

The Healthy Buzz



Fresh tips, tasty bites, and growing strong—together!

WELCOME TO *THE HEALTHY BUZZ*

Advocates for Healthy Kids is here to cut through the noise and bring parents the practical, balanced information they need to raise strong, healthy families. From real-life nutrition tips to clear breakdowns of hot-button health topics, this newsletter delivers resources, ideas, and encouragement—so you can stay confident in the most important role you'll ever have: **being your child's greatest advocate.**

THE LATEST

Smooth Transitions: Back-to-School Tips for a Healthy Start

The weather may still be hot and humid, but for parents, August signals the start of fall... and back-to-school season.

Kids can struggle or be thrown off by a sudden shift in routine, but with a few thoughtful adjustments, we can make the transition back to busy mornings and long days a little easier on everyone.

Gradually Adjust Sleep Schedules

The first day of school shouldn't be the first time your child hears that early alarm go off! To ease the transition, start adjusting bedtime and wake-up times by 10-15 minutes every few days until they are back on their regular school week schedule. Use this extra time together to “run through” what the routine will look like – get dressed, have breakfast, and get out the door for a last summer adventure to simulate heading to school.

Plan Ahead to Simplify Mornings

The fewer decisions in the morning, the better. Plan ahead by prepping a few healthy breakfast options that everyone can eat quickly (we give you some ideas here!), laying out outfits the night before, and making sure backpacks and after-school sports gear are packed by the door. This helps make the morning calm and gives you a chance to talk and connect with your kids before

they head out on the bus.

Keep Getting Outside

Even though school is back in session, there's still plenty of daylight left after school lets out. Encourage your kids to spend time outside! Whether it's a school sports team, a walk with the dog, or a bike ride with friends, outdoor activity helps your child release pent-up energy and soak up some vitamin D. Physical activity is great for mental and physical health, so let them move, explore, and unwind in the fresh air.

Wind-down Before Bed

A good night's sleep is key to an easier morning, so wind down by limiting screen time 30-60 minutes before bed. Instead of letting kids zone out in front of the TV, spend time together as a family—play a board game, chat, or read a book. This helps relax the mind and creates space for meaningful connection, setting everyone up for restful sleep.

Support Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

The back-to-school transition can be overwhelming for kids. New teachers, finding their lockers, and managing assignments can create a lot of stress. As parents, there are little things we can do to help them transition back to school and keep their physical and mental health a top priority. By fostering a calm, organized routine and prioritizing sleep, outdoor time, and family connection, you'll help your children ease into the school year with confidence.

Preparing ahead of time and leading by example with healthy habits can set kids up for success as they begin their new year!

How to Navigate Vaccine Decisions with Confidence as a Parent

When it comes to making health decisions for your child, few topics feel more overwhelming than vaccines. There's a lot of information out there, and not all of it feels balanced. As a parent, you shouldn't feel rushed, judged, or confused when making medical decisions for your child. You deserve facts, not pressure.

Here's how to confidently approach vaccine decisions — with curiosity, clarity, and the peace of mind that comes from being an educated participant in your child's health.

Start with the Basics

Understanding how vaccines work can go a long way in making sense of recommendations. Vaccines are designed to help your child's immune system recognize and fight off harmful viruses or bacteria before they can cause serious illness.

For a deeper dive, check out our [Resources Page](#) for good links on vaccines, vaccine safety, and the childhood schedule.

Ask the Right Questions

When you're at the doctor's office, it can feel intimidating to speak up. But you're allowed to ask questions... and good doctors welcome it. Some helpful ones to consider:

- *What are the benefits of this vaccine for my child at their age?*
- *What are the possible side effects?*
- *Are there any ingredients I should be aware of?*
- *Is it possible to delay or space this out, and what are the risks if I do?*
- *Are there any underlying conditions in my child that might change this recommendation?*
- *Why do you recommend this vaccine?*
- *What does it do for my child?*
- *What are the benefits of the prevention it offers?*
- *What are the risks if I delay or decline?*
- *Are there alternatives?*

This isn't confrontation — it's conversation. And you're allowed to have it.

Know Where to Look

When researching vaccines, it's easy to feel lost in a sea of opinions. That's why it's so important to pull from a variety of sources — not just the ones that confirm what you already believe. Bias is real, and as Dr. Dunnivant explains, learning how to [recognize it](#) is the first step toward [finding](#) the clear, unfiltered information you're looking for.

It's important to remember that you're not alone in this process, and you're not expected to know everything at once. With vaccines being such a hot button issue in the media right now, it's easy to feel overwhelmed or uncertain about the decisions you have to make for your child.

The fact alone that you're curious enough to do the research and answer the questions yourself means that you are a loving, caring parent. Stay confident and stay empowered — you've got this.

Get started by exploring our [Resources Page](#) for easy-to-navigate information—all in one place.

Looking for shows that calm kids instead of winding them up? We've rounded up low-stimulation favorites that support focus and creativity—perfect for busy families who still want movie night without the meltdowns.

👉 [Check out the list](#)

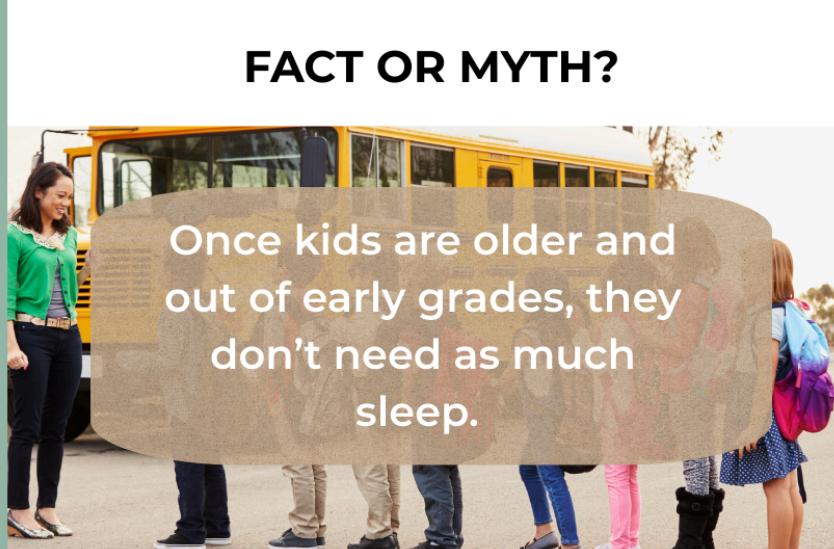
When Trust Breaks, Parents Get Louder

Respect is the starting point for any real conversation about vaccines. Without it, trust erodes—and parents are left raising their voices just to be heard. We break down why humility and respect matter in these discussions.

👉 [See the post on Instagram](#)

FACT OR MYTH?

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Once kids are older and out of early grades, they don't need as much sleep.

MYTH: Elementary and middle schoolers still need 9-12 hours of sleep each night. Consistent rest supports growth, focus in the classroom, and emotional balance, making it just as important as what they eat and regular exercise.

Keep up the conversation!

Follow us [@adv4healthykids](https://www.instagram.com/adv4healthykids) for useful tips, clear breakdowns on hot-button issues, and encouragement to stay empowered and confident in your role as a key part of your child's growth.

ADVOCACY ACTION



Want a creative way to slow down at the end of the day? **Try making a Gratitude Jar!** Have your kids decorate a jar with stickers or markers, then each night add a slip of paper with something they're thankful for. Reading them back at the end of the month is a fun way to reflect together — and it helps kids build gratitude and calm before bedtime.

A NOTE FROM DR. DUNNAVANT



Dear Friends,

By now, most families are hitting their stride in the new school year. Morning alarms are back, afternoons are busy with practices and homework, and evenings can feel like a race against the clock. It's not always easy, but it's also an opportunity: routines—done well—give our children a sense of security and set the stage for growth.

At the same time, it's hard to ignore what you see in the news and online. From debates over school health policies to questions about who gets to make decisions for children, it can feel like uncertainty is everywhere. These headlines are reminders of something we already know—stitutions will shift, experts will disagree, and policies will change, but one thing doesn't: the central role of parents in shaping their children's wellbeing.

That's why I want to encourage you—keep asking questions, keep building routines that work for your family, and keep showing up with calm confidence even when the world feels chaotic. Protect the small daily habits—family dinners, setting screen boundaries, consistent bedtimes, meaningful conversations. These may seem simple, but they're the building blocks of raising healthy, resilient humans.

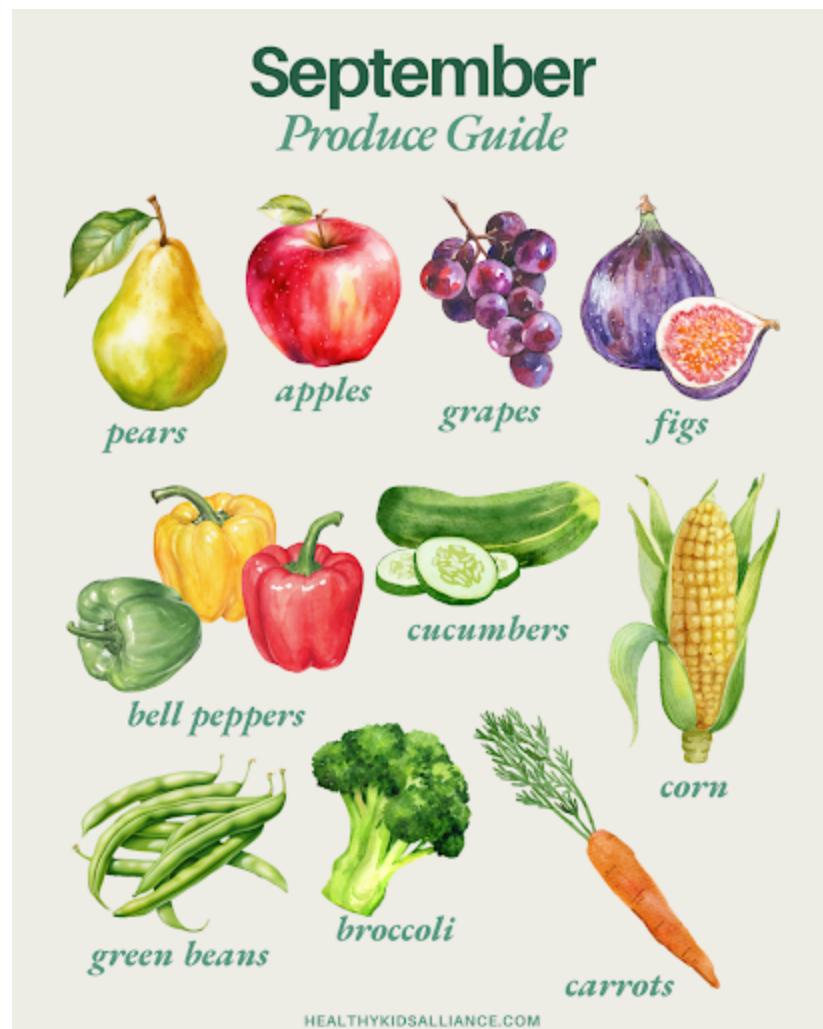
*Thank you for standing with us as part of this community. In a season full of noise, trust your instincts, lean on your values, and remember: **your voice as a parent matters more than ever.***

Warmly,

Siobhan Dunnivant, MD

Senior Advisor, Advocates for Healthy Kids

PRODUCE OF THE MONTH



HEALTHYKIDSALLIANCE.COM

EASY SCHOOL NIGHT DINNER RECIPE

EGG ROLL IN A BOWL

Takeout flavors, weeknight speed. This Egg Roll in a Bowl brings all the savory crunch of a classic egg roll — without the deep fryer. It's a one-pan wonder, packed with lean protein, colorful veggies, and flavor kids love. Best of all? It's on the table in under 20 minutes, making it perfect for busy school nights.

[DOWNLOAD TO SAVE THIS RECIPE FOR LATER](#)

ENGAGE WITH US

We love hearing what other parents are thinking — your perspective helps us keep the conversation real.

Before school started this year, how did you handle vaccines for your kids?

- *Went with the full recommended schedule*
- *Followed a modified or delayed schedule*
- *Decided to wait or not vaccinate right now*
- *Still figuring it out / haven't decided yet*

What played the biggest role in that decision?

- *Talking with my pediatrician*
- *Doing my own research*
- *Content I came across online or on social media*
- *Advice from friends or family*
- *Past experiences with my child's health*
- *A mix of all of the above*

LET US KNOW HERE

KEEP IN TOUCH

Follow Advocates for Healthy Kids for quick tips, fun updates, and real talk from fellow parents and our founder, Dr. Dunnivant. Get involved and help us keep our children safe and healthy!



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