

Basic Recommendations:

I Diet:

1. Additive , preservative free. **Avoid** dyes, especially red dye; caffeine, ALL sugar substitutes.
2. Protein should be eaten at every meal, especially breakfast (eggs, lean meat, nuts, tofu, beans)
3. Avoid packaged foods, whole freshly prepared foods are best. Organic when ever possible, especially dairy, and fresh fruits and vegetables. Free range meat, without hormones and antibiotics.
4. Avoid highly processed foods, avoid white flour and white sugar. Preferred sweeteners are: Stevia, xylitol, agave nectar.
5. If your child has an identifiable improvement when certain items are avoided, more careful attention to this area is indicated; an elimination diet or specific food removal trials may be indicated.

II Exercise

1. One half hour of exercise per day is equally as effective as antidepressant medication in improving mood.
2. If your child is considered over active then this indicates a need for greater amounts of regular exercise. If your child is sluggish or over weight, this indicates a need for greater amounts of regular exercise.
3. If sleep onset is a problem –ensure that your child has sufficient activity –at least ½ hour of heart pounding exercise prior to dinnertime.

III Environment-toxins are pervasive in our environment-avoidance is key

1. Water-a water filtration system for your home is a good idea. A filter on the faucet is a very good investment- (i.e. Brita-is readily available).
2. Cleaning products are often toxic and best avoided. Vinegar and baking soda are good non-toxic choices, there are many “green” cleaning products-seventh generation is readily available.
3. Avoid exposure to smoking, gasoline fumes, and other obvious toxins.
4. Chlorine in swimming pools may irritate your child-watch for this.

IV Sleep Hygiene

1. Maintain the same sleep time and same wake time even on weekends and holidays for best results.
2. Develop and maintain a 3-4 step sleep routine, which may include, warm bath, reading, soft /soothing music, snack, back rub.
3. Evening snack of warm milk chamomile tea can help promote sleep onset.
4. Avoid TV, video, computer use at least 1 hour before bed as they result in brain activation and inhibit sleep onset.
5. Avoid exercise within 1 hour of bedtime; ensure adequate exercise (at least ½ hour) prior to dinnertime.

6. The blue light component of TV and computer use after the sun goes down, with in a few hours of bedtime can actually suppress melatonin. Melatonin is your body's circadian regulator(helps you naturally fall asleep in the dark)-The blue light from these items can be blocked by using special blue light blocking glasses or special TV/computer screens. Lowbluelight.com-ask Dr. Beth for more info.

V Media

1. Monitor your child's media contact and observe age recommendations-inappropriate content can be traumatizing and lead to behavioral symptoms-sleep problems, anxiety, and aggression.
2. 2 hours of TV viewing per day is a good limit for any child.
3. Avoid TV viewing prior to age 2. There is no such thing as educational TV for children that age, that is not how children that age learn.
4. Excessive TV watching can lead to visual problems, excess weight gain, aggression, and inattention.
5. Avoid computers and TV in children's bed rooms-this is unhealthy for many reasons.
6. Video and computer and handheld games should be limited to -at maximum 2-hours per day, preferably 1-hour per day. If limitation results in conflict then further restriction or avoidance is indicated.
7. Avoid 1st person shooter games -there is no redeeming value; avoidance of violence in gaming is desirable.
8. Use parental controls on computer use to limit accessible sites. Monitor use and educate your children about avoiding sexual content, check to see what sites your child is visiting.

VI Nutritional supplementation

1. Essential Fatty Acids -must be obtained from the diet and generally require supplementation. Essential Fatty Acids make up membranes, all cellular communication occurs across membranes -thus adequate function is essential for all areas of biological function. Unless otherwise indicated your child should be taking at least 1000mg/d of essential fatty acids. Nordic Naturals -Pro-Omega is a good standard and available directly from Nordic Naturals on the web. -This can be taken as gel cap or liquid.
2. Coromega is a foil packed soft candy like form of EFA-readily available at many health food stores and Kirkman labs 800-
3. Effervescent is available for Nordic Naturals
4. Vitamin D-optimally obtained through 20min of sun exposure per day(before applying sun screen) supplementation of 1000IU Vit D3 per day is good, unless advised to supplement greater amounts.

VII Social

1. 1:1 time with your child is key. 20min per day is optimal, but even 5min per day at a regular time on a regular basis is valuable. This should be time that the focus is merely on enjoying being together -doing what the child would like.

2. Age appropriate opportunities for nurturing are important-BEGIN with a PLANT. If this is successful moving on to a fish or small animal might be appropriate-if the child is not successful with this a larger pet is probably not a good choice.
3. If peer conflict is a concern then close enough supervision to be able to guide and direct your child in successful interaction is key. Allowing ongoing failure situations is a poor choice.

VIII Behavior Control

1. Every child needs clear limits-optimally these are agreed upon by adults in the home first, then shared with the child, with some options for child input as age appropriate, agreed to then written and posted. Minimal and basic are key.
2. Focus on the positive; what is the positive expectation-it is hard to get anyone to stop doing anything.
3. Focus on rewarding and reinforcing the positive. Criticism is NOT generally helpful.
4. If your child is not successful with the basic expectations your first choice should be education, then move to more support, structure and guidance.
5. There is no evidence to support any benefit of punishment.
6. Having your child earn privileges through accomplishing appropriate expectations, rather than loose privileges for misbehavior is generally a more successful strategy.