

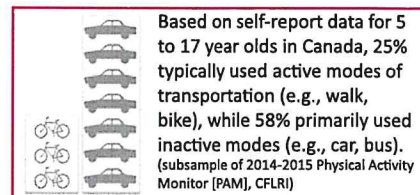
# Building Healthy Schools...

## A HEALTHY START TO KINDERGARTEN

2019-20

### Travelling to School

Building active transportation into your daily routine is a great and easy way to get kids active. We know that only 35% of Canadian kids aged 5 to 17 meet the physical activity recommendation within the **Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth** of at least 60 minutes of heart-pumping activity they need each day<sup>1</sup>, so walking or wheeling to school is a great way to increase physical activity.



Active transportation has many benefits for children that may include better sleep, higher grades, and more positive emotions during the trip to school. Reducing car trips is good for the environment and can also decrease the release of car exhaust emissions that are a factor in cardiovascular and lung diseases.

☒ **Prior to school starting, plan a safe route to school for your child and practise that route while teaching your child pedestrian and road safety.**

Some schools have programs in place that are dedicated to the promotion of active transportation for the daily trip to school. Ask your teacher how to become involved! Consider organizing a walking school bus where volunteer parents or older students lead a group of students on a designated route; students get 'picked up' at spots along the route. Families that must drive can 'Park and Stride'. Try parking a few blocks from the school and then stride, or walk, the rest of the way. This practice gives kids a chance to get a little exercise before school begins, which can help improve focus and behaviours throughout the day.

If your child will be travelling to school on a school bus, annual First Rider programs are offered by the Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO) which provides the opportunity to learn and practise how to get on and off the school bus, as well as bus safety tips. For more information you can call STSCO at 1-800-757-0307 or visit [www.mto.gov.on.ca](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca) and search "school bus safety".

☒ **Remember...when wheeling to school make sure your child wears a properly fitted helmet every time they ride.**

1. ParticipACTION. The Brain + Body Equation: Canadian kids need active bodies to build their best brains. The 2018 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. Toronto.



### Self-Regulation and Your Child

Self-regulation means that a person is able to manage their emotions, behaviours, and attention in positive ways. Self-regulation is different than self-control.

Helping your child learn self-regulation now, will help them handle being in a classroom later. Right from birth, your baby's experiences are shaping and building connections in their brain. As you hold and calmly soothe your fussy baby, you are laying the foundation for good self-regulation. When you comfort your upset child, they learn from you how to calm themselves. By interacting with your child in a positive way you are role modelling how to deal with stress efficiently and effectively.

Self-regulation lays the base for long-term well-being and school success. The following link contains videos and more information about self-regulation:

<http://edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/selfRegulate.html>

### Help Your Child Become Resilient

Resilience is the ability to "bounce back" from change or stress and to move forward. Resilience is key to mental well-being and an important life skill for children to develop. Try these strategies from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health to foster resiliency in your child:

- treat them with warmth, care and sensitivity;
- expose them to a variety of learning environments to help develop awareness, imagination, know-how, initiative and decision-making skills;
- talk about feelings within your family to help children learn to identify and communicate their feelings to others;
- help children feel good about themselves by accepting and appreciating them the way they are and the way they want to be;
- help them learn to have more positive thoughts about themselves;
- teach them to be flexible, to make decisions, solve problems, set appropriate goals and persevere to reach them; and
- help them develop social skills by cooperating and interacting with others and making friends.

For more information visit:

[www.child-encyclopedia.com/sites/default/files/docs/coups-oeil/resilience-info.pdf](http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/sites/default/files/docs/coups-oeil/resilience-info.pdf)



# DEVELOPING HEALTHY BEHAVIOURS

## Healthy Eating

Kindergarten is the best time to establish healthy eating habits at school!

Help your child get the nutrition they need to make it through a busy day.

### Breakfast

- Include foods from all three food groupings in the new **Canada's Food Guide:** vegetables & fruit, protein foods, and whole grains. Ideas include: yogurt, berries and whole grain cereal; whole wheat toast and scrambled eggs with peppers; whole grain pancakes, fresh fruit and milk.
- Encourage your child to participate in their school's student nutrition program (if it has one). All students are welcome to eat a nutritious breakfast or snack!



### Lunch

- Whether your child has two nutrition breaks or one lunch break, pack foods from all food groupings. Ideas include: veggies, hummus, apple slices and mini-muffins; cheese, crackers, veggies and a banana; chilli, whole-wheat bun, and orange wedges.
- Water is the beverage of choice! Send a reusable water bottle to school every day.
- Pack water, plain milk or unsweetened fortified soy beverages. These choices have lots of nutrition and no added sugar. Find out if your school has a milk program.
- Avoid sending 100% unsweetened juice, vegetable juice, flavored milk and flavored plant based beverages (e.g. soy, rice, almond), fruit drinks, sports drinks, pop, iced tea, or vitamin enhanced water. These drinks have added sugar and often bump out healthy choices.
- Offer whole fruit instead of juice. Whole fruits have more nutrition and fibre, and keep kids satisfied longer.

### Snacks

- Include at least two food groupings. Ideas include: fruit and yogurt; veggies and whole grain pita wedges; unsweetened applesauce and pumpkin seeds.

### Remember to ...

- Offer a vegetable or fruit at every meal and snack.
- Keep cold foods cold by using freezer packs, and hot foods hot in insulated containers.
- Nutrition breaks can be short and full of distractions! Pre-peel fruits and vegetables, cut foods into bite-size pieces and quarter sandwiches to help your child get enough to eat.
- Involve children in packing lunch. They are more likely to eat what they help prepare.
- Have your child practice opening containers, foil, baggies and yogurt or fruit cups. This helps them access their food independently, rather than waiting for help.

### Community Support and Resources

- Visit [www.unlockfood.ca](http://www.unlockfood.ca) for healthy, low cost lunch and snack ideas.
- Call Telehealth Ontario to speak to a Registered Dietitian for free: 1-866-797-0000
- Find out about community food programs at [www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca) (search "food") for programs in Haliburton County, Northumberland County and City of Kawartha Lakes, and at [www.foodinpeterborough.ca](http://www.foodinpeterborough.ca) in Peterborough and County.

## Oral Health Screening

During the school year, Public Health Oral Health staff visit elementary schools to conduct oral health screening.

Parents/guardians will be notified of the screening dates either by an information letter, school newsletter or as determined by your school's Principal.

This quick visual screening does not replace a child's regular visit to the dentist. It helps in the planning and development of community dental programs, provides parents with advice/recommendations on the dental needs of their children and may provide access to the Healthy Smiles Ontario Program.

Healthy Smiles Ontario is a free dental program for eligible children age 17 and under. For more information, contact your Health Unit.

## Vision Screening

Your child's vision is very important to overall development. Nearly 85% of a child's early learning occurs through vision.

During the school year, Public Health Vision Screening staff visit elementary schools to conduct vision screening for Senior Kindergarten students.

Parents/guardians will be notified of the screening dates either by an information letter, school newsletter or as determined by your school's Principal.

The screening involves three short tests that may help identify possible risk factors for certain eye conditions. This vision screening cannot diagnose eye conditions and does not replace a full eye exam by an eye doctor (optometrist).

An eye exam with an optometrist is free of charge every 12 months up to 19 years of age with a valid OHIP card.

## FREE Glasses for JK Students

One in four children has a vision problem.

Young children do not know what normal vision is supposed to look like and therefore may not complain to their parents. Children's eye exams are paid for with their health card, so there is no cost to parents.

Don't miss out on free glasses for JK students through the Eye See Eye Learn Program.

For more information, visit: [www.EyeSeeEyeLearn.ca](http://www.EyeSeeEyeLearn.ca) or call 1-855-424-3735





# DEVELOPING HEALTHY BEHAVIOURS

## Sun Safety

No matter the season, sun safety is important year-round! Children receive 80% of their lifetime ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure before the age of 18. It is important that children are protected, by promoting and practicing good sun safe behaviours. Did you know that UV rays from the sun can reflect off of snow, ice, water, sand and concrete causing sunburn, skin and eye damage and increase your risk of skin cancer? Being sun safe is easy to do. Teach your child to be sun smart and set a good example by being a good role model to your child. Keep well hydrated in hot weather by drinking water throughout the day.

Follow these sun safety tips:

### Time

In Canada, the sun's UV rays are strongest usually between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. from April to September. UV rays can be harmful even when it is cloudy. Check the UV index and when it is higher than 3 follow the sun protection messages.

### Shade

Teach your child about shade from trees or covered structures (i.e. umbrellas, porches, tents) and to seek shade whenever necessary, especially during sporting events.

### Cover Up

Wear a wide-brimmed hat, and clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Hats should shade the head, face, ears, and the back of the neck. Clothes made of tightly woven fabric or those labelled as UV-protective are best. Cover up even in the shade.

### Sunscreen

Use sunscreen labelled 'broad spectrum' and 'water resistant' with a sun protection factor of 30 and reapply often. Use plenty of sunscreen to cover the skin not covered by clothing. If sweating or after swimming, towel off and reapply sunscreen to dry skin. Use a sunscreen lip balm to protect lips.

### Sunglasses

Choose sunglasses marked with "UV 400 or 100% UV protection" and wear sunglasses year round. Ensure children's sunglasses are unbreakable.

To learn more about sun safety, visit the following links:

[www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca) (search "sunsense")

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs.sun-sol/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs.sun-sol/index-eng.php) (click on "Protect yourself and your family")

[www.dermatology.ca](http://www.dermatology.ca) (search "sun safe tips for parents")



## Play!

Play is a child's right according to the United Nations. For children, play is their work. There are all kinds of play but in the school grounds, we encourage unstructured or free play - child-led with no interference from an adult. Unstructured play has many health benefits, physically, mentally and socially.

Parents can support free play by encouraging the school to include natural elements like logs, branches, "tree cookies", and rocks. If your school has the storage available, parents can also support loose parts play by donating items like cardboard boxes, milk crates, buckets, cooking utensils, pots and pans, building blocks, traffic cones, and so many other items!

If there is play, there may be injuries. For the most part, they are minor and part of a child's learning around assessing risk. It's part of growing up. If you want to learn more about how you can support outdoor play, visit [www.outsideplay.ca](http://www.outsideplay.ca)

Many school playgrounds have built play structures for children to use that may include swings, slides and climbing bars. For children younger than five years of age, parents can give them the chance to play on similar structures at a local park or in a backyard. Stay close to your child and help them learn to use equipment properly and develop age appropriate skills to assess and manage risks.

For more information, visit [www.parachutecanada.org](http://www.parachutecanada.org) and search Playgrounds and Play Spaces.



## Backpack Safety

Backpacks are a popular and practical way for children to carry school books, lunch and extra clothing. They are designed to distribute the weight of the load among some of the body's strongest muscles. As practical as backpacks are, they can strain muscles and joints, and may cause back pain if they're too heavy or are used incorrectly. It is recommended that children carry no more than 10-15% of their body weight in their packs.

To learn more, click [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org) and search "backpack safety".



# PREVENTING DISEASES AND ILLNESSES

## Immunization

Immunization protects children from diseases. To be in school, your child must have an up-to-date immunization record or a valid exemption. Keep your child's immunization card in a safe place and remember to request that the immunization card be updated each time your child is immunized.



As a parent of a school-aged child, it is your responsibility to provide a copy of your child's immunization record to your local Health Unit and then to notify the Health Unit of updated immunizations.

For information click [www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca](http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca) or [www.hkpr.on.ca](http://www.hkpr.on.ca) and search "immunization".

## Hand Hygiene

Teaching and encouraging good hand hygiene is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of illness. Teach children to clean their hands with soap and water before eating lunch or snacks, and after using the washroom.

Proper hand washing can be taught as your child sings 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' or 'Happy Birthday' while:

- wetting hands with warm water;
- lathering soap on both sides of hands and in between fingers;
- rinsing hands; and
- drying hands thoroughly.



Also, teach children to cough and sneeze into their sleeve to cover their mouth and nose. This can play an important role in reducing the spread of illness.

## Second-hand Smoke

"Children and youth model their behaviour after people they look up to". This means parents, guardians, caregivers, and other family members play an important role in helping their children remain smoke-free.



Children are more at risk of getting sick from second-hand smoke as their bodies are still growing and their immune system is not fully developed. Symptoms seen in children regularly exposed to second-hand smoke include:

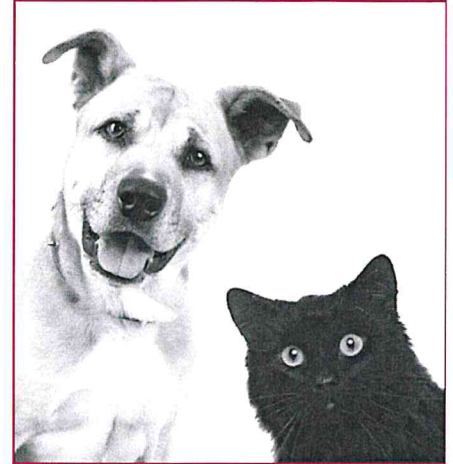
- wheezing, asthma, and other breathing problems; and
- bronchitis, croup, pneumonia, and chronic ear infections.

Children who miss school due to illness lose out on many valuable learning opportunities. Reduce your child's exposure to second-hand smoke by making your home and car smoke-free. Have family members and guests who smoke, smoke outside. Smoking in vehicles with children less than 16 years of age is illegal and can result in a fine of \$125.00.

For tobacco-free living tips visit [www.smokefreehousingon.ca](http://www.smokefreehousingon.ca) and [www.playlivebetobaccofree.ca](http://www.playlivebetobaccofree.ca). For tips on quitting smoking visit [www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca). To speak to a Certified Respiratory Educator or order free smoke-free home and car stickers, please call the Ontario Lung Association 1-888-344-5864 or click [www.on.lung.ca](http://www.on.lung.ca) for resources.

## The ABCDs of Rabies:

If someone asked you "where do you get rabies from?" Lots of people might say dogs or cats. Some people might say you can get rabies from raccoons or skunks. Some people might even say you can get rabies from squirrels or mice. Well, that is all true, in fact any mammal can get rabies, but it doesn't mean they will. So how do you tell if an animal has rabies? That's the hard question, because rabies is a virus which is hidden in the saliva of infected animals, so you can't actually see it. Also it is hard to know exactly how an animal will act when they do get rabies; they don't have to look mean or scary.



To make sure your child is safe, teach them the ABCDs of rabies:

### A: Acting strange

If you see an animal that you never met before, and it is being very friendly, strange, sick or mean; stay away from that animal, and tell your parents.

If that animal tries to come close to you, don't move and eventually the animal will get bored and walk away.

### B: Bats

Bats can get rabies too. So tell your parents if you see a bat acting strange, like flying outside in the daytime, or slowly crawling on the ground. Also if you wake up and see a bat in your bedroom, stay away from the bat, and tell your parents.

### C: Clean

If you get bit by an animal, tell your parents right away, and CLEAN the bite with soap and water, and ask your parents to disinfect the bite.

### D: Distance

The safest thing to do with any animal is to keep your DISTANCE from the animal at all times, until your parents say it is safe. The animal may not have rabies, but we don't know if the animal wants us near them.

If your child would like to know more, go to [www.cdc.gov/rabiesandkids](http://www.cdc.gov/rabiesandkids), or for more detailed information, visit your local public health website.



# YOUR CHILD'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

## Looksee Checklist

The Looksee Checklist is easily completed by parents and caregivers to identify delays in children up to six years of age. Areas of development include gross and fine motor, cognitive, social/emotional, self-help skills, vision, hearing and communication. The checklist also provides suggestions and activities to enhance development.

Visit [www.lookseechecklist.com](http://www.lookseechecklist.com) for more information or contact your local Health Unit.

## Speech and Language

Developing speech and language skills will help your child to make friends, learn to read, and succeed in school and life. Milestones and activities for children from birth to six years of age are available at [www.kidtalk.on.ca](http://www.kidtalk.on.ca).

Warning signs for three year olds:

- stuttering which lasts longer than three months (struggle and tension while speaking);
- rarely makes eye contact; and
- has difficulty playing with others.

Warning signs for four year olds:

- other people have a hard time understanding what your child says; and
- gets frustrated when others cannot understand his/her speech.

Some children have difficulty developing their speech and language skills. This puts them at risk for failure in school, which could lead to further problems later in life. Make sure your preschooler's speech and language skills are on track by calling your local Health Unit to talk to a Public Health Nurse. In the Peterborough area call 705-743-1000. In the Haliburton, Northumberland and City of Kawartha Lakes area call toll-free 1-866-888-4577.

For more information, visit:

- [www.kidtalk.on.ca](http://www.kidtalk.on.ca)
- Five Counties Children's Centre 1-888-779-9916
- Northumberland Child Development Centre 905-885-8137

## Hearing

Hearing problems may affect your child's speech and language. Signs of hearing problems may include: not responding when called, loud talking, frequent ear infections or colds, turning up the volume on the TV or radio. If you have any concerns about your child's hearing, contact your doctor or an audiologist to arrange a hearing test. To learn more visit [www.kidtalk.on.ca](http://www.kidtalk.on.ca).

## Sleep

Preschoolers need up to 12 hours of sleep when they no longer have naps. Good sleep habits are important for children so they are prepared to learn. Healthy bedtime routines include:

- a consistent bedtime;
- quiet time before bed - avoid stimulating activities like TV and computer games for one hour before bedtime;
- no TV, video games or computer in the bedroom, making the bedroom quiet and cozy; and
- reading to your child as part of the bedtime routine; share reading from a book rather than a tablet or other screen.



To learn more, visit [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca) search **healthy sleep for your baby and child**.

## Screen Time

Parents can help promote healthy child development by following these recommendations on appropriate use of screen time:

- For children 2 to 5 years, limit routine or regular screen time to less than 1 hour per day.
- Ensure that sedentary screen time is not a routine part of child care for children younger than 5 years.
- Maintain daily 'screen-free' times, especially for family meals and book-sharing.
- Avoid screens for at least 1 hour before bedtime.
- Be a good role model with your screen use.



For more information, visit:

[www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca) search **screen time and young children**

If you have questions about these or other topics please call your local Health Unit and speak to a Public Health Professional:

Residents of **Peterborough County and City** call **705-743-1000**

Residents of **Haliburton County, Northumberland County and City of Kawartha Lakes** call **1-866-888-4577**



HALIBURTON, KAWARTHA,  
PINE RIDGE DISTRICT  
HEALTH UNIT [www.hkpr.on.ca](http://www.hkpr.on.ca)



Peterborough  
Public Health [www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca](http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca)