

## Bright Futures: Family Matters

Formerly PICture This

**10 Things You Can Do to Get Your Children Off to a Healthy New Year This Fall** – The end of summer and start of school signals new beginnings. Get your children - and family - off to a healthy start this fall!

**1. Make sure your children are up to date on immunizations.** These are among the best protections your children can have. Schedules have changed in recent years – besides those for very young children there are new ones recommended for teenagers. Talk to your children's doctors or go to [www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.htm) to see the most current schedule.

**2. Schedule your children for their well child health and dental visits.** These important visits review your children's general health and well-being. They are also opportunities for you, as parents, to get advice and information.

**3. Gym, physical education and recess.** In the past families could assume that schools offered physical education, sports and daily opportunities to get outside and play. Now limited budgets mean some schools are cutting back. Find out what's happening in your town and schools and what you and others can do to ensure your children get the exercise so beneficial to growing children.

**4. School classes** - What classes address health and wellbeing at your children's school and how can you be involved?

**5. School lunches** – Are there healthy food options at your children's schools – lunches, snack + drink machines? Or can your children bring food? What can you and others do to work with schools to ensure the availability of healthy foods children will eat? See:

[www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_fit/nutrition/lunch.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/lunch.html)

**6. Children with special needs** - Ensure that those who need to know about your child's needs - nurse, teachers, etc. – have your child's individualized education or 504 plans. See also: [www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/backtoschool.html](http://www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/backtoschool.html)

**7. Snacks/After school snacks** – After school kids seem to be starving. Plan ahead to have healthy snacks on hand that your children will enjoy. Try to limit the number of high calorie foods around the house so there's no temptation. [www.mealsmatter.org/eatingforhealth/topics/article.aspx?articleid=43](http://www.mealsmatter.org/eatingforhealth/topics/article.aspx?articleid=43) or [www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/thriftyliving/tl-snacks.html](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/thriftyliving/tl-snacks.html)

**8. After school activities** – More exercise less screen time (TV, computer, videos)! Ensure that your children have regular opportunities for active play every day. See: [www.ncpad.org](http://www.ncpad.org) specially for kids with disabilities on [www.scholastic.com/familymatters/parentguides/afterschool.htm](http://www.scholastic.com/familymatters/parentguides/afterschool.htm)

**9. Meals/Family Meals** – Maybe you already eat well or maybe this is the year you'd like to plan healthier meals for your family. Involve your children in choosing foods and helping to prepare meals. Eat together as a family as often as you can. [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/nibbles/family\\_meals.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/nibbles/family_meals.pdf)

**10. Family activities** – Think about activities that will get your whole family moving. Try to build in regular times to take walks, play catch, swim – activities everyone will enjoy. For ideas that will work for your family's interests and time see [www.verbnow.com](http://www.verbnow.com)

Family Voices is a national grassroots network of families and friends speaking on behalf of children with special health needs. Our children are also part of the wider world of children. With a Partners in Information and Communication (PIC) Cooperative Agreement from the MCH Bureau - DHHS, Family Voices works to encourage partnerships between families and professionals for children's good health. *Bright Futures: Family Matters* is a digest of articles and news clips to share with families, family organizations, and our professional partners. Check out our Family Voices web sites at: [www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org](http://www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org) and [www.familyvoices.org](http://www.familyvoices.org)

## Partners... Voices for America's Children

, formerly the National Association of Child Advocates, is a national organization that works through state and local groups to improve the well-being of children by influencing public policy. Voices supports and enhances the effectiveness of child advocacy organizations across the nation. Their web site offers links to state and local child advocacy groups and other great resources and information. Learn about children's health allies in your state and how you can become involved.

<http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org> or  
Monica Zimmer

1522 K Street, NW, Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20005-1202



### Family Resource Corner

\*KidSource focuses primarily on health and education related issues. They offer articles on health care, a list of recalled products for children and babies, links to other helpful resources, and more! [www.kidsource.com](http://www.kidsource.com)

\*National Bullying Prevention Campaign, Take a Stand. Lend a Hand. Stop Bullying Now! The federal Health Resources and Services Administration has resources and communication kits available at [1-888-ASK-HRSA](http://1-888-ASK-HRSA). Urge the schools in your neighborhood to request kits.

\*Mental Health in Children and Adolescents is a new "knowledge path" linking to a wealth of current, reference-based materials for parents and professionals – reports, resources, data, family organizations and much more. Other knowledge paths connect to areas such as asthma, Spanish-language resources, and more. Go to: [www.mchlibrary.info](http://www.mchlibrary.info)

\*Fact sheets from the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools are available on topics such as children's vision, weight, dental health needs, mental health, and more. Check out [www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org)

## What's new in research?

**Benefits of Family Meals** – A new study finds that the more family meals teens eat the less likely they are to use tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana. Adolescents are also less likely to be depressed and have suicidal thoughts if they eat more family meals. Archives for Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine published this study based on data from more than 4000 adolescents in the Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, metro area. For an article about this study go to: [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2004-08/jaaj-fma080204.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2004-08/jaaj-fma080204.php)



**Tidbits for the Month**  
**October is National**  
**Child Health Month!**  
**Eat Healthy/Move More!**

**We'd like to hear from you!** We'd like to know the value of this newsletter and how you use it. Email Betsy Anderson at [betsyand@fcsn.org](mailto:betsyand@fcsn.org) or fax to (617) 572-2094.

- I am a: parent\_\_ professional\_\_ little of each\_\_
- The overall usefulness of this publication is:  
(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
- I use the information for myself \_\_\_\_\_
- I pass the information on to others \_\_\_\_\_
- The best things about the newsletter are:
- The things that could be improved are:



**Highlights for the next**  
**Bright Futures: Family Matters**  
Screen Time – TV, computer, videos

### Share your news with others!

We're always looking for news and activities about family organization and programs to post. Share exciting events and activities about your organization that will be interesting to others. . To subscribe to the newsletter, email or call Betsy at (617) 236-7210 •

This issue prepared by: Joan Steck, Intern, Simmons College, Betsy Anderson, and Barbara Popper.

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