



5 BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS

WATCH YOUR BACK-PACK!

- ✓ Filled backpacks should weigh no more than 10-15% of your child's weight.
- ✓ Buy a backpack with padded, adjustable shoulder straps. Have your child use both shoulder straps, adjusted to fit close to the upper part of the back.
- ✓ Encourage children to make trips to their lockers between classes to replace books.
- ✓ Instead of a traditional backpack, buy a small luggage bag with wheels and handle.

GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP!

- ✓ By the time children are five years old, they need at least nine hours of sleep a night. With their jam-packed schedules, it's something too few are actually getting.
- ✓ Help young children get to sleep by establishing a predictable bedtime routine. Limit action packed television, computer or video games before bedtime.
- ✓ The internal clock for teens - which tells them when it is time to sleep and when it's time to wake - rapidly changes with their rapidly changing bodies. While they may not feel sleepy until very late, their school day often starts very early ... leaving them chronically sleep deprived. Encourage teens to get into bed before they're actually tired and relax until they fall asleep.

KEEP YOUR KIDS HEALTHY!

- ✓ Make sure that your child's immunizations are up-to-date.
- ✓ Know your school district's rules about handling and distributing medicine before the school year starts. While some schools allow children to "self medicate" under certain circumstances (carry an inhaler for asthma with them), others require that the nurse administers all medications.
- ✓ To reduce the risk of lice, remind children to never share or trade hats, scarves, combs or brushes, or anything else that touches another person's head (headbands or headphones).

KEEP LUNCHES HEALTHY!

- ✓ Choose low sodium ham, turkey breast or roast beef for a lower fat deli sandwich.
- ✓ Peanut butter and jelly, apple butter or honey is still a favorite meatless lunch.
- ✓ Pack a "leftover" lunch with cold chicken or meatloaf. Fill a thermos with stew, chili or soup.
- ✓ Avoid high fat (and salt) *Lunchables*: pack crackers or mini rice cakes and low fat cheese or deli meat in a plastic container.
- ✓ Include fresh fruit or an individual can of fruit, and a baggie of cut-up carrots, celery or peppers.

KEEP LUNCHES SAFE!

- ✓ Use an insulated lunch box or bag. Once a week, wipe the interior of the box or bag with a weak bleach solution (one teaspoon of bleach per gallon of water).
- ✓ Make sandwiches from cold ingredients (use frozen bread slices). Pack a 100% juice box or water bottle - freeze the night before - as it thaws, it will keep everything cool until lunchtime.
- ✓ Remind children to wash their hands before eating ... and after using the bathroom.