

Priorities in Caring for Your Children: A Primer for Parents

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Wrapped in the same warm bundle of joy with a new baby is a tremendous responsibility. Helping an infant grow to be healthy and free from injury into the teen years is an awesome task. Feeding, vaccination and child-proofing questions take a back seat to increasingly complex issues.

The job of keeping your children healthy and safe is further complicated by myths and misconceptions about matters of safety and good health.

Should a parent be concerned about lead poisoning? What about pesticides in food or carcinogens in the water supply? What exactly should a parent be most concerned about?

The American Council on Science and Health acknowledges the difficulties parents face in prioritizing matters of health and safety and offers this booklet to help you as a parent wind through the maze of health and safety information. Ultimately, we hope to help you direct your energies and resources appropriately to bring your children to the brink of adulthood as healthy as possible.

We've divided this booklet into sections based on age. Within each age group, you'll find the issues subdivided into priority categories, from high priority health and safety issues to hypothetical risks. As you'll notice, some issues are germane to more than one age group. You'll find the relevant discussion in the earliest age group under which it's listed, and we'll refer you there for details. In addition to heeding the specific advice in each age category, ACSH recommends that all parents learn first aid techniques in order to handle emergencies such as burns, choking and fractures. Check with your local American Red Cross about the availability of first aid courses.

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