



**Eau Claire City - County
Health Department**

720 Second Avenue, Eau Claire, WI 54703-5497

715-839-4718
Fax: 715-839-1674

www.eauclairewi.gov/health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Lieske Giese, RN, MPH

Director/Health Officer

715-839-4718

After 5:00 p.m. – 715-514-7881 (cell)

Elizabeth.Giese@co.eau-claire.wi.us

Healthy Start to School Year

Eau Claire, WI –September 6th, 2013

School is back in session and the Eau Claire City-County Health Department encourages families to help their children have a healthy start to the year. “We all want our kids to have success in school. Coming to school healthy makes an enormous difference in every child’s ability to learn,” says Lieske Giese, RN, MSPH, director of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. Simple things make a difference. Every parent can take steps to focus on helping their kids not get sick and stay healthy.

Sick kids miss school and may pass their illnesses on to other children and teachers. Parents can focus on a few things to help keep children from getting sick this year.

- Vaccinate your children. Children that are fully vaccinated are protected from a number of diseases themselves and also do not risk spreading disease to others that are at risk including our elderly. Check with your provider or the health department if you are not sure if your child is up-to-date. More information on vaccines needed can be found at: <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/P44021.pdf>
- Teach kids how and when to wash their hands and how to cover their cough/sneeze. Be an example to them. There are helpful videos, <http://www.cdc.gov/cdctv/handstogether/> and posters <http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/wash-your-hands-poster.pdf> available to remind everyone of how to stop the spread of disease.
- Keep your child home if they are ill. They need to get better, and others don’t want them to share germs.

Parents can also focus on helping kids make healthy choices this school year. Clear and consistent messages to them make a difference in their health.

- Kids should understand how to make food choices at breakfast and lunch that will help them stay strong, prevent illness, and be ready to learn. Having breakfast every day is critical for all kids.
- Encourage your child to walk/bike to school and wear a helmet when they bike. Modeling helmet use when you bike also sends a strong message to them about protecting their brains – something they need for school!
- Kids need activity. Pay attention to how much TV, computer, and gaming time your child has in a day and consider ways to get them to be more active.
- Making choices about unsafe alcohol and drug use and unsafe sexual behavior can all have significant consequences for school age children. Give them clear messages and the support they need to be safe.

Summer is over and our school age children are back in school. Let’s keep them strong and healthy and ready to learn this year.