

Northern Health Supports for Schools

Regional Northern Health staff provide health promotion initiatives, programs and resources to support schools in the 2020/2021 school year:

The Regional Nursing Lead, Healthy Schools and Youth, follows a comprehensive school health approach to support schools, school districts and school partners across the north with health promotion initiatives.

This role acts as a liaison between schools and Northern Health by coordinating the supports, resources and programs that are available on various health topics related to mental health, substance use, sexual health, physical activity, dental health, injury prevention and immunizations.

For more information and resources visit the Northern Health, School and Youth Health website: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/school-youth-health>.

The Regional Population Health Dietitian, Lead - School-Age Nutrition, is available to provide guidance and support to schools, school districts, and school partners across the north related to:

- grade-specific food literacy, nutrition, and body image curriculum for the classroom and at-home learning
- school food programs (e.g. salad bars, local food to school activities, breakfast, lunch and snack programs),
- granting opportunities,
- school-based food allergy management and prevention
- implementation of the Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools (<http://bit.ly/31ELulq>), and more.

A Population Health Dietitian can also support schools with adapting food-based education activities and programs to fit existing and emerging COVID-19 guidelines and food safety protocols. For more information and resources, including key messages for educators, lesson plans, and linkages to food literacy programs and supports, visit the Northern Health, Healthy Eating at School website: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/healthy-eating-school>

Environmental Health teams can provide guidance in regards to food safety, water, sanitation, and air quality. They also complete physical environment inspections of schools every three years. They can advise on a range of topics including communicable disease prevention and emergency preparedness.

Regional health promotion activities, information and resources:

- **Mental Wellness** – For schools looking to enhance the mental wellness of students and staff. Some resources to consider are found here:



o <http://bit.ly/school-mental-wellness>

- **Substance Use** – For supports related to vaping, tobacco, cannabis, alcohol and other substances, some resources to consider are:
 - For help to quit smoking or vaping: visit quitnow.ca or call 1-877-455-223 to get information and FREE nicotine patches, gum, lozenges or inhalers through the [BC Smoking Cessation Program](#)
 - <http://bit.ly/school-substance-use>
- **Sexual Health** – For schools looking to promote sexual health, some resources to consider are:
 - <http://bit.ly/school-sexual-health>
- **Physical Activity** – For schools looking to decrease sedentary behaviour in the learning environment and enhance students’ physical literacy. Some resources to consider are:
 - <http://bit.ly/school-physical-activity>
 - A School Physical Activity and Physical Literacy Project (funded by the Ministry of Health) will be delivered by Engage Sport North in up to 50 schools across the north beginning in September 2020. The project goals include supporting teachers and schools to confidently increase movement opportunities in the everyday learning environment, recognize physical activity as a mechanism to support enhanced student and teacher physical and mental wellness, and increase knowledge of Indigenous perspectives on health and wellness to support Indigenous students in a culturally safe way.
- **Dental Health** – For schools looking to enhance dental health:
 - Dental resource kits are available for loan to primary teachers to provide dental health and tooth brushing lessons
 - Northern Health - Dental Health Program
<https://www.northernhealth.ca/services/programs/dental-health-program>
- **Injury Prevention** – Injury risk is connected to children and youth’s age and stage of development. There are supports for schools to connect to age appropriate programs and resources that encourage building a child’s capacity to be safe. Resources are available on a wide range of topics that provide curriculum and project content. For more information visit the Northern Health, Injury Prevention webpage:
 - <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-information/injury-prevention>

- **Immunizations** – For resources to help educate and promote immunizations:
 - [Kids Boost Immunity](#) (KBI) is a free online platform for Canadian teachers to engage digital-age students. There are lessons with interactive quizzes that reflect science, health and social studies curriculum across BC and Canada. Students can earn a vaccine to donate to a child in another part of the world for each quiz they successfully complete.
 - For Grade 6 Teachers – the [prepare your students for immunization day](#) poster is available to promote KBI.

To get monthly updates throughout the school year on up and coming granting opportunities, health promotion initiatives, training opportunities and resources watch for Northern Health’s “**Healthier Northern Communities eBrief.**” To subscribe, send a blank email with “subscribe” in the subject line to healthycommunities@northernhealth.ca.