

# Health Care Providers: Supporting Two Generations of Healthy Development



ZERO TO THREE's 2018 parent survey, Millennial Connections, shows **health care providers** are among **the most frequently consulted, most trusted** sources of information on parenting and child development. **Here's what this means for you and your practice.**

In the spring of 2018, **ZERO TO THREE surveyed 1,002 parents and caregivers** of children aged five and younger across the United States.

The survey found that **83% of parents frequently turn to their child's health care provider** when looking for information about parenting or early childhood development. This trend held across income, race/ethnicity, and other categories. (Only immediate family—at 86%—were consulted more frequently as a source of parenting information.)

The sources parents rely on most—health care professionals and immediate family—are also the most trusted.

**93%** of parent respondents placed "a lot" or "some" trust in health care providers' information.

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### Health Care is a Universal Setting for Children

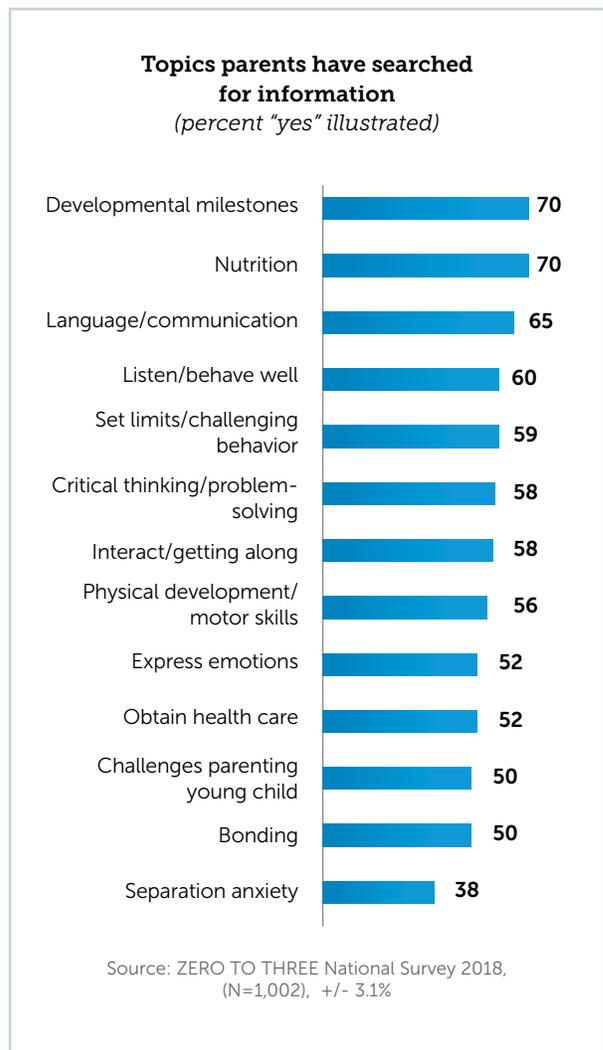
About [90% of U.S. children](#) under six have had a well-child check-up in the last year<sup>1</sup>, making the primary care setting universal for most children, and positioning health care professionals as a consistent and trusted source for positive parenting and child development information. Frequency of well-child visits is, however, influenced by demographic characteristics. Only 86% of children living in poverty have had a well-child visit in the last year. Latino children (86%) and uninsured children (68%) are also less likely to receive well-child visits than children in other groups.

Approximately **90% of U.S. children** under the age of six have had a well-child check-up in the last year.

**86%** of children living in poverty have had a well-child visit in the last year

### What Do Parents Want to Know?

Survey participants were asked whether they had searched for information on a variety of common parenting issues (respondents were allowed to choose more than one response). Parents were most likely to seek information on topics covered in many well-child visits, including developmental milestones (70%), nutrition (70%), and language/communication skills (65%).



<sup>1</sup> Child Trends, 2013. *Well-Child Visits*. Retrieved from [www.childtrends.org/indicators/well-child-visits](http://www.childtrends.org/indicators/well-child-visits).

<sup>2</sup> ZERO TO THREE, 2017. *HealthySteps Evidence Summary*. Retrieved from [ztt-healthysteps.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/5/attachments/ZTT\\_HealthySteps\\_Outcomes\\_Sept2017\\_r5.pdf?1506538354](http://ztt-healthysteps.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/5/attachments/ZTT_HealthySteps_Outcomes_Sept2017_r5.pdf?1506538354).

## Your Resources and Guidance Matter

More than half of parents surveyed (57%) said information they learned from an in-person source changed how they dealt with some aspect of their child's growth and development. Sharing anticipatory guidance and responding to behavioral/

developmental questions from families reflects a growing trend in pediatrics to support parents in their role as their child's number one caregiver, teacher, and advocate. Pediatric models that embed this element of parent coaching, such as [HealthySteps](#), show a promising evidence base<sup>2</sup>.

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### Want to know more?

- Review the survey [executive summary](#).
- Browse our downloadable [parenting resources](#) on a range of parent-friendly topics.
- Check out our [developmental milestones](#)—designed for parents and aligned to the well-child visit schedule.
- Share our [videos for parents](#) on topics ranging from learning to talk to responding to tantrums.
- For more information about ZERO TO THREE's evidence-based HealthySteps program for pediatric practices, visit [healthysteps.org](#).
- Check out additional resources for health care providers working with parents of young children:
  - [healthychildren.org](#)
  - [reachoutandread.org](#)
  - [vroom.org](#)
  - [sesamestreetincommunities.org](#)
  - [brightbytext.org](#)