



**Press Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Safety and Wellness Tips for Families as School Routines Return**

*Reeves Regional Health shares reminders for safe travel, healthy habits, and heat awareness this school year*

PECOS, Texas (August 18, 2025) — With the school year now in full swing, Reeves Regional Health is reminding families in Pecos and surrounding communities to stay mindful of safety and wellness—both on the road and in daily routines. From slowing down in school zones to keeping young athletes hydrated in the lingering West Texas heat, small precautions can make a big difference for children and parents alike.

### **Road and Pedestrian Safety**

The first few weeks back to school can be hectic as families adjust to new schedules. Traffic is heavier during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up, and the rush to get to work or home can sometimes lead to dangerous shortcuts. Reeves Regional Health urges drivers to slow down near schools, obey crossing guard instructions, and watch closely for children entering crosswalks.

Parents should remind children to make eye contact with drivers before crossing, avoid distractions such as texting or wearing headphones, and always stay on designated sidewalks. Even in familiar neighborhoods, the presence of new students, bus stops, and school events can change traffic patterns, making it important to remain alert.

“Extra caution during drop-off and pick-up times is one of the simplest ways to protect our kids,” said Brenda McKinney, CEO. “Whether you’re running late or rushing to work, that extra 10 seconds to look twice can prevent an accident.”

### **Healthy Eating for Busy Families**

The return to school often means busy schedules filled with classes, homework, sports, and other activities. With so much going on, nutrition can sometimes take a back seat. However, what children eat plays a big role in their ability to focus and perform both in and out of the classroom.

Planning ahead can help. Having grab-and-go healthy snacks available—such as apple slices with peanut butter, baby carrots with hummus, or yogurt with fresh berries—can keep kids fueled without relying on

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vending machine choices or fast food. Packing lunches the night before and keeping water bottles filled and ready are small steps that can make a big difference in creating consistent healthy habits.

“Children learn and perform better when they’re eating well,” McKinney said. “Parents set the tone for healthy habits, so planning ahead can make a big impact.”

### **Heat and Hydration for Young Athletes**

While the calendar may say fall is approaching, West Texas weather often tells a different story. Afternoon temperatures in Pecos can still climb into the 90s or higher well into the school year, creating challenges for students involved in outdoor sports, marching band, and other physical activities.

Hydration should be a top priority. Encourage children to drink water before, during, and after practice or games. Light-colored, breathable clothing can help keep body temperature down, and frequent breaks in shaded areas allow time to rest and cool off.

Signs of dehydration—such as headache, dizziness, nausea, or unusual fatigue—should be addressed immediately. Sports drinks can be helpful during extended activity, but water should remain the main source of hydration.

### **Staying Active, Safely**

Physical activity is essential for healthy development, but safety measures are equally important. Proper equipment, from helmets and pads in contact sports to supportive footwear for running, can help prevent injuries. Sunscreen should be used for any outdoor activity, even on cloudy days, to reduce the risk of sunburn and long-term skin damage.

Warm-ups and cool-downs are often overlooked but play a critical role in preventing strains and sprains. Parents can support safe activity by ensuring children have time to stretch before and after sports, and by encouraging rest days when needed.

“Being active is important, but it’s equally important to keep kids safe while they participate,” McKinney said. “Hydration, sunscreen, and the right equipment can prevent injuries and other health issues.”

### **Mental and Emotional Well-being**

The back-to-school season can bring more than physical demands—it can also be emotionally stressful for children. New schedules, unfamiliar teachers, and changing social circles can create anxiety or mood changes.

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Parents should watch for warning signs such as changes in sleep patterns, loss of interest in favorite activities, or difficulty concentrating. Regular check-ins, open conversations, and reassurance can help children adjust to the new school year. If concerns persist, reaching out to a healthcare provider or school counselor can provide additional support.

### **One Checklist for Families**

To help keep these reminders in mind, Reeves Regional Health suggests families focus on four key priorities during the school year:

- **Slow down** in school zones and watch for children in crosswalks.
- **Pack balanced snacks and meals** to keep kids fueled and focused.
- **Keep water handy** for all outdoor activities, especially in warm weather.
- **Encourage open communication** to support children's emotional health.

### **Partnering with Your Healthcare Provider**

Back-to-school is also an ideal time to ensure children are up to date on wellness exams, sports physicals, and immunizations. These visits allow providers to track growth and development, review health habits, and discuss any concerns with parents.

"Wellness visits are a chance to address the whole picture of a child's health—physical, mental, and emotional," McKinney said. "It's an opportunity to make sure they are set up for success."

Parents are encouraged to call now to schedule an appointment. For families in Pecos and the surrounding areas, contact the Reeves Regional Rural Health Clinic at **432-447-0565**.

### **About Reeves Regional Health**

Reeves Regional Health (RRH), formally known as Reeves County Hospital District, provides healthcare services for Reeves County and neighboring West Texas communities. Founded in 1954, RRH, a Level IV Trauma Center, offers various medical services, including emergency care, diagnostic imaging, physical therapy, general surgery, a clinical laboratory, and more. RRH also operates Reeves Regional Home Health and Hospice and Reeves Regional Rural Health Clinic. In November 2022, RRH began serving patients from a new \$115 million, 140,000-square-foot campus. For more information, please visit [www.reevesregional.com](http://www.reevesregional.com).



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