



Steps to Building a Relationship with Your Child's Doctor

In an ideal world your child's doctor will be the one person, besides you, who has a vested interest in your child's health and development. From infancy through your child's teenage years and into young adulthood you will share your concerns and milestones with their doctor as you develop this important partnership. Open communication is the key to your child's care.

Step 1: Choosing the Right Person: You should choose a medical provider who listens, and is responsive to you and your child. You should feel comfortable talking to this person and your input and questions should be welcomed.

Step 2: Schedule Well Visits: Well visits are an important part of monitoring your child's development. Well visits give your child's doctor an opportunity to address development and health issues unrelated to being sick. At these visits developmental milestones should be discussed, family medical history, immunizations and parenting concerns.

Step 3: Be Organized: Whether you are seeing your child's doctor for a well or sick visit be prepared with specific question about both physical wellbeing and development and records of symptoms, medication, etc. Have a list of questions and concerns.

Step 4: Identify the Purpose of the Visit: From the beginning, be clear about the reason for the visit. Share your list of questions and concerns. It is helpful to take a pen and paper to write down answers to your questions or instructions of care.

Step 5: Know Your Child's History: Don't rely on the doctor to remember every aspect of your child's history. Know your child's history and be prepared to give them a friendly reminder. You may also need to update them on reactions to medication, changes in symptoms from the last visit, test results or information about recent visits to specialists, urgent care or school based assessments.

Step 6: Ask Questions: If a doctor says something you don't understand, ask them to explain. This way both you and the doctor have the same understanding of your child's needs. Inquire about the need for a specialist or other referrals.

Step 7: Follow Up: Whether it is a follow up appointment or phone call to the office, it is important to let them know how a treatment or referral worked or didn't work for your child. If you are to be tracking developmental progress, check back to discuss progress or concerns. Remember, you are your child's voice and you are responsible for their well being.

Provided by the Pediatric & Family Health Committee

www.GreatStartLivingston.org