

HEALTH TRACKS

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



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

AGE -
6-7 YEARS



GREETINGS!

Can you believe your child is already in school? Your school-aged child is coming into a world of new experiences and responsibilities. With a healthy personality, he will continue to gain knowledge and skills to help him become a success in whatever he wants to be in life.

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH CARE



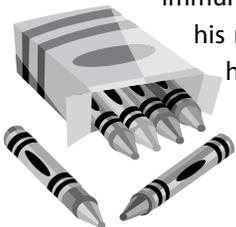
Well-Child Check-Ups:

The check-ups are recommended every 2 years by the Minnesota Department of Health. The purpose of these exams is to help find any health problems your child may have. It will also give you a chance to ask questions or bring up any concerns. Please make an appointment soon.

Remember - he needs at least yearly dental check ups and needs to brush and floss twice daily.

Immunizations (shots):

★ If your child is up to date, he will not need any immunizations at this time. If you need a copy of his record, please contact our office or your health care provider.



Enjoy your
industrious child.
Spend time with him
now, he is growing and
changing fast.



YOUR GROWING CHILD

Your school-aged child is growing, but the growth rate is less than that of infancy and isn't yet showing the big changes in height and weight that adolescence brings.

- ✿ At 5 or 6 years of age, he will start to lose his primary (baby) teeth.
- ✿ He is learning to take care of himself at home but he is not an expert yet. He may struggle with dressing, brushing teeth, bathing and combing hair.
 - ✿ watch closely to make sure he is getting it done and assist him when needed.
 - ✿ allow for practice and mistakes.
 - ✿ praise his efforts.

Some children still wet their bed at this age. Sometimes bed wetting is hereditary. Your child needs your love and support in dealing with bed wetting. Be patient. Your child is not wetting on purpose. If you have concerns, please discuss them with your health care provider.

When your child is 6 years old, he should:

- ✿ Play well with other children.
- ✿ Want to learn everything.
- ✿ Count by hours (not by minutes).
- ✿ Know some streets (names), his full name, his phone number and major points of interest.
- ✿ Like superman, magic, make believe, dress up and dolls.
- ✿ Count to 13.
- ✿ Know am/pm.
- ✿ Follow 3 step direction.
- ✿ Cut/fold/paste.
- ✿ Enjoy games.
- ✿ Enjoy hopping, skipping, riding a bike, jumping rope.
- ✿ Enjoy being read to.
- ✿ Write numbers and letters.
- ✿ Giggle a lot.

Common Health Concerns

- Sore throats, colds, and ear infections are common at this age and may occur for the first time. When he starts school, he comes in contact with new people and new sources of infection.
- You now have the new challenge of deciding when to keep him home from school. Your child should not attend school if he has a contagious illness, fever of 100 F, rash of unknown origin, vomiting or diarrhea.

The following illnesses will require medical treatment before returning to school:

- ✓ head lice
- ✓ strep throat
- ✓ impetigo
- ✓ scabies
- ✓ chicken pox
- ✓ pinworms
- ✓ ringworm
- ✓ pink eye

- It's not uncommon for children his age to complain of stomach aches, head aches or leg aches. This can be related to something unpleasant at home or at school. At this age, most children do not like to miss school.

This is often the first time your child has experienced stress in his life. Possible sources are:

- ◆ New demands from teachers, parents, club leaders and activity supervisors.
- ◆ Competition with peers and the need to feel "part of the group".
- ◆ Making some of his own decisions.

POSITIVE PARENTING

- ★ Put his baby picture in his bedroom.
- ★ Look through family pictures or his baby book.
- ★ Tell him about "when he was a baby."
- ★ Respect your child's need for privacy. Provide him with his own space.
- ★ Keep activities relaxing and quiet before bedtime, such as stories, coloring, hugs and kisses. He may resist going to bed. He likes to have the same bedtime routine. He may be more demanding and whiny in the evening. After a long day, he needs to unwind.
- ★ Be a good role model. Parents need to be aware that certain behaviors, such as cheating, stealing, and lying are learned by example. He has not yet learned these behaviors are wrong.
- ★ Be willing to admit your mistakes. He will learn adults can be wrong at times. All parents make mistakes.

FEEDING YOUR CHILD

It's your responsibility to offer healthy food choices. It's his responsibility to eat.

Learning to eat meals is an important part of his growth and development.

- ★ Be sure he washes his hands before meals.
- ★ He still likes to eat with his fingers.
- ★ He is often too busy to eat.
- ★ Sometimes he's hungry, sometimes not.

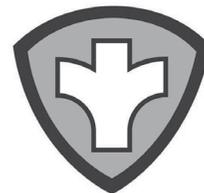
Have "family meals":

- ★ He can't move on to other tasks if he worries when he will be fed.
- ★ At breakfast, talk about what you plan to do today.
- ★ At supper, talk about what you did today.
- ★ Turn off the television while you eat.

ACTIVITY TIP

Exercise as a family.
Go for a nature walk and look for bugs or pretty leaves.
Play on a swing set or go to a park. Play tag, ride a bike, play catch.

I will be writing you again before your child is 8 years old. Please let me know any change of name, address or phone number and feel free to call me about any other concerns.



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