



Welcome To 2023-24 School Year

This is an exciting time in your child's life! The start of their school career marks the beginning of independence, learning and becoming part of a bigger world outside of their family. We, as Certified School Nurse-Teachers, want this transition to be a happy and healthy one for all. It is the job of the school nurse-teacher to be sure that all students are healthy and able to learn to their fullest capacity. *Here are a few recommendations to help ensure a great start:*

- **Health information-** All kindergarten students in the State of Rhode Island are required to have current and complete immunizations, a recent physical exam including a vision screening, and lead screening results. ***Please let us know if your child has health conditions, allergies, or requires medication during the school day.***
- **Establish bedtime routines** – start a bedtime routine at least two weeks before school starts. If you let your child stay up a little later during the summer, it is time to get into the bedtime you will expect when kindergarten starts. Begin to eliminate nap time if your child is still napping. There is not a nap time built into the kindergarten day. Sleep is important to your child's overall health, especially for their immune system, social and emotional behaviors, physical stamina, and mental focus. Your child needs about 10-13 hours of sleep a day.
- **Establish a morning routine** – do a 'dry run' of your school time morning routine. Wake up at the time you plan to when school starts, have breakfast, practice walking to the bus stop or driving to the school to get your 'timing' down. Having a healthy breakfast is important. Be sure to adjust your morning schedule to account for the extra time for your child to enjoy breakfast. Get cereal bowls, spoons, cups, etc. ready the night before to help the morning go smoothly. Picking out their clothes ahead of time helps too.
- **Practice makes perfect** - Have your child practice opening their snacks, lunch items and drinks on their own. The snack and lunch time is limited, students need to be able to open packets, baggies, milk cartons, drink boxes, and water bottles. Make a practice lunch at home and talk about the items to be eaten first. Students will often go for the snacks first and come home with an uneaten sandwich. Snacks for school should be healthy foods, some healthy choices: yogurt, string cheese, fruit, veggies, and whole grain crackers. Please keep candy, soda, etc at home. Due to food allergies we do not share food at school.
- **And speaking of practice-** Please help your child get ready for toilet use at school. They should be able to unbutton, unzip pants, and pull pants up and down on their own. Students need to be able to wipe themselves after bathroom use and wash their hands. The Boy's bathrooms also have urinals. The proper use and disposal of tissues to blow their nose is also a good skill for them to master. Practice will make it less stressful for children when they are at school. Please put a change of clothes (pants, undies, shirt, and socks) in their backpacks in case accidents happen.
- **Dress for success-** Kindergarteners have an active day. Sometimes sitting on the rug, climbing stairs, and playing outside every day. Easy to wear clothes work best. Avoid fancy accessories like jewelry, belts, slippery sandals. Sneakers with socks are best for Physical Education class and the playground.
- **Medication at school** – if your child has a prescription medication that needs to be given during the school day, a

medication form needs to be signed by the parent and their doctor. All medications must be brought to school in a pharmacy labeled container stating the students name, dose, and time to be given.

• **Too sick for school guidelines** – children should not come to school if:

- ★ They have a fever of 100 or greater (students should not return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication like Tylenol or Motrin)
 - ★ Have nausea/vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours.
 - ★ Have pink, irritated eyes with drainage or crusty discharge
 - ★ Have a rash of unknown origin (if a rash develops seek medical advice)
 - ★ Have a runny nose, nasal discharge, cough, excessive sneezing (if your child has difficulty breathing seek immediate medical advice).
 - ★ Contact your child's doctor for advice on Covid-19 testing with any of the symptoms listed above.
- If you need health insurance information, access to food pantries, information on afterschool programs, childcare, job training, housing and utilities assistance, Veterans assistance, you may access the United Way help line by simply dialing '211' on your phone.

As your school nurse-teachers, we are excited to have our newest and youngest students get off to a great start! Please do not hesitate to contact us with your concerns or if we can help you in any way. Thank you, parents, and guardians, for all your efforts to send your child to school ready to learn.

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