

# Knowledge of Parenting and of Child and Youth Development

Parents know their children best – their unique behaviors, interests, and abilities.

But it is challenging for any parent to be an expert in all aspects of infant, child, and teenage development or the most effective ways to support a child at each stage. When parents are not aware of normal developmental milestones, or they do not know how to respond to and effectively manage a child's behavior, they can become frustrated and may resort to harsh discipline or emotional withdrawal.

There is extensive research linking healthy child development to effective parenting. Children thrive when parents provide not only affection, but also respectful communication and listening, consistent rules and expectations, and safe opportunities that promote independence. Successful parenting fosters psychological adjustment, helps children succeed in school, encourages curiosity about the world, and motivates children to achieve. Parenting skills cannot be static; as children grow and mature, parents need to change the way they respond to their children's needs. In addition, parenting styles need to be adjusted for each child's individual temperament and unique circumstances.

## Sharing Strategies and Resources to Strengthen Parenting

When parents have shared their concerns and perspectives on their children, there is an opportunity to explore solutions and share resources. Educational materials about parenting and child development may help parents assess their child development relative to others of the same age, have realistic expectations for their child's behavior, and explore ways to communicate those expectations effectively. Helpful resources for enhancing knowledge of parenting and of children and youth development may include information about:

### Child and youth development

- What parents can expect and look for as the child or youth grows,
- The ability of children or teens to understand and control their behavior at different ages,
- Addressing developmental challenges such as inconsolable crying, bedwetting, eating or sleeping problems, lying, school issues, problems with peers, and puberty,
- How to keep children safe, including information on shaken baby syndrome, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), childproofing strategies, appropriate daycare, and safety in the community.

### Parenting

- How a parent can guide a child's behavior and reinforce desired/appropriate behavior,
- Ways that a parent can model desirable behavior,
- Non-punitive disciplinary techniques, such as setting limits, redirecting attention or behavior, and logical consequences for actions.

**ChildHelp Pee Dee**  
**24 Hour Toll-Free Helpline**  
**1-866-867-9857**

**Parenting is tough. Asking for help doesn't have to be.**

Information brought to you by:

Keeping Pee Dee kids Safe at Home, sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse Pee Dee,  
a program of the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault.

Website: <http://www.peedecoalition.org/safe>

