

#1

Take your child to their healthcare provider for a check-up before the new school year. A physical exam may be needed to enter the next grade or to take part in a school sports program. While you're there, be sure to ask your healthcare provider if your child should receive any shots.

#2

Keep emergency contact information current. If there is an emergency, the school staff and the school nurse need your most up-to-date contact information in order to reach you quickly.

#3

Talk to your school nurse about the recommended and required shots for your child. Your child may need shots before attending school. Some of the shots your child received as a baby and young child may wear off by the time they become preteens/teens, leaving them at risk for catching and spreading certain diseases. For example, a booster shot is recommended to continue to protect preteens/teens and adults from tetanus and diphtheria, as well as whooping cough, which can cause missed school or work. Talk to your school nurse about vaccinations required for school entry. If you do not have insurance, your school nurse can provide information on low cost or public vaccine clinics.

#4

Keep your child active. Physical activity, such as playing sports, is an important part of overall health. Being active can increase interpersonal skills, helps develop healthy competition and leads to overall physical health. Not getting enough activity can cause weight gain, which can lead to other potentially serious health problems.

#5

Make sure your child gets enough sleep. Sleep will help your child achieve a healthy lifestyle and stay focused in the classroom.

#6

Read the school handbook on school safety. Make sure you understand how the school prepares for disasters and prevents violence and bullying. Talk to your school nurse about how medical emergencies are handled.

#7

Pay attention to your child's eating habits. Diet affects your child's health and development. Set an example by making good food choices for yourself and family meals.

#8

Share any health issues and changes at home with your child's school nurse. In addition to alerting the nurse to your child's medical needs, it's also important to relay any environmental changes. A new sibling or recent divorce can impact children in different ways. School nurses can do a better job of monitoring the situation at school if they have a heads up.

#9

Tell the school if you think your child has a serious or contagious disease. Some diseases, such as whooping cough or H1N1 flu, can easily spread to others. Your school nurse can work with the health department, school staff and other families to help control the spread of disease.

#10

Have a plan. If your child has a learning disability or a health condition that may impact learning, ask your school nurse about formal health/education plans.

GlaxoSmithKline has provided funding, editorial and other assistance to the National Association of School Nurses





Additional Resources:

For more information on these topics, you may want to visit the following resources:

National Association of School Nurses

www.nasn.org

National Institutes of Health

www.nih.gov

American Academy of Pediatrics

www.aap.org

American Academy of Family Physicians

www.aafp.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov

We all want children to be healthy, happy and active throughout the school year. NASN encourages families to speak with their healthcare providers and school nurses about ways to help protect against highly contagious vaccine-preventable diseases and reduce other health risks.