



Early Learning Digest

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December 2016

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What is Newborn Screening?

Babies can be born with a health condition but may not show any signs of the problem at first. Newborn screening checks for serious but rare conditions that your baby may have at birth.

If a health condition is found early with newborn screening, it often can be treated. This makes it possible to avoid more serious health problems for your baby.

Your baby will get newborn screening before leaving the hospital after birth. If your baby wasn't born in a hospital, talk to your health care provider about getting newborn screening at 1 to 2 days of age. Some states require that babies have newborn screening again after about 2 weeks.

There are three parts to newborn screening:

Blood test. Most newborn screening is done with a blood test. A health care provider pricks your baby's heel to get a few drops of blood. The blood is collected on a special paper and sent to a lab for testing within 24 hours. Your provider gets results for serious health conditions within 5 days and results for all conditions in 7 days.

Hearing screening. For this test, your provider places a tiny, soft speaker in your baby's ear to check how your baby responds to sound.

Heart screening. This test is called pulse oximetry. It checks the amount of oxygen in your baby's blood by using a sensor attached to his finger or foot. This test is used to screen babies for a group of heart conditions called critical congenital heart disease (CCHD).

Most newborn screening results are normal. In rare cases when screening results aren't normal, it may simply mean more testing. Your health care provider then recommends a diagnostic test, to see if there is a health problem. If the diagnostic test results are normal, no more testing is needed. If the diagnostic test results are not normal, your provider can guide you to the next step for your baby.

Each state requires different tests, so ask your baby's health care provider which tests your baby will have. You can also visit babysfirsttest.org to find out what conditions your state tests for.

Source: "What Is Newborn Screening?" March of Dimes, <http://www.marchofdimes.org/baby/newborn-screening-tests-for-your-baby.aspx>, February 2016.

How Much Is Too Much?

Overindulgence is giving children too much of what looks good, too soon, and for too long. Occasional indulgences add color, joy and even excitement to life, but when it becomes a pattern, then it becomes overindulgence.

Parents often ask, "What's the harm in overindulging my child?" Studies indicate that parents who overindulge their children risk raising kids who feel that they are the center of the universe, are ungrateful, have poor boundaries, need immediate gratification, have poor self-control, and are irresponsible. One tool that is helpful determining if adults are overindulging, is called the **Test of Four**.

1. Does it hinder the child from learning his/her developmental tasks?
2. Does it use a disproportionate amount of family resources for one or more child?
3. Whose needs are being met? Does it benefit the adult more than the child?
4. Does it do harm to others, society, or the planet?

If after examining the situation, and there is a "yes" answer to one or more of the **Test of Four**, it probably is overindulgence.

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help me



If you have concerns about your child's growth and development, please talk to your child's health care provider or call 1-866-693-GROW (4769), to talk to a professional and find out how you can get connected with various resources in Minnesota.



Why Children Need to Play Outside – Even in the Winter

The weather changes from warm and sunny to cold and “dreary,” which means that the kids can’t go outside and play, right? Wrong! There are a lot of other benefits for your children when they play outside, even in the winter. Below you will find several of them.

Builds Up their Immune System:

While we like to think that dirt, animals, pests and bacteria do more harm than good, it’s actually the opposite. When your children come into contact with these things in a natural way (outside) and on a regular basis, they are less likely to develop autoimmune disorders and allergies.

Provides Exercise: Exercising while having fun is the best kind of exercise, and that’s exactly what playing outside does. Running, climbing, building a snowman, sledding, and other outside activities get our children’s bodies moving.

Stimulates the Imagination: Playing outside helps children develop their imagination, which is something that television, video games, computers, and iPods don’t do.

Promotes Problem Solving Skills: Children who play outside learn how to solve real life problems better than children who are always in their rooms playing video games or secluding themselves. Regardless of if they’re learning how to get along with



friends or trying to figure out the best way to build a fort – they’re problem solving.

Provides Vitamin D: It’s important that your children get Vitamin D, which is provided by the sun. Vitamin D helps promote better moods, energy levels, memory, overall health and more. Just 10-15 minutes out in the sun will give your children their daily dose of Vitamin D.

It doesn’t matter if it is summer or winter outside, or how old your child is, your children need everything listed above and playing outside is a great way to get them all at once! If it’s nice outside then bundle the kids up and get outdoors!

Source: “Why Children Need to Play Outside, Even in the Winter Months,” <http://www.niu.edu/ccr/resources/Why%20Children%20Need%20to%20Play%20Outside.pdf>, retrieved November 2016.

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Here are a few suggestions for parents who are struggling with overindulgence.

1. **Recognize and own it.** The first step is becoming aware that you are overindulging, own it, and choose to do things differently.
2. **Use the Test of Four.** The Test of Four is a powerful tool and like any tool you get better the more you use it.
3. **Work on one problem area at a time.** Identify one overindulgence problem area that routinely surfaces between you and your child. Think of a new, more effective way to respond.
4. **Forgive yourself for your parenting mistakes.** Learn more effective ways of parenting by reading reputable parenting books.
5. **Ask for help and support.** An other choice is to surround yourself with parents who are also concerned about overindulgence - find allies. Join a parenting group and receive as well as give others help.

Source: “How Much Is Too Much? Raising Likeable, Responsible, Respectful Children – from Toddlers to Teens – in an Age of Overindulgence,” by Clarke, J. I., Dawson, C., & Bredehoft, D. J. (2014).

