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## **Report as of September 2022**

Much like a vacation, summer always seems to be the time when everything goes – dessert for dinner, no early bedtime, no hectic schedule with school, homework, tutoring, and extra curriculars. While it is much needed and it surely promotes happiness, summer is fleeting, and too much of it may not be the healthiest! September rolls around, and the landscape changes drastically from chill vacation mode, to real life mode.

As our children head back to school, we need to remind ourselves and our little ones to have a healthy and balanced lifestyle. We can educate ourselves and make informed decisions in order to help minimize the chances of falling victim to the many disease causing bugs that are out there, and maximize everyone's wellbeing.

As a note to all parents-

Beginning 2022-2023 school year, our schools are returning to a three-tiered meal system in which some families may qualify for free or reduced-price meals while others will need to pay full-price for school meals. Parents or guardians will need to complete the school meal application process annually to determine their eligibility for assistance. Income eligibility guidelines can be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/income-eligibility-guidelines>

Please remember to speak to your child's classroom teacher regarding food instructions/limitations for classrooms. Many of our children have life-threatening food allergies and the only way we can help keep them safe is by being informed and keeping certain foods out of the classroom. This includes reminding our children to follow teacher's classroom protocols for safety, and washing hands before and after eating in the classroom or in the school cafeteria. Our younglings are great sharers and while they have the best of intentions, periodic reminders of how sharing can sometimes, in fact, end up hurting someone, can go a long way. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/>

While parents continue to be concerned about coronavirus and school safety protocols, the attention has shifted a bit to something new called orthopoxvirus, better known as monkeypox. It is a rare viral infection that transmits to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal, or with material that is contaminated with the virus. As of 9 September, there are a total of 3,542 confirmed

cases of monkeypox in New York State. Based on the current outbreak, and previous outbreaks around the world, certain populations are being affected more than others and there are ways we can protect ourselves and our children. We should stay informed, understand how the virus transmits, and what steps we can take to protect ourselves. Frequent reminders to our children about maintaining healthy distance from others, limiting sharing and good hygiene are important as well. Refer to the following sites to learn more.

<https://health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/monkeypox/>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/monkeypox>

As the school year gets busy and children get bogged down with assignments and exam preparation, it is important to remember that outdoor time and exercise are vital to our physical and mental health and overall wellness. Just a few minutes of sun exposure can have tremendous positive effect on our health and something as simple as taking a walk can be a wonderful way of relaxing and bonding with our kids.