

COVID-19 Information for Schools

September 2020

School-based Control Measures for COVID-19

There are 5 main principles of school-based control measures for containing the COVID-19 Virus. (Refer to Infographic in Appendix A on p.21 [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)). Information on masks has been provided as a 6th principle.

Accompanying PowerPoint available [here](#).

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:

- Refer to Appendix C: Daily Health Check Example on page 23 and pages 15 -17 for information on illness and returning to school at [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 When to Perform Hand Hygiene at School (refer to page 17 of [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#))
- Refer to Appendix A: Summary of School-Based Control Measures Infographic on page 21 [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

- General cleaning of the school should occur at least once a day;
- Cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces should occur at least one additional time, during the school day.

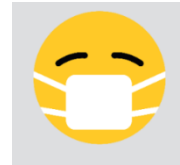


Cleaning & disinfection resources:

- BCCDC [Cleaning and Disinfecting for Public Setting](#)
- BCCDC [Cleaning & Disinfection for Eye and Facial Protection](#)

6. Non-Medical Masks

- Non-medical masks or face coverings may be useful for middle and secondary students and staff when physical distancing cannot be consistently practiced, and a person is interacting with people outside of their cohort;
- Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary-aged students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask;
- No student should be required to wear a mask if they do not tolerate it;
- Students and staff should be supported to know how to properly put on, wear, take off and store non-medical masks and other face coverings.



Non-medical mask resources:

- Refer to page 19 [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)
- [Non-medical masks and face coverings](#) - Information about appropriate use, how to put on and take off.
- [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 4-6 and grades 7-12.
- [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:

- [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.
- [COVID-19 Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Independent School Authorities](#)
This guide provides direction to school districts and independent school authorities in developing plans to deliver educational opportunities and supports in the context of COVID-19.
- [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.
- [Family support during COVID-19: Toolkit from the BC Pediatric Society](#)
Information and links to resources on the following topics: finances, housing, food, childcare, safety medical care, mental wellness, youth health, Indigenous resources, diversity.
- [K-12 Education Restart Plan-Ministry of Education](#)
Information about Stage 2 of the Education Restart plan (enhanced safety measures, learning groups, what parents and students can expect).
- [Safe and Healthy Schools-BC Government](#)
Information and resources on medical alert conditions, selling food and drink, safe school resources, and ERASE.
- [B.C.'s Back to School Plan](#)
This website addresses in-class learning with new health and safety measures, and gives information on increased funding for protective equipment like masks and new learning groups to help keep everyone safe. This is a good resource to share with parents.
- [BC's Restart Plan- BC Government](#)
This 24-page document gives background to date of COVID-19 in the province and outlines what the phases of reopening will look like in the "new normal".
- [WorkSafe BC Education \(K-12\): Protocols for returning to operation](#)
These protocols are for K-12 education providers and include guidance and protocols for teachers, contractors, bus drivers, and others. There are also posters that cover how to wear a mask, respiratory etiquette etc.

ANY QUESTIONS?

- For school questions, please contact your local [School Public Health Nurse](#)
- For School District questions, please email the Healthy Schools Team at: healthyschools@interiorhealth.ca