



## Tips for Child Safety and Health

- Talk about the importance of **caring for yourself** – brushing teeth, using a seatbelt, eating healthy foods, and so forth.
- Set **clear rules** for how you expect your child to behave. Encourage your child to ask questions if he or she does not understand your rules or instructions.
- Allow younger children to make **simple decisions**. For example, ask if he or she would rather eat corn or green beans with dinner; give your child a choice what shirt to wear. Be sure you can honor the decision.
- Let children know that **you like them just the way they are**, and teach them to like themselves, too.
- **Take time each day** to give your child your full attention. Learn his or her likes and dislikes. **Encourage your child to talk** about his or her feelings.
- Let them know that they **don't have to be friends with kids who make them feel bad**.
- **Get to know your child's friends** and friends' parents.
- Remember **you are a parent, not a friend**. It is possible to be close with your children and also set and enforce rules.
- Know that **children and teenagers WANT their parents to be involved** in their lives.
- Ensure that all baby equipment, toys, and clothing meet **current safety standards**.
- Look for **product recalls** in stores, in the news, and/or on the Consumer Product Safety Commission web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov>.
- Keep in mind that **toddlers** are especially at risk of getting injured. They are **impulsive, don't have good judgment, are curious, and want their independence**, each of which puts them at risk for injury. They need to be protected at all times.
- Children are always watching, so **set a good example** – use seat belts, bicycle helmets, etc. to help children understand the importance of safety equipment.
- Keep a list of **emergency telephone numbers** near your telephone, including your child's doctor and the Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222).
- **Do not try to completely shelter** your child. For example, a young child who is never allowed to go up or down steps is more likely to get injured than one who has been allowed to practice with close supervision.

*For more information about parenting or relationships, please visit <http://ncfamilies.com/jitp/>.*