



# Parent Newsletter for 3rd Grade

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Countryside  
Public Health  
Spring 2010

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## Bicycle Safety

Summer is almost here! Now is the time to make sure your child knows the rules of the road when it comes to riding their bike.

### Wear a Bike Helmet

- Each year many people get head injuries when riding bikes. Some even die.
- Helmets help protect your head but don't be reckless.
- Your helmet should have a sticker that says it meets standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).
- Helmets need to fit snug. It should not slide around or pull off with the strap hooked.
- Don't wear a hat under your helmet.
- Wear it correctly. It should be worn level and cover your forehead. Don't tip it back so

your forehead is showing.

*Helmet straps should always be fastened.*

**Parents:** *Be a good example and wear a helmet yourself.*

### Does the Bike Fit?

When you are on your bicycle, stand straddling the top bar of your bike so that both feet are flat on the ground. There should be 1 to 3 inches of space between you and the top bar.

### Be Visible

- Wear bright colored clothing
- Put reflectors on the bike

### Dress to Bike Safely

- Make sure that nothing will get caught in your bike chain, such as loose pant legs, backpack straps, or shoelaces
- Wear the right shoes — sneakers are best. Ear buds are fun but not for biking—

you need to hear what is going on around you.

### Where to Ride ?

Discuss where kids are allowed to go on their bike.



- Kids under 10 ride on sidewalks and walk bikes across busy streets. \*\*Look ahead for obstacles.

### RULES OF THE ROAD

If allowed to ride on the street:

- Ride with your hands on the handlebars
- Always stop and check for traffic in both directions
- Don't ride bike after dark unless your bike is equipped with lights.

- Cross at intersections.
- Stop & check in both directions before crossing or entering a street.
- Ride on the right-hand side of the street, so you travel in the same direction as cars do.
- **Never** ride against traffic.
- Don't ride too close to parked cars. Doors can open suddenly.
- Obey street signs just as cars do.
- Ride single file on the street.
- When passing other bikers or people on the street, always pass to their left side, and call out "On your left!"
- Use hand signals.
  - [http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/bike\\_safety.html#](http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/bike_safety.html#)

## Play it Safe in the Sun !



We wait all year for the sunny warm days. But just a few serious sunburns can increase your child's risk of skin cancer later in life. Kids don't have to be at the pool, beach, or on vacation to get too much sun. Their skin needs protection from the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays *whenever* they're outdoors.

**Seek shade.** UV rays are strongest and most harmful during midday, so it's best to plan indoor activities then. If this is not possible, seek shade under a tree, an umbrella, or a pop-up tent. Use these options to prevent sunburn, not to seek relief after it's happened.

**Cover up.** Clothing that covers your child's skin helps protect against UV rays. Although a long-sleeved shirt and long pants with a tight weave are best, they aren't always practical. A T-shirt, long shorts, or a beach cover-up are good choices, too—but it's wise to double up on protection by applying sunscreen or keeping your child in the shade when possible.



**Get a hat.** Hats that shade the face, scalp, ears, and neck are easy to use and give great protection. Baseball caps are popular among kids, but they don't protect their ears and neck. If your child chooses a cap, be sure to protect exposed areas with sunscreen.

**Wear sunglasses.** They protect your child's eyes from UV rays, which can lead to cataracts later in life. Look for sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.

**Apply sunscreen.** Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and UVA and UVB protection every time your child goes outside. For the best protection, apply sunscreen generously 30 minutes before going outdoors. Don't forget to protect ears, noses, lips, and the tops of feet.

The sun's UV rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes.

<http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/pdf/>

## Home Alone?

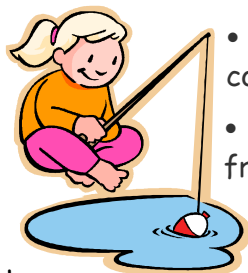
### General Guidelines to Follow:

Kids 7 years old and younger must be supervised at all times.

- Children 8-10 may be left alone for no longer than 3 hours at a time.

- Children ages 11-13 could be left alone for no longer than 13 hours.

- For older children use your judgment. Kids mature differently, so make your decision based on each child. Let your kids know exactly what you expect of them - discuss your house rules.



Explain what activities are acceptable:

- Is the TV allowed?
- Do you want your child to answer the phone?
- May your child use the computer?
- Can your child have friends over while you're not at home?
- Can he or she go to friends' houses?

Review & practice safety rules  
Talk about what to do for fires/strangers/emergencies.  
Teach basic first aid.

Post all important phone

numbers, and instructions in a central location.

Post your schedule so they know your whereabouts and decide who will be an emergency contact if you can't be reached.

Check for safety & practice using appliances they might be using.

Make sure your home is child proof (medicines, firearms, alcohol)

<http://singleparents.about.com>

<http://parenting.ivillage.com>

## IDEA Corner:

### Fun Putty

Ingredients:

1 T liquid starch      Mixing bowl  
2 T white glue        Plastic egg  
Food coloring

Stir the starch & glue together in a small bowl. Allow to stand several minutes. Add 2-3 drops of food coloring and stir until you reach the desired consistency. Store in the plastic egg. You will be able to use the putty for 4-5 days



### Treasure Hunt

Make a list of clues naming objects for your kids to find throughout the house (i.e. cotton object you wear on your head). Give kids a set amount of time to find the objects. Also hide a prize for them, once they have found all of the objects, give them a clue to help them find their reward. The more items you use, the more exercise they will get without even knowing it!

### Keep it Up

Give each kid a balloon or feather and have a contest to see who can keep it up the longest-change the rules around so it becomes more challenging (i.e. use right or left hand only, hop on one foot, etc.)

### Obstacle Course

Make a space in a room and use items from your house to create an obstacle course for the kids to run through. Let them be creative while they make it. Drape cloths over tables and chairs or cushions to make an arch. Use string to make a line to walk across, jump over or crawl under.

## Child & Teen Checkups (C&TC)

### What is the Child and Teen Checkup Program and how do I get this service for my child?

It's a comprehensive child health program .

### Who Qualifies?

- Children and teens age newborn through 20 .
- income eligible people enrolled in Medical Assistance (MA) or MN Care.

*Get information on these health plans from the Family Services agency in your county.*

### What type of services do I receive for my child when they are part of the Child and Teen Checkup program?

- Reminders to parents when their child is due for a checkup.
- Regular health checkups (so health problems can be found and treated early.)
- Children are tested for lead and tuberculosis.
- Parents get information about



healthy lifestyles and normal growth and development.

- Families can receive assistance with transportation to medical and dental appointments.
- Interpreters if needed.

### What benefits can I receive for having checkups?

- Some of the Health plans provide incentives for families to take their child for a Child and Teen checkup ( i.e. vouchers or chamber bucks for completing immunizations, lead tests).
- C&TC staff in Countryside Public Health offices make phone calls to families who are on Mn. Health Care Plans insurance to assure that:
  - they have a medical home.
  - that their children are up-to-date with immunizations.
  - that they are connected to resources such as WIC, Head-start and community resources available.

### Dental checkups ?

Dental visits are recommended every year starting at age 3 or earlier if there are problems .

Call the 800# on your health plan card for assistance finding a dentist if you do not have a current dentist that will provide care. The CTC outreach staff can assist also with finding a dentist.

### A CTC exam includes:

Information about: good health habits & thoughts, feelings & relationships with others.

Time to ask questions and get answers about your child's health and development.

Complete physical exam  
Shots

Hearing & Vision checks

Lab tests- UA- lead test

Checks of development & growth

Referral to the dentist

**Call your child's  
medical provider to  
schedule their  
appointment today !**

## Countryside Public Health

Swift County  
201 13th Street South  
Benson, MN 56215  
1-800-657-3291

Big Stone County  
47 Northwest 2nd Street  
Suite 104  
Ortonville, MN 56278  
1-866-277-5587

Chippewa County  
719 North 7th Street  
Suite 308  
Montevideo, MN 56265  
1-800-894-0192

Lac Qui Parle  
422 5th Avenue Suite 305  
Madison, MN 56256  
1-800-255-0736

Yellow Medicine County  
415 9th Avenue  
Granite Falls, MN 56241  
1-800-407-3628

*Countryside Public Health is a five county Community Health service agency serving the counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine in western Minnesota.*

*The Philosophy of Countryside Public Health is to support all individuals to reach and/or to maintain an optimal level of well being in their place in society. Such support shall be available to all members of the area. The service will strive to promote, plan, cooperate, and coordinate with other agencies and institutions to develop that optimal level, and to become a leader in the development of a comprehensive community health program.*



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

- Stop & check for traffic in both directions.