

## Healthy Schools Toolkit

**COVID-19 Information for Schools**

February 2022

**School-based Control Measures for COVID-19**

Here are the main principles of school-based control measures for containing the COVID-19 Virus.

**1. Stay Home When Sick**

- Perform a daily health check
- Staff or students with new symptoms of illness should stay home
- Staff or students who develop symptoms at school should go home

**COVID-19 symptoms resources:**

- [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)
- [BCCDC Symptoms of COVID-19](#) for the most up to date list of COVID-19 symptoms
- [BCCDC If you are sick](#) for what to do if you think you are sick
- [BCCDC COVID-19 Testing for Children and Youth](#) for information and videos about COVID-19 testing

**2. Hand Hygiene**

Students and staff should clean hands more often using soap and water or hand sanitizer:

- When they arrive at school and before they go home
- Before eating and drinking
- After using the toilet
- After sneezing or coughing into hands or tissue
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- When moving between different learning environments (e.g., outdoor-indoor transitions, from the gym to the classroom)



**Hand hygiene resources:**

- Interior Health [Hand Hygiene Toolkit](#) with lesson plans, teaching resources, and videos
- BCCDC [Hand Hygiene](#)
- Public Health Agency of Canada [Reduce the Spread of COVID-19 – Wash Your Hands](#)
- [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)

**3. Respiratory and Personal Hygiene**

Students and staff should:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. Teach children about keeping their hands below their shoulders, so they don't touch their face
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices
- Encourage children to avoid physical contact. This is more important than keeping 2 meters apart

**4. Physical Distancing & Minimizing Physical Contact**

- Minimize close face-to-face interactions
- Avoid physical contact
- Spread students and staff out to different areas when possible
- Take students outside more often
- Stagger break and transition times
- Incorporate individual activities

**Physical Distancing resources:**

- BCCDC [Physical distancing](#)

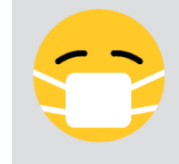
**5. Cleaning & Disinfection**

- Frequently touched surfaces (those touched by larger numbers of people) are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1x/day. General cleaning of the school should occur at least once a day
- Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty
- Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices
- Practices are in place to clean and disinfect any surfaces a person's body fluids have contacted after they have displayed symptoms of illness



**Cleaning & disinfection resources:**

- [Provincial COVID-19 Health Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
- BCCDC [Cleaning & Disinfection for Eye and Facial Protection](#)

**6. Non-Medical Masks**

Wearing a well-fitting, 3-layer mask is important to protect yourself and others around you. [Review BCCDC guidance on masks.](#)

All K to 12 students, staff and visitors are required to [wear masks in all indoor areas](#), including:

- At desks
- On school buses

Exceptions to the mask policy include:

- A person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons
- A person unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person
- If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it
- If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask. For example:
  - Playing a wind instrument
  - Engaging in high-intensity physical activity
- If a person is eating or drinking
- If a person is behind a barrier

**Non-medical mask resources:**

- [COVID-19 Safe Schools](#)
- [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe](#)-handwashing, masks, hand sanitizer, and other hygiene practices
- [Video](#) from Alberta Health- Wearing Masks in School
- [Non-medical masks and face coverings: How to put on, remove and clean](#) - Information about how to wear a non-medical mask or face covering properly

## Additional Topics Related to COVID-19

### Mental Wellness

- [Stigma-Free COVID-19 Youth Wellness Toolkit](#)  
Resources are available for both Parents/Caregivers and Educators for grades 4-7 and grades 8-12.
- [Family Support During COVID-19 Toolkit](#)  
BC Pediatric Society that lists an array of mental wellness resources.



### Home Resources: Dedicated Action for School Health (DASH)

- [Healthy at Home](#)  
Resources available for parents and educators with ability to sort by grade level and topic area.

### Interior Health Resources

- COVID-19 Information is posted on our [Public Website](#)

### Additional resources:

- [SUPPORTING THE K-12 EDUCATION RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN B.C. \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings-BCCDC](#)  
Direction on a variety of Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for schools (physical distancing, cleaning and disinfecting, cohorts, personal hygiene measures, staying home when sick, seeking medical follow up and testing if develop symptoms, procedure for illness at school, food service, masks). Document is a good reference for many questions from schools.
- [COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators](#)  
This resource provides K-12 school and school district administrators with key information on the processes, roles and responsibilities involved in managing symptoms of illness, exposure to COVID-19, and confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 within the school community.
- [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)  
The Ministry of Education document builds on the [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings-BCCDC](#) to outline the principles and requirements for maintaining safe learning environments.
- [COVID-19 Information for Child Care and Schools-BCCDC](#)  
Information on illness and self-isolation, cohorts and physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, school activities, and mental health.
- [Safe and Healthy Schools-BC Government](#)  
Information and resources on medical alert conditions, selling food and drink, safe school resources, and ERASE.
- [COVID-19 Safe Schools Website](#)  
This website provides information on health and safety measures, COVID-19 protocols, guidelines for inside and outside the classroom and added supports for students and staff.

### ANY QUESTIONS?

For school questions, please contact your local [Local Public Health Nurse](#)

For School District questions, please email the Healthy Schools Team at: [healthyschools@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:healthyschools@interiorhealth.ca)