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## **Public Health Nurses and Schools**

### **Information for School Principals and Teachers**

Public Health Nurses (PHNs) work in partnership with school staff, students, parents and the community to promote health and prevent disease and injury for school-aged children and youth. PHN services may vary within regions dependent upon School District programs and health services offered within the community. To connect with the PHN for your school see the [School Health Nurses](#) list on our website.

#### **Activities that PHNs are currently involved in with schools:**

- Provincially funded immunization for students in grades K, 6 and 9.
- Infectious disease follow-up initiated by greater than 10% absenteeism rates (i.e. respiratory or gastrointestinal illness) or by the Interior Health Communicable Disease Unit (i.e. meningitis, pertussis, measles).
- General training sessions for school staff on topics such as anaphylaxis, seizures, diabetes and glucagon.
- Consultation for specific students with medical alert conditions such as anaphylaxis, diabetes, or seizures.
- Providing information for school staff on various health topics upon request such as head lice.

#### **The following are examples of activities that PHNs can be involved in:**

- Support teachers through consultation, in-service sessions, or partnering with teachers to build their capacity on health related curriculum. These activities might include: reviewing lesson plans, providing up to date resources and offering to have discussions with teachers or students informally or during class time.  
Information and curriculum resources on the following topics are available through the Interior Health Public Website under the section: [Teaching Toolkits](#)
  - Adoption and Foster Care
  - Hand Washing and Staying Healthy
  - Healthy Eating
  - Healthy Relationships
  - Positive Mental Health
  - Seizures
  - Sexual Health
  - Substance use
  - Tobacco Reduction
  - Vaccines and Immunology
- Participate in or help to recruit members for a Healthy Schools Team (administrators, teachers, parents, students, health staff, and other community partners) that initiates a healthy schools assessment (see tools below) or discusses and plans for healthy school initiatives or activities.

- [Healthy Schools Assessment- "GOT HEALTH"](#)
  - [Healthy Schools BC Additional Assessment Tools](#)
  - [Healthy Schools BC Newsletter \(monthly\)](#)
  - [Healthy Schools BC](#)
- Assist with grant application processes (i.e. Salad Bar, Farm to School, School District Readiness)
  - Participate in health promotion events at schools.  
Examples:
    - posting health promotion messages on a school bulletin board
    - participate in the planning and/or attend school events such as health fairs, retreats, Ready- Set- Learn, Strong Start, and Kindergarten orientation events to provide information ( i.e. concussion awareness, sip smart/sugar display, handwashing, sun safety, youth sexual health, immunizations)
    - provide information to schools on [how to get free condoms](#)
    - attend school injury prevention events. (i.e. Bike to School/ Bike Safety)
  - Regular visits to school to connect with staff and offer a student drop in-service for health questions. (i.e. Healthy Fridays, Drop in Wed, Youth Clinics)
  - Attend staff and PAC meetings to provide information or in-service for teachers or parents on health topics. (i.e. the results of the Adolescent Health Survey, headlice management).
  - Assist teachers and principals in locating community guest speakers
    - See the Healthy Schools [Teaching Toolkits](#) on various topics for further information.
  - Offer a student field trip to show case [health unit services](#)
  - Provision of information from the IH Public Website that can be included in newsletters or as links on school websites for families:
    - [Health Hints](#) information for school newsletters and other [Health Promotion Resources](#)
    - [Health Promoting Schools Newsletter](#) (monthly)
    - [Developmental Stages in Sexual Health Teaching for Teachers and Parents](#)
    - [Opioid Overdose Information for Schools](#)
  - Provision of information on local community resources that offer services for youth.  
Examples:
    - [Options for Sexual Health clinics](#)
    - Local [health unit services](#)
    - [physicians](#) and nurse practitioner offices
    - [Sexual and Reproductive Health](#) services listed by community