

CASE VIGNETTE: JANICE'S 10 YEAR VISIT

Janice, accompanied by her father, has come for her scheduled 10 year well-child visit. Scanning her record, you note that Janice has had regular health supervision visits throughout infancy and childhood, with a few visits for viral illnesses. Her immunizations are up to date, and her previous screening tests are all in the normal range.

Janice and her father give you a cheery hello as you enter the exam room and ask Janice, "How are you today?"

"I'm fine," Janice replies. She tells you that she is now in the fifth grade and likes school. She lives with her parents, her 7-year-old brother, Juan, and their dog. No one at home smokes, but a neighbor smokes a pipe, which smells "yucky." Janice then asks, "Am I going to get a shot today?"

Janice's father says, "Janice is pretty healthy, but I want to be sure she has had all of her shots."

You explain to Janice and her father that she has had all of the recommended childhood immunizations so she doesn't need any "catch-up" vaccinations, but that in the next year or two she'll need another shot for tetanus and then routine "boosters" every 10 years, just like adults.

You recall that Janice's father works as a legal assistant at a law firm, and that her mother works as a receptionist at a dentist's office. Since neither employer offers health insurance for dependents, Janice and her brother receive health care coverage through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Janice's father is concerned that Janice and her brother are alone for about an hour after school every day until one of the parents arrives home, but they can't afford child care expenses. The parents have taught the children home safety rules, and they try to limit television viewing to 1 hour on weekdays.

Janice likes to ride her bicycle with her best friend, Caren, and to read stories on the weekends. She has lots of other friends at school. She wants to be a lawyer or president of the United States when she grows up. She feels safe at home and school, although she mentions a boy at school who is "mean" and calls her "fatso."

During her physical exam, Janice appears healthy and enthusiastic. Both her hearing and vision are in the normal range, and the examination yields no abnormal findings. Her height is at the 50th percentile and her weight at the 75th percentile for her age. Developmentally, Janice's sexual maturity rating is assessed at Tanner stage 2.

After the physical exam has been completed, Janice's father asks, "When should her mother and I talk to Janice about growing up? I'm not sure what to say."