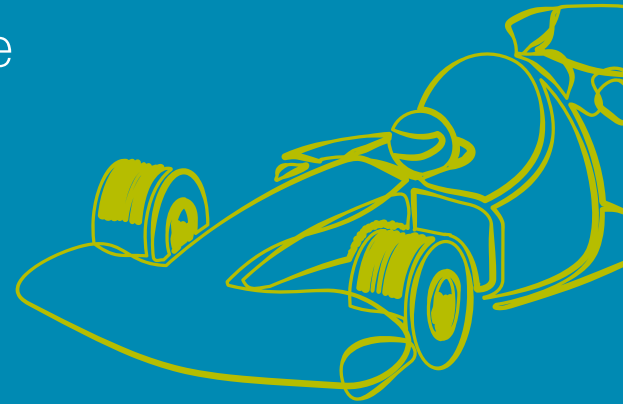


Middle School Health **Starts Here**



INTRODUCTION

So you're a parent of a middle schooler. Great job getting this far! You've made it past the terrible twos and sped past the first day of kindergarten. Now you and your child are starting a new journey! There's more to learn, more fun, and more changes. It's going to be awesome – and weird at times – but you've got this!



This guide is here to help you navigate these changes during this time in your child's life. Tween health for 11-12 year-old children brings a new stage of health questions. We're here to help.

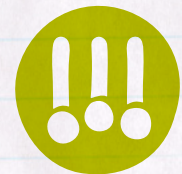
What you do now will prepare your child to cross the finish line into adulthood. This is a road map to the potential health bumps in the road. While we can't prevent everything, we can at least be prepared!

In this guide, you'll find:

- Checklists to use with your health provider for a tween tune-up
- Health information road map

Visit our website with even more information – MiddleSchoolHealth.org

This guide is created by public health organizations across the country that care a lot about the health of all children. They have worked to pull the most important information for you and your child.



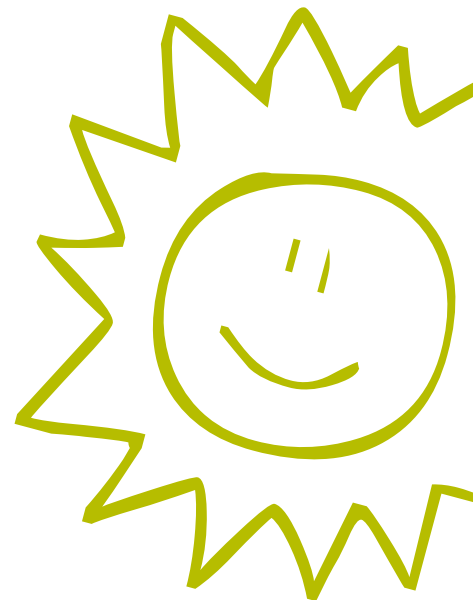
If you ever have questions about your child's health, make sure to ask your health provider, nurse or doctor. This guide is helpful, but never a replacement for the health advice of a professional that knows your child.

Funding for this guide was made possible (in part) by the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention Cooperative Agreement number 5H23IP000931-01. The content in this toolkit does not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

HEALTHY YEAR CHECKLIST

Check-Ups	How Often
Pediatrician, Nurse, Health Care Provider	
<input type="checkbox"/> Routine Wellness Visits	<i>Every year - Includes developmental milestones, behavioral assessments, anticipatory guidance, physical activity and nutrition</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Growth and Body Mass Index	<i>Every year</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cholesterol Blood Test	<i>As needed based on family history</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Blood Pressure Check	<i>Every year</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Check	<i>As needed based on family history</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Vision Check	<i>Every year. Eye exam for needing glasses/contacts at age 12.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Vaccines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Flu - Every year <input type="checkbox"/> Tdap - Get 1 booster at 11 or 12 years old <input type="checkbox"/> HPV - HPV vaccine series is recommended for both boys and girls at 11 and 12 years old, start as early as 9 years old <input type="checkbox"/> Meningococcal ACWY - First shot at age 11 or 12
<input type="checkbox"/> Anemia Blood Test	<i>Girls annually. Boys starting at 12.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexually Transmitted Diseases	<i>Only needed if child is sexually active</i>
Dentist	
<input type="checkbox"/> Oral Health Check-Up	<i>Check-up visit every 6 months</i>



SCHOOL READINESS CHECKLIST

When you are registering for middle school, you will likely need these things.



Your school district might require additional forms and releases. Always check with your school district first!

From Your School District

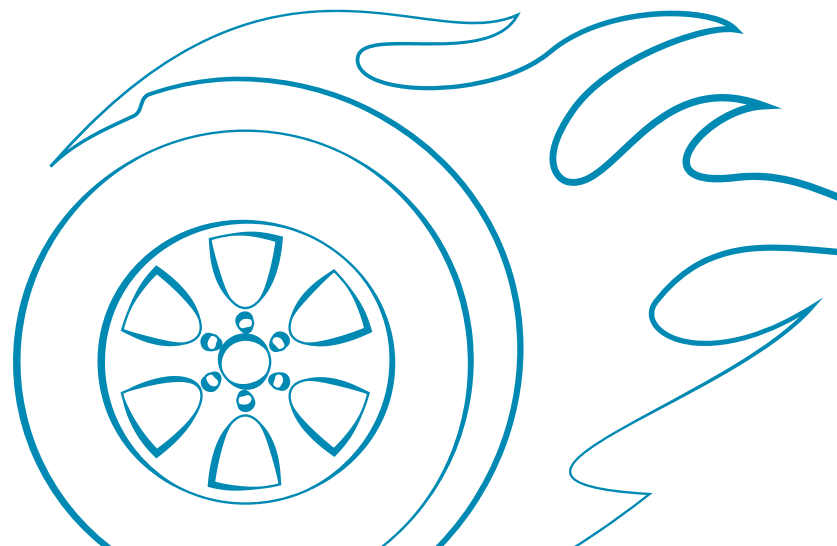
- Student Registration Form
- Record Release Form
- Transfer Card from Previous School
- Report Card
- Test Scores
- Individual Education Plan - IEP (If Applicable)

From Your Health Care Provider

- Health History Form
- Physical Examination Form
- Immunization Record
- Medication Instructions and Releases (If Applicable)
- Emergency Action Plan (If Applicable)
- Individual Education Plan - IEP (If Applicable)

From Your Home

- Proof/Certificate of Residency
- Custody Alert Form (If Applicable)
- Custody Papers (If Applicable)
- Medical Emergency Contact Information



SHOT AT GOOD HEALTH

Vaccinations don't just give your middle schooler protection against preventable diseases, they're often recommended before your child can start class! Give your middle schooler a shot at good health with these vaccines:

- **Tdap** – Get 1 booster at 11 or 12 years old to protect your child against three illnesses in one mighty shot!
 - *Diphtheria* - serious respiratory illness that can be deadly for children.
 - *Tetanus* - bacterial disease that affects your nervous system, commonly called lockjaw.
 - *Pertussis* - serious respiratory illness that can be deadly to infants.
- **HPV** – It literally prevents cancer! Both boys and girls need complete the HPV vaccine series to prevent HPV infections that are known to cause cancer.
- **Meningococcal ACWY** – First shot at age 11 or 12 will help protect against four strains of meningococcal bacteria, which causes infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord. Your child will need a second dose when they go off to college.
- **Flu** – Get this shot annually to help avoid this nasty illness.

It's NEVER Too Late

It is never too late to get up to date on all vaccines. Just ask your health care provider to catch up your tween!

- **Pneumococcal**
- **Hepatitis A**
- **Hepatitis B**
- **Polio**
- **Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)**
- **Chickenpox**



Get more information online:

Teen Vaccine Schedule →

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/who/teens/downloads/parent-version-schedule-7-18yrs.pdf>

How important is the HPV Vaccine? →

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7VnhgvtID00NDhSQ1ZQa1BRdHc/view?pref=2&pli=1>

HPV Vaccine:

▪ Basics →

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/hpv-basics-color.pdf>

▪ In-Depth →

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/hpv-indepth-color.pdf>

Flu Vaccine →

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/flu-basics-color.pdf>

Meningococcal Vaccine →

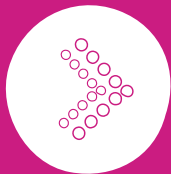
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/mening-basics-color.pdf>

Tdap Vaccine →

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/teen/tdap-basics-color.pdf>



Change “happens” to all middle schoolers and your middle schooler is no different. These changes might start with hair growth in new places on their body to unfamiliar body odors and more. Here are some ideas to get your tween off to a healthy start.



Take this quiz to test your parent safety smarts →

<http://www.cdc.gov/family/parentquiz/index.htm>

Clean Body. Encourage your child to bathe or shower daily. If body odor is a concern, have your child use a deodorant.

Hair. Your son might want to start shaving his face and your daughter might want to start shaving her legs. Help them pick out a razor that is safe and easy to use.

Eating. Pizza might be your tween’s idea of a balanced meal, and it can be...in moderation. A balanced diet is important for a growing mind. Make sure your child:

- Gets three cups of low-fat or nonfat milk daily.
- Aims for five servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Limits foods and drinks that are high in sugar and fat.
- Limits juice to no more than 1 cup per day.

Sleeping. Children this age generally need about 10 – 11 hours of sleep per night. Lack of sleep can make it hard to pay attention at school.

If Your Child Needs to Wake-up At...	6:00 AM	6:15 AM	6:30 AM	6:45 AM	7:00 AM	7:15 AM	7:30 AM
Set Their Bed Time for...	8:15 PM	8:30 PM	8:45 PM	9:00 PM	9:15 PM	9:30 PM	9:45 PM

Physical Activity. Children this age should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Make it a family playtime! Get outside for a walk or dance in the kitchen with your child.



HEALTHY BODY AND HEALTHY MIND

Limit Screen Time. Try to limit screen time to no more than two hours per day! This includes TV, DVDs, video games, smartphones, tablets and computers. Excessive screen time can lead to eye fatigue, obesity and general middle schooler grumbles.

Oral Health. Tweens need to continue to brush twice a day and floss once a day. A dental check-up every six months is valuable. Some children may be fitted for braces around age 12.

Ear Health. Listening with headphones or music too loud can cause tinnitus, which is an early indication of potential noise-induced hearing loss. It is easy to prevent:

- Buy noise canceling headphones so your tween can listen at lower levels.
- Invest in volume-limiting headphones.
- Set a safe volume limit in their device settings.
- Get ear plugs for concerts.

Skin Health. You might start seeing big changes in your child's skin. Be prepared!

- **Acne** – Acne can arrive as early as 11 or 12. Washing with soap and water at least twice a day is the first step. If problems persist, talk to your health provider about medications and topical treatments to help prevent this totally natural (and annoying) skin problem.
- **Sun Block** – You still need to slather that tween in sunscreen. Use at least SPF 30 and reapply every hour.
- **Tanning Beds** – Don't do it. Some states have outlawed tanning bed usage for those under 18. It's never a good idea. Even one indoor tanning session can increase users' risk of developing cancer cells by 67%¹.

Need an easy way to kick-off a conversation with your tween about their health?

Try the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine's **THRIVE** app – in both the Apple store and on Google Play. This free app has an extensive library of teen health and wellness topics relevant to this transformative and often complex stage of life to help parents have important discussions with their teens and young adults. It also provides parents with conversation starters for difficult or sensitive topics; health exams and preventive health information, including vaccinations and well-visits; risk-oriented behavior, such as drinking, smoking or sexual health; social media and more.

Learn more → <http://www.adolescenthealth.org/About-SAHM/Healthy-Student-App-Info.aspx>



Get more information online:

Parent Toolkit for 6th Graders →

<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/index.cfm?objectid=F2AAC860-9D75-11E3-857E0050569A5318>

American Academy of Pediatrics Grade School Information →

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool>

Tips for Raising A Safe and Healthy Child →

<http://www.cdc.gov/family/parenttips/tips.pdf>

Children and TV:

Limiting your child's screen time →

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/children-and-tv/art-20047952?pg=1>

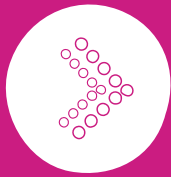


¹ American Academy of Dermatology, "Prevention and Care." <https://www.aad.org/media/stats/prevention-and-care>

HEALTHY BODY AND HEALTHY MIND

MENTAL HEALTH

- **Stick to Your Rules.** A growing need for independence means tweens may test the boundaries of established rules. Decide which rules can be eased and which must remain in place.
- **Getting the Blues.** Look for signs of depression, which can include irritability, sadness, loss of interest in activities, poor academic performance and talk of suicide.
- **Bullying.** Almost 1 in 3 U.S. students in grades 6 – 12 experienced bullying. In addition, 70.6% of young people say they have seen bullying in their schools². Talk to your child about how to get help if they are being bullied and what to do if they see a friend being bullied. Being a bystander is not okay for our children.



Are you worried about your child's mental health?

Take this quiz →

<http://childmind.org/symptomchecker>

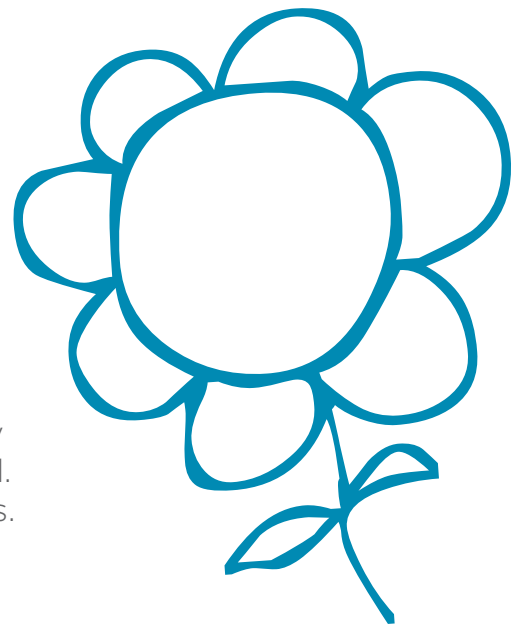
SEXUAL HEALTH

Be Ready to Talk. Be prepared to answer questions about puberty and the feelings associated with those changes. Encourage your child to bring his or her questions or concerns to you. Be ready for “The Talk” about sex and relationships.

Talk openly about sex and encourage your child to wait until he or she is older to engage in sexual activity with others. Explain the risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and unwanted pregnancy.

Female Health³ – Your little girl is becoming a woman; be ready to talk about it.

- **Breast Development** – Her breasts can start to develop by age 11. Often one breast will grow faster than the other will. Be ready to support your daughter through these changes.
- **Periods** – In girls, the first menstrual period usually occurs by age 13, but it can come as late as age 15. Talk to your daughter about menstruation before it occurs and encourage her to come to you once it does.



² Bullying: Statistics and Information.

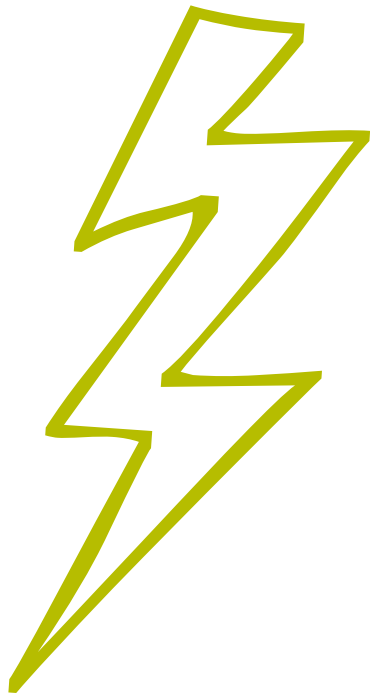
http://americanspcc.org/bullying/statistics-and-information/?gclid=CjwKEAjwsMu5BRD7t57R1P2HwBgSJAbrtj-RE19g_S25F2SKx_JsZ_MtKavqL6CM13c_5rollq7TZBoC3Mbw_wcB

³ “Concerns Girls Have About Puberty” <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/Pages/Concerns-Girls-Have-About-Puberty.aspx>

HEALTHY BODY AND HEALTHY MIND

Male Health⁴ – Your son will have some special concerns; be ready to talk about them:

- **Voice Change** – Your son’s voice might change and get “crackle-y”.
- **Erections** – Assure your son that erections and “wet dreams” are normal.
- **Breast Enlargement** – The breast tissue on young men might get bigger during puberty. It usually goes away after a few months.
- **Testicle Lower Than The Other** – Assure him that uneven testicles are normal and common.



Get more information online:

Parent’s Guide to Getting Good Care →

<http://childmind.org/wp-content/uploads/Child-Mind-Institute-Parents-Guide-Getting-Good-Care-032216.pdf>

How to Talk to Educators: Parents Guide →

http://www.dodea.edu/StopBullying/upload/SBN_Tip06_Parents.pdf

Bullying: What Parents Can Do About It →

<http://extension.psu.edu/publications/ui368>

⁴ “Concerns Boys Have About Puberty” <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/Pages/Concerns-Boys-Have-About-Puberty.aspx>

FLIRTING WITH THE DANGER ZONE

Peer pressure from friends and the media can steer your tween to the danger zone. Your child's safety is still a big part of your job, but they can start taking some responsibility for their own well-being too.

As a tween, they still need to:

- Ride in the back seat and always wear a seatbelt while in a vehicle. Your child should use a belt-positioning booster seat until they are 4 feet 9 inches (150 cm) tall.
- Wear a helmet while riding a bike, skateboard or scooter.
- Limit exposure to secondhand smoke, which increases the risk of heart and lung disease, and can make asthma worse.
- Understand gun safety: guns should be unloaded and locked away. Bullets should be locked elsewhere.

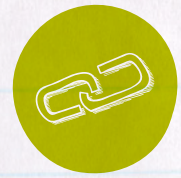
Tweens and young teenagers also begin experimenting with adult things like tobacco, alcohol and other substances. Here are some interesting facts about substance use:

1. 90% of smokers began before the age of 19.
2. One in nine adolescents used alcohol— that also means that most teens, eight in nine, did not use alcohol.



The good news is, your child still cares what you think and what you say! Despite the increased frequency of slammed doors and eye rolls, your opinion matters.

You still have a chance to set them on the right path, but the time to do it is NOW. Read the guides in this section to find ways to curb usage at a young age.



Get more information online:

Parent's Guide to Talking about Alcohol and Substances →

http://medicineabuseproject.org/assets/documents/parent_talk_kit.pdf

Cannabis Use and Youth: A Parent's Guide →

<http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/sites/default/files/cannabis-use-and-youth-a-parents-guide.pdf>

10 Ways To Keep Teens Smoke-Free →

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/tween-and-teen-health/in-depth/teen-smoking/art-20047069>

10 Facts about Teen Tobacco Use →

<https://www.dosomething.org/facts/11-facts-about-teen-smoking>