

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

December 2023

DENTAL

Teaching and Learning

Healthy Smiles for the Holidays

As we gear up for the festive season, let's keep our students' smiles shining bright. Maintaining good oral health is not only crucial for overall well-being but also contributes to a positive learning environment. So, let's unwrap some tips and resources for integrating oral health into the holiday spirit!

1. Sugar Awareness:

We all know the holidays come with sweet treats, but educating our students about the impact of sugary snacks on their oral health is essential. Consider incorporating fun activities or discussions about making mindful choices during the holiday season.

2. Brushing and Flossing Challenges:

Turn oral care into a friendly competition by organizing [brushing and flossing challenges](#) in the classroom. Set goals for the number of times students brush and floss during the holiday break and celebrate their achievements when they return.

3. Creative Crafts:

Infuse oral health into holiday crafts! You can create tooth fairy ornaments or design posters highlighting the importance of dental care. It's a fantastic way to blend festive activities with valuable lessons.

4. Storytime with a Dental Twist:

Choose a holiday-themed story that emphasizes the significance of oral health. Discuss the importance of regular dental check-ups and good brushing habits. This adds an educational touch to the holiday reading list.

5. Resources for Teachers:

Here are some handy resources you can use in your classroom:

- [American Dental Association Lesson Plans](#)
- [Colgate Classroom Resources](#)
- [Canadian Dental Association Teaching Resources](#)

Feel free to explore these links for lesson plans, activities, and materials that make teaching about oral health engaging and effective.

Wishing you and your students a joyful and cavity-free holiday season!



HARM REDUCTION

Community Partnerships



Need to reach the Youth Harm Reduction Team?

We have a new email address – YHRC@interiorhealth.ca

Welcome Cassie Van Camp!

Cassie joined the Interior Health Youth Harm Reduction Team in early November when Heather Lee started her maternity leave. Cassie is new to Interior Health but she is no stranger to the world of harm reduction! Cassie has several years experience in front line work in substance use and harm reduction. She has worked in community, acute, and research settings in BC and abroad.



Teaching and Learning

IH Safety First program impresses Mississippi teacher

A secondary school teacher in Mississippi discovered Interior Health's Safety First while searching the internet for materials to use for her grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 classes on substance use. She was so impressed with the program that she took the time to contact the Youth Harm Reduction team with her feedback. Here are a few things she had to say:


- "All of the lessons that I used were relevant, engaging and easy to use."
- "The Safety First Program will be used in my Drug Education class as long as I am teaching it. It is so easy to use and keeps the students interested."
- "I would recommend this program to anyone who teaches about drugs. It is easy to use, requires very little prep time and provides meaningful content."

Have you check out [Safety First](#) yet? The team would love to support your school to deliver the program. Reach out to us YHRC@interiorhealth.ca

If you are already using it – send us your [feedback](#)!

WHAT'S THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND SAFETY FIRST?

Adults have been trying to prevent teenagers from drug use for more than a century. A variety of methods, from scare tactics to "Just Say No" techniques, have been used to try to persuade, coax and force young people to abstain.



WHAT'S THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND SAFETY FIRST?

Safety First is based on the philosophy of **harm reduction**.

Harm reduction means helping people reduce risks by making the healthiest choice possible, based on current evidence-based research, and without judgment.



New Youth Harm Reduction Resources

Drug Info Sheets – web version and printable have been added to the [Youth Harm Reduction Toolkit](#) - print versions below.

- [Alcohol](#)
- [Cannabis](#)
- [Psychedelics](#)
- [Stimulants](#)
- [Opioids](#)

If you haven't looked at the toolkit lately we also added a section on [Sexual Health](#).

[Guidelines for Providing Harm Reduction Services to Youth in British Columbia \(BC\)](#) - Provincial Guidelines from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC)

Drug Alerts by TEXT

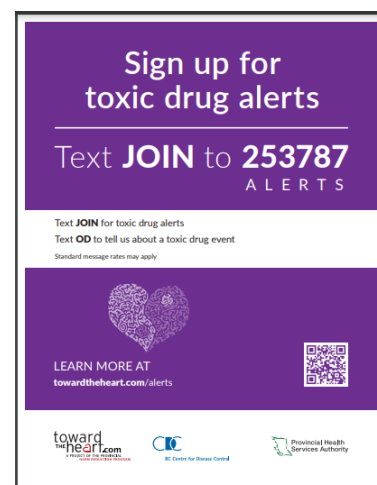
This June the BC Coroners Service released a report on [Youth Unregulated Drug Toxicity Deaths in British Columbia](#). Tragically, the report shows that youth unregulated drug toxicity deaths (overdoses) have increased since 2016 and are now **the top cause of unnatural death among youth under the age of 19 in BC**.

The Toxic Drug Alerts system was developed in partnership through the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Provincial Health Services Authority. It uses free and anonymous text messaging to send alerts as a public health measure to prevent drug poisonings and deaths, while also providing timely information on overdose prevention services.

Schools across the Interior Health region have received posters promoting the text alert program. Please display these posters so that interested students can access information that can reduce harms, including overdose and death, from toxic drugs. Consider placing posters in high traffic areas, as well as safe private areas such as washrooms or counsellor offices. Staff and Administrators who wish to be informed about alerts are also encouraged to sign up for the service.

To sign up for text alerts, text the word JOIN to 253787 (ALERTS)

For more information: <https://towardtheheart.com/alerts>



HEALTH PROMOTION

Community Partnerships

GRADE 6 POSTER CONTEST



CANADIAN
PUBLIC HEALTH
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION
CANADIENNE DE
SANTÉ PUBLIQUE

Infectious Disease & Climate Change: Awareness & prevention in your community

The Infectious Disease & Climate Change Grade 6 poster contest is back! The fourth edition of our contest has launched for Grade 6 students in Canada to bring attention to climate sensitive infectious diseases. Students are invited to enter by 9 February 2024 for a chance to win an Apple iPad 9 and other great prizes. This year students in grade 5/6 and 6/7 split classes are eligible to enter. Teacher resources and contest details are now available on our website.

Learn more at: [Grade 6 Poster Contest. Infectious Disease & Climate Change: Awareness & prevention in your community | Canadian Public Health Association \(cpha.ca\)](#)

Teaching and Learning



Live 5-2-1-0 Resources- Online Teacher Training Module – Updated!

The Online Teacher Training Module was created to assist teachers and school administrators in understanding the Live 5-2-1-0 message and how it can be promoted in schools. This training course describes the background of Live 5-2-1-0, how other schools implement Live 5-2-1-0, suggests ways to share and support the initiative in schools, and provides an opportunity to learn about our resources. Over the past year, we have updated the course to align with our positive approach to health messaging and to include the latest nutrition information. We also collaborated with Fraser Health's Public Health Dietitian team to incorporate ideas from Teach Food First, which promotes positive and inclusive approaches to eating and food exploration. In this updated version of the training course, we focus on highlighting the benefits of following the Live 5-2-1-0 guidelines and how they connect with the Comprehensive School Health Model and BC's Curriculum.

The course is free to access and can be completed in about 40 minutes. To register, check out our [user guide](#) for step-by-step instructions.

Screen Time Fact Sheet – Updated!

The [Screen Time Fact Sheet](#) provides a snapshot of the scientific evidence supporting the '2' guideline, that suggests no more than two hours of recreational screen time per day. Similar to the Online Teacher Training course, this resource has been updated with more positive and values-based messaging. Instead of focusing on the negatives of exceeding the two-hour limit, we highlight the benefits of sticking to the guideline. Our goal is to move away from messages that might create fear and make kids feel bad about their behaviour, and instead, focus on ones that are more optimistic and actionable.

As the information on screen time in kids is always changing, they've also made sure that the references in this resource are current. Use this resource as part of your discussions with families, patients, students, and children to help explain why managing recreational screen time is important for kids.

Screen Time Fact Sheet



Power down-
no more than TWO hours
of screen time a day

INJURY PREVENTION

Community Partnerships

Up to \$20,000 for Road Safety Grants Program

The British Columbia Vision Zero in Road Safety Grant Program provides funding to support communities planning to make their roads safer. Applications are accepted from local governments, Indigenous governments and non-governmental organizations including: school districts, Parent Advisory Councils, road safety advocacy groups, Indigenous Friendship Centres and charitable organizations. Application deadline is January 15, 2023. Projects activities and expenditures can be completed by March 31, 2025.

For more information see:

[Vision Zero](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

Teaching and Learning

School Community Toolkit- Autism Speaks

This kit provides helpful information about students with autism to promote understanding and acceptance at school. It includes tools and strategies to increase learning for all members of the school community.

To access the toolkit see:

[School Community Tool Kit | Autism Speaks](#)



NUTRITION

Community Partnerships

With the new [Feeding Futures funds](#), school food programs can work towards improving access to nutritious and local food at school.

This [Nutritious School Food Resource](#) from the Ministry of Health can help school food providers plan snacks and meals.



RADON AWARENESS

Teaching and Learning

Contest Closes January 31, 2024



To raise awareness about radon and its health risks, Interior Health in collaboration with the BC Lung Foundation has launched a **Student Radon Skill Testing Contest**. The contest is open for Grades 4 through 12 and provides an opportunity for students to learn about radon with prizes to be won. For contest rules and details, please visit the [Student Radon Skill Testing Contest Webpage](#). If you have questions, please contact the Healthy Schools team at: HealthySchools@interiorhealth.ca.

Winter is the Best Time to Test for Radon

Radon is a radioactive gas that is formed naturally in the ground. It has no colour, odour, or taste and can accumulate indoors, particularly in basements and ground floors. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada after smoking. Spending long periods of time in rooms where radon is present can increase the chance of developing lung cancer. The only way to know radon levels is to test for it, and testing is best done in the winter months.

For more information and resources about radon in BC and to order a long-term test kit visit:

- [Interior Health's Radon Information Page](#) - Radon Overview and Resources
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) - Radon Overview and BC Mapping Information
- [BC Lung Foundation](#) - Long-Term Test Kit Information and Radon Projects in BC

Some public libraries are also participating in loaning out Radon test kits for short term (4 week) home testing. Check if your local library is participating and borrow one of these kits: [Radon Detector Library Lending Program](#).

TOBACCO AND VAPOUR

Community Partnerships

Take a Breath: Teen Voices on Tobacco, Cannabis and Vaping poster contest

contest deadline extended until December 15th, 2023

About the contest:

This poster contest invites teens in grades 8-12 from across the IH region to share their view on the impacts of tobacco, cannabis use and/or vaping through an original artwork. The contest will now be accepting submissions until **December 15, 2023** to allow students more time to participate in having their voice heard!

It is important for us to understand youth perspectives on how tobacco, cannabis and/or vaping impacts their friends, family, school, community and themselves. Plus, the winning submissions will receive a gift card at a location of their choosing valued at \$150 and have their message shared across the IH region!

For more contest details and FAQ's, please visit the [Take a Breath Contest: Teen Voices on Tobacco, Cannabis & Vaping webpage](#), or email tobaccoandvape@interiorhealth.ca.



RESOURCES

Teaching and Learning

Teaching Toolkits

Interior Health has recently updated the [Teaching Toolkits](#) with resources for teachers on a variety of health related topics like COVID-19 Information, Dental and Oral Health, Hand Hygiene, Positive Mental Health, and Substance Use.

Healthy Schools BC Website

The [Healthy Schools BC Website](#) is a great resource for teachers. Look for the “Classroom and School Resources” and “Teach Food First”.



Healthy Schools Information Sharing

The following School Districts have a Healthy Schools tab on their websites. Take a look at all the great information available from: [SD 5](#), [SD 6](#), [SD 8](#), [SD 19](#), [SD 23](#), [SD 53](#), [SD 73](#), [SD 83](#)

Community Partnerships

Harm Reduction Resources

For resources visit the [Interior Health Website](#).

To connect with a Youth Harm Reduction Coordinator email: YHRC@interiorhealth.ca

Tobacco and Vapour Prevention and Control

For resources visit the [Interior Health Website](#).

To connect with a Tobacco Reduction Coordinator email: tobaccoandvape@interiorhealth.ca.

For previous newsletters: [Health Promoting Schools Newsletters](#)

Content for Parent Newsletters

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