



# DESERT GROVE

## Family Medical

Specializing in the HEALTH of Your Family!

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## 11-12 Year Check

### **GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:**

Some body changes will begin to appear in both boys and girls. In boys, the testes and penis begin to increase in size. Girls will develop breasts and their period will begin. Hair will start growing on different parts of the body in both sexes. Most often girls will be taller and heavier than boys of the same age. They will feel, and are, clumsy and uncomfortable at social events. The increase in weight is more rapid than the increase in height. Some children may become overweight during this stage.

Growing children need regular exercise. Running, skipping rope, roller-skating, ice skating, and bicycle, riding all help promote coordination and development. A child's motor skills have improved which allows more speed and larger, stronger muscles will allow harder and longer play. Children's muscles will begin work together and the children are less clumsy. They now can make decisions necessary to play in adult, like activities. They may not have the strength and control of an adult. The muscles are not yet fully developed and may be easily injured by overuse.

### **SELF ESTEEM:**

Children love a sense of doing well, enjoy praise, rewards, and friends' approval. Tell them "job well done", when you notice your child does something well, or thank you" when they listen or do something for you. Let them know how important they are to you. Support your child in learning new skills. A child will gain self, esteem by doing, taking action and getting involved. Children need to feel loved and capable. Parents should encourage their child to do things for themselves, but set limits as needed. Children may complain loudly about not being able to do what other children do and will try to break down rules, but usually are not happy when they succeed. Children need discipline and guidance. A child raised by parents with warmth, support, under, standing, good communication and discipline, express a greater degree of self, confidence. They are more likely to exhibit healthy and normal behavior. They do better in school, handle stress and are less likely to try alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances. Building your child's self-esteem is the best gift you can give your child and yourself.

### **PLAYING AND LEARNING:**

Friends and family are important to children. They will choose their own friends, but will often argue with them. One day, a certain child will be their "best friend," sharing jokes, secrets, and adventures. The next day, the child will argue and break up with their friend. Then they will make up and start over. Boys and girls do not like each other very much at this age (or at least they won't admit it!). Know your child's friends.

Early in this stage, the child is usually loud and full of energy and loud, gradually becoming calmer as she/he approaches age 12. Children may be disagreeing with their parents, a result of wanting to make decisions for themselves and wanting to be like their friends. Children are not ready to make most decisions for themselves. Even though they won't admit it, they feel secure knowing that there is a parent that will prevent them from acting out and doing something that they really didn't want to do, but had felt pressure from someone who said they should. A child needs to learn it's OK to say no when they don't agree. Most children at this age enjoy learning and will read, write, and draw pictures in their spare time. They are usually happy to help with household chores. Don't forget to give praise!

Continue to encourage your child to be active, making exercise a regular part of their daily activities. Closely monitor the amount of time that they watch television and its content. Monitor your child's time spent playing video games and playing on the computer.

**SLEEPING:**

Most 11 to 12 year olds may need more rest than they did in earlier years, due to the new growth spurt. An eleven-year-old may argue with you at bedtime. By the time children reach the age of 12, your child may even go to bed on their own.

**SAFETY:**

A child's improving motor skills, looking for fun and new things to try, and need for physical activity and their friends' approval may lead a child to some dangerous activities. Common accidents at this age include falls, sports injuries, drownings, bumps, and car accidents. Some children may be going further from home on their bicycles. Parents should be sure they understand traffic laws and enforce them. Children should learn the safety rules in walking, skating, skate boarding, and playing sports. Children should never have a gun. If there are guns in the house, they need to be locked up and gun safety rules should be taught. Children can learn basic first aid and what to do in case of a fire, injury, or accident. Water activities should always have an adult watching over a child making sure that a child is following the water safety rules.

**EATING:**

Children who have begun to grow fast at this age will need more energy from the food they eat. Parents should be sure that a child's diet is healthy so a child will get all the vitamins, minerals that they need for growth. Junk foods, filled with sugars, starches, and excess fats, should be avoided, and give them foods that are high in protein and energy snacks. A child should have at least four cups of milk every day. Milk is a good source of protein and calcium.

**ORAL HYGIENE:**

The years from 12-18 are the time that children's teeth decay. Children have lost their baby teeth, and they have been replaced with permanent teeth. Proper care is important to keep your child's smile beautiful. Teach your child to brush and floss at least twice a day. Take your child for yearly dental check-ups and cleaning.

**SEX EDUCATION:**

The most helpful thing a parent can do in this area is to offer support and understanding to the child who is undergoing body and emotional changes. They may have many questions about these changes, or there may be none. Questions need to be answered honestly, at the child's level of understanding, and proper language when talking about body parts. At this age there may be an increase in masturbation. Parents need to realize that this is common and to teach the child about body changes. Do not punish, scold, or make them feel guilty.

**DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND SMOKING:**

Curiosity and watching older children and adults' behavior may encourage children to try cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs such as marijuana. Parent, you need to talk to your child about the risks of these things so your child will feel free to come and talk with you. The best way to teach a child is by the example you set. If you think that there is a serious alcohol or drug abuse problem with your teenager, seek the advice of a school counselor or your doctor.