

# Notes from the Nurse

## Jody Stiver, RN

### Highlands Elementary School

### Spring 2013

**Welcome to Highlands Elementary School Kindergarten! I look forward to meeting your child and getting to know him or her during the years at Highlands Elementary. I have been the nurse at Highlands for 23 years. A few of the current parents were once students that visited me! I wanted to offer some words of advice that may make your child's transition to kindergarten easier. Please let me know how I can help your child adjust to school and have a successful year.** Nurse Phone 281-634-4166 Direct Nurse fax 281-327-4166



## SAFETY FIRST!

Your child's safety is a priority at Highlands. Please take time to read the arrival and dismissal plan as well as information in the student handbook (you will get these just prior to the start of school) to become aware of the practices we follow. While some practices may seem inconvenient, we want all 600+ Highlands children to arrive and go home safely every day. Some highlights:

- Make sure your child can state their full name, parent's name, address and telephone number in case they are lost. This is vital information in all situations, not just at school. The staff member supervising and assisting your child at dismissal most likely will not be their classroom teacher. Many of the support staff and non homeroom teachers have dismissal duty. Tell your child that talking to "strangers" at school is OK!
- The *crosswalks* must be used to cross any streets. Please follow the crossing guard's instructions.
- Children may not be dropped off or picked up in the parking lots or along the side streets. They should be dropped off and picked up at the designated curb so they enter and exit your car without ever going into the flow of traffic.
- Keep the same plan for dismissal from day to day. It creates confusion and insecurity for your child to have unpredictable pick up routines. For instance, if they usually walk and you will not be able to meet them, have your alternate person meet them at the crosswalk like you normally do! If you are out and about running errands, plan to be at the meeting spot a few minutes before dismissal time. Remember, **do not walk up to the car line to get your child. We must put children scheduled to go home by car in a car.** It is for their safety that we do not release them to an adult approaching in a different way!
- If a change in your usual pick up routine is necessary, the teacher must be notified in writing. Send a note in the morning in your child's folder. Do not call the school to make a change unless it is a true emergency.
- Texas law requires booster seats or car seats for children less than 8 years old, unless they are 4' 9" tall. Help your child learn how to buckle themselves in the seat when they enter the car. *You will be asked to remain in the driver seat and move forward in the line as the cars fill with students.*
- Sugar Land law dictates that no cell phones be used in the school zone. This includes the circle driveways!
- Use the card with your child's name when picking up your child by car. It is a safeguard, since we know only you have that particular card and sign. When approaching the car pick up area, use a child's clothing hanger with clothes pin type hooks (like for pants or skirts) to hang the sign from your review mirror. It is easy for the staff to see the sign from a short distance and you can have both hands on the wheel for safety!
- We will ask to see your drivers license if you must pick your child up from school during the school day due to illness. Please have it available when you arrive in the clinic! If you are asking another adult (such as Grandparent, babysitter, etc) to pick up your child, notify us whom to expect from the list on the emergency contact list. If the person is not on the emergency pick up list, we must have permission in writing, although we consider an email in writing! The alternate adult must show ID before we will release your child to their care.

Many things change from time to time. Be sure I have current contact information for you in the clinic. If your child is ill or hurt, they want mom or dad, not me! If you get a new cell phone, change jobs or office locations or move, be sure to contact the clinic with the new information. You may send a note to the teacher that will be forwarded to me, call me at 281-634-4166 or email at [jody.stiver@fortbend.k12.tx.us](mailto:jody.stiver@fortbend.k12.tx.us). Even though you completed one today, please take time to edit and sign the emergency information form you will find in your child's first day of school information. We want to start the year with the most current information!

Z Z



## Sleep and bedtime

One major change your child may experience is the absence of a nap. The children do not have a designated nap time, they are just too busy! Now is the time to stop daytime naps for your child so they are ready for the full day in August. Five year old children need 11 hours of sleep each night. If they waken at 7am for school, they need to be asleep at 8 pm. Of course, for earlier wake times, he or she will need an earlier bedtime. This can be a problem for working families. Often, by the time work is over, the children picked up and dinner is done, it's bedtime. Children that have a lack of sleep may not be lethargic and sleepy, instead they are often irritable, act out and show a lack of attention to tasks. Help your child be their best by having enough sleep each night! Visit [www.sleepforkids.org](http://www.sleepforkids.org) for more information and tips on bedtime success.

## Bathroom and toileting

All children should be fully potty trained when attending kindergarten. This means they have the skills to recognize the need to use the restroom, know how to unbutton clothing as well as how to wipe, flush and wash their hands when leaving the bathroom. Of course, accidents do happen! If your child has frequent accidents, please keep a change of underwear and shorts or pants in a zip lock bag in the backpack. I have a few hand me down articles of clothing for the unexpected, but often children prefer their own clothing. If your child is not independent with bathroom skills, let me know so we may make plans for the transition.



**Sturdy shoes such as tennis shoes are needed for climbing and running at recess time. In addition, we use mulch as the cushion under the equipment- sandals are not appropriate!**

## Breakfast!

Multiple studies have shown the most important meal of the day is breakfast. It breaks the fast since the evening meal and provides a source of glucose needed for brain function. Yet, breakfast is the meal most families skip or skimp on calories and nutrients. To make sure your child is functioning at his or her optimal level for learning, make breakfast a priority! Be sure to include foods from at least three different food groups. It doesn't have to be fancy; cereal with milk and a banana fits the criteria and your child can participate in serving and clean up! A sandwich with a glass of juice has at least three food groups and requires little preparation.

**Be creative, but be consistent and make sure breakfast is a priority every day!**



### Tidbits:

During transition times like this a good plan is very important! Please contact me if there are details of your child's health I should know about. I will share *pertinent* information with the classroom teacher to help with monitoring your child's status. If your child will require medication during the school day, please contact me for details and forms. More information can be found on the district website in the parent handbook.

All kindergarten children are required by the Texas Department of Health Services to have vision and hearing screening during the year. I will contact you if I find any problems that need an evaluation or further attention. I usually have completed the kindergarten screenings by Thanksgiving!

*I want to be a community resource, advocate for your child's needs and provide assistance in any way I can. I will be glad to assist you with free lunch forms, referrals to health care providers, parenting advice from having "been there and done it".. just call me for whatever you may need!*

### SNACK suggestions:

Each day kindergarten children have a snack time in the afternoon. Due to the early lunch (brunch?) time, it is important that you provide a snack every day! Keep in mind that refrigeration is not available and the snack should not be too messy or difficult to open and eat. More information will be provided by the teachers near the start of the school year. Here are some healthy suggestions:

- Graham cracker and cream cheese "sandwich"
- Trail mix Granola bar Pretzels
- Apple slices prepackaged in a baggy
- Raisins or other dried fruit
- Goldfish Rice cakes String cheese
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich half or cutouts
- Tortilla spread with strawberry cream cheese then rolled up and cut in one inch sections
- Cheddar cheese cubes and wheat crackers
- Cut up fruit like cantaloupe
- Strawberries, banana, mandarins or grapes
- Ants on log- celery with peanut butter and raisins
- Vegetables (cut up cucumbers, red or orange peppers, carrots and grape tomatoes)
- Pita half filled with veggies or turkey and cheese