

# HEALTH TRACKS

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



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

AGE- 8-9 YEARS



## GREETINGS!

At eight years of age, your child is continuing the process of separation from home and family. She is becoming involved with friends and school activities. Your role is now changing to "behind-the-scenes" support.

## YOUR GROWING CHILD

✿ Some girls and boys may be showing early signs of puberty such as:

- ◆ change in mood
- ◆ increased sweat glands/skin changes
- ◆ underarm hair growth
- ◆ breast changes
- ◆ development of sex organs, onset of menstruation
- ◆ increased growth spurts

## 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 of your concerns. Please make an appointment soon.

Remember - dental check-ups are very important! Check with your dentist for his/her recommendations.

### Immunizations (shots):

★ Your child should not require any immunizations now if she is current. Know where your child's immunization record is. If it is misplaced, please call us. We may have the record on the computer and will provide a print out for you!



★ It is also recommended that your child receive a yearly flu shot.

★ Remember - before a child receives any immunization, she should be told why she is getting it and how it is given.

### Your child:

- ✿ Is now more interested in their own personal appearance.
- ✿ Has a best friend, usually the same sex.
- ✿ May try "dare-devil" activities.
- ✿ Is still "clumsy" due to growth spurts.
- ✿ Knows how to tell time.
- ✿ She is becoming more responsible to time; and is more punctual.
- ✿ Knows the sequence of months, seasons and years.
- ✿ Wants space of his/her own such as own room or part of a room.
- ✿ Knows own neighborhood well and likes maps and geography trips.
- ✿ Is interested in stars and other objects in space.

## Common Health Concerns

- She will now want to take a more active role in her health care.
- She should be able to take care of her own daily routines. You may need to remind her as she is busy with other activities or play. She may need help washing her hair.
- Sore throats, colds and ear infections remain common in this age group.
- At this age, the body's ability to fight infection is better. She may be ill less often.
- If you have questions about when to exclude your child from school, please call us. The following illnesses will require medical treatment before returning to school:
  - ✓ head lice
  - ✓ strep throat
  - ✓ impetigo
  - ✓ scabies
  - ✓ chicken pox
  - ✓ pinworms
  - ✓ ringworm
  - ✓ pink eye
- At this time, your child is getting permanent teeth. Cavities are common. Remind her to brush, floss her teeth twice daily. Ask your dentist about sealants.
- Peer pressure to smoke and use drugs is emerging as a health concern. Talk about it with your child.
- Bone fractures are common (especially arms due to falling while climbing).

## POSITIVE PARENTING

- ★ You are entering a time in a child's life when it is important to have talks about health, social issues and values. If you feel unprepared to discuss these topics with your child, talk with us or your health professional. Your library is another source of information.
- ★ Swearing or cursing is often tried out. Try to ignore this rather than give it undue attention. Your child uses these words for shock value and attention. Punishment only emphasizes the importance of the words. If he or she persists, say "I'm tired of hearing that word, please say, \_\_\_\_\_ instead", or "In our house, we don't say, \_\_\_\_\_." Ask her not to use the word again since it may hurt others.
- ★ Start to give your child a few household chores.
- ★ Peer pressure becomes an influence in your child's life .
  - Your child may be cruel to others who are different.
  - Your child attempts to live up to the standards of the group .
  - Your child may forget accepted family standards.

## Safety Check

- ✓ Your child may look larger and appear to be stronger but she may not be prepared yet for strenuous physical activities.
- ✓ Sports activities are important for the development of your school aged child.
- ✓ Gear sports equipment proportions to your child's size and strength.
- ✓ There is an increase in minor injuries at this age.
- ✓ Encourage independence but maintain limit-setting and discipline.
- ✓ Use a seatbelt every time you and your child are in the car. The back seat is the safest.
- ✓ Remind her to look for cars before crossing the street.
- ✓ Teach water safety and always wear life jackets.
- ✓ Teach your child how to swim.
- ✓ Use sunscreen (SPF 15 at least).
- ✓ Teach bicycle safety.
  - Provide a helmet and knee and elbow pads when skateboarding and bicycling.
- ✓ Keep all firearms/guns, matches, lighters safely locked away.
- ✓ Store dangerous tools, hazardous poisons or fertilizers in locked area.
- ✓ Keep household, all chemical products, and medicines safely capped in original containers, out of sight and out of her reach.
  - Minnesota Poison Control information number --- 1-800-222-1222
- ✓ Teach her how to call 911.
- ✓ Check her bath water temperature. Teach her to turn on the cold water first as she becomes independent in bathing/showering.
- ✓ Teach her to be aware of strangers and what to do if approached by a stranger.
- ✓ Practice fire drills in your home.



### ACTIVITY TIP

- Plant a tree/garden.
- Join a club

- ✓ Check smoke detectors annually.
- ✓ Supervise and teach safety in the kitchen.

## FEEDING YOUR CHILD

- ★ What your school aged child eats is influenced by her activities.
- ★ Your child is capable of learning about nutrition and healthy eating habits for strong bones and teeth.
- ★ Because of activities and growth spurts, she will need more calories. Offer healthy snacks.
- ★ She is often too busy to take time out to eat. Have a firm understanding with her that play and TV do not take priority over meal time.
- ★ At this age, your child definitely has food likes and dislikes. She may surprise you and try foods she previously did not like, so offer them again.

### HEALTHY SNACK TIP

Eat a yellow vegetable. Make a design in a slice of cheese with a cookie cutter and eat it. Make fruit kabobs!



## AS CHILDREN GROW, THEY NEED -

**LOVE** - that lets them try things on their own.

**SECURITY** - that lets them know you are there.

**RECOGNITION** - positive as well as negative.

**DISCIPLINE** - to guide and teach with love, affection and limits.

**WORTHWHILE EXPERIENCES** - including a chance to make mistakes.

I hope you have enjoyed this newsletter. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions. Please call me if you have a change of address or phone number so you can continue to receive these newsletters. Meanwhile, enjoy this special time in your life.



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

218-281-3385  
[www.co.polk.mn.us](http://www.co.polk.mn.us)

*Codi Jo Lehmann, RN, PHN*  
Email: [codi.lehmann@co.polk.mn.us](mailto:codi.lehmann@co.polk.mn.us)



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

**Polk County Public Health**  
**PO Box 403**  
**Crookston, MN 56716**

*Address Service Requested*

**TO:**

8-9 YR.