

NEWSLETTER

WebParentTip Vol 8 #5 for 5-2-07

LIFE EXPECTANCY

If your child was born in 2002 a son has a life expectancy that takes him to the year 2077 while a daughter could live until the year 2081. Women, as a class, still outlive men and white people outlive blacks.

To me the most astounding statistic our government collects for us is in a table entitled, Life Expectancy at Selected Ages. At age 90 a male has a life expectancy of 4.2 years while a female has a life expectancy of 5.0 years. The gap between the sexes close as they grow older. A new statistic has been added to these tables which are published annually: life expectancy at age 100! Male, 2.5 years; female 2.8 years.

There is no question that people are living longer thanks to medical and technological advances, Social Security and Medicare, and prevention of the diseases and accidents that carry us off at a younger age.

Let's get back to your hypothetical 5-year-old kid. If you want your child to live into the last quarter of the 21st century (it boggles my mind to think of what the world will be like then) you have a job to do now. You--and your child's doctor--must keep the word PREVENTION in mind. Besides immunizations you two have to think about accident prevention (the biggest killer of children between 1 and 14), prevention of obesity which leads to those twin threateners of a long life: diabetes and heart disease, and dental care as you live longer with your own healthy teeth. The doctor-parent team has to work to prevent smoking, drugs, and risky behaviors in teens. All of us have to work to eliminate unhealthy environmental pollutants that can everybody especially kids.

Write PREVENTION in big letters and post this reminder on your refrigerator door. Pay attention to the concept. Remember if you want your children to live out their life expectancy help prevent problems now and teach your kids the importance of a healthy life style when they grow up. Statistically some of them will make it to the 22nd century!!!!