

Continuing the Conversation on Student Health, Well-Being & Success



Island Health

School Health Townhall Follow-Up: Resources for School Staff

Welcome to a New School Year!

As a follow-up to our recent School Health Townhall, Island Health thanks you for the important role you play as school staff in supporting student health, well-being, and success. **To help you start the year** with confidence, we've highlighted **key health information and resources**. Wishing you a rewarding school year ahead!



Tip: Bookmark or save this so you can refer back to it throughout the year.



Healthy Schools Website



Our website provides resources for school staff and parents/ caregivers.

islandhealth.ca/healthyschools

AT A GLANCE

Key Updates

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- [Immunization Webpage & Digital Consent](#)
- [New Nursing Support Services Training](#)

Foundations for Healthy Learning

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Supporting Healthy School Communities

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Switch to Permanent Daylight Saving Time

This winter, sunrise will occur after school starts in many B.C. communities. This may affect sleep, alertness, and well-being for some students. School communities can support by:

- Encourage healthy sleep habits
- Turn on school ground lighting earlier
- Max opportunities for daylight exposure and outdoor activity
- Promoting safe school travel during darker morning hours.

Public health will continue to monitor emerging evidence and share updates.



Tip: Send reminders to families on safe travel to school and consider including or adapting our [“Active School Travel”](#) insert in your school’s Fall newsletter to families.



Lice Management

Island Health has retired its Head Lice Management Guideline & Wet Combing Method Resource. Please remove any references to these on your school documents and websites.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Current evidence indicates head lice shampoos are more effective than wet combing.
- Children with head lice or nits should not be excluded from school.
- Family resource:
 - [HealthLink BC – Head Lice](#)
 - [School Newsletter Insert: Head Lice](#)
- School information:
 - [BCCDC Quick Guide to Common Childhood Diseases](#)
 - [Canadian Paediatric Society position statement on head lice](#)

Immunizations

Families and school staff can visit the **NEW** [Immunizations for School-Aged Children](#) webpage to learn more about:

- School immunization clinics
- Recommended vaccines by grade
- Immunization records
- Vaccination Status Reporting Regulation
- Frequently asked questions



Digital Consent

Starting this school year, Island Health will use the provincial digital consent platform for all school immunization clinics. This process will replace paper consents. Paper forms will be made available when digital consent cannot be used or accessed.

Public Health teams will continue to support schools with clinic planning throughout the school year and provide schools and families more info and resources prior to clinics.



Vaccination Status Reporting Regulation (VSSR)

Immunization is not mandatory for children in BC. However, reporting the immunization status (including non-vaccination) of school-aged children (K–12) is required under the [Vaccination Status Reporting Regulation](#). Accurate records help Public Health respond quickly during vaccine-preventable disease events, protecting students, families, and school communities.

The VSSR applies to students attending public, independent, and home schools (including international students). It does not apply to children attending schools in First Nations communities.

New Nursing Support Services Training *Adrenal Insufficiency Care in Schools*

Starting this school year, Nursing Support Services will be offering new training and resources to support children with adrenal insufficiency in schools. Check out the [NSS website](#) for more info.

Vision

For an optometrist call: 1-888-393-2226 or visit: bc.doctorsofoptometry.ca

Hearing

Screening is conducted annually in kindergarten and public health staff will contact schools directly. Reach out to your public health unit if need of further support.

Dental

Occasional province-wide kindergarten dental screenings help monitor trends & spot early concerns.

For a dentist visit: bcdental.org/find-a-dentist/

Routine Immunizations:

School-based immunization clinics (SBICs) are offered to students in Kindergarten, Grades 6 and 9. Catch-up opportunities for all vaccines, including HPV, are available for eligible students in Grades 7-12.

School-aged children, including those who are home-schooled, can also receive immunizations at their [local public health unit](#).

- ✓ Options for families to access immunizations
- ✓ Increased immunization coverage
- ✓ Support BC Cancer's goal of eliminating cervical cancer

Read the Minister's, provincial health officer's [statements](#) on back-to-school vaccinations



Nursing Support Services

- Teach and support school staff to help eligible students perform their diabetes care, intermittent catheterization, or tube feeds, at school.
- Train school staff to perform medically ordered rescue interventions for students with seizures or adrenal insufficiency.

For referrals & more info see BC Children's Hospital [Nursing Support Services webpage](#)



Health Care Financial Support

- [Healthy Kids Program](#) may provide financial assistance to eligible families for basic dental care, eye care and hearing assistance.
- Additional dental financial assistance may be available from the [Canadian Dental Care Plan](#)

Vaping

The Tobacco & Vapour Prevention and Control program supports schools in addressing student tobacco, vaping, and nicotine use.

- [Resources to Support Tobacco & Vapour Education](#): Tools and lesson plans for discussing tobacco, vaping and informed decision making.
- [Supports and Resources to Reduce or Quit Nicotine](#): Free, confidential nicotine reduction and cessation support for youth. Printable for school posting.
- [Alternative to Suspension for Tobacco & Vapour Use](#): Supports restorative, education-based responses to student tobacco and vapour use, with a focus on reflection, prevention, and skill-building.



Find these resources, how to connect with our team, and more on our website

PreVenture

[PreVenture](#) is a program for youth ages 12-18 that promotes mental health and delays and reduces substance use. The program workshops focus on managing stress, peer pressure, and other everyday challenges.

- [Foundry BC](#) provides free PreVenture training, resources, coaching, and implementation support for schools.
- The Healthy Schools Team can assist with implementation and facilitator capacity as needed.



SCHOOL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT: VAPING EDUCATION PILOT

Project Overview:

Last year, SD62 and Island Health (ISLH) piloted a vaping education workshop to support Grades 5 and 6 educators in:

- Delivering evidence-informed vaping prevention education
- Engaging in meaningful conversations before youth start vaping

The Why:



Increasing youth vaping rates

13 years old

Age that many youth try vaping

Partners involved in delivering the pilot:

- SD62 Health Curriculum Coordinator
- ISLH Tobacco & Vapour Reduction Coordinator
- ISLH School Health Promoter

Project outcome highlights

- Value in school-health partnerships in supporting student well-being and strengthening prevention efforts
- Participants reported increased confidence in addressing vaping related topics
- Participants reported greater awareness of available tools and resources that can be immediately applied in class

Naloxone Training

Student, school staff, and PAC workshops have been delivered across the Island. Sessions focus on substance use literacy, recognizing opioid poisoning, hands-on naloxone training, and reducing stigma. Students have expressed a desire for more open and honest conversations about substance use. Contact us for support or resources.

"I feel stuff like this needs to be spoken about in schools and I'm glad it was at my school"

Student

Check out BCCDC's guidance document to support schools and districts with [considerations for responding to overdose events](#)

Sexual Health

Island Sexual Health's free, confidential Youth Q&A Text Line provides youth with reliable sexual health information and local resource referrals across Vancouver Island and surrounding regions. *It does not offer medical advice or counselling.*

250-812-9374



- birth control
- STBIs
- emergency contraception
- consent
- relationships
- gender identity

Contact our Healthy Schools team if you need posters or information for your school.

SCHOOL HEALTH SPOTLIGHT: YOUTH-LED HEALTH INITIATIVES

Project Overview:

Last year, Dunsmuir Middle School launched the Youth Engagement Project, an initiative focused on student agency and community connection to foster a more supportive school environment for student well-being.

How it started:

A school champion recognized the importance of elevating student voice, direction and leadership to address youth-identified health and wellness priorities.

Partners involved in the initiative:

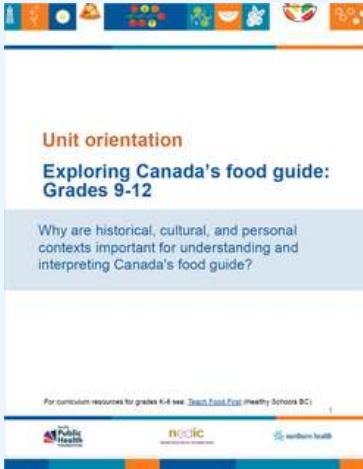
- Staff champion, school & district staff
- ~50 Middle School Students
- McCreary Centre Society
- Island Health
- **15** Community Organizations

Project outcome highlights

- Students explored youth health data with McCreary Centre Society facilitators, and identified 3 health priorities: mental health literacy, sleep and vaping
- Students and partners planned **Mental Health Week** activities based on priorities, for example:



- ✿ **Student vaping forums:** Students shared their current knowledge on vaping and what they wanted to learn → informing future classroom learning
- ✿ **Wellness Market:** Students connected with community partners to learn about local youth wellness resources and supports
- ✿ **Peer-led learning** activities on vaping & sleep



New Resource for Secondary Educators: Exploring Canada's Food Guide

What makes this resource unique?

- Co-developed by teachers and health professionals
- Explores the food guide in relational ways
- Considers students' diverse food contexts
- Classroom-ready lessons for grades 9-12 that connect to the BC curriculum

Access the resource: [NH Teaching about Food and Nutrition page](#). Connect with us for Island Health Public Health Dietitian support.

Being Me, Being Us - Body Inclusivity

What is it?

- A free online resource that helps educators create body-inclusive classrooms and schools
- Offers teacher learning resources, Grades 4-7 lesson plans, and strategies for integrating body-inclusive concepts across subject areas and within school policies

Check it out at: <https://beingmebeingus.ca/>



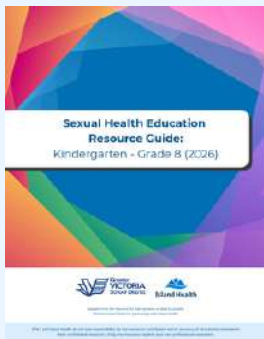
PHE Curriculum Resource Guide

What makes this resource unique?

- Created in partnership with SD62's Curriculum Transformation team.
- Developed to support curriculum-aligned, age-appropriate, and evidence-based health education from K - Grade 10.
- Organized by grade & topic, it includes ready-to-use lessons on:
 - Nutrition & body image
 - Illness prevention
 - Personal safety & media literacy
 - Sexual & reproductive health
 - Substance use
 - Mental well-being

Access the resource on our [Healthy Schools Webpage](#)





Sexual Health Education Resource Guide

What is it?

- Free and ready-to-use resources to teach the required sexual health learning outcomes in the PHE Curriculum from K - Grade 8.
- An SD61 resource developed in collaboration with Island Health

Check it out: [Sexual Health Education Resource Guide \(K-8\)](#)

SEL Suicide Prevention Toolkit

What makes this resource unique?

Social-Emotional
Learning Suicide
Prevention Toolkit
Foundational Skills for Youth's Mental Health



- Free, practical resources to help caring adults understand how social-emotional learning (SEL) supports youth mental health and suicide prevention.
- School staff can learn what SEL programs address certain risk factors of suicide, as well as learn more about protective factors.
- Developed by the University of Victoria and Island Health.

Access the resource: [SEL Toolkit](#)



Concussion Awareness Training Tool

What is it?

- A free, evidence-based online resource with information on recognizing the signs & symptoms of concussion, knowing when to seek help, and supporting safe recovery & return to learning.
- Free e-courses are available for school professionals, coaches & youth.
- Presentations for groups such as DPACs, coaching staff & more.

Check it out: [Concussion Awareness Training Tool \(CATT\)](#)

Screens

Addressing digital media use and child health and development is a growing priority. See examples below of support we can offer:

- Family/staff education sessions on healthy screen use & digital safety
- Student health promotion events
- School Newsletter Inserts: Screen Time ([K-7](#)), ([Gr.8-12](#))

Reach out to explore how we can partner with your school community to promote youth digital wellbeing.



School Newsletter Inserts

School newsletter inserts are grab and go resources for your own school newsletters for parents and caregivers on various health topics. Find them on our [webpage](#), under school newsletter inserts.

School newsletter inserts

We are currently updating and adding health and wellness related newsletter inserts. If you are not seeing a newsletter insert for a specific health topic, please [reach out to our team](#) so we can work with you to meet your request.

Newsletter Inserts by health topic

Care options: [Right Care, Right Place](#)

Body Image and nutrition

- [Allergy Aware Schools](#)
- [Eating Together: Better Nutrition & More!](#)
- [Healthy Relationship with Food](#)
- [Keeping Active Children Hydrated](#)

Local Resources

Health Units: Public health services for children, youth and families. Visit the [webpage](#) to find your local health unit.

Discovery Youth & Family Substance Use Services: Counselling for youth (13-19+ years) and their families related to substance use. To make a referral call 250-519-5313 and visit the [webpage](#) to learn more.

Foundry: Mental health and substance use support, primary care, peer support & social services for youth (12-24 years). Learn more: foundrybc.ca/victoria or call 250-383-3552.

Vancouver Island Crisis Line: Free, confidential 24/7 support for individuals experiencing emotional distress, mental health concerns, or crisis. Call 1-888-494-3888 or visit www.vicrisis.ca.

Island Sexual Health: The community health centre (3960 Quadra St.) offers sexual health care and gender affirming products for people of all ages, genders, orientations and abilities. Learn more: www.islandsexualhealth.org or call 250-592-3479

Meet with us!

We'd love to connect! Your Medical Health Officers and multidisciplinary [Healthy Schools](#) team can support health promotion & illness prevention in a variety of ways, such as:

- Curriculum & Instructional Support
- Professional Development & Capacity Building
- Student & Community Engagement
- Strategic Planning & Environmental Support
- Student Health Services

To schedule a meeting or submit an inquiry, e-mail us at

Healthy Schools Team: healthyschools@islandhealth.ca

Medical Health Officers: Melissa.Wan@islandhealth.ca