

## Vaccinations for Kindergarten Students

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian of pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten students,

Kindergarten entry is an ideal time to review your child's vaccination history. It is important to keep your child's vaccination up to date to prevent disease and to help keep your child healthy.

Most children are due for these routine vaccines between the ages of 4–6 years:

- Diphtheria / Pertussis / Tetanus / Polio
- Measles / Mumps / Rubella / Chickenpox

To book an appointment or discuss your child's vaccinations, please contact your local Community Health Centre/Public Health Office listed below. These services are provided free of charge.

Thank you,

Vaccination Team

### Calgary Community Health Centres

<input type="checkbox"/> Acadia	403-944-7200	<input type="checkbox"/> South Calgary	403-943-9500
<input type="checkbox"/> East Calgary	403-955-1250	<input type="checkbox"/> Thornhill	403-944-7500
<input type="checkbox"/> Northwest	403-943-9700	<input type="checkbox"/> Village Square	403-944-7000
<input type="checkbox"/> Shaganappi	403-944-7373		

### Rural Public Health Offices

<input type="checkbox"/> Airdrie	403-912-8400	<input type="checkbox"/> Didsbury	403-335-7292
<input type="checkbox"/> Banff	403-762-2990	<input type="checkbox"/> High River	403-652-5450
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Diamond	403-933-6505	<input type="checkbox"/> Nanton	403-646-2218
<input type="checkbox"/> Canmore	403-678-5656	<input type="checkbox"/> Okotoks	403-995-2600
<input type="checkbox"/> Chestermere	403-365-5400	<input type="checkbox"/> Strathmore	403-361-7200
<input type="checkbox"/> Claresholm	403-625-4061	<input type="checkbox"/> Vulcan	403-485-2285
<input type="checkbox"/> Cochrane	403-851-6130		

# Wake Up to Breakfast Every Day

There are many good reasons to start the day with a healthy breakfast:

- It gives you and your family more energy for school, work, and play.
- It helps you and your family stay at a healthy body weight. It also lowers your risk of having chronic diseases.
- Children are more likely to carry on those healthy habits when they see them at home.

## Breakfast food facts

- Eating breakfast improves memory and test grades.
- People who skip breakfast often have low intakes of calcium, iron, and fibre. These are nutrients for growth and health.
- Children who do not eat breakfast are more likely to miss class, be late, or be sick than children who eat breakfast.
- Breakfast does not have to be fancy to meet nutrition needs. Keep meals simple. For example, have leftover food for breakfast.
- Include at least three of the four food groups from Canada's Food Guide.

## No time for breakfast?

Try to prepare breakfast or set the breakfast table the night before. Here are some quick breakfast ideas:

- whole grain toast, bagel, or English muffin topped with peanut butter and sliced bananas
- whole grain waffle or pancake topped with fruit and low fat yogurt
- small oatmeal muffin, low fat yogurt, and an apple
- whole grain crackers, low fat cheese, and ½ cup (125 mL) 100% fruit juice
- whole grain cereal bar and a fruit smoothie

- unsalted nuts, fruit, and 1 cup (250 mL) of low fat milk
- whole grain hot or cold cereal with fruit and 1 cup (250 mL) low fat milk
- leftovers: homemade pizza, soup, pasta or casserole

## Not a breakfast eater?

If you are not used to eating early in the morning, try waiting an hour before you eat. Or try having one or two of the foods below:

- piece of fruit
- hardboiled egg
- half a whole grain bagel with cheese or nut butter
- small bran muffin
- low fat cheese
- individual box of whole grain cereal
- 1 cup (250 mL) of low fat milk (skim or 1%) or fortified soy beverage
- low fat yogurt
- unsweetened applesauce
- toasted whole grain English muffin
- ¼ cup (60 mL) of unsalted nuts
- fruit and nut bar

If you don't eat much for breakfast, add healthy foods to your morning snack. You may be able to eat more at snack time.

Slowly increase your breakfast meal to include foods from 3 or 4 food groups of Canada's Food Guide.

### Breakfast Tip:

Look for cereals and grains with more than 2 grams of fibre per serving.

## Need some more great breakfast ideas?

Boost your breakfast by trying some of these ideas:

- Scramble eggs with ham and vegetables and cook in the microwave oven for 1 to 1½ minutes.
- Fill a whole grain tortilla with scrambled eggs, salsa, and low fat cheese.
- Stuff a whole grain pita with cottage cheese and fruit.
- Broil a whole grain bagel topped with low fat ham and sliced tomato.
- Spread peanut butter on a whole grain flour tortilla and roll it up with a banana.
- Microwave oatmeal and milk, or congee, or polenta. Mix in 1 Tbsp (15 mL) peanut butter and cinnamon. Top with fruit or 1 Tbsp (15 mL) raisins or chopped dates.
- Have sardines or baked beans on whole grain toast with a glass of milk, low sodium tomato juice, or fortified soy beverage.
- Mix canned peaches or frozen berries with low fat yogurt. Top with low fat granola.

## Eat together!

Parents are role models for their children. Children who see their parents eat breakfast are more likely to eat breakfast.

People who often eat with family or friends are healthier. A family meal doesn't have to be supper. Breakfast can be a good chance to share a healthy meal.

## Recipes

### Basic French Toast

4	eggs, lightly beaten	4
½ cup	low fat milk	125 mL
8 slices	whole grain bread	8 slices
4–5 tsp	non-hydrogenated margarine	20–25 mL

Combine eggs and milk in a pie plate; beat with a fork until well blended. Dip bread slices into the mix to coat each side. Melt 1 tsp (5 mL) margarine in a frying pan over medium heat. Brown each side of bread until it is cooked through. Serve right away, or freeze for later use. Makes 4 servings.

### To reheat frozen French toast slices:

- put in the toaster **or**
- microwave on high for 30 to 45 seconds **or**
- place in the oven at 400°F (200 °C) for 10 minutes

### Once reheated, you can:

- **Stack them** with turkey or ham and top with chopped tomato or salsa.
- **Stuff them** with ½ cup (125 mL) part-skim ricotta cheese and ¼ cup (60 mL) blueberries, strawberries, or peaches.
- **Slice them** into strips and dip into mixture of one mashed banana, 2 Tbsp (30 mL) peanut butter, 1 cup (250 mL) low fat yogurt, and 2 tsp (10 mL) cinnamon sugar.

### Easy Berry Banana Smoothie

½	banana	½
½ cup	low fat milk	125 mL
1 cup	fresh or frozen berries or fruit	250 mL
1 cup	ice	250 mL

Blend ingredients in a blender until smooth. Drink right away or freeze for an easy grab-and-go breakfast in the morning. Serve with a small whole grain muffin. Makes 1 serving.

Be creative! Try other fruit combinations such as: mango and pineapple; strawberry and kiwi; or blueberry, banana, and raspberry.

# Healthy Drinks, Healthy Kids

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## Did you know?

What kids drink can have a big impact on their health.

- Children and youth need plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration and to get nutrients for good health and growth.
- Fruit flavoured drinks, pop, sport drinks, and ice slushes have too much sugar and too few nutrients for healthy growth.
- Large amounts of sugar can cause weight gain, tooth decay, stomachaches, or diarrhea.

## How can I tell if my child is drinking enough fluid?

Kids will usually drink when they are thirsty. A child that has dark yellow urine may not be getting enough fluid. Offer water or milk more often.



## Healthy drinks to Choose Most Often

Parents and teachers can help kids choose healthy drinks by making sure that healthy choices like water and milk are available.

### Water

Offer water throughout the day. Try a personal water bottle during active play, sports, studying, and when travelling. Wash water bottles every day in hot, soapy water.

### Milk

Every day, offer milk, or soy beverages fortified with calcium and vitamin D, in the amounts your child needs. These drinks help your child get enough protein, calcium, and vitamin D.

Age	Amount and type of milk needed per day
1–2 years	Breastmilk or 2 cups (500 mL) homo (whole) milk
2–8 years	2 cups (500 mL) lower fat milk or fortified soy beverage
9–18 years	At least 2 cups (500 mL) lower fat milk or fortified soy beverage

If your child needs soy formula, follow-up (stage 2) soy formula is recommended for children 1 to 2 years old. Do not give fortified soy beverages until your child is 2 years old.

### 100% fruit juice

100% fruit juice has vitamins and minerals, but is high in natural sugars. Kids who drink too much juice may not be hungry to eat healthy meals and snacks and may be at a higher risk for weight gain. Kids should eat their fruit rather than drink it! **Limit juice to ½ cup (125 mL) per day.**

- Choose drinks labelled as 100% fruit juice. Products called “drink”, “punch”, “-ade”, “beverage” or “cocktail” have added sugar and little or no fruit juice.
- Use a cup if you give juice. Don’t use a bottle or sippy cup for juice because this can cause cavities.
- Do not give juice to babies under 6 months old.



## Drinks to Choose Sometimes

### Flavoured milks or flavoured fortified soy beverages

Kids can enjoy flavoured milks and fortified soy beverages, such as chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry up to 3 times per week. They have the same bone building nutrients as regular milk or fortified soy beverage but also provide added sugar.



## Drinks to Choose Least Often

These drinks can be very high in sugar, and have little or no nutrients. Examples are regular pop, sport drinks, ice slushes, fruit flavoured drinks, and punches. **Limit “Choose Least Often” drinks to 1 cup (250 mL) a week.**

### Pop

Pop is high in sugar and has acids in it that can weaken tooth enamel. Large amounts of pop can also replace healthy drinks such as milk or fortified soy beverages.

### Sport drinks

Sport drinks are high in sugar and have added sodium and potassium. Water is the best choice during and after most activities. Sport drinks may be helpful for intense activity that lasts at least one hour with little time for recovery (for example: tournaments and competitions).

## Caffeine

Caffeine is found in drinks like cola, iced tea, coffee-based drinks, and energy drinks. Kids may become nervous, irritable, and have problems sleeping if they have caffeine. It can also be addictive.

### Energy Drinks

Energy drinks are high in sugar and caffeine. Do not give to kids of any age.

## Artificial sweeteners

Drinks with artificial sweeteners have few nutrients and may take the place of healthy foods. They are not recommended for kids unless advised by a healthcare provider.

### Vitamin water

Vitamin water is sold as a “healthy choice” but often has added sugar, artificial sweeteners, and herbs. Vitamin water is not recommended for kids.

**Don't give children and youth drinks that have caffeine or artificial sweeteners in them.**

## Drink facts

Some healthy drinks like milk and 100% fruit juice contain natural sugar and are a part of a healthy diet. Other drinks are high in added sugar and should be avoided. The following table lists drinks and average added sugar. Note: 1 tsp table sugar = 4 grams of sugar.

Drink	Serving Size	Average added sugar per serving	Average added sugar per 1 cup (250 mL)
<b>Choose Most Often</b>			
Water	Any amount	0 tsp	0 tsp
1% milk	1 cup (250 mL)	0 tsp	0 tsp
Unsweetened fortified soy beverage	1 cup (250 mL)	0 tsp	0 tsp
100% fruit juice, unsweetened	½ cup (125 mL)	0 tsp	0 tsp
<b>Choose Sometimes</b>			
Flavoured milk	1 cup (250 mL)	4 tsp	4 tsp
Flavoured fortified soy beverage	1 cup (250 mL)	4 tsp	4 tsp
<b>Choose Least Often</b>			
Vitamin water	2½ cups (591 mL)	6 tsp	2.5 tsp
Sport drink	1 bottle (710 mL)	10 tsp	4 tsp
Sweetened iced tea	1 can (355 mL)	8 tsp	6 tsp
Iced coffee slush	1½ cups (414 mL)	12 tsp	7 tsp
Regular pop	1 can (355 mL)	10 tsp	7 tsp
Fruit flavoured drink	1 bottle (591 mL)	18 tsp	8 tsp
Ice slush	4¾ cups (1.18 L)	36 tsp	8 tsp
Energy drink	1 can (473 mL)	14 tsp	8 tsp

## ABOUT BEDTIMES



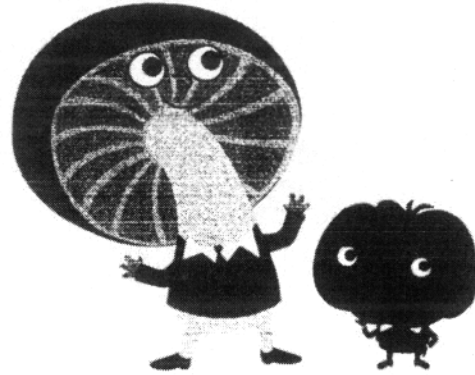
Sleep is important for children to be healthy and to learn at school. Most growing children need 10 to 12 hours of sleep every night.

### Here Are Some Tips Which May Help

- ⌋ Give your child 10 to 15 minutes warning before he has to go to bed so that he can finish his playing.
- ⌋ Avoid rough play at night, because it causes children to become too excited.
- ⌋ Do not allow children to begin watching TV programs that run past their bedtime.
- ⌋ Be firm about bedtimes. Do not give in to excuses to stay up on school nights.
- ⌋ Do not be in too much of a rush to get the children off to bed. Children are sensitive to this.
- ⌋ Spend some quiet moments talking to children while they fall to sleep. A bedtime story often helps.
- ⌋ Bedtime should be a pleasant experience with fresh bed linen, cozy pyjamas, fresh air in the bedroom, and "loving hands" to tuck them in.

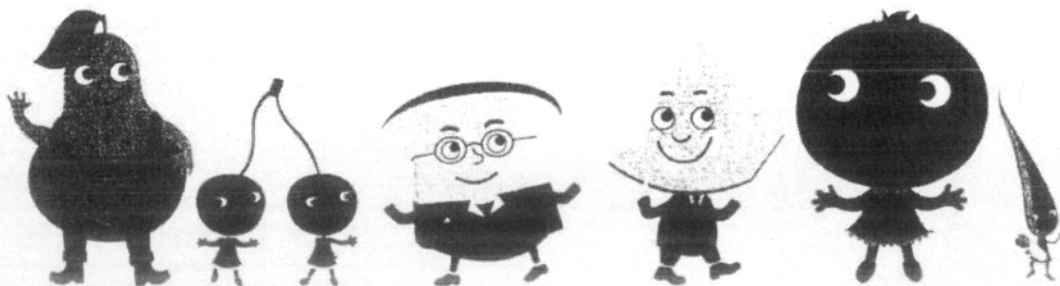


Age	Average Total Sleep Time
3 years	12 hours
4 years	11.5 hours
5 years	11 hours
6 years	10.75 hours
8 years	10.25 hours
10 years	9.75 hours



## Things to consider when making school snacks and lunches

- You will have more energy by making sure to combine foods from at least 2 different food groups
- With each snack try to have foods from 2 of the 4 food groups
- You are more likely to try new and different snack combinations if you are involved in the planning and making of the snack/lunch – so make a weekly plan on the Saturday or Sunday with an adult in your house to make sure you have the required ingredients
- Remember that if you are just having a snack, not a meal, you need to be able to eat your snack in about 10-15 minutes. A meal is larger than a snack and should be able to be eaten in 20-25 minutes.

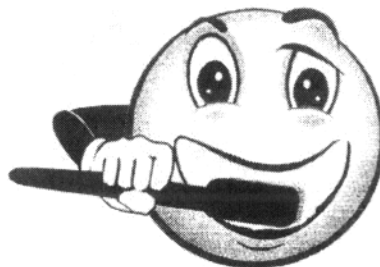




## Health Snack Ideas

- Piece of fresh fruit (peeled if necessary and cut) with a yogurt tube and couple of crackers
- Handful of trailmix with a small juice box
- Cheese and crackers with a peeled mandarin orange
- Apple and cheese
- Ants on a log (pea butter or cheese spread or cream cheese and raisins on top)
- Cut up veggies with a small container of dip (for example ranch or hummus)
- Whole wheat pita sliced into wedges with hummus spread
- Whole wheat tortilla spread with pea butter and wrapped around a banana and then cut into finger food sized coins, or spread with cream cheese wrapped around cucumber sticks or pepper slices and then cut into finger sized coins
- Fruit kabob with variety of cubed fruit and yogurt dip (could have cheese cubes instead of yogurt)
- Animal crackers with a small milk and bunch of grapes
- A few cherry tomatoes dipped in cream cheese and wrapped in a piece of deli meat on a toothpick
- Small granola bar with a few strawberries or grapes on the side
- Vegetables sliced thin and tied with a sliced of whole wheat pita or tortilla

# Oral Health



## **Less than a pea-size**

Fluoride toothpaste effectively reduces tooth decay, but children should use very small amounts of it. Until age 6, use less than a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.

## **Rethink your drink**

Reduce the risk of, tooth decay, obesity, diabetes and osteoporosis by selecting healthy beverages such as water, milk or 100% juice.

## **Lift the lip**

Check for early signs of tooth decay in babies and young children. Lift the upper lip once a month, and carefully examine the tooth enamel along the gum-line.

## **Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body**

Oral health influences general health. Maintain oral health to limit risks of heart disease, lung infections, diabetes and low birthweight babies.

## **Strong baby teeth start with you**

Moms with good oral health are more likely to have healthy babies with good oral health. Moms can limit the risk of early childhood tooth decay by making sure their own teeth are healthy.

## **Teeth for a lifetime**

Natural teeth are meant to last for a lifetime. Keep your teeth, and keep them healthy with daily home care and routine dental office visits.

## **Dental care for all**

People without dental insurance need dental care too. Every Canadian should have access to good dental care.

# Speech and Language Development



Communication skills are essential for your child's success at school, both academically and for playing with his/her friends. Answer these questions to do a quick check of your child's speech and language development in his/her home language:

Does your child:

- talk in whole sentences using adult-like grammar?
- tell a story that is easy to follow?
- ask many questions?
- answer *who, how, how many* questions?
- use *I, me, you, he* and *she* properly?
- start a conversation and continue it, staying on the same topic?
- use language to create pretend situations when playing with others?

Do people outside the family understand everything he/she says? (Children do not say all sounds clearly at this age.) If you answered "no" to any of these questions, or if you have other concerns about your child's communication skills call HealthLink at 943-LINK

## Feeding Your Child's Mind

When it comes to feeding your child's mind, it's important to consider more than reading, writing and arithmetic. As your child will be transitioning to a new routine with the start of school, it is important to think about how you will fuel their body and mind.

The foods that we eat and how often we eat have a lot to do with how well we learn and how we perform on activities throughout the day. Here are just a few examples:

- **Breakfast!!!** Starting the day with a healthy meal and enough time to eat it will give your child the energy they need to for you child by providing them the problem solving and learning skills
- Regular meals and snacks make a difference because it's tough to concentrate on an empty stomach
- Choosing nutritious foods and eating regularly improve well being and help maintain a healthy body weight.
- Getting enough iron in your diet is needed to carry oxygen to the brain and helps you to feel alert, while too many high sugar foods can make you feel "sluggish" a few hours after eating them.

So next time you're tempted to skip a meal or fill up on junk food - think again - **choose grains, fruits, vegetables, milk products and meat/alternatives from Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating – and feed your mind.**

## Growing and Changing

Children are curious. As they grow, their bodies, feelings and how they get along with others will change. Children may be confused about these changes. They may have questions. Answering these questions gives you a chance to share health information and your values with your children.



### Stress

Children have stress too! Adults aren't the only ones who feel stressed. Stress in your child may show up in many ways such as headaches, tummy aches or just not feeling well.

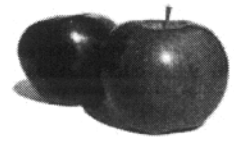
Stressed children may act differently than they usually do, such as: having trouble sleeping, difficulty relaxing, eating more or less, not wanting to go to school, becoming more quiet or looking sad or panicky. You can help your children when they feel stressed by:

- spending time with them, perhaps doing a physical activity together, such as going for a walk or a bike ride
- listening to them when they talk
- trying to understand how they feel
- showing that you love them
- giving them time to relax and do nothing



# Preparing for Kindergarten

## Key Health Messages for Parents



It's a big step when children start their education. The partnership between health and education can be summed up by the phrase: **Healthy Kids Learn Better.**

The checklist, resources, and websites below will help you as you get your child ready for kindergarten.

### **Vaccination**

- Review and update your child's vaccination before kindergarten—keep them up to date to prevent disease. Make an appointment with your Community Health Centre to have your child vaccinations brought up to date. This is a free service by Alberta Health Service.

### **Vision screening**

- Children's vision should be checked by the time they are 3 years old and every year after. The cost of the yearly eye exams are covered by Alberta Health until your child is 19 years old.

### **Hearing/Speech screening**

- If you wonder if your child may have a hearing or speech problem, check with your doctor—you may need a referral to an audiologist and/or speech specialist.

### **Dental check-up**

- Regular dental check-ups should begin by age 3. Early and regular oral health care at home is very important to a child's overall health.

### **Sleep**

- Children **4** and **5** years old need about **11** hours of sleep each night...even on the weekends!

### **Screen Time**

- Limit the time spent watching TV, video games, DVD players, i-Pad computers, etc., to no more than 2 hours a day.

## Health Conditions

- Make sure that the school has up-to-date information about any health or medical conditions your child may have, including allergies. Check with your school about their policy on what foods may not be allowed at school (e.g., like peanut butter and nuts).

## Healthy Eating

- "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide" ([www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)) has advice for all ages and stages.
- Key messages: breakfast every day, offer a wide variety from the four food groups, don't restrict nutritious food because of the fat content, and most important...be a good role model!
- Involve your child in the planning and preparing of food to build knowledge and skills, so your child will accept a greater variety of foods.

## Active Living

- Your child needs at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
- Play and have fun being active as a family.

## Routine

- Routines (like bed time, mealtime, and story time) are important. They help a child cope better with new experiences ([www.albertahealthservices.ca/2577.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2577.asp)).

## Backpack basics

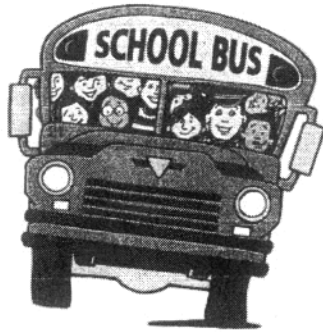
- A backpack should weigh **no more than 15%** of your child's body weight. It should also have wide shoulder straps ([www.albertahealthservices.ca/577.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/577.asp)).

## Safety-Injury Prevention

- Review and practice road and bus safety as well as "social safety" (things like staying with the group, not talking to strangers, etc.).

## Helpful Resources

- Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide ([www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)).
- [www.albertahealthservices.ca](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca): follow links...drop-down box "Information for Parent"...follow the many items or links.
- Health Link Alberta at 8-1-1 in the Calgary area
- [www.saferoads.com](http://www.saferoads.com)
- [www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org)



## Help make first day of school a happy one

**The first day of Kindergarten is an important milestone in a child's life.**

But it can also be a bit of an emotional roller-coaster, both for parents and children.

Children, though eager, may feel a bit jittery about entering this new world. "Starting school can be an emotional time for parents and children," says Leslie Barker, Coordinator, and Parenting Project with Alberta Health Services. "For children, it can be a big adjustment to get used to going to school for a half day, while parents often worry about how their child will cope. In some cases, they feel a sense of anxiety that their child is growing up so quickly."

Every year, some tears are shed by children and parents navigating new territory. The good news is starting Kindergarten doesn't have to be difficult. "There are several things parents can do to help ease the transition for their children," says Barker. "Simple things like talking to your child about what to expect when they go to school can really help ease any anxiety."

Other suggestions include:

- Book a health checkup (medical, vision and hearing; ensure vaccinations are up to date).
- Ease your child into a new routine. Have her go to bed at school-night bed time for at least a week before the first day. Most children this age need about 10 hours of sleep a night. Get your child up at the school-day wake-up time.
- Try a school bus run. Go over your child's school bus route with her if it's going to be a first-time bus ride. Find out how long the ride is, and talk about things like bus safety and where to get off.
- Take a school tour. Call the school and arrange to tour the school with your child. Help your child find his way around the school. Locate the classroom and the bathroom. If possible, meet the teacher and principal.
- Read books on starting school. Your local library will have many titles.
- Make a new friend. If possible, introduce your child to a classmate before the first day of school. If not, teach your child ways to make a new friend. Friends can help each other learn about the school routines.



- Talk about starting at a new school. Encourage your child to share his feelings. Talk about the excitement of this event. Discuss any concerns your child might have.
- Prepare the night before. To eliminate early morning last minute rushing, get your child in the habit of picking an outfit for the next school day. You can save time by preparing lunch and packing his backpack before going to bed.
- Serve a healthy breakfast/ lunch and pack a healthy snack. Children need nutritious food for their brains.

“Children adjust to change in different ways, so parents need to respect their child’s temperament. “When parents are calm but enthusiastic, and reassure their child about this exciting new experience, they can help their child cope.”

Barker adds that starting school is a time for adjustment for children, and they need to know that their secure base is still there in order to feel safe when exploring their new world.

Some safety tips parents should discuss with their children:

- Make sure your child knows the rules of the road when it comes to traffic.
- Ensure your child knows what to do if approached by a stranger.
- If your child is taking the bus, make sure he knows the correct route and has a backup plan in case of getting lost.
- If your child will be going to childcare, ensure she knows how to get there and what the rules are, and has met and feels comfortable with the caregiver. Recognize that the first few days of going to childcare may be stressful - try to have your child familiar with it before starting school.



HEALTHLink Alberta  
1 866 408 5465

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