



## NOTES FROM THE NURSE – Traver Road September 2009

FOR ALL OUR NEW STUDENTS AND FAMILIES - WELCOME TO TRAVER ROAD  
FOR ALL OUR RETURNING STUDENTS - WELCOME BACK!

My first newsletter always contains the same information I believe will be useful for all our families. For those who have read this before... let it be a gentle reminder of how to help get our children AND ourselves back into a healthy routine.

Wow! Summer vacation is over and what a wonderful summer it was. For those of you who have air conditioning and swimming pools - it ranked up there at the top for best summer weather. For those that had to sweat it out - it certainly was a hot and muggy one - including the first week of school! Regardless, here we are back to school and now is a great time to talk about sleep, schedules & snacks.



**SLEEP:** Adults crave it, kids fight it-we all NEED it. It helps us to grow and learn. The start of school is always a difficult time to get to bed early. Summer is still in the air and the children miss their freedom of late nights and sleeping in. The school day begins early (8:40) and getting to bed on time is very important. Children aged 4-8 truly require 10-12 hours of sleep per night to perform well in school and stay healthy. This brings me to schedules.



**SCHEDULES:** Gone are the lazy days of summer (although there are still week-ends). Setting a sleep schedule with regular bedtimes and bedtime rituals will almost **guarantee a fight-free bedtime**. Try to adhere to the same bedtime every night. Settle down with a quiet activity at least 30 minutes before bedtime (reading, puzzles, coloring, talking). Not only are these activities soothing they are perfect opportunities to spend some quality quiet time with our children. And, parents are happiest when they know in advance when their parenting day will end. Parents need sleep too!!



**SNACKS:** Bag the chips, toss the cookies & candy. Many packaged snacks lack the nutrients our little ones need to make it through the day. We have all been guilty of grabbing these from time to time, but make this year the year of getting in a habit of healthy eating. Many of these healthy snacks can be purchased in small portions in the supermarket, perfect for little ones to pack for a snack. Have them help pick out their "new" healthy snacks. They'll be more prone to enjoy them! Here are some suggestions:

- ♥ 100% juice & milk, or bottled water instead of "fruit drinks"
- ♥ Crackers instead of chips
- ♥ Carrots with ranch dressing
- ♥ String cheese
- ♥ Yogurt
- ♥ Cheese & crackers
- ♥ A piece of fruit

**Remember:** make sure your children ask the teacher before sharing a snack, due to food allergies. We have several children with nut allergies at Traver Road this year. This can be a very dangerous, life-threatening allergy and I ask that all our parents keep this severe allergy in mind when sending food into school for both their child and the class. If there is a peanut allergic student in your child's class I ask that you please refrain from sending in ANY foods with peanut butter or peanut oil into the class. Remind your child that they can enjoy these foods at home anytime.

Please do not hesitate to call me at 635-4315 with any questions you may have regarding your child & their health. You may also email me at [kcarlin@acsdny.org](mailto:kcarlin@acsdny.org)



## School and Stress



The beginning of the new school year can be a stressful time for children, with new teachers and classmates, new routines and more schoolwork. This time can be particularly unnerving and overwhelming for children who are facing major transitions such as starting elementary school (or middle and high school for older children). As a parent there are proactive steps you can take to support your child as he or she heads back to school.

- ❖ Express interest and **ENTHUSIASM** about the start of the school year. If you are confident and excited, your child will be too!
- ❖ Take time to **LISTEN** to your child and discuss aspects of the new school year that he or she is worried about. Remember to let your child know that it is **NORMAL** to feel nervous about the start of school. For parents of younger children, suggest that your child take a family photo or special object to school to make his or her surroundings more comfortable – they can leave this item in their backpack if they choose.
- ❖ Spend time **EACH** day talking to your child about what happened in school. Give your child positive feedback about his or her new experiences.
- ❖ Praise and encourage your child to become **INVOLVED** with school activities and try new things.
- ❖ **ATTEND** school functions and stay involved in your child's education. Children whose parents are more involved with their education have higher achievement and are better adjusted.
- ❖ Make a point to learn about how your child develops not just physically, but socially and emotionally, as well. If you are aware of what's typical behavior and thoughts for your child's stage of life, you will be able to tell more readily when things may not be right.

Anxiety and stress about starting school is normal for a child and usually passes within the first few days or weeks. If your child continues to seem anxious or stressed, it may be time to speak with the teacher and/or your pediatrician about what you can do as a parent to help.

**DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN THE HEALTH OFFICE – BABY WIPES AND NEW UNDERWEAR (SIZES 6-10) ARE ALWAYS NEEDED – THANK YOU**