

# HEALTH TRACKS

A Newsletter From Local Public Health to Improve the Health of Families in NW Minnesota



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

AGE - 5 YEARS



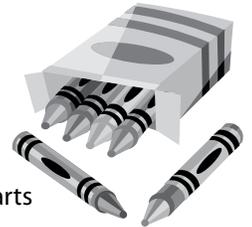
## GREETINGS!

Can you believe that little baby of yours is 5 years old and you're thinking about school readiness for her? School readiness is affected by a number of areas which we'll review in this newsletter. You're still his/her teacher at home, though, so enjoy those "teachable" moments.

## YOUR GROWING CHILD

When your child is 5 years old she should be able to:

- ✿ Play organized games
- ✿ Follow a 3-step direction
- ✿ Cut with scissors
- ✿ Copy familiar shapes
- ✿ Draw a person with 6-8 body parts
- ✿ Catch a bounced ball
- ✿ Count to 10
- ✿ Understand the meaning of many words
- ✿ Swing, climb
- ✿ Can hop



## YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH CARE



### Well-Child Check-Ups:

Your child will need a complete physical exam before she starts Kindergarten. Along with this she'll need to go to the dentist. Also she should see an eye doctor for an eye exam if she hasn't already. Help your child realize that these are friendly, helpful places to visit. If she is fearful, check out a book from the library or health care provider's office that tells about visits to the health care provider, eye doctor or dentist.

### Immunizations (shots):

It is time for him/her to have her Kindergarten boosters if she has not had them. Your child will need to be up to date on im-munizations to enter kindergarten

- ★ Don't forget to take her immunization record with you if you need to have these given.
- ★ These are his/her last immunizations until he/she is 12 years old
- ★ Parents, have you had your tetanus (Tdap) booster in the last 10 years?

## Common Health Concerns

Runny and stuffy noses, coughs, and earaches seem to be going on forever for parents whose children seem to catch everyone else's cold. The biggest defense your child has in preventing illness is to wash his/her hands. He/she should wash her hands before meals and after using the bathroom. Just imagine how many germs there are floating around a Kindergarten room!

See you healthcare provider if:

- He/she has a fever for 24 hours.
- He/she has a earache.
- He/she has vomiting and/or diarrhea that does not improve in 24 hours.
- You have any other concerns.

## FEEDING YOUR CHILD

He/she needs

- ★ 5 oz. meat
- ★ 2 cups vegetables
- ★ 1 1/2 cups fruit
- ★ 5 ounces grains
- ★ 2-3 cups 2% milk

**REMEMBER** - small children need the same kind of food as adults; they just don't need as much. They also have definite food likes and dislikes at this age.

- Most children eat best when they are served several meals at regular times of the day.
- A calm mealtime setting makes it easier for small children to enjoy eating.
- Small children will make messes at the table. This is part of learning to eat.
- Snacks should be small, not too often, not too close to scheduled mealtime (1 1/2 - 2 hours before meals).
- Water is as important as food. Offer him/her small drinks of water 2-3 times a day. Check if your water is fluoridated (to protect his/her teeth). If not, ask your health care provider about fluoride.

**REMEMBER** - you are helping him/her develop good eating habits for her entire lifetime. Be a good role model through your own food selections.

### **PICKY EATING:**

- offer small portions of new foods at the start of the meal
- serve new foods several times, she is more likely to try the food if it becomes familiar to her.
- include foods he/she likes at every meal.
- avoid forcing, rewarding children to eat.
- Be supportive. Set limits. Don't be afraid to have him/her wait for the next snack time or meal to eat.

### ACTIVITY TIP

Teach your child his or her full name, address and telephone number in case of an emergency.  
Also discuss how to use 911.

### ACTIVITY TIP

Continue to read to your child. It encourages creativity, further interest in learning, and gives you time to sit down and rest too!



## Safety Check

- ✓ All children under the age of 13 should ride in the back seat even after they outgrow their child safety seat. Children under 80 lbs. up to 4 feet 9 inches tall should ride in a booster seat.
- ✓ Teach him/her to avoid stray animals - they may carry rabies.
- ✓ Use sunscreen (#15 at least).
- ✓ Supervise him/her on the playground - especially when he/she climbs.
- ✓ Supervise her when she uses knives
- ✓ Teach her to watch for traffic before crossing the road
- ✓ Tell her to stay away from all farm and yard equipment.
- ✓ Be sure she wears a safety helmet when riding a bike, skateboard, scooters, rollerblades and skates.
- ✓ If you have an old unused refrigerator, remove the door. Children can hide in them and suffocate.
- ✓ Teach her to be aware of strangers and what to do if approached by strangers.
- ✓ Teach her to swim and supervise her around any body of water.
- ✓ Wear life vests in boats or around water.
- ✓ Keep matches and lighters away from her.



## POSITIVE PARENTING

Help her develop individuality by:

- ★ Giving her responsibility for doing basic chores or tasks around the house.

CONTINUE TO:

- ★ Praise a job well done.
- ★ Observe how your child plays with others and handles confrontation or decision-making.
- ★ Play with your child.
- ★ Answer your child's questions simply and directly. They don't want to hear lengthy explanations.
- ★ Most children need 10 hours of sleep each night.

**REMEMBER:** If your child has not gone through Pre-School Screening to check for school readiness, make sure you do that soon. Call your school to find out dates of screening.

This is your last newsletter from your local public health program. Thank you for joining your community in a program to improve the health of families in Northwest Minnesota. I hope you have found that our newsletters provided a lot of helpful information.

If you have friends who are pregnant or have young infants, please tell them how to join our program. Please feel free to call me anytime.



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