

Child and Teen Checkups **CONNECTION**

February 2026



Sparkly Smiles Start Young

In honor of National Children's Dental Health Month, let's prioritize healthy habits that keep little smiles shining bright! Start brushing your child's teeth as soon as their first tooth appears, typically around 6 months of age, using a soft-bristled toothbrush and a small smear of fluoride toothpaste. As they grow, increase the toothpaste to a pea-sized amount and encourage them to brush for two minutes twice a day. Make brushing fun by singing songs, using a timer, or choosing a toothbrush with their favorite characters.

Flossing is just as important as brushing! Once your child's teeth start touching, use floss or kid-friendly flossers to remove plaque and food particles between their teeth.

Regular dental checkups are key to maintaining oral health. Your child should visit the dentist by their first birthday and continue with appointments every 6 to 12 months. If you need assistance in setting up a time for your child to visit the dentist, contact Steele County Public Health.

WHAT ARE CHILD AND TEEN CHECK UPS?

A **FREE** preventative health care benefit for children under the age of 21 who are eligible for Medical Assistance.

Why are they important?

They can:

- Find & treat health problems early on.
- Encourage healthy habits.
- Give a chance to ask questions about your child's health & development.

When should my child get a checkup?

- Between birth & 1 month.
- At 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24, & 30 months.
- Every year starting at age 3 to 20.

Where can I get a checkup?

Your child's primary provider. Call or email Steele County Public Health for the local provider list.



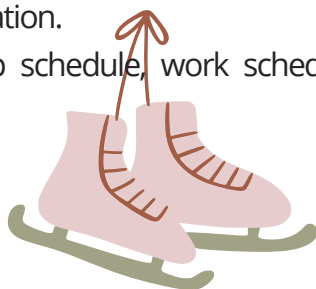
Keep Kids Safe This Winter: Car Seat Tips

Think of buckling your child into their car seat like riding a roller coaster—if a bulky jacket kept the harness from fitting snugly, you'd take it off to stay secure. The same idea applies in the car during winter months. Thick coats and puffy jackets can prevent the harness from tightening properly, putting children at risk if there's a sudden stop or crash. Removing bulky layers before buckling your child in, then placing a coat or blanket over the harness, helps keep your kiddo both warm and safe while traveling this winter.

Have Questions? Contact Public Health & ask for a Car Seat Technician: (507) 444-7650.

Staying Well in the Winter

- **Get exercise for at least 30 minutes a day:** ice skating, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, walking, shoveling snow, playing in the snow, at home work out/stretchers, & much more!
- **Spend time with friends and family:** don't isolate yourself!
- **Take time for your mental health:** journaling, breathing exercises, walking, reading, & meditation.
- **Keep a routine:** have a set sleep schedule, work schedule, exercise schedule, etc.



DENTAL CHECKUPS

- Dental coverage is a part of your Medical Assistance.
- Dental checkups are due every 6 months.
- Your child's doctor will advise you to start dental checkups as soon as the first tooth appears, & no later than 12 months.
- Call or email Steele County Public Health for assistance in scheduling this appointment.



What is WIC?

A nutrition & breastfeeding program that helps families eat well & stay healthy.

Who is WIC for?

Pregnant or breastfeeding women, infants from birth to age 1, & children aged 1 to 5.

How do you qualify for WIC?

Scan for the WIC income guidelines & application or call (507) 444 - 7660 for more information.

