

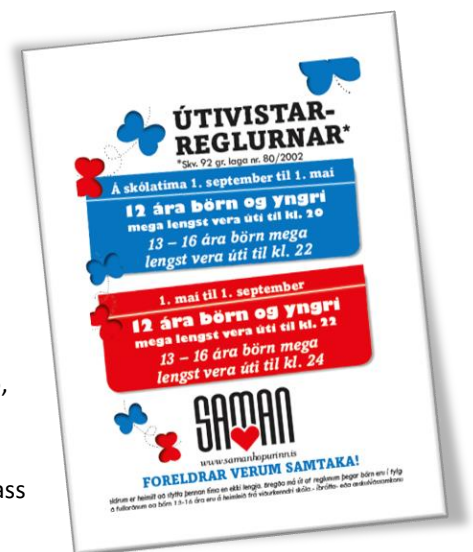
Dear parents/guardians

Yet another school year is over, and the summer is ahead. The summer season, which offers more leisure time and adventures, can present various challenges for children and teenagers. For that reason, we want to urge parents/guardians of children in preschool and primary school to be vigilant in their important preventive roles. It is important that parents and other caregivers form a tight support system for the children and provide support and encouragement for active social participation for their children in safe environment. Good results in the health promotion and prevention work of the last decades have been achieved, among other things, through solidarity and cooperation with parents.

Research indicates that certain factors protect children and adolescents against risky behavior. Parents of preschool children and children in the younger grades of elementary school are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these protective factors, no less than parents of teenagers. These studies have shown that if parents adopt these points and actively participate in parental cooperation, they are not only reducing the likelihood of risky behavior in their own child, but they are having a positive effect on the entire group of children in the local community.

We would like to point out those protective factors:

1. Parents and children spending time together.
2. Good and [sufficient sleep](#).
3. Caring parents and clear boundaries.
4. That parents know their children's friends and their friend's parents.
5. The importance of children's participation in organized afterschool activities/leisure activities.
6. To respect [outdoor time rules](#).
7. A clear stance against any consumption of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, nicotine pillows, e-cigarettes, and caffeine drinks.
8. Parents do not allow unattended parties.
9. Cooperation, trust, and participation in parent cooperation, e.g., class agreements, parent councils and parent walks.



Research indicates that fewer children value their mental health as good or very good than before. They also show growing number of children say they are not getting enough sleep and it is therefore of importance to stick to outdoor rules and set a [limit for children's use of smart devices and computers](#). For all social media the age limit is at least 13 years. It is important to respect those age limits and thus prevent our children from being participants in digital communities for which they have neither maturity nor age. Let children of all ages take part in the adventures of the summer with us, discuss these issues with them and limit the use of screens.

In recent summers, it has been common for teenagers who are starting high school in the fall to meet at unsupervised parties, e.g., in outdoor areas in Reykjavík and its surroundings. Attention is drawn to the fact that these events have not been organized by the secondary schools. There has been considerable drinking of alcohol at these events and parents are encouraged to be aware of this. It is important to prevent our young people from starting to consume alcohol or other drugs as far as possible.

With the protective elements as a guide, we can together tackle big challenges with success. Let's discuss these issues with the children, the children's friends and their parents and contribute to the welfare of children.

With summer greetings,
The public health and prevention team of Reykjavík's Education and Youth Department