

# Northern BC Healthy K to 12 Schools Newsletter

ISSUE 4 | SPRING



Information for Northern BC schools,  
students, and families



**northern health**  
the northern way of caring



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## FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



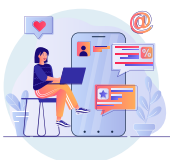
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# FOR ALL SCHOOLS

## Using QR codes

In this newsletter, we use QR codes for various websites and resources. Here are steps to help you:



- **Step 1:** Open the Camera App from your mobile device (either on the home screen, control centre, or lock screen).
- **Step 2:** Hold your device so the QR code opens in the viewfinder and wait until you see a notification pop up with a link.
- **Step 3:** Click on the notification to open the link associated with the QR code.

## Land acknowledgment

- Northern Health acknowledges with gratitude and respect the traditional territories of the 55 First Nations upon whose lands we live, work, and learn.
- We also recognize the 11 Métis Chartered Communities, as well as the Inuit and Urban and Away from Home Indigenous peoples on these lands.
- We are thankful for the continued opportunity to work in partnership to optimize the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples whom we serve.

## Services to schools



Healthy schools help to protect the health and safety of our children and youth in the North. For an overview of the current Northern Health (NH) services that are available to schools, visit the [NH School and Youth Health](#) webpage.

At a glance, the types of services offered for families with school-age children and youth include:

- Communicable disease follow-up
- Environmental health
- Immunizations at Kindergarten entry (4-6 years of age), Grade 6, and Grade 9



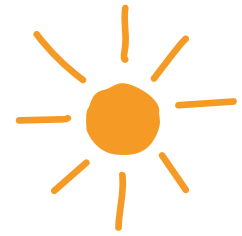
If you or your family need to connect with a health care provider, connect with the [health unit](#) in your community.

**Note:** Some services may vary from community to community and school to school.

### Health education and promotion content to support curriculum are available for:

- Cannabis, tobacco, and vapor reduction
- Injury prevention
- Mental health and wellness
- Nutrition and healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Support for children with potentially life-threatening medical conditions
- Support for substance use, including access to harm reduction supplies

# GET INVOLVED AND HAVE FUN



## May is sun awareness month

### Be a SunSense Certified School



- Calling all Northern BC elementary schools, including Parent Advisory Committees!
- The Canadian Cancer Society invites you to become a SunSense Certified School.
- SunSense supports elementary schools to create sun safe environments that protect students and staff from harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

Visit [sunsense.ca](https://sunsense.ca) to learn more about free tools and resources for teachers and students. Register today!

## National health and fitness day



Saturday June 4th is national health and fitness day. Finding ways to move your body helps support physical and mental well being for all. #LetsMoveCanada



**NATIONAL HEALTH & FITNESS DAY** JUNE 4  
**#LetsMoveCanada**

## Let's get outside



Did you know June is [Park and Recreation Month](#)? Find a local park near you to explore with family or friends.



Have some outdoor fun with this [spring scavenger hunt](#)! Downloaded and print it the next time you and your child go outside to visit a park, nature trail, or your backyard bring this along.

## National Indigenous Peoples Day

*Content adapted from Government of Canada*



[June 21<sup>st</sup>](#) is a day for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.



# BEING ACTIVE

## Spring GoByBike Week

- Mark your calendars! Spring GoByBike Week is coming up May 29 to June 4, 2023.
- [Register your school team now](#), and start tracking your kilometers biked to see how many kilograms of greenhouse gases you save.
- Participation is free, fun, helps you stay focused and healthy, and it's great for the environment! ... AND, you can win great prizes!



### Cycling education resources

- [Guide to ride \(grades 4-6\)](#) Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE)
- [Learn2Ride Online | GoByBike BC](#) (free online course for youth ages 9-12)
- [StreetWise Cycling Online | GoByBike BC](#) (free online course for adults and youth 12+)
- [Cycling safety: Sharing the road with cyclists and safety tips for cyclists](#) - ICBC

## Mental Health and Sport Resource Hub



The Coaching Association of Canada has launched the [Mental Health and Sport Resource Hub](#) to provide the tools and information to overcome stigma and guide conversations about mental health.

This **free** online portal offers training and resources for coaches to develop mental health literacy and positive coaching practices to improve performance and well-being in sport.



## Keeping Girls in Sport



[Keeping Girls in Sport](#) is an online resource that helps coaches and youth activity leaders to create safe and respectful environments for female athletes, ensuring girls stay enrolled and engaged in sports and physical activity.



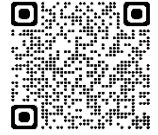
# SAFETY ADVICE

## Concussion prevention



A **concussion** can occur anywhere. Any blow to the head, face, neck, or body that jars the head could cause a concussion. It is important to learn how to prevent, recognize, and manage a concussion.

The [BC Concussion Awareness Training Tool](#) is an excellent resource for parents, youth, and educators. The resource includes, for example, information to support the return to school or sport after a concussion.



## Road Safety



Spring and summer are when people like to get out and enjoy the nicer weather. Be sure everyone is safe on the road, whether you are:

- driving
- skateboarding
- cycling
- walking
- scootering



[ICBC has excellent resources](#) for parents and educators to teach road safety skills. There are booklets and activity sheets for topics ranging from safely crossing the street, to signaling while bike riding, to paying attention while behind the wheel.

## Fall Prevention



Play is a key part of a healthy childhood. Sometimes play can lead to scrapes and bruises which is a normal part of growing up.

[Preventing more serious injuries](#), however, will ensure the play stays fun. Falls are common among children and youth. Always encourage safe play and safety gear to avoid injuries related to falls.



### Injury Prevention Resources

[Alex at the Playground:](#)  
A story for educators and parents of elementary school children



[Playground Safety HealthLink BC](#)

## Protecting your child's teeth from injuries



During spring and summer, children, and youth are spending more time doing outdoor activities where injuries can happen to face/teeth.

[Dental care for school aged children](#) has advice on overall dental care and what to do if a child experiences injuries to their teeth.

### Did you know?

Sports guards can help protect your child's teeth from chips and lost teeth.





# HOW ARE WE DOING?

## BC Adolescent Health Survey



The [BC Adolescent Health Survey](#) from McCreary provides information about students' health and well-being looking at many topics including new questions around:

- discrimination,
- gaming,
- sources of mental health and
- sexual health information,
- the impact of covid-19, and
- barriers to physical activity.

Teams across BC uses this information locally, regionally, and provincially in order to support programs and projects to improve youth health. Results are available to the public, school district and for youth to review and respond to. Find out more information about the survey by following the QR code.



## Screen time and digital media

Content adapted from [Canadian Pediatrics Society](#)



Many parents are concerned about how much time children are spending on devices. When children are on their devices, they are usually not learning, interacting with friends and family, playing, or enjoying the outdoors. Here are some suggestions for parents:

- **MANAGE** screen use through plans, rules, and limits.
- Encourage **MEANINGFUL** screen use, so that time spent online serves a purpose.
- **MODEL** healthy screen use because your kids are watching you.



## Early Development Instrument



The [Early Development Instrument \(EDI\)](#) is a questionnaire filled out by kindergarten teachers annually and looks at school readiness (beyond academic skills) and 5 core areas of children's health:

- physical health
- social skills
- emotional maturity
- language development
- communication skills

See how children are doing with the latest results in NH and across BC.





# TEACHING TOOLS

## School garden mentorship program



Farm to School BC is offering a series of free monthly after-school [online workshops](#) to support K-12 educators in BC with planning, creating, or revitalizing a school garden.



## “Help! How do I Talk to my Kid about Puberty?!” - Options for Sexual Health



[Options for Sexual Health](#) is a webpage available to parents with additional links to resources online that support how to have conversations with youth about puberty. Including how to be an askable adult encouraging youth to ask questions, factual information and resources for parents as well as for youth.



## Teaching sexual health



[Teach children and youth](#) to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health.

### For teachers:

- This website has evidence-based health information, lesson plans, tools, and resources to assist you in the classroom.

### For parents:

- This website offers parents the knowledge and confidence to talk comfortably with your children about sexual health.
- It's never too early or too late to talk to your child and learn more yourself.

### Did you know?

[Free birth control \(contraceptives\)](#) is now free in BC with Prescription



## Elmer the safety elephant

The Canada Safety Council, in partnership with education and public health experts, created a [new health education series](#). It offers informational posters, video presentations, interactive activities, and other teacher resources. The program features:



- Age-appropriate learning experiences for students on safe play
- Sharing of information and feelings
- Hand washing, mask wearing, and vaccinations

## Cessation supports for youth

Use these resources to assist those looking to quit or decrease their commercial tobacco and vapour use:

- [QuitNow](#) offers free information, support, and counseling by trained professionals by phone, text, or email.
- [Talk Tobacco](#) is a free confidential program offering culturally appropriate support and information about quitting smoking, vaping and commercial tobacco use to First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities.
- [Learn About Vaping | QuitNow.ca](#)
- [Smokers Helpline](#)



### Did you know?

May 31st is World no Tobacco Day



## Vaping: Know the risks

Watch to understand the short and long-term effects of vaping on lung health.

### [Clearing the Cloud](#)



[\(Grades 5-7\)](#)



[Exploring the cloud](#)  
[\(Grades 8-10\)](#)



### Remember:

Keep cannabis safe from curious little children by using two barriers to keep them from being accidentally poisoned. Keep the substance out of reach and locked up

## The CARD™ Toolkit

The [CARD™ toolkit](#) stands for: Comfort, Ask, Relax, Distract

Anxiety Canada developed this toolkit to help prepare children for stressful events, like school-based immunizations, presentations, and examinations. Students in Grades 4 to 12 can benefit from CARD™ strategies, and adapt them to different circumstances (including at home, school, and healthcare environments).



# CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Distance doesn't have to be a barrier. Lean on the resources below for support and education.



## Balancing Our Minds



[Balancing Our Minds](#) is a toolkit for youth, made by youth. It aims to support youth wanting to make changes for improved mental health and well-being in their schools and communities.

The toolkit:

- Features the experiences of young people, some who are early on their advocacy journey and some who have years of experience
- Explores how to create a safe space, how to start a conversation about mental health, and many more topics

## Team up against anxiety or behaviour challenges

These free phone-based programs are for parents and caregivers with children ages 3 to 12 years throughout BC.

[Confident Parents: Thriving Kids](#)



[We Are Indigenous Big Worries / Fears](#)

## First Nations Health Authority

There are culturally safe and trauma-informed services available for Indigenous people in BC. [First Nations Health Authority](#) supports cultural, emotional, and mental health needs. For instance, [Hope for Wellness Helpline](#) offers experienced mental health counselling and crisis intervention by phone or online chat. Counsellors can help if you:



- Want to talk
- Are distressed
- Are triggered by painful memories
- Have strong emotional reactions

## Compass – for community care providers



[Compass](#) is a BC-wide service to support mental health care to all BC children and youth. It supports community care providers to provide timely and appropriate care for every child and youth, such as:



- Public health nurses
- Child and youth mental health teams
- School mental health and substance use teams

The Compass team offers telephone consultation and web-based resources. The information, advice, and resources they provide can help to treat children and youth with mental health and substance use concerns. This program may be especially helpful when teams are feeling stuck or local resources require consultation with specialists.

# FOOD LITERACY

## A Hands on Food – New food literacy resource

Are you an elementary school educator looking to teach about food? [Hands on Food](#) offers student-tested lesson that teach important food skills such as:



- Growing
- Cooking
- Preserving
- Reducing food waste

It makes it easy it to integrate food literacy activities into your core curriculum, including Science and PHE. This resource is a community collaboration between Interior Health, School District 73, Farm to School BC, and the Public Health Association of BC.

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## Positive relationships with food and body

Feeling good about our bodies, and how we eat is important for wellness. However, this can be hard when diet culture is all around us.

Did you know that more and more school-age kids are trying risky weight loss diets? Schools, educators, parents, and others can play a role in preventing disordered eating and promoting positive relationship with food for kids. To learn more, check out the resources below:



## Weight bias and stigma in schools

- Weight stigma can increase the risk for disordered eating, poor body image and other mental health issues.
- This resource provides tips and teaching tools to make schools more inclusive for children of all sizes.



## Promoting positive body image – A resource for educators

- This resource offers tips and curriculum tools to promote positive body image and relationship with food for children.
- It also has tips for how to deal with body-based bullying and what to do if you are concerned about a student's eating.



## For more information or support:

Connect with a Northern Health Population Health Dietitian at [PopHthNutrition@northernhealth.ca](mailto:PopHthNutrition@northernhealth.ca)

Check out NH's [Relationship with Food and Body](#) webpage for schools



# ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

## Kindergarten-entry immunizations

Children entering Kindergarten (between 4 to 6 years) need booster immunizations against vaccine-preventable communicable childhood diseases. Boosters include:

- Tetanus/ Diphtheria/Pertussis/Polio (Tdap-IPV)
- Measles/ Mumps/Rubella/Chickenpox (MMRV)
- Any other childhood immunizations that may be overdue

Contact your local health unit to find out when kindergarten immunization clinics will be held and to book an appointment. Parents can:



[Check vaccination status](#)



Connect with their [local health unit](#)



### Did you know?

Lesson plans are available for teachers about immunizations for grades 4 to 12.



We hope you have a safe, fun, and memorable summer! Return to school in the fall strong and ready for a new year of learning adventures.

## Previous issues

[Issue 1 – Winter 2022](#)



[Issue 2 – Summer 2022](#)



[Issue 3 – Fall 2022](#)









## Important contact information

If you need to speak with a health care provider:

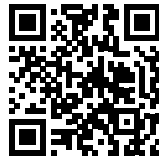
- Call your family doctor or nurse practitioner
- Connect with your local health unit
- Check out the [NH website](#) for more information



Here are some more options for you and your family:



Connect with the [First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day](#)



Call [HealthLink BC](#) at 8-1-1



Contact the [Northern Health Virtual Clinic](#) at 1-844-645-7811



#healthynorth

[northernhealth.ca](#)

[HealthySchools@northernhealth.ca](mailto:HealthySchools@northernhealth.ca)

10-420-6141 (FF06842-IND-05/23)



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