



Press Release
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Back-to-school season offers a fresh start for family health

Reeves Regional Health shares reminders for safer, healthier routines

PECOS, Texas (August 10, 2026) — Backpacks are being filled, alarm clocks are being reset and families across the area are preparing for the return to school. As students settle into new classrooms and schedules, Reeves Regional Health encourages families to make safety, healthy routines and personal wellness part of their back-to-school plans.

The beginning of a school year often brings excitement, but it can also mean busier mornings, heavier traffic and a major adjustment for children and adults. Taking a few simple precautions can help everyone begin the year safely and with more energy.

“The return to school changes the daily routine for the entire community, not only for families with school-age children,” said Brenda McKinney, CEO of Reeves Regional Health. “Drivers need to be more alert, students need time to adjust to new schedules and parents should remember that their own health remains important.”

Drivers should allow extra travel time during the first several weeks of school and be especially careful near campuses, bus stops, intersections and residential areas. School zones may become congested quickly, and children may step into the street without recognizing how close a vehicle is.

Phones and other distractions should be put away before the vehicle begins moving. Drivers should slow down, watch for crossing guards and never pass a stopped school bus when its red lights are flashing and its stop sign is extended.

Children who walk or ride bicycles to school should use a familiar route whenever possible. Parents may want to travel the route with younger children before the first day, pointing out crosswalks, intersections and places where visibility may be limited. Students riding bicycles should wear properly fitted helmets and avoid using phones or headphones that prevent them from hearing nearby traffic.

At home, returning to a dependable sleep schedule can make the transition to school easier. Children who have been staying up later during the summer may benefit from an earlier bedtime and wake-up time several days before classes begin.

Creating a quiet period before bedtime can help children relax. Turning off televisions, phones, tablets

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and video games before bed may also make it easier for them to fall asleep. Clothes, backpacks and school supplies can be prepared the night before to reduce morning stress.

“A well-rested child is generally better prepared to listen, learn and handle the emotional demands of the school day,” McKinney said. “Consistent routines can also make mornings calmer for parents and children alike.”

Breakfast and nutritious snacks can provide the energy students need throughout the day. Families do not have to prepare complicated meals to make healthier choices. Fruit, yogurt, cheese, whole-grain crackers, vegetables, nuts or nut-free alternatives allowed by the school can be convenient options.

Pairing a source of protein with fruit, vegetables or whole grains may help children feel satisfied longer. Parents should also encourage children to drink water throughout the day, especially during hot West Texas weather and when participating in recess, athletics or outdoor activities.

Backpacks should be checked regularly so that students are not carrying unnecessary weight. Children should use both shoulder straps, and heavier books or supplies should be positioned close to the back. Parents should pay attention if a child complains of recurring shoulder, neck or back discomfort.

The beginning of school can bring emotional changes as well. Some children may be excited, while others may be nervous about a new classroom, teacher, school or group of classmates. Parents can help by asking open-ended questions and giving children time to talk about their day.

Changes in sleep, appetite, behavior or school performance may be signs that a child is struggling with the adjustment. Parents who have concerns should communicate with the child’s teacher, school counselor or medical provider.

While children are returning to the classroom, parents may find that the new schedule creates an opportunity to renew their own healthy habits. A morning walk, an exercise class or a few planned workouts each week can help adults rebuild an exercise routine that may have been interrupted during the summer.

Exercise does not have to begin with an intense program. Starting gradually and choosing an activity that is enjoyable can make it easier to remain consistent. Parents can also involve children by walking together after dinner, riding bicycles or planning active family time on weekends.

“The beginning of the school year is a natural time for the entire family to reset,” McKinney said.

“Parents spend a great deal of time making sure their children have what they need, but taking care of

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their own health allows them to be more present for the people who depend on them.”

Parents who have postponed an annual wellness examination may also use the change in routine as a reminder to schedule an appointment. A wellness visit provides an opportunity to review medications, discuss health concerns, check recommended screenings and talk with a medical provider about nutrition, physical activity, sleep and other preventive health needs.

Families needing school physicals, immunizations, wellness examinations or routine medical care may contact Reeves Regional Rural Health Clinic at 432-447-0565. Reeves Regional Health encourages every family to begin the school year with patience, preparation and a renewed commitment to health and safety.

About Reeves Regional Health

Reeves Regional Health (RRH), a non-profit Level IV Trauma Center in Pecos, Texas, has been caring for Reeves County and surrounding West Texas communities since 1954. In 2022, the hospital opened its new facility, combining modern technology with the warmth of hometown care. In 2025, RRH was recognized as one of the Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals nationwide and also earned National Recognition as a Center of Excellence in Surgical Safety by the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN).

Our Mission and Vision: We are committed to exceptional care through servant leadership and strive to be the trusted beacon of health in our region—enhancing quality of life through innovation, compassion, and excellence. Guided by our WECARE values—Wellness, Excellence, Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Equality—we put patients and families at the heart of everything we do.

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