

**MINI TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOL
DISTRICT'S PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**

Share this information with your Public Information Officer or Communications/Marketing office to include special communications to promote messages from the Middle School Starts Here toolbox.



Hello Public Information Officer or Communications/Marketing office staff!

The school nurses in your district are working with other school nurses across the county to keep our middle school students safe and healthy. This mini toolkit has handy resources to help your school and/or district make the most of the Middle School Health Starts Here program.

In this you'll find:

- Sample letter/email to parents about the program
- eNewsletter blurb and images
- Social media posts and images
- Sample press release about the program – don't forget to take advantage of the Back to School section in your local paper!
- FAQs about the program and HPV vaccination
- Communications materials to rising 5th Graders' parents to catch them up before summer

This toolkit has a website with even more information – visit MiddleSchoolHealth.org to learn more!

The Middle School Health Starts Here program was created by public, private, academic, and nonprofit organizations across the country that care a lot about the health of all kids. They have worked to collect the most important information for you and your kid.



Sample Letter/Email to Parents about the Program

Dear Parents,

Our school district has joined other schools across the county to keep our students safe, healthy and ready to learn. Your school nurses have a toolbox of health tips to keep your 11- and 12- year olds healthy all year long with the Middle School Health Starts Here program!

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!

The Middle School Health Starts Here program can help you navigate the changes at this time in your kid's life. Tween health for 11-12 year-old children brings a new stage of health questions. We're here to help.

In the guide, you'll find:

- Stories from parents and health providers that have survived middle school – just like you will!
- Checklists to use with your health provider to get a complete check of your child's health
- Health information to keep you up to date on your tween's health needs
- Ways for your child to learn about their own health

Our school nurses have a print version of the guide and you can visit this website with even more information – **MiddleSchoolHealth.org**.

COMMUNICATIONS MINI TOOLKIT

The Middle School Health Starts Here program was created by public, private, academic, and nonprofit organizations across the country that care a lot about health of all kids. They have worked to collect the most important information for you and your child.

- National Association of School Nurses (NASN)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- American Cancer Society (ACS)
- Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP)
- Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network (CPCRN)
- Head & Neck Cancer Alliance (HNCA)
- Health Net Federal Services (HealthNet)
- National Area Health Education Centers Organization (AHEC)
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
- National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)



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.

eNewsletter Blurb

TITLE:

Middle School Health Starts Here Comes to (School or District Name)

BODY:

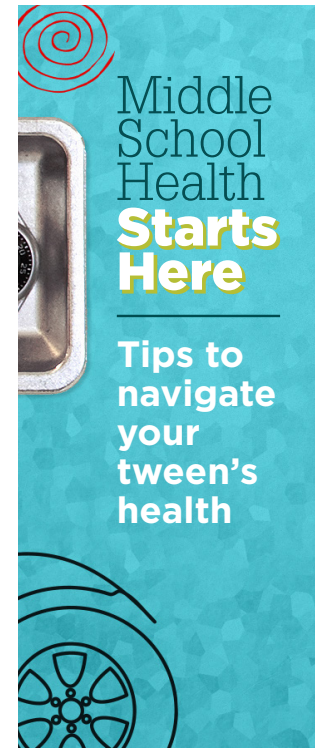
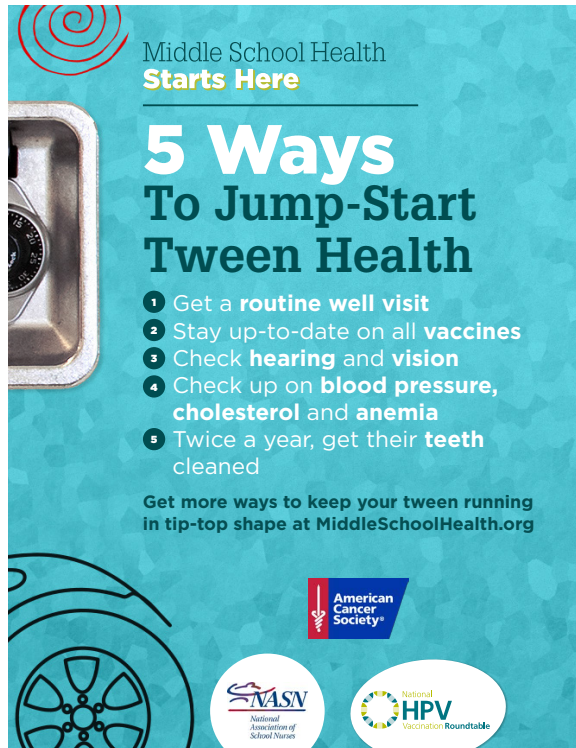
Our school district is working to help middle schoolers become and remain as healthy as possible. The Middle School Health Starts Here program can help parents navigate the changes of this special age and time in your child's life. Tween health for 11-12 year-old children brings a new stage of health questions. The Middle School Health Starts Here program can help answer your questions about the twists and turns to becoming a teen. Visit the Middle School Health Starts Here website for more information –

MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

COMMUNICATIONS MINI TOOLKIT

Images

Coming with design



Sample Press Release on the Program

HEADLINE: National Pilot Program to Tune Up Middle Schooler's Health Comes to (School Name)

CITY – (School Name) has joined select schools from across the county to jump start middle schooler's health. (School Name) is one of a select number of sites invited to participate in a pilot program created by the American Cancer Society, Centers for Disease Control and the National Association of School Nurses.

The *Middle School Health Starts Here* program can help parents navigate the changes of health and development for 11 to 12 year-old children. The website –

MiddleSchoolHealth.org – and printed materials have been compiled by national health experts to deliver accurate, succinct information for parents.

“Middle school offers an opportunity for parents to do a thorough check up on their child's health,” said SOURCE. “The goal of this program is to provide the resources our parents need and want, whether it's vaccines, body care, a basic health tune up or avoiding the danger zones of life in middle school.”

The Middle School Health Starts Here program was created by public, private, academic, and nonprofit organizations across the country that care a lot about the health of all kids. They have worked to collect the most important information for parents and children in middle school:

- National Association of School Nurses (NASN)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Health Net Federal Services (HealthNet)
- Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP)
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
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- National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
- Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network (CPCRN)
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
- National Area Health Education Centers Organization (AHEC)
- American Cancer Society (ACS)

Visit the Middle School Health Starts Here website for more information – **MiddleSchoolHealth.org**.

COMMUNICATIONS MINI TOOLKIT

Social Media Posts

Posts to Launch the Program

Use these posts on Facebook, and modify for Twitter, to launch the program at your school.

- Middle School Health Starts Here! Our school has been selected to be part of a national pilot project to kick start middle school health. Get ready to navigate your tween's health – MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Jump-start your tween's health - get a routine well visit to check your child's overall health and growth. Keep your kid in tip-top shape at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Jump-start your tween's health - Check up on blood pressure, cholesterol and anemia. Keep your kid in tip-top shape at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Jump-start your tween's health - Check hearing and vision. Keep your kid in tip-top shape at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Jump start your tween's health - Stay up to date on all vaccines to prevent diseases. Keep your kid in tip-top shape at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Jump start your tween's health - Every six months, get their teeth cleaned. Keep your kid in tip-top shape at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

Health Observance Posts

To promote middle school health all year long, use these posts on Facebook and modify for Twitter.

JANUARY

Approx. last week of January - **National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week**

POST: DYK: One in nine adolescents used alcohol— that also means that most teens, 8 in 9, did not use alcohol. Get more tips to jump-start your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources - <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week>

COMMUNICATIONS MINI TOOLKIT

FEBRUARY

American Heart Month

POST: Jump-start a heart healthy lifestyle. Exercising at least 30 to 60 minutes on most days is good for your ticker. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.middleschoolhealth.org).

More resources - <https://www.goredforwomen.org>

National Children's Dental Health Month

POST: 2min2x – Brush 2 minutes, twice a day for a healthy smile! Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.middleschoolhealth.org).

More resources: <http://www.ada.org/en/public-programs/national-childrens-dental-health-month>

MARCH

National Nutrition Month®

POSTS:

- Middle schoolers need fuel to power their brains. Make sure your kid gets three cups of low fat or nonfat milk (or equivalent low fat or nonfat dairy products) daily. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.middleschoolhealth.org).
- Eat the rainbow! Aim to fuel your kid with five servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.middleschoolhealth.org).
- Sugar and fat are poor fuel for middle school kids. Balanced foods are better fuel for growing bodies. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.middleschoolhealth.org).
- H2O-hydrate! Water is the best beverage for growing bodies. To keep your tween in top shape, limit juice to no more than 8 ounces per day. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.middleschoolhealth.org).

More resources - <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/resources/national-nutrition-month/national-nutrition-month>

National Sleep Awareness Week® - Second week of March

POST: Zzzzzzzzz. Tweens still need 10-11 hours of sleep per night. Lack of sleep can make it hard to pay attention at school. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.middleschoolhealth.org).

More resources: <https://sleepfoundation.org/>

APRIL

World Immunization Week - Last week of April

POST:

- Disease is only a plane ride away! Polio, measles and mumps are active diseases around the world. Protecting your child from disease is as easy as keeping their vaccines up to date. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.MiddleSchoolHealth.org).
- DYK: When the HPV vaccine series is completed, it can prevent cancer – literally. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.MiddleSchoolHealth.org).
- The HPV vaccine is now recommended for BOTH boys and girls starting as young as 9 years old. Most health care providers start recommending it at 11 and 12 years old, and completed by their 13th birthday. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.MiddleSchoolHealth.org).
- Research shows that the HPV vaccines are safe. The benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh any potential risk of side effects. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.MiddleSchoolHealth.org).
- DYK: The HPV vaccine has been on the market for more than 10 years and is not associated with any serious side effects. Now that's good news! Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.MiddleSchoolHealth.org).

More resources: <https://healthfinder.gov/NHO/nho.aspx?year=2016#639>

World Meningitis Day – April 24

POST: Many parents don't know the warning signs of meningitis. Symptoms can be similar to those of the common flu (fever, vomiting, headache, stiff neck, sensitivity to light, and drowsiness or altered consciousness) and can develop in just hours. Many types of meningitis are vaccine-preventable. Ask your doctor if your child is up to date. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at [MiddleSchoolHealth.org](https://www.MiddleSchoolHealth.org).

More resources: <http://www.comomeningitis.org/>

COMMUNICATIONS MINI TOOLKIT

MAY

Better Hearing and Speech Month

POST: Do you have fewer conversations with your kids than you'd like because of technology distractions? If you answered yes, you are a typical parent in the digital age. Safeguard your child's hearing and vision by monitoring their smartphone and tablet usage. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.asha.org/bhsm/>

Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month®

POST: Help your tween create a life-long habit of skin protection. When you are going to be outside, even on cloudy days, apply sunscreen to all skin that will not be covered by clothing. Reapply approximately every two hours, or after swimming or sweating. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <https://www.aad.org/public/spot-skin-cancer?redirect>

JUNE

National Safety Month

POST: Safety never takes a holiday. Take extra care this summer to prevent unnecessary injury. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.nsc.org/act/events/Pages/national-safety-month.aspx>

National Lightning Safety Awareness Week - Third Week of June

POST: DYK: There is no safe place outside when thunderstorms are in the area! When thunder roars, go indoors: a substantial building with electricity or plumbing, or an enclosed, metal-topped vehicle with windows up. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources - <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/>

JULY

Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month

POST: DYK: Juvenile arthritis affects nearly 300,000 children in the United States. The various types of juvenile arthritis share many common symptoms, like pain, joint swelling, redness and warmth. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.arthritis.org/about-arthritis/types/juvenile-arthritis/>

AUGUST

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

POST: 43% of sports-related eye injuries are to children ages 14 and younger. Ensure your child has the right eye protection for the sport. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.preventblindness.org/>

National Immunization Awareness Month

POSTS:

- Say "Shoo!" to the flu. Get the flu shot annually to help avoid this nasty illness. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- The Tdap vaccine is one mighty shot! When your tween gets the Tdap booster at 11 or 12 years old, they are protected against three illnesses! Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Holy awesome health, Batman! One Meningococcal ACWY 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. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Prevent cancer – literally! Both boys and girls need to complete the HPV vaccine series to be fully protected from strains of the human papillomavirus that is known to cause cancer. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- DYK: When the HPV vaccine series is completed, it can prevent cancer – literally. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- The HPV vaccine is now recommended for BOTH boys and girls starting as young as 9 years old. Most health care providers start recommending it at 11 and 12 years old. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- Research shows that the HPV vaccines are safe. The benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh any potential risk of side effects. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.
- DYK: The HPV vaccine has been on the market for more than 10 years and is not associated with any serious side effects. Now that's good news! Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niam.html>

COMMUNICATIONS MINI TOOLKIT

SEPTEMBER

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

POST: Every day, 43 children are diagnosed with cancer. This month take a moment to think about the courage of parents and students who battle, and often conquer, this foe. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://curesearch.org/Be-a-Digital-Advocate>

National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

POST: Moving at least 60 minutes a day + eating healthy foods fights childhood obesity. It takes the whole family moving together to keep growing bodies healthy. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.letsmove.gov/>

OCTOBER

National Dental Hygiene Month

Are your family's choppers up for the Daily 4 challenge? Brush 2x per day for 2 minutes each time, floss, rinse with mouth wash and chew sugar-free gum. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources - <http://www.adha.org/national-dental-hygiene-month>

Mental Illness Awareness Week - First Week of the Month

R U Okay? Just over half (50.6%) of children aged 8-15 received mental health services in the previous year. Don't be afraid to seek help for your child or yourself. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.nami.org>

NOVEMBER

American Diabetes Month

Diabetes affects nearly 30 million children and adults in the U.S. today—nearly 10% of the population. Eating right with every bite can help your family keep weight off and prevent type 2 diabetes. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/american-diabetes-month.html>

Great American Smoke-out – November 19

Teen smoking is more common among teens whose parents smoke. If you smoke, quit. The earlier you stop smoking, the less likely your teen is to become a smoker. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

More resources: <http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/greatamericansmokeout/>

COMMUNICATIONS MINI TOOLKIT

DECEMBER

National Influenza Vaccination Week - First Week of December

DYK: You may spread the flu virus 1 day BEFORE symptoms develop and up to 5 - 7 days AFTER becoming sick. Don't spread the flu at all by getting the flu vaccine for everyone in your family (over 6 months old) every year. Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at **MiddleSchoolHealth.org**.

More resources: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/>

National Handwashing Awareness Week - First Week of the Month

Help us "spread the word not the germs" on how "Handwashing is the new vaccine"* against ALL respiratory and many gastro-intestinal infections! Wash your hands often and sneeze into your elbow to stop germs from spreading! Get more tips to navigate your tween's health at **MiddleSchoolHealth.org**.

More resources - <http://www.henrythehand.org/>

FAQS ABOUT THIS PROGRAM AND THE HPV VACCINE

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about the Middle School Health Starts Here program.

Who created this program?

The Middle School Health Starts Here program was created by the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable. The Middle School Health Starts Here program was created by public, private, academic, and nonprofit organizations across the country that care a lot about the health of all kids.

They have worked to pull the most important information for parents and children in middle school:

- National Association of School Nurses (NASN)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
- American Cancer Society (ACS)
- Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP)
- Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network (CPCRN)
- Head & Neck Cancer Alliance (HNCA)
- Health Net Federal Services (Health Net)
- National Area Health Education Centers Organization (AHEC)
- National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
- National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)

Visit the Middle School Health Starts Here website for more information – MiddleSchoolHealth.org.

FAQS ABOUT THIS PROGRAM AND THE HPV VACCINE

Why was this program created?

Middle School Health Starts Here's purpose is to address the issues which impact the health and safety of middle schoolers. This transition time is difficult for both the parents and the students. There are a lot of social, emotional and physical changes taking place. It can be overwhelming for everybody involved. This toolkit provides research and evidence-based information to help parents and to dispel myths. While the Roundtable is focused on increasing awareness of HPV vaccination and dispel myths about the vaccine, the program was created to address all health issues of middle schoolers. School nurses are often seen as a valuable resource for parents, who have questions about all aspects of tween health. This program was created to support school nurses as they answer those questions.

Who paid for this program?

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.

Why is HPV vaccination included?

HPV vaccination is recommended for 11 to 12 year olds. When talking about tween health, it makes sense to include HPV vaccination. Here are 10 facts about HPV and the vaccine.

1. HPV vaccination is recommended for BOTH boys and girls at ages 11 or 12 years, but can be started as early as age 9.
2. The HPV vaccine series should be completed before the 13th birthday to be most effective.
3. HPV vaccines have been on the market for over 10 years and there have been over 200 million doses of HPV administered worldwide.
4. HPV is extremely common and almost everyone will be infected in his or her lifetime. There is no way to know if an infection will lead to cancer.
5. Every year, over 30,700 women and men are affected by a cancer caused by HPV— that is a new case every 20 minutes.

FAQS ABOUT THIS PROGRAM AND THE HPV VACCINE

6. Every year in the United States, over 2 million women have invasive testing and biopsies to look for precancer or cancer of the cervix caused by HPV infection. HPV vaccination of preteens can slash those numbers dramatically.
7. Each HPV vaccine—Gardasil® 9, Gardasil®, and Cervarix®—went through years of extensive safety testing before they were licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and are continually monitored for safety.
8. Like any vaccine or medicine, HPV vaccines can cause side effects. The most common side effects are mild, usually pain, redness, or swelling in the arm where the shot was given, as well as dizziness, fainting, nausea, and headache. Adolescents with a severe allergy to yeast should not receive Gardasil® 9, or Gardasil®.
9. Some adolescents faint from getting shots. Patients should remain seated for 15 minutes after receiving any shot to prevent injury from falls that could occur from fainting.
10. Too few boys and girls in the United States get the HPV vaccine and thus miss the protection it could provide. When the HPV vaccine series is completed, it can prevent cancer – literally.

SOURCE: <http://www.cdc.gov/hpv/index.html>

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES:

- [Fact Sheet: What Parents Should Know About HPV Vaccine Safety and Effectiveness](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/who/teens/vaccines/vaccine-safety.pdf)
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/who/teens/vaccines/vaccine-safety.pdf>
- [HPV Vaccine Safety - Questions and Answers](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Vaccines/HPV/hpv_faq.html)
http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Vaccines/HPV/hpv_faq.html
- [CDC Medscape Commentary: Safety Data on the HPV Vaccine—Reassure Your Patients, Reports to VAERS Following HPV Vaccination](http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/722555)
<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/722555>
- [MMWR - Human Papillomavirus Vaccination Coverage Among Adolescents, 2007-2013, and Postlicensure Vaccine Safety Monitoring, 2006-2014 — United States](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6329a3.htm)
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6329a3.htm>
- [HPV Vaccine Information Statements](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html)
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RIISING 5TH GRADER DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Sample email, eNews and social media materials for distribution to 5th grader's parents in the spring semester/quarter.

SAMPLE EMAIL

Dear Parents,

Our school district has joined other schools across the county to keep our students safe, healthy and ready to learn. Our school nurse (NAME) has a toolbox of health tips to keep our rising middle schoolers healthy all year long.

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In the guide, you'll find:

- Checklists to use with your health provider to get a complete check of your child's health.
- Health information to keep you up to date on your tween's health needs.
- Ways for your child to learn about their own health.

Our school nurse has a print version of the guide, and you can visit this website with even more information –

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RIISING 5TH GRADER DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

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eNewsletter Blurb

TITLE:

Middle School Health Starts Here Comes to (School or District Name)

BODY:

Our school district is working to help rising middle schoolers become as healthy as possible. The Middle School Health Starts Here program can help parents navigate the changes of this special age and time in your child's life. Tween health for 11-12 year-old children brings a new stage of health questions. The Middle School Health Starts Here program can help answer your questions about the twists and turns to becoming a teen. Visit the Middle School Health Starts Here website for more information – **MiddleSchoolHealth.org**.

RIISING 5TH GRADER DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

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- Jump-start your tween's health - Check up on blood pressure, cholesterol and anemia. Keep your kid in tip-top shape at **MiddleSchoolHealth.org**.
- Got a rising middle schooler? Jump start your soon to be tween's health - Check hearing and vision. Keep your kid in tip-top shape at **MiddleSchoolHealth.org**.