

## RE: PRESS RELEASE

### Back to School Again...

As summer break draws to a close, the New Mexico Poison and Drug Information Center has some tips to help keep your student poison-free:

- To avoid food poisoning, make sure cold foods stay cool and warm foods stay warm. For example, when taking a cold-cut sandwich with mayonnaise for lunch, make sure to also pack ice or a cold pack.
- Students should wash their hands thoroughly before eating.
- Children should never eat or drink something if they are not sure that it is okay to do so. Medicines often look and taste like candy. Also, cleaning products often look and smell like food or drink.
- Students should wash their hands well after art projects. While most school supplies are non-toxic, ingestion of these substances is not recommended.
- Students should be reminded to follow directions carefully during science projects. Some chemicals are highly toxic and may react violently with water and other substances. Wear gloves when appropriate.
- A trusted adult, such as a parent or school nurse, should always help children take their medication(s).
- Children and adolescents should avoid alcohol. Small amounts of alcohol can be highly toxic in children and adolescents, and is even more dangerous when mixed with caffeine or certain medications. Of course, alcohol and driving never mix.
- There is such a thing as caffeine toxicity. Children and adolescents should have no more than 100 mg of caffeine a day. A typical can of soda contains around 40 mg of caffeine. Energy drinks should be strictly limited.
- Time spent in the sun should be limited, especially between 10am – 4pm. Wear plenty of sun screen that has an SPF of at least 15, protects against both UVA and UVB rays ("broad-spectrum") and is PABA-free. Children and adolescents should stay well hydrated during sport activities.
- Make sure childhood vaccinations are up-to-date.
- If you think that your child or student has been poisoned, call **1-800-222-1222** right away!  
**Do not wait for the person to look or feel sick or ask for help!**