

# Healthy Children

September 2019 Parent Newsletter



## Being a Role Model

As a parent you act as a role model for your children every day. It can be a scary thought, but from the time they are babies, your children are watching you and learning from you. They learn from your actions and your conversations. They absorb your attitudes and copy your expressions. Before they even reach school age they've probably learned far more than you ever intended.

Thinking about your behaviour and how it might be understood by your child is an important part of healthy parenting. You can't always be calm and cheerful – nobody is. Those times can be especially useful examples for your children about how to manage feelings in a healthy way. As they grow up, they'll learn by your example and they'll have that example to follow in years to come when coping with life's challenges.

Talk to your child about your own experiences when you were their age. Tell your child about someone who made a big difference in your life, and why you admired that person. Tell stories about family members or friends who showed real courage, kindness or determination in their lives. You could look at sports figures or performers and watch how they behave. Talk with your child about what makes a person a good winner or a good loser. What makes a person a poor winner or a poor loser?

It's not always easy being a role model for someone but it is part of every parent's and caregiver's role. Remember you won't always know the difference you make but know for sure that you are.

## Articles

Being a Role Model

Walk Safe

### Does your child's school have an AMA Youth Run Club?

The Alberta Medical Association (AMA) and Ever Active Schools have brought a free, award-winning program for school-aged children to Alberta schools. They can provide schools with resources and support for new and/or existing run clubs. To learn more visit [www.amayouthrunclub.com/](http://www.amayouthrunclub.com/)



## Walk Safe

The new school year means many of you will be walking with your child to school. Walking has many benefits, like physical activity, quality time together and familiarity with your community and neighbours. Even if you live too far from your school to walk there from your home you can still give your child the walking experience by parking five to ten minutes away from the school.

Walking with your child and negotiating neighbourhood streets with them provides an experience and opportunity to develop traffic safety awareness and to practice safe pedestrian behaviours. Until they are at least 9 years old, most children will need supervision to walk to school. Did you know that 26 judgement skills are required to cross a street safely and that many of these skills have not fully developed in a young child? For example, they may think that a car can stop instantly or that if they can see a car, the driver can see them. Children are also often easily distracted and may



underestimate dangerous situations. Make it a rule to:

- Only cross the street at pedestrian crosswalks or corners, and to cross railway tracks at designated crossings.
- Always walk on the sidewalk or as far away from the street as possible, facing traffic.
- Never play on the street or around or between parked cars.
- Point, Pause and Proceed:
  - **POINT** across the road with your arm to tell drivers that you are ready to cross

- **PAUSE** until all vehicles stop and you have made eye contact with drivers
- **PROCEED** with your arm out, and keep looking both ways as you cross



For more information on pedestrian safety and childhood injury prevention visit:

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/pedestrian-safety-for-children.aspx> and [www.albertahealthservices.ca/injuryprevention.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/injuryprevention.asp)