

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

MAY 2024

FOOD LITERACY

Tips on Teaching and Talking about Nutrition – Check out the [Teaching and Talking about to Students About Food and Nutrition](#) for examples on using a food exploration approach to food and nutrition education.

School Gardening and Farms – Are you looking for more support? Check out the next [School Garden Mentorship Program](#) workshop on "Summer Maintenance and Volunteer Management" held on Tuesday, May 7th (Farm to School BC). Consider joining the [listserv](#) to receive monthly email updates and connect with other educators across BC.

Spring Learning Activities - Are you looking for activities to do inside or outside with your K-12 class this spring? Check out [Hands on Food](#) and [Farms to School BC](#) for plenty of BC curriculum-based activities to do with your students.



DENTAL HEALTH

Teaching and Learning

May Water Be Your Student's Drink of Choice!

Spring is the perfect time to promote water as the drink choice for students. Encourage students to bring reusable water bottles to class and lead by example by drinking water in front of them. The [Win With Water Toolkit](#) offers a variety of resources, from printable posters to engaging project ideas like Staff 'Water Week', which encourages staff and employees to drink only water for a week, setting a positive example for everyone.

Explore other resources available from [Sip Smart! BC](#) for older students, and consider incorporating engaging videos like TED-ED's [What Would Happen If You Didn't Drink Water?](#) and 'Healthy Canadians' video [Benefits of Water](#).

Canada's Food Guide also provides valuable information to [Make Water Your Drink of Choice](#), emphasizing its importance and highlighting the negative effects of [sugary drinks](#) and [caffeine](#) on health. Utilize tools like HealthLink's [How Much Sugar Are You Drinking?](#) to further educate students about the impact of their drink choices.



The following YouTube video is great for introducing the benefits of drinking water to children ages 4-6 years: [Potter the Otter: A Tale About Water](#) (omitting page 10). Additionally, you can educate students of all ages about the importance of dental health and the role water plays in maintaining it by sharing presentations and resources with your class. Consider displaying posters from the [Canadian Dental Hygienist Association](#), including [Time to Tame that Sweet Tooth](#), [Swap the Pop](#) and [Treats are Sweet](#) to promote healthy eating and drinking habits in high-traffic areas like the cafeteria or near vending machines.

As spring sports kick off, it's also a good time to raise awareness about the side effects of many sports and energy drinks. The Canadian Paediatric Society offers information on this topic at the following link: [Energy Drinks and Sports Drinks](#).

Let's make a splash this spring by prioritizing **water drinking** and empowering school community to promote informed choices that benefit health and well-being!

BAT AND TICK SAFETY

Teaching and Learning

Animal and Insect-Borne Diseases (Bats, Ticks, Mosquitoes)

Bats

With longer days and warmer weather, encountering a bat may be more common. While, bats are an important part of our ecosystem, they can carry diseases, such as rabies, that can be transmitted to humans. Please consider teaching children to:

- recognize what a real bat looks like
- never touch bats or any other wild animal
- notify a responsible adult immediately if they find a bat.

Teaching Children about Bats

Children need to be shown what a real bat looks like, since most people have only seen bats either in cartoons or flying in the air from a distance at dusk. When a bat is not moving it may be difficult for both children and adults to recognize it as a bat, because the wings may be folded inward. Consider showing your children pictures of real bats; these can be obtained on the internet.



I suspect a bat exposure. Now what?

If you think someone has been exposed to a bat (e.g. from touching, petting, catching, sitting on, or kicking it or trying to shoo it away), please contact your local public health unit or primary care provider immediately, or go to the emergency department. Treatment may be needed and should be given as soon as possible after exposure. Without treatment, rabies is almost always fatal.

For more information please visit the Interior Health website at: [Animal & Insect Diseases | Environmental & Seasonal Health | IH](#)

Ticks

Did you know ticks can be found year-round but they are most likely to bite in the spring? It is important to check yourself and your family members for ticks after being outside. Ticks found by BC residents can be identified for free by submitting a photo of the tick to [eTick](#). If the tick is identified as the type of tick that can carry diseases, clients will be provided instructions to keep the tick in a freezer for 30 days and monitor for signs of illness. If signs of illness develop, clients should see their healthcare provider immediately. Check out [BCCDC](#) for more information on ticks, including these tick bite prevention [tips](#) & [Tick Talk video](#).



For information about what to do if you find a tick on your skin see: [Tick Bites and Disease - HealthLinkBC File #01](#)

Additional information can be found here: [Insect repellents and DEET - HealthLinkBC File #96](#); [Insect Bites and Stings and Spider Bites | HealthLink BC](#).

MENTAL HEALTH

Teaching and Learning

Connecting with Kids Webinar and Q&A- May 7 at 6:00-8:00 pm

Join this special FamilySmart event. Listen as Kim Barthel talks about having more self-compassion, self-awareness and knowledge about the art and science of relationships.

A holistic and engaging story-teller, Kim will introduce the basics of attunement, attachment theory, trauma-sensitive practice, sustainable self-care and above all the power of connection and inclusion. [Register here](#).

National Child & Youth Mental Health Day





New Autism & ADHD Webinar Recordings Are Available Now!

School Counsellors Series: Autism in Elementary School

Dr. Robin Friedlander and Nurse Clinician Eddie Chau speak to BC School Counsellors on supporting elementary school-age children with Autism/Developmental Disabilities. To listen to the 1 hour recorded session from March 4, 2024 see the [Compass Website](#).

Ask The Expert: Child & Youth ADHD

Dr. Priya Watson speaks to the Fraser Northwest Division of Family Practice on: ADHD and common comorbidities. Approaches to the assessment of ADHD, Management options for ADHD and its comorbidities. Recorded on February 6 2024 see the [Compass Website](#)

Promote Mental Health and Inclusivity in your School Community

The **Stigma-Free School Program** equips school communities with accessible mental health tools and training to combat stigma. We offer a diverse range of resources that can be easily implemented in the classroom or used at home.

The program is designed to empower educators, school counsellors, parents/guardians, and students to advocate for mental health and reduce stigma. By participating in our program, you join a movement of individuals dedicated to fostering awareness, understanding, and acceptance among the next generation. The program also provides a safe space for people to share their lived experiences of stigma. By opening up about our personal journeys, these inspiring individuals instill hope and compassion in students and school staff alike.



For more information see: [Stigma-Free School Program | Mental Health Tools](#)



Child & Youth Mental Health & Substance Use 2024 | Collaborative Education Series Bulletin

Interior Health and our partner agencies are pleased to offer a series of **Child and Youth Mental Health & Substance Use Collaborative Education** sessions designed to enhance the clinical skills and confidence of those supporting children and youth with mental health and/or substance use needs.

These **free** and virtual **education** sessions connect care providers and subject-matter experts across the continuum of care, providing you with an opportunity to gain new skills, knowledge, and confidence in caring for children and youth with mental health and/or substance use needs.

Join us for our second & third focused on **Collaborative Care Planning** and **Consent**.

Click the [Link](#) beside the session to enroll. Manager approval may be required.

When	Topic	Register	Presented By
May 7 10:00-11:00 PST	Collaborative Care Planning	Link	COMPASS Consultation & Education team @BC Children's Hospital
June 4 10:00-11:00 PST	Consent	Link	James Cotter, Partner – Litigation Nixon Wenger Lawyers

Interactive learning

If you have a case example you would like to share related to the session or would like to submit questions for the presenter and panel, kindly send them to Gorette at the email below.

Questions? Case to share?

For more information, please contact:

Gorette.Pereira-Imm@interiorhealth.ca

Knowledge Coordinator, Mental Health Services

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 Harm Reduction Coordinator email: YHRC@interiorhealth.ca

Legal Substances Program

For resources on tobacco, vaping or cannabis use, visit the Interior Health [Tobacco & Vaping Information for Schools webpage](#) or the [Cannabis Information for Youth webpage](#).

To connect with a Legal Substances Reduction Coordinator, email: LegalSubstances@interiorhealth.ca

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