

# HEALTH TRACKS

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



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



**Age-  
10-11 YEARS**

## GREETINGS!

Now that your child is 10 years old, you will be noticing some changes occurring in the next couple of years with growth and development. Since every child is an individual, each develops at his or her own rate.

The 10 year old is generally characterized as a happy, cooperative, casual and relaxed child. This is a good time for you to develop a close relationship with your child before he or she enters adolescence.

## YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH CARE



### Well-Child Check-Ups:

It is time for your child to have his 10 year old check up. Please make an appointment soon. Dental exams are recommended every 6- 12 months and brushing and flossing twice daily. By now he has 14-16 permanent teeth.

### Immunizations (shots):

★ Please check to make sure your teen is up to date with his or her immunizations. Your child will be required to have the Tdap and meningococcal vaccines before beginning 7th grade. The HPV vaccine is also recommended in this age group. For more information about your vaccines please contact your local Public Health Clinic, Physician or School Nurse.

★ It is helpful to keep personal records of your immunizations.

★ It is also recommended you receive a yearly flu vaccine!

## YOUR GROWING CHILD

### ❁ Physical Characteristics

- Has sudden growth spurts (girls usually earlier than boys).
- Increased sweat glands, skin becomes more oily.
- Underarm and pubic hair-begin to grow.
- Fat distribution changes

### ❁ Girls

- Breast development.
- Menstruation can begin at this age.

### ❁ Boys

- Voice changes begin.
- Increased length of penis and scrotal growth.
- Wet dreams may occur.

### ❁ Mental Characteristics

- Argues logically.
- May like to read.
- Begins to use fractions.
- Has rather short attention spans.
- Begins to show talents.

### ❁ Social Characteristics

- May develop hero worship.
- Is highly selective in friendship; may have one best friend.
- It is important to be "in" with the gang.

### ❁ Emotional Characteristics

- Is casual and relaxed.
- Likes privacy.
- Is concerned with school and peer relationships.
- May cry in anger.

### ❁ Moral Characteristics

- Is more concerned with what is wrong than with what is right.

## POSITIVE PARENTING

- ★ Be a good listener, avoid preaching.
- ★ Be sensitive to his or her feelings.
- ★ Be willing to discuss sex-related concerns. Help your child understand that he is physically capable of having (fathering) a baby. She is physically capable of having (mothering) a baby if she is menstruating at this time.
- ★ Encourage your child to make more decisions.
- ★ Welcome your child's friends into your home.
- ★ Avoid criticizing his friends - what one's peers (friends) think, strongly influences your child's self-esteem.
- ★ Set reasonable limits and rules and enforce them.
- ★ How do I know when my child is ready to stay home alone?
  - ◆ There is no "right" age when a child is ready,
  - ◆ Age is less important than the skills and maturity he possesses. Does your child feel "ready" to stay alone? How long will you be gone?
  - ◆ In making your decision, consider the following:
    - ◆ Is your neighborhood safe?
    - ◆ Are there adults that your child could call for help?
    - ◆ Is your home safe? (doors and windows locked, guns/poisons/alcohol secured and locked)
    - ◆ Knows what to do in case of emergency? Can dial 911.
    - ◆ Can follow directions/rules and is "trustworthy"?
    - ◆ Have had one or more trial periods?

**REMEMBER** - don't allow your child to stay home alone if he or she is not ready.

## Safety Check

- ✓ You and your child should use a seat belt every time you ride in a car. The back seat is the safest for your child.
- ✓ Reinforce bicycle safety rules.
- ✓ Wear a bike helmet when riding bike, rollerblading or skateboarding as well as elbow and knee protectors.
- ✓ Use life vests in boats or other motorized water craft.
- ✓ Reinforce water safety rules. Never swim alone or when ill. Never dive into water which is shallow or of unknown depth.
- ✓ Use sunscreen (SPF 15 at least).
- ✓ Enroll your child in a babysitter clinic.
- ✓ Enroll your child in a firearm safety class.
- ✓ Keep guns and ammunition locked away in separate places.
- ✓ Discuss drug and alcohol-related issues with your child. Chances are your child knows others who use drugs or alcohol.
- ✓ Tell your child never to ride with a person who has been drinking.
- ✓ Continue to practice fire drills at home.
- ✓ Have a smoke detector on each level of your home.
- ✓ Check smoke detectors annually. Choose a date such as Thanksgiving Day.
- ✓ Keep all household, chemical products, and medicines safely capped in original containers.
  - Minnesota Poison Control information number 1-800-222-1222

### ACTIVITY TIP

Having children share in household chores teaches them useful skills and promotes personal responsibility.

Come up with a list of chores together and then divide them among all family members. i.e. vacuuming, take out the garbage, wash dishes, rake leaves, make beds.

## FEEDING YOUR CHILD

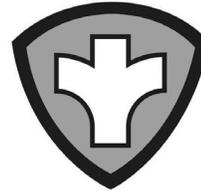
- ★ Pre-teens can push the nutritional quality of their diet to the limit. They often:
  - snack on high-calorie foods and low-nutrient foods.
  - eat out with friends at “fast food” places.
  - choose pop for meals instead of milk.
  - miss meals with the family.
  - skip breakfast.
  - go on diets.
  - try to make weight for sports.
- ★ During his rapid growth phase, your child has higher requirements for nutrients than at any other time.
- ★ Continue to have family meals and continue to expect your child to be at them. He may not be there a lot of the time, but the expectation is important.
- ★ Meals will give you a reliable social time with your child.
- ★ Have “good” healthy food in the house for snacks.
- ★ Don’t criticize the way he eats. This will only cause rebellion. Often, the nutritional quality of his diet isn’t as bad as you fear.



## Common Health Concerns

- Peer pressure to smoke and use drugs is emerging as a health concern. Talk about it.
- 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
- Puberty changes may raise questions or concerns. Be prepared to talk with your child. Call us for information.

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.



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10-11 YR.