Happy Birthday-Two Peds in a Pod Turns Seven! About seven-year-olds



We are so proud that Two Peds in a Pod® turned SEVEN this week!

It's the golden age of seven– too old to take a nap and too young to drive. Some parental worry will now subside. Finally, you will be able to clean your garage out on the weekend without wondering if your kid has stuck her head in a bag of mulch.

Seven Wonders of your Seven-year-old's World

Entering first or second grade, a seven-year-old will often sport a toothless grin (and still believes in the tooth fairy)

as she continues her march to independence and self care. **Wondering** what she is capable of? Now she is able to set an alarm, wake up for school, get dressed and brush teeth on her own. However, self care will not be as meticulous as the care you give, so be prepared to dot sunscreen on the large patch of skin that she missed.

Wondering if your child is too old for you to read to him at bedtime? We recommend you not only continue to read aloud to your child, but have your child read out loud to you. Read higher level, more interesting books to him (chapter books), which will inspire him to become a better reader. He is now transitioning from learning to read to reading to learn. In other words, he will start to gain information from reading. Bedtimes become busy, with electronics and extra curricular activities crowding up the family schedule, but persevere.

Wonder if your child can do his own homework? Improve your child's self-esteem by allowing him do his own homework. Encourage success by setting up a quiet, clean place away from his younger siblings. At this age, homework is not supposed to take more than 10-20 minutes- if it does, alert the teacher. Let your child see natural consequences of not doing homework (teacher will have a repercussion, refrain from double punishing). Set up good expectations.

Wonder if you or your child is ready for sleepovers? Remember: kids do not sleep at sleepovers. If you will not sleep at night because a) your child is at a family's home that you are not familiar with, b) your child is at your own home and you will be constantly interrupted by the thumping of feet running about, or c) you dread how crabby and whiny your child will be in the morning, don't do it. Despite any accusations you may hear, you will not be the only parent in history to say "no" to a sleepover. Many times in the office when we see an ill child, the parent starts out the office visit with, "Well, she was at a sleepover and the next day she came down with a fever/sore throat/cough/etc."

Wonder how your child conducts himself when he is away from you? A seven-year-old is fully capable of entertaining his own friend at your home and remembering “yes, please” and “no, thank you” in a friend’s home. Make sure your seven-year-old has memorized your phone number as well as his address.

When you get into a car with a seven-year-old, he not only can buckle himself up in the car (another **wonder** of the seven year old world and a huge improvement from having to kneel in the back seat straining your back as you buckled him up as a toddler) but also he will likely remind you to do the same. Seven-year-olds are rule followers. A strategy you can use at home to encourage desired behavior is to say “The rule in our house is that everyone cleans up his own mess,” rather than saying “Clean up your toys because I said so.” (Although he may ask, he still needs to be in a booster seat.)

Our 7th **wonder** of the seven year old world: when your seven-year-old recovers from a nasty stomach virus, it is possible that NO ONE ELSE in the family will catch it. A seven-year-old can use a basin, run to the toilet, wash his own hands, and change his own pajamas. You just have to supply the watered down gatorade (and comfort, as older sick kids still appreciate a parent’s cool hand and reassuring words) and remind him to keep drinking.

We are excited to have reached our 7th year writing practical pediatrics for parents on the go. That’s hundreds of posts on topics that you have suggested to us both in the office and online. Please continue to share our content- we **wonder** if we can reach 7 million families this year!

Thank you for your suggestions and comments over the years.

Sincerely, Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD

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