

QUICK FACTS: A Back-To-School Checklist

It's that time of year again – classrooms have been readied, pencils have been sharpened, and children of all ages are headed back to school. Children's Regional Hospital at Cooper is pleased to offer parents this checklist of additional resources to help make this season safe, healthy and sane for you and your students!

Backpack Safety: A national consortium of chiropractors and other health care providers have banded together to form Backpack Safety America, which has endorsed steps to safe backpack use. Those steps include:

- Choose the right **SIZE** backpack. It should be large enough to contain all the school essentials, but not so large that it overwhelms your student.
- Carefully **PACK** the backpack. The maximum weight of the backpack should not be more than 15% of your student's body weight – so pack only what is needed.

LEARN MORE AT: <http://www.backpacksafe.com/topic.asp?pid=9>

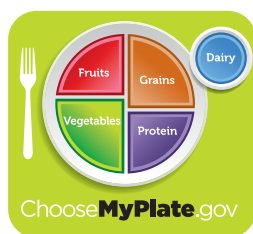
Sun Protection: Minimizing exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays – while walking to school, during physical education classes, and at recess – can help prevent skin cancer later in life. The tools you should use regularly are:

- Hats
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen

LEARN MORE AT: www.peggywalk.com/melanomafacts.html

Healthy Food Choices: Eating healthy meals, especially breakfast, is a no-brainer. Did you know that the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently issued new guidelines for how to eat healthily that replaces the Food Pyramid? The new model is called MyPlate, which is much simpler. It uses an image of a plate, with four sections:

- Proteins
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Grains



LEARN MORE AT: www.choosemyplate.gov

Bus Safety: With school as with so many things in life, getting there safely and securely is half the battle! Whether your child takes a city bus or a school bus, there are common-sense principles that can help them be safe:

- Stay seated anytime the bus is moving.
- Never stick arms or heads out of bus windows.
- Once you exit the bus, watch for the bus driver to tell you when it is safe to cross the street – and double-check, looking both ways before crossing.

LEARN MORE AT: http://www.ehow.com/how_2154688_teach-children-bus-safety.html

Immunization Updates: The state of New Jersey requires that certain students receive vaccines to protect themselves and others from common childhood diseases. Among them are:

- Students entering daycare or preschool
- Students entering New Jersey public schools for the first time
- Students entering 6th grade

LEARN MORE AT: <http://nj.gov/health/cd/imm.shtml>

Seat Belt Safety for Carpoolers: State laws now require all passengers, including back seat riders and adults over 18, to buckle up. If your young carpoolers protest wearing seat belts, this resource is chock full of surprising statistics on safety. For example, did you know:

- A seat belt increases your chances of surviving a crash by 75%
- Only 37% of kids ages 8-18 buckle up in the back seat
- Good news: Front-seat seat belt use is at an all-time high of 93.73% in New Jersey!

LEARN MORE AT: www.njbackseatbullets.com

Safe Walking: Pedestrian injury is the #2 leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 5-14. If your children walk to and from school, or around the community, this resource contains tips about safely walking everywhere, like:

- Cross streets at corners, and in crosswalks wherever available
- If there are no sidewalks where you are walking, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible
- Look left, right, and left again – and keep looking! – as you cross the street

LEARN MORE AT: www.safekidsnewjersey.com/category/safe-kids-walk-this-way/

Adequate Sleep: Getting the right amount of sleep each night can mean a world of difference to your student. And setting the stage for a productive night of ZZZs is easy:

- Remove distractions, such as televisions, from the bedroom
- Keep the room as dark as possible – perhaps just a night light, if necessary
- Keep the temperature cool to optimize a solid night's sleep

LEARN MORE AT: <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/pages/Sleep-and-Mental-Health.aspx?nfstatus=401&nftoken=00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000&nftstatusdescription=ERROR%3a+No+local+token>

Can We Help? Cooper In Schools, a program of Children's Regional Hospital at Cooper, offers FREE information and continuing education sessions for parent-teacher organizations, school district staff inservices, coach and trainer clinics, and community groups. Please contact Maureen Donnelly, Cooper In Schools Intake Coordinator, at cooperinschools@cooperhealth.edu to learn more.



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