

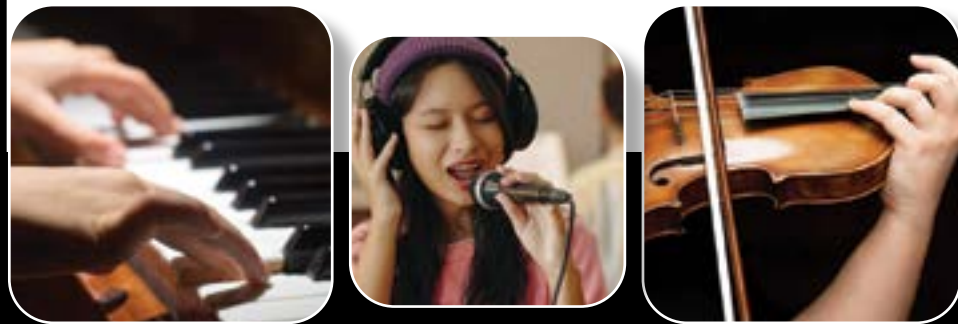
PARENT CONNECTION

BACK TO SCHOOL



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PARENT CONNECTION — INSIDE —

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How to spark excitement for the new school year

A new school year presents a wealth of opportunities for students. At the dawn of a new school year, students have a chance to further their academic careers, student-athletes may be given a shot at making a team or moving up to varsity, and extracurriculars provide a chance for personal growth outside the classroom.

Despite all that a new school year represents, students may need a little extra motivation to get excited about going back to campus once summer winds down. A relaxing and largely obligation-free summer vacation can be tough to give up, as can mornings without alarm clocks. Parents recognize that kids might not be enthusiastic about the return of early mornings and sessions in the classroom. In such instances, parents can try the following strategies to get kids excited about a new school year.

Make the first day special. First days can be challenging regardless of a person's age. Professionals with years of experience in their field still feel first-day jitters when they begin a new job, so youngsters can be excused if what seems like a lack of excitement is really just nervousness about a new school year. Parents can calm those nerves by doing something to make the first



day special. Skip the standard cereal and prepare a homecooked breakfast or let kids buy lunch at the school cafeteria instead of packing a PB&J in their lunchbox. A little something special on the first day can go a long way toward getting kids excited about going back to school.

Emphasize new subjects. As children advance through school, they're typically exposed to more engaging subjects or challenged in ways that helps them build on previous years' work.

Emphasizing new subjects or opportunities can increase kids' excitement

to get back in the school year swing of things. If a youngster likes playing an instrument, emphasize how the new school year is an opportunity to get better, play alongside other students and take a talent to new heights. If students are old enough to take subjects they've long been interested in, such as a foreign language, make a point to emphasize how that opportunity has finally arrived.

Create a school calendar. Schools typically make their yearly schedules available prior to the first day of school. Parents can peruse those schedules alongside their children and make a calendar noting special days. Mark down field trips, special events involving parents and students, school performances where kids get to act or sing on stage, and other notable moments during the school year. Kids are bound to grow more excited about a new year when they see a year's worth of fun events marked down on a calendar.

Host a late summer get-together with friends. A late-summer pool party or play date with various friends can remind youngsters that they're about to see their friends every day. That might be enough to make young students jump out of bed on the first day of school. (METRO)*


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DID YOU KNOW?

There is no definitive age when a child may need to get eyeglasses. However, the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus notes that children's visual systems are still developing during the first 12 years of their life, and during this period wearing glasses can be important for normal vision development.

Glasses can help straighten crossed or misaligned eyes, bolster weak vision caused by differences in vision between a child's eyes, and even protect the stronger eye.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children begin vision screening around age 3 and receive annual screenings each year at ages 4, 5 and 6. After that, screening is recommended when children turn 8, 10, 12, and 15.

Of course, parents who begin to suspect their children are having trouble with their vision are urged to take the child to an ophthalmologist once such suspicions arise. Some notable signs include blurriness, headaches, losing interest in games, losing place while reading, eye rubbing, dizziness, inexplicable declines in academic performance, children sitting closer to the television than they once did and children's own remarks regarding their vision if they say anything at all. (Metro)*



Balancing sports and studies

The rigors of academia demand every student's utmost devotion. For some, the challenges in the classroom are accompanied by the thrill of competition on the playing fields. Multi-tasking may be most associated with modern professionals, but many might have learned how to balance multiple responsibilities at once during their days as student-athletes.

Student-athletes typically have a lot on their plates. Managing multiple priorities at once can overwhelm anyone, especially young student-athletes without much experience handling such a juggling act. As a new school year begins, student-athletes can consider these strategies as they try to do their best in the classroom and on the competitive playing fields.

Practice time management over the summer. Summer vacation provides a much-needed respite for all students, but it also can serve as a time management trial run for student-athletes. Over the course of summer break, create a schedule of activities and allot a certain amount of time to devote to each. In the spirit of summer vacation, these activities need not be rigorous, but the schedule can lay the foundation for the hopefully successful management of time that will be necessary when the school year begins.

Embrace organization. Being organized requires knowing what is required of you and when. It's important to set up a way to keep track of your schedule and your obligations in sports and in the classroom. Invest in a planner that works for you, whether it's digital on a phone or computer or a notebook paper planner. Consider color-coding items so they stand out and you'll be able to scan easily.

Be flexible. There are times when peak season for sports may coincide with exam and assignment deadlines. This time will not last forever, and being flexible and changing things on the fly may be necessary.

Take steps to avoid burnout. Burnout can affect student-athletes in the classroom and on the field. Work with parents, coaches and school staff, including a nutritionist if one works for the school's athletic department, to devise a meal plan



that will help to energize the body and reduce injury risk. In addition, follow a consistent sleep schedule that helps to overcome mental and physical fatigue.

Avoid distractions. Student-athletes who are finding it hard to get at least eight hours of sleep each night might be too distracted during the day to get everything done so they can go to bed at a reasonable hour. Smartphones ensure distractions are never too far away, but student-athletes can take a proactive approach and turn off app notifications once a new school year and season begins. In addition, pick a quiet homework/study room in the house without distractions like a television or the hum of outside noise.

Set academic and athletic goals Coaches typically establish goals for players before the season and then again during end-of-season exit interviews. Such goals can help athletes maintain their motivation, and a similar strategy can be employed in the classroom. Parents and student-athletes can meet with teachers to establish study goals to keep them striving toward academic achievement. Clearly defined goals can improve student-athletes' focus, and that can make it easier to balance their responsibilities.

Student-athletes face a balancing act once a new school year or season begins. Various strategies can help young people successfully juggle their academic and athletic obligations. (Metro)*

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What parents can do to be more **involved** at school

Education is vital for young people to reach their full potential and enjoy success in adulthood. Students' academic journeys begin as early as preschool and continue for decades. While students ultimately earn degrees or professional certifications in their own names, their academic journeys are often a team effort that includes the support of their parents.

Parental involvement in school can pay significant dividends for students. A recent study by the American Psychological Association reviewed more than 400 studies examining parental involvement in school. That review found that students whose parents were involved in their children's schooling showed greater academic achievement, school engagement and motivation compared to youngsters with parents who were not involved. That payoff compels millions of parents to get involved in their children's schooling, and the following are a handful of ways to do just that.

Start the year off right. Parental involvement in children's schooling can begin before a new school year gets under way. Orientation events designed to acclimate students to new schools can



help calm youngsters' nerves when they're beginning kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, or high school. Transferring to a new school due to a family relocation or another variable can be difficult for students, and parents can make that transition a little easier by attending orientation events before the first day of classes. Back-to-school nights held a week or two into the school year also present a great chance for parents to start the year off right.

Volunteer with parental organizations. Parent teacher associations/organizations are always in need of members to help to organize special events and volunteer at school functions. Parents can join groups such as a PTA or PTO to get more involved in campus life. If joining such groups is not possible, try to volunteer for events throughout the school year.

Actively communicate with children's teachers. Parents can contact teachers at

the start of a new school year to identify the best way to communicate. Some schools utilize apps to facilitate communication with parents. Some teachers may prefer communicating via email, phone calls or even text messages. Parents should not hesitate or be afraid to reach out to teachers about their children's needs.

Do your part at home, too. Parental involvement in children's education can extend to the home as well. Parents can emphasize the importance of education in conversations with their children and offer to help with homework when children seem to need some assistance. Parents also can ask about assignments and tests, enthusiastically engage in projects designed to involve students' families, and provide a stable, distraction-free home environment where kids can focus on their schoolwork.

Ask children about their day. One of the simplest ways parents can be more involved in children's schooling is to ask them about their day when they arrive home. Ask children what they did in class, and which parts of their day they found most, or even least, enjoyable. When parents express an interest in what kids are doing at school, that may compel kids to be more interested in their coursework. (Metro)*



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Sleep and academic performance go hand in hand

Parents of school-aged children know that bedtime can be challenging, particularly when moms and dads want to ensure their youngsters get the recommended number of hours of sleep each night. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine advises school-aged children between the ages of six and 12 get nine to 12 hours of sleep per night, while teens are urged to sleep eight to 10 hours per night.

Studies have found that when students don't get enough sleep on school nights, their academic performance is likely to suffer and identified a notable decline in students' grade point averages when they received less than six hours of sleep, suggesting humans' ability to learn and remember what they've learned in a given day is compromised if they don't get enough sleep that night.

If school-aged youngsters are falling short of AASM recommendations, those students' academic performance could be adversely affected. With that in mind, parents can try various strategies to get children to bed on time.

Stay consistent with bedtime. A firm bedtime can reduce the likelihood that sleep disruptions will affect how



children perform in the classroom. If children are staying up three hours past their weeknight bedtime on Friday and Saturday, then they're less likely to want to go to bed on time on school nights. A little flexibility on the weekends might not upset the apple cart, but

try to maintain a consistent bedtime throughout the week.

Help kids calm down before bed. A winding down period leading up to bedtime can help kids fall asleep more quickly and might even make them less resistant to bedtime. Avoid particularly

energetic activities directly before bedtime. Calmly reading a book and picking clothes out for the next day of school are calm activities that can get kids' bodies ready for sleep.

Avoid confrontation. Parents are urged to let it go if kids aren't falling right asleep but are still being cooperative at bedtime. Kids might want to keep reading to themselves after Mom and Dad say goodnight, and that's alright so long as children aren't continually getting out of bed or getting riled up. Eventually kids will tire out when engaging in a calm, pre-sleep activity, so parents should not grow upset and confront kids who are behaving but not falling asleep right away.

Create a positive sleep environment. Young children will resist sleep if it sounds like their parents and siblings are having a grand old time without them. Parents typically go to great lengths to ensure kids' bedrooms are conducive to sleep, but it's also important to maintain a peaceful setting throughout the rest of the house once children go to bed.

Sleep and school are inextricably linked, and parents can do much to ensure kids get the rest they need to do their best in the classroom. (Metro)*

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No two children are the same, but many youngsters share a number of similarities. Few young children enjoy going to bed on time, and many can't resist a good trampoline. Kids also have a reputation for being picky eaters, which can be challenging for parents tasked with picking and preparing school lunches.

When dining at home, parents know which foods their kids eat and which they push around their plates in the hopes they won't have to consume them.

School lunch is a different scenario altogether, as parents are not around to ensure their youngsters eat a full and nutritious meal. Kids who are picky eaters may not eat any lunch at all. Parents who want to ensure their children get the nutrition they need to do well in school can consider the following school lunch ideas.

Make-your-own sandwich: Kids may be more likely to eat a full lunch if they get to put it together themselves. Parents can put all the elements of a tasty sandwich into youngsters' lunch boxes, but let kids assemble the meal themselves. Sandwiches are not necessarily the healthiest midday meal, but they are much more nutritious when parents pack whole grain bread, tomatoes, lettuce, and low-sodium deli meat in students' lunch boxes. If a do-it-yourself sandwich is a nonstarter, consider a DIY taco lunch complete with whole grain tortillas.

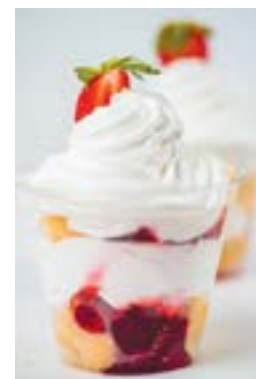
Burrito bowl: A burrito bowl with kid-friendly yet nutritious ingredients is another great school lunch option. Red beans are a good source of fiber and the Harvard Medical School notes all beans are rich in potassium. Fiber is filling, so a burrito bowl that includes fiber-rich

ingredients, including red beans but also quinoa or brown rice, can help students avoid late-day hunger pangs that can compromise how they feel and perform in the classroom. Burrito bowls are so tasty that kids may not even realize Mom and Dad have snuck some healthy foods like vegetables into their midday meal.

Parfait: Parfait has all the looks of a tasty dessert without the pitfalls of ice cream and other treats. The nutritional value of parfait depends on the ingredients Mom and Dad choose to include. Protein-rich Greek yogurt paired with some fruit and granola makes for a filling and tasty meal that's also loaded with vitamins, minerals and fiber. An insulated and airtight lunch box packed with ice packs can ensure the parfait is still cool come lunchtime.

Pasta salad: Kids tend to be especially fond of pasta, and parents can use that affinity to their advantage when planning school lunches. A whole-wheat pasta salad with some cherry tomatoes and diced broccoli makes for a nutrient-rich lunch that kids can enjoy. If broccoli figures to raise youngsters' ire, consider a nutritious substitute, such as shaved cucumber or zucchini.

School lunches can be nutritious and still make kids excited to eat their midday meal away from home. (Metro)*



6 ways to help your kids have a healthy school year

As you prepare children to return to the classroom this fall, the American Medical Association (AMA) has seven tips to help your family have a healthy school year.

“As you purchase school supplies and prepare the students in your family for academic success, you can take concrete steps that prioritize physical and mental health, too,” said AMA President Bobby Mukkamala, M.D. “A healthy start can set the tone for a strong, successful year ahead.”

Ultra-processed foods are associated with health risks. Many busy families rely on ultra-processed foods due to their convenience. However, consuming these foods regularly increases the risk of health complications, including cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, obesity and type 2 diabetes. Read nutrition labels carefully with attention to sodium, saturated fat and added sugar, shop the perimeter of the grocery store where fresh, whole foods tend to be located, and prepare meals that prioritize whole foods, including fruits and vegetables, for growing children and adults.

Eating disorders are misunderstood. This silent epidemic affects people of all ages and backgrounds, striking at the core of their physical and mental well-being.



Despite its widespread impact, the gravity of eating disorders often remains private, leaving many to battle the condition silently. If you believe your child or teenager has an eating disorder, their physician can direct you to helpful resources.

Ensure your vaccinations are up to date. Vaccinations help protect you and your family against severe disease and disability, and save millions of lives each year. Check with your physician during the

back-to-school season to ensure everyone in the family is up to date on vaccinations. When respiratory virus season starts later in the fall, get up to date on the influenza vaccine to help reduce time away from school or work.

Norovirus is very contagious, but preventable. It seems everyone has experienced the sudden turn of the stomach, causing a mad rush to the bathroom due to vomiting, diarrhea or

both. And, unfortunately, remaining near the bathroom may be the only plan for the next day or two. The most likely culprit is norovirus, and it can happen to anyone.

When buying school supplies, stock up on cleaning supplies as well so you can keep frequently touched surfaces sanitized. Model good hand-washing habits for your children. Keep children with norovirus symptoms home from school for at least 2 days (48 hours) after symptoms stop to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Too much screen time is bad for health. People are on their devices more than ever before. But too much screen time can have negative mental and physical health effects and increase feelings of loneliness. The start of a new school year is a good time to replace screen time with other activities, such as after school clubs and sports, playdates, quality family time and sleep.

Eye health is essential. Don't take eye health for granted. Fall is a good time for an ophthalmologist checkup. If your tween or teen wears contacts, be sure that they wash their lenses and lens case and take their lenses off at night. Frequent computer breaks, wearing sunglasses, and a healthy diet can also promote good eye health. (StatePoint)*



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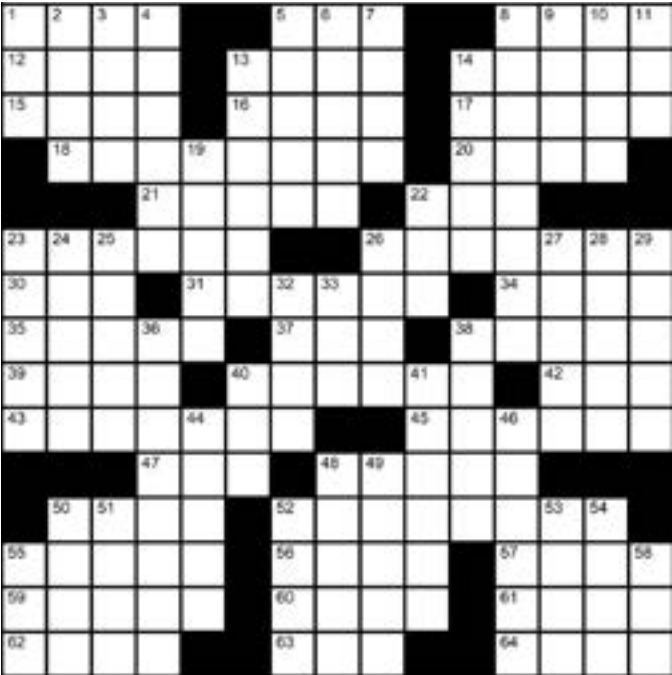
THEME:
Back to School

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. *Report _____
- 5. One on the beat
- 8. Put on the payroll
- 12. Fan sound
- 13. Buckeye State
- 14. Indy entrant
- 15. Table mountain
- 16. 2021 movie "The Harder They _____"
- 17. Carry away, in a way
- 18. *_____ Readers
- 20. Weary walk
- 21. Basketry stick
- 22. *_____ time for preschoolers
- 23. Plums and cherries genus
- 26. Allegiance
- 30. Crew propeller
- 31. Rh in Rh disease
- 34. Your majesty
- 35. Miss of the Muppets
- 37. Band event
- 38. Asci, sing.
- 39. Olympic castaway
- 40. *Didn't fail
- 42. Frozen H2O
- 43. Took a penny-farthing, e.g.
- 45. *Punctuation marks for famous words
- 47. Maltese or Havanese, e.g.
- 48. *Use Play-Doh
- 50. Cheap trinket
- 52. *3+x=10, e.g.
- 55. Soviet place of exile
- 56. Curtis, to friends
- 57. Beehive state
- 59. *Olden-day notebook
- 60. Honey-producing facility
- 61. Sushi restaurant soup
- 62. Location of altar
- 63. Type of poem
- 64. Sing like Ella Fitzgerald

Answers to last week's puzzle:
Working Out

A	R	O	M	A	Y	A	K			L	A	T	H	
C	A	R	O	B		A	L	A		P	A	D	R	E
E	V	A	N	S		R	I	P		I	V	I	E	S
D	E	L	T	O	I	D		P	I	L	A	T	E	S
			E	R	R		B	A	T	E				
S	K	I		B	A	B	A		S	U	N	L	I	T
T	I	N	T			T	U	R	F		P	E	A	C
R	O	V	E			E	R	N	I	E		E	M	I
A	W	A	R	D			N	O	V	A		M	I	L
W	A	R	M	U	P			W	E	R	E		A	Y
						R	O	I	L		L	U	G	
C	I	R	C	U	I	T			C	Y	C	L	I	N
I	D	I	O	M			E	R	A		H	O	N	E
T	E	L	L	S			M	E	G		R	A	D	A
Y	A	L	E				S	P	Y		E	M	O	T



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CLUES DOWN

- 1. Mountain basin
- 2. Attention grabber
- 3. Reduced Instruction Set Computer
- 4. Hiccup's Toothless, e.g.,
- 5. Irritate by rubbing
- 6. Persian Gulf ship
- 7. Multi-
- 8. *"Get out of classroom" permit (2 words)
- 9. International Civil Aviation Organization
- 10. Retired, shortened
- 11. Bard's before
- 13. Lacking cordiality
- 14. Settle a debt
- 19. Unethical loaner's practice
- 22. Us, in Mexico
- 23. Temporary store
- 24. Reason to strike
- 25. Prodded
- 26. Totes or tugs
- 27. Permissible
- 28. Cease-fire
- 29. Many affirmatives
- 32. "Good grief!"
- 33. Bro's counterpart
- 36. *School alum
- 38. Next step for juvenile
- 40. Margaret, for short
- 41. Describe as similar
- 44. Elks' hangout
- 46. Poppy derivative, pl.
- 48. Marine cephalopod
- 49. *Grading arch
- 50. Big one at 7-Eleven
- 51. Regrettably, exclamation
- 52. Sound reflection
- 53. Auditory
- 54. U.S. space agency, acr.
- 55. Geological Society of America
- 58. *Van Halen's "_____ for Teacher"

*THEME RELATED CLUE

SUDOKU PUZZLE

						5	6	
	7	8			5			
6			2			1		
				3			4	9
4		7				3		6
5	3			4				
		9			3			2
			1			8	3	
	4	6						

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Directions: Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Answers
to last week's
SUDOKU

1	2	8	4	3	5	9	6	7
6	3	4	7	8	9	2	5	1
5	9	7	1	6	2	4	8	3
4	8	2	9	7	1	6	3	5
9	6	1	2	5	3	7	4	8
7	5	3	6	4	8	1	2	9
2	7	5	8	1	6	3	9	4
3	4	6	5	9	7	8	1	2
8	1	9	3	2	4	5	7	6

Back to school food allergy guide

What parents need to know

Children spend anywhere from 800 to 1,100 hours at school each year. For those with food allergies, that time comes with added risks. From cafeteria meals to classroom snacks, the risk of a food allergy exposure is an everyday concern.

And with good reason: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1 in 13 children — roughly two per classroom — are affected by food allergies. Of those, 42% have experienced at least one severe allergic reaction, known as anaphylaxis. For children at risk, even a small exposure can be life-threatening.

The good news? With the right preparation, you can help your child manage food allergies with care and consistency. Discover how to educate, plan and confidently communicate with school staff and other parents to support your child throughout the school year.

Awareness and education are key

What is a food allergy? Simply put, it's an allergic reaction that occurs after eating a food allergen. Your body's immune system mistakenly responds to a certain food as if it were a harmful germ, causing an allergic reaction.

In children, the most common food allergies are to peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, fin fish and shellfish.

A serious allergic reaction involves two or more body organs — the skin, lungs, stomach and/or heart. Symptoms may include: hives on the skin, sometimes on several parts of the body; shortness of breath, wheezing, repetitive cough; tightness in the throat, hoarse, trouble swallowing; swelling of the tongue, lips or throat; stomach discomfort such as abdominal cramps, diarrhea or vomiting; blood pressure changes; and becoming pale, faint, dizzy, and confused.

Epinephrine is the only medication that can stop anaphylaxis. Administer it as soon as possible. Remember the rule: "Epinephrine First, Epinephrine Fast."

10 tips for a safe school year

Here are 10 essential tasks to help ensure your child with food allergies is safe, supported and included at school.

Schedule a back-to-school health checkup. Obtain updated medication forms, epinephrine prescriptions and an emergency care plan. Discuss whether



new food allergy therapies — such as biologics — might offer added protection in case of accidental exposure.

Meet with school staff. Discuss food allergy accommodations in the cafeteria and classroom. Review the emergency plan. This is especially important if your child starts a new school.

Teach your child how to stay safe. Help your child recognize signs of an allergic reaction and understand when and how to ask for help. Make sure your child knows who to turn to and what steps to take in an emergency.

Be ready for the first day of school. Submit all required school health forms, drop off your child's epinephrine and share a copy of the emergency care plan.

Address bullying and exclusion. Talk with your child about speaking up if they are being excluded, teased or bullied due to food allergies. Encourage talking with a trusted adult.

Pack allergy-safe meals and snacks. Make sure your child only eats what is safe based on his or her dietary restrictions.

Plan for snacks and special events. Confirm school policies for snack times and meals during field trips. Encourage no sharing of food.

Ensure epinephrine is easy to access. Find out if the school stocks epinephrine, where it's stored, and if the staff is trained to administer it in an emergency. Remember, your child is permitted by law to self-carry an epinephrine device.

Check in with your child. Make it a habit to ask your child how things are going at school, including if there's any difficulty managing food allergies.

Keep the conversation going. Communication between home and school is key. Keep teachers, school nurses and staff informed of any changes in your child's health or needs.

Food allergies don't have to get in the way of a safe, fun school year. With a little planning and teamwork, you can help your child thrive in and out of the classroom. For more information, tools and resources, visit AllergyAsthmaNetwork.org. (BrandPoint)*

Give Kids A Smile Day

Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine will host its annual Give Kids a Smile Day at its Dental Care Center, 1 South Drive, Stony Brook on Thursday, Aug. 28 from 2 to 4 p.m. with special appearances by The Tooth Fairy, Mr. and Mrs. Tooth, Wolfie the Seawolf and a facepaint artist. Children ages 1–17 will receive a FREE dental screening, cleaning, fluoride treatment, and sealants (as needed) in support of their mission to ensure that all school-aged children have access to good oral health. Each child will be provided with a dental health kit, string backpack, and a "Summary of Exam" form that will document the treatment rendered and recommendations for further treatment, if necessary. Appointment registration is required, and a parent or legal guardian must accompany the child on the day of the event. To schedule an appointment, please call 631-632-8967 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

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