

2. Health & Wellness are Critical (con't.)

HYGIENE. Wash your hands. This really does work to cut down on infection by preventing spread of germs. Many times students do not have the opportunity to wash their hands before they eat. Encouraging this easy-to-implement habit can help keep a classroom healthy.

Healthy bodies look good and smell good. It is important to keep hair, teeth, and the body clean. This may require some skill development from the occupational therapist and physical therapist.

3. Pro-active Wellness Keeps You in School - and Later on the Job!

FLU SHOT. Check with your doctor to see if you should have an annual flu shot or periodic pneumococcal vaccination.

VITAMINS. Check with your doctor about what kinds and dosage of vitamins to take. Being a student and keeping up with activities requires a lot of energy!

BE INFORMED. Learn as much as you can about your medications (dosage and time to take them), your health, and problems to avoid in order to maintain and sustain your periods of wellness.

Students who have difficulty reading can learn how to identify their prescription bottle, certain words, or their names on the labels.

4. Live Each Day!

PERSON FIRST. Everyone needs and deserves to be a person first—someone who has friends and is a member of the community, and someone who gets to have fun. This is no less true for people with serious illnesses or disabilities than it is for anyone else.

RAISING EXPECTATIONS. None of us knows how long we will be on this earth. Some students who have life-threatening health or disability issues may have a shorter time. Each day is a day in its own right—not a time of mourning or a Disney World, either.

Students with special health care needs will appreciate being treated like any other student. Even though there may be times that will be intense, both emotionally and physically, this is all part of the package. It is important that rules and consequences apply to ALL students.

FRIENDSHIPS ARE LIFESAVERS. It is critical that students have friends. All students need to feel connected. Encourage inclusive activities whenever possible. Seek learning experiences that foster positive relationships.

Recognize the importance of social skills, exhibiting age-appropriate behavior, and that some communication is acceptable for the classroom and some only for peer dialogue.

If medical issues or equipment appear to be a barrier to participation, identify ways to neutralize the problem.