

## Healthy Schools Fall 2024 Newsletter

### Welcome back students, staff, and families!

This newsletter has information about programs and activities offered by the Health Unit.

### HKPRDHU School Health Team:

Each school has a School Health Team nurse who provides programs and support to schools, staff, students, and families.

**The School Health Team nurses can be reached at 1-866-888-4577 ext. 1508.**

### Topics School Health Nurses will be focusing on this year:

- Vaping Prevention
- Mental Health and Wellness Promotion
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Prevention of common childhood illnesses

**Reminder: It is illegal to smoke or vape on school property (which includes buses). Students are not permitted to have vapes (e-cigarettes) at school even if they aren't in use.**

### Topics the School Health Dietitian will be focusing on this year:

- Food Neutral approach to educating
- You're The Chef food literacy programming for grades 5-8
- Mental Health pertaining to Body Image
- Supporting Student Nutrition Programs

### Healthy Schools Certificate:

Registration for Ontario Physical and Health Education Association's (OPHEA) Healthy School Certification opens September 9<sup>th</sup> and closes November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. This is an opportunity to promote health and well-being within your school community. For more information, visit [Healthy Schools Certification](#).

If you need help applying, reach out to your School Health Nurse.

The [Immunization of School Pupils Act](#) states that children in Ontario must be up to date with vaccines to go to school. A notice will be sent home if the health unit doesn't have a completed record. Students that are not immunized for personal or medical reasons need a legal *immunization exemption* on file with the health unit. A student may be suspended if immunizations are not completed by the date



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on the notice. Learn more about immunization and vaccines in Schools by visiting [Immunization for Schools](#).

### **Grade 7 Vaccinations:**

The Health Unit will provide vaccine clinics to grade 7 students in October and November. Spring clinics will provide the second immunization for vaccines that require 2 doses. Consent forms will be sent home with students at the beginning of the school year. The date of each school clinic will be confirmed in September. The consent form is good for 2 years. If a student misses a dose in grade 7, they will receive it in grade 8. If your child has already received the dose at a doctor's office, please contact the health unit.

The clinics offer three vaccines:

- Meningitis – this vaccine is required to attend school (please note, this is different from the Meningitis C vaccine that children may have received as a baby).
- Hepatitis B (HB)
- Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

### **Dental Health Screening and Fluoride Varnish Program:**

Dental screening starts in October. The Health Unit will provide free dental screening to students in select grades.

Dental screenings help to:

- Identify urgent oral health needs or other oral health issues.
- Provide preventive oral health services.
- Connect students with free oral health programs (for Children and Youth 0-17).
- Track the oral health needs in our communities.

The Fluoride Varnish Program will be taking place at several schools. It will occur once in the Fall and once in the Spring. Oral Health screening appointments can be booked for anyone under 18 years of age. Appointments are available in either our Port Hope or Lindsay office clinics.

**The Oral Health Team can be reached at 1-866-888-4577 ext. 1247**

### **Healthy Families:**

If you have questions about pregnancy, parenting, nutrition, healthy growth and development, perinatal mental health, or infant feeding, visit [www.hkpr.on.ca](http://www.hkpr.on.ca) or call the Health Unit at **1-866-888-4577 ext. 5003** to speak with a public health nurse or registered dietitian.

### **Sexual Health:**

[Sexual Health Clinics](#) are held in Haliburton County, Northumberland County, and the City of Kawartha Lakes. Appointments are required.

For appointments, please book through our website – [www.hkpr.on.ca](http://www.hkpr.on.ca). A Sexual Health Nurse is also available to answer questions at 1-866-888-4577 ext. 1205.

For teacher use, a limited number of Birth Control Demonstration Kits are available to support lesson plans. To book a kit please call 1-866-888-4577 ext. 1205.



**Healthy Environments:**

Air Quality & Weather Events: Health Unit staff check air quality and weather events for our area and update the Health Unit website to reflect the current situation.

**Animal Bite Prevention Education:** The Health Unit has investigated around 600 animal bite incidents each year, for the past 4 years. This is a significant increase from previous years. Many of these animal bites involve school-aged children.

To address this important issue, we have created a resource toolkit, “Keep Bites at Bay”. Classroom teachers can use it to teach students about how to prevent animal bites. We have 2 toolkits geared towards primary grades and junior grades. Teachers can email [inspections@hkpr.on.ca](mailto:inspections@hkpr.on.ca) to request a toolkit.

**COVID-19 and Flu Vaccine Clinics:**

The Health Unit will offer various COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination Clinics this fall. Please check our website for current information on dates, time, and locations.

**Respiratory Illnesses and Schools:**

Fall means a rise in respiratory, stomach flu, and other infectious diseases in our schools and communities. We continue to stress the importance of:

- Staying home when sick
- Coughing into arm
- Good handwashing
- Access to hand sanitizer/masks
- Promoting mask-friendly environments

For more information, see [Cold, Cough and Flu | HKPR District Health Unit](#).

Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Health Unit for more information or support, at 1-866-888-4577. We are looking forward to our continued partnership into the 2024-2025 school year!

Please take a moment to tell us what you think by filling in the [Health Unit survey!](#)

Sincerely, The HKPR School Health Team