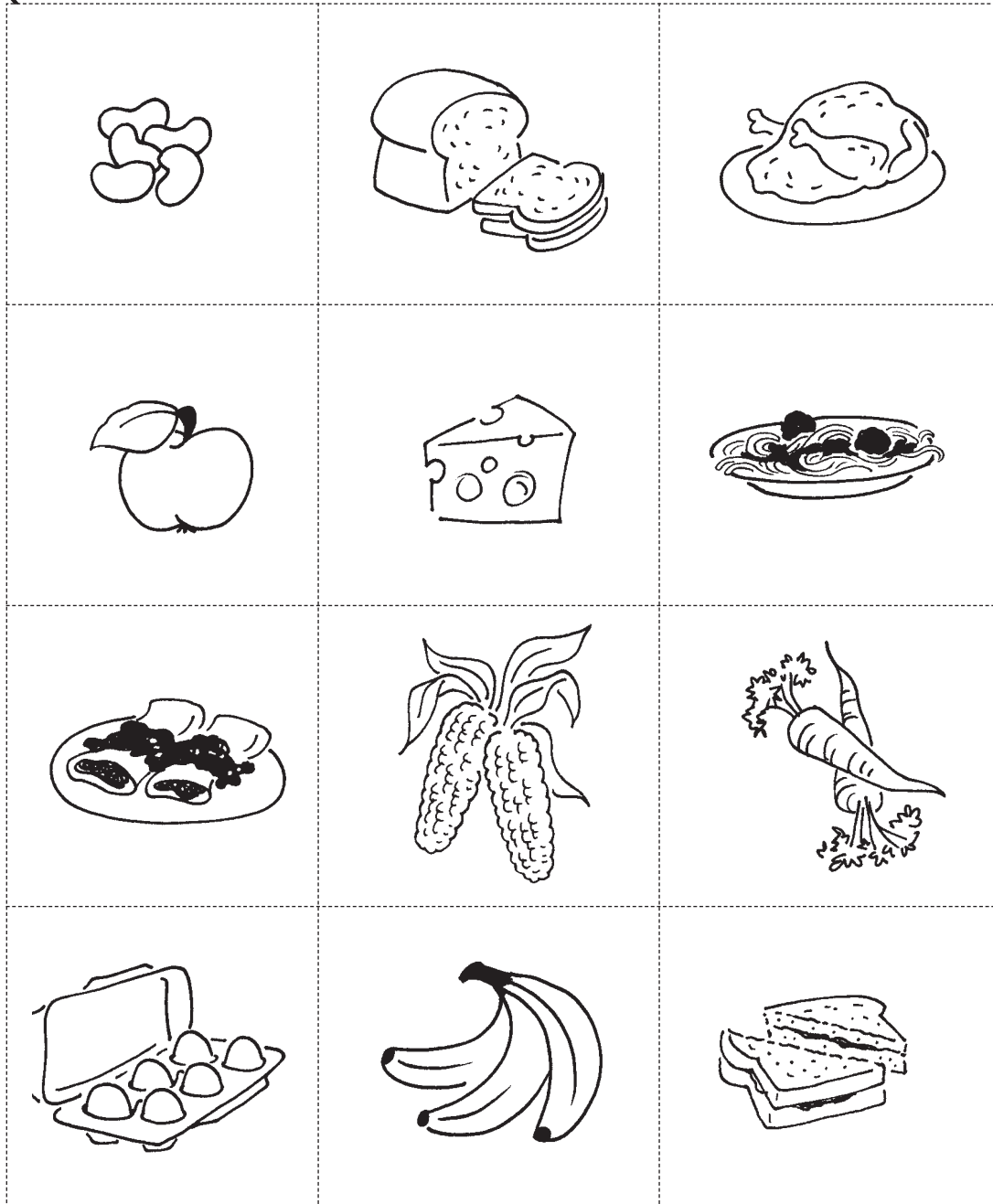
Children have more taste buds than adults and are therefore more sensitive to flavors. Foods with pepper or other spices may taste too hot or spicy for your child. Do not insist that your child eat or finish a food.

By letting your child stop eating when she or he is full, you are helping to develop good eating habits.



# FAMILY ACTIVITY

Cut out the following foods, and assist your child in sorting them into food groups, shapes that are alike, favorite tastes, and so on. First, discuss which foods in this activity you and your child have each tried and which foods you might like to try. Next discuss other foods you each would like to try and in which food groups they belong.

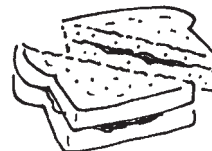


# FAMILY INFORMATION

## I SHARE FOOD, NOT GERMS!

It is great when children share toys or crackers, but not when they share germs! Germs that cause diseases can travel in food and beverages and on eating utensils. Colds, influenza, and other illnesses can quickly spread among children who share glasses, cups, or eating utensils.

Sharing a bite of a sandwich or a sip of juice can also spread germs. Children should not eat or drink from the same containers as anyone else, including family members.



## HEALTHFUL WAYS TO SHARE

Help children learn healthful ways to share food by demonstrating these practices:

- To share a sandwich or an apple, cut the food before taking a bite.
- To share juice, pour it from the container into the number of glasses needed.
- Use tongs or serving spoons in food dishes. Do not use a spoon you have had in your mouth.
- When taking food from a platter with your hands, take the first item that you touch.
- Use a napkin to take a cookie from a plate.
- Wash your hands before sharing or eating food or drinks.

## WHAT NOT TO SHARE

Help your child look around your home for items that should not be shared, such as a toothbrush, a drinking cup, or a partially eaten cookie.

# FAMILY ACTIVITY

Glue this picture to one side of an empty cereal box, and then cut out the puzzle pieces, using the lines as guides. After assisting your child to complete the puzzle, discuss how each person in the picture is about to eat and drink, what utensils they are using, and how they might pass the food they are eating to enjoy the meal together without sharing germs.

