



# BLUE SKY PEDIATRICS ASHEVILLE

## NEWSLETTER—SCHOOL IS COOL!



### STARTING OFF HEALTHY

As all parents with school-age children have experienced, the beginning of a new school year requires a great deal of advance work such as buying new supplies and clothing and filling out all of those new forms the first few days of school. Preparing for student's health needs is also an important part of getting your child ready for school. Make sure your child receives all necessary immunizations. Also, make sure that the school nurse and teachers know about any medical conditions that your child may have, such as food allergies, asthma, and diabetes. You might need to check with the school to see how any medications your child might need will be administered. Remember also to talk to the teachers about any condition that may affect how your child learns such as ADHD, vision problems, or hearing problems. Don't assume that this information will be passed along from the last school year. The schools have a lot of students to keep up with and it is easier for you, as the parent, to make sure that the school has this information. Most schools require one or more health forms that will need to be updated each year and this may require a well-child visit with your Pediatrician if it has been over a year since the last well-check was completed. If your child plays a sport and needs a sports physical form completed, your child will need to have a well-check within the past year. Don't wait until the last minute. This is also safer for your child so no health issues are missed.

### BACK TO SCHOOL BUTTERFLIES

When a child starts school for the first time or enters a new school or a new grade, kids can feel very uneasy and need time to adjust. Remind your child that everyone feels a little nervous and that it will become easier in no time. Teachers expect students to be anxious and will usually make an effort to help everyone feel as comfortable as possible during those first few transition days of school. As a parent, you can emphasize the positive things about going back to school, such as seeing old friends, meeting new friends, and getting new supplies or clothes for school. You can also remind them of positive memories from previous years and how they were nervous at the beginning of those years also. If you can, adjust your schedule to be home at the end of the school day for the first week to make the transition smoother. Try to arrange your evenings so you can give your child as much time as they need during those first few days. If your child is new to the school, ask the school if they can pair your child with another student to help with the adjustment to new people and new surroundings. It would also be helpful to transition your child into a consistent school-night routine a few weeks before school starts. Tips to help your child the entire year include eating a healthy breakfast, sleeping enough, and writing down important information such as locker combinations, class times, teachers' names, bus numbers, etc.. To help them be more organized, you can suggest that your child use a wall calendar or personal planner to write down when assignments are due, when tests will be given, when after-school activities are scheduled, etc.. Your child can also feel more organized if they can set out what they need the night before, such as the clothing for the next day, and make sure that everything they need is in their backpacks and ready to go the next morning. Although it is normal for your child to be anxious in any new situation, a few kids develop real physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches. If you are concerned that your child's worries go beyond the normal back-to-school butterflies, call and speak to your child's Pediatrician's office to make sure that there is no underlying cause of the physical symptoms.



### AFTER SCHOOL



Figuring out what to do with your child after school can be a challenge when both parents work. It is important that younger kids and preteens have some sort of supervision from a responsible adult. Although it might seem like kids who are approaching adolescence are becoming mature enough to start watching themselves after school, even kids as old as 11 or 12 may not be ready to be left alone. If your kids or teens are home alone in the afternoons, it is important to establish clear rules for them to follow so they know that you are paying attention. You should set a time when they are expected to arrive home from school and have them check in with you or a neighbor. You should also specify who is allowed in your home when you're not there and make sure that they know to never open the door for strangers. It would also be helpful to make sure they know what to do in an emergency and leave them a list of emergency phone numbers and neighbors number in a place where it is easy for them to find, such as on the refrigerator. If your child will be attending an after-school program, make sure that it offers kids a productive alternative to watching TV or playing video games. Be sure that the facility has an adequate staff-to-child ratio and that the rooms and/or playground are safe. Your child should also know when and who will pick them up when the program ends. For more information about an after-school program that we have personal knowledge of and recommend, go to [www.dojoku.com](http://www.dojoku.com). If you choose a program that helps to develop your child's interests and talents, then that will make the program a place that your child will look forward to attending instead of being just a babysitter for them.