

# HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025

## DENTAL HEALTH

### Teaching and Learning

#### A New School Year: Is the perfect time to brush up on good habits for healthy teeth

Teachers play a significant role in helping students maintain healthy habits and strong routines. Daily brushing, flossing and drink/food choices impact oral health and overall health. A new school year offers opportunities for teacher to be leaders in supporting healthier routines.

- Staying hydrated: Remind students to drink water throughout the day using their own reusable water bottle. [Make water your drink of choice - Canada's Food Guide](#)
- Scheduling snack time: Recommend students enjoy their food during recess and lunch. [Healthy eating at school - Canada's Food Guide.](#)
- Daily oral health routines: Highlight the importance of brushing for 2 minutes, 2 times a day As a fun activity have children use [DHC brushing chart 2019](#) toothbrushing chart to track their daily brushing.
- Provide interactive oral health education: Interior Health Dental Health Education Kit (children ages 3-6 years) [Dental Education Kit Promo Letter](#) is available for teachers to sign out and use in their classroom. Colgate also offers [Colgate Classroom Kits](#) for ages kindergarten to grade 2. The kits include oral health education and a toothbrush kit for each student to take home.
- Integrate oral health into classroom curriculum: Interior Health's [dental and oral health toolkit](#) offers a variety of resources for teachers.
- Reach out for more oral health support: Contact [local IHA Dental Program](#) for ideas and more information.



[School Staff | Information For | IH](#)  
[Healthy Schools Toolkit Template - October 2024](#)  
[Canadian Dental Association](#)  
[Toothbrushing Tips.pdf](#)  
[K-1 Classroom Kit](#)



## FOOD LITERACY

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### Teaching and Learning

#### Teacher Resources

##### New Body Image Resource!

[\*Being Me, Being Us: Creating a school community where every \*\*body\*\* belongs\*](#), is an easy-to-navigate website for educators and school professionals to learn, talk and teach about body image. It includes:

- Background information to increase educator and school staff knowledge about body image and how to approach the topic with students
- Lesson plans and supporting teaching materials for educators for grades 4-7, that connect to multiple subjects in the BC curriculum and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies
- Strategies for a whole-school approach to supporting a body-inclusive environment

##### Webinar opportunity - October 24<sup>th</sup>, 12:30-1:45pm

Join the upcoming professional development workshop offered online at the Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers Association (myPITA) Fall Conference. Find the [conference schedule here](#).



#### BC School Food Toolkit – School Meal Program Resource

[The BC School Food Toolkit](#) - check out the toolkit that was developed to support schools in creating and maintaining healthy school food environments. It includes guidance to support schools in their efforts to provide nutritious foods for students through their [Feeding Futures](#) programs.

#### Farm to School BC - New Resources and Webinars

Explore two new educator resources: Edible Adventures and Cultivating Curiosity. Join upcoming [webinars](#) for a guided walkthrough and opportunities to ask questions and gather with fellow educators during Farm to School Month.

**The Interior Health Public Health Dietitian team** is available to support school district's efforts to create nutritious, stigma-free meal programs and healthy school food environments. For questions email [schoolnutrition@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:schoolnutrition@interiorhealth.ca)

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

### Partnerships and Services

#### [Violence Is Preventable – BC Society of Transition Houses](#)

Violence Is Preventable (VIP) is a free, confidential, school-based violence prevention program for students in grades K-12. VIP presentations are delivered by Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment (PEACE) Program counsellors. Presentations increase awareness of the effects that domestic violence has on students while connecting those experiencing violence to PEACE program counselling. The program curriculum reflects the core competencies outlined by the Ministry of Education. For more information contact your [local VIP program](#).



## LEGAL SUBSTANCES AND YOUTH HARM REDUCTION

### Partnerships and Services

#### Preventing Youth Overdoses

Since 2019 the Interior Health (IH) region has seen an increase in fatal and non-fatal toxic drug events (overdoses) among young people under the age of 19. The Youth Harm Reduction Team has several programs and resources to help schools reduce the risk of overdose – contact us at [yhrc@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:yhrc@interiorhealth.ca)

#### Naloxone for Schools

Recently, the Ministry of Education required schools to have Naloxone onsite the team has resources to help support schools prepare to respond to overdoses.



[School Naloxone Blue Kit Program](#): We have a limited number\* of injectable kits available for **secondary schools** at no cost. Schools wishing to participate in this free program are supported to develop an [overdose response policy/procedure](#) and ensure training is in place.

\*Once the remaining kits are distributed, the team will continue to support schools with policy development and training.

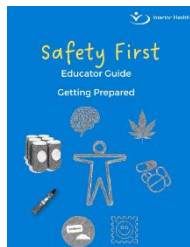
#### Take Home Naloxone Program

Schools are eligible for the [Provincial Take Home Naloxone \(THN\) program](#) that provides free kits for distribution to people at risk of overdose or who may need to respond to an overdose. If schools are not prepared to distribute naloxone onsite, they can promote locations in community where naloxone is available.

## Review School Substance Use Policies and Practices

Sometimes school policies intended to prevent substance use can cause harm or prevent students from seeking help. Reviewing policies through an evidence-based harm reduction approach can help create safer and more inclusive school communities.

## Evidence-based and age-appropriate substance use education



Substance use becomes more prevalent as students get older. Education about the risks of substances as well as how to be safer if someone is using them is important in older grades. [Safety First](#) is a program recommended for grade 9 and up that takes a pragmatic and balanced approach to substance use, acknowledging both the risks of using as well as the practical realities of living in a world where people use substances.

Interior Health's Youth Harm Reduction Team can provide you with more information on this program and more. Reach out! [yhrc@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:yhrc@interiorhealth.ca)

# PHYSICAL LITERACY

## Partnerships and Services

### Take me outside - Because not all classrooms have four walls

Take Me Outside, a non-profit charitable organization committed to raising awareness and facilitating action on nature connection and outdoor learning, has several exciting events coming up:



#### [Take Me Outside Day: October 22, 2025](#)

Take Me Outside Day is a FREE virtual event from October 20-24, 2025, designed to inspire educators to bring outdoor learning to their classrooms. With speakers, activities, and prizes, the event focuses on Indigenous Perspectives, Environmental Education & Climate Change, and Health & Wellbeing. Don't miss this chance to expand your teaching beyond the classroom!

#### [Take Me Outside Learning Challenge: One hour per week](#)

If you're already planning to take part in Take Me Outside Day, why not go all in and register for the school year challenge?! Commit to taking your learners outdoors once a week from September to June. Sign up for exclusive resources, inspiration, and opportunities that promote the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of outdoor learning.

#### [Take Me Outside Student Video Contest: 2025](#)

Calling all K-12 students! Submit a short film about your favorite outdoor spot for a chance to win a 3-day trip to Banff National Park and \$400 in MEC gear. The contest closes October 1, 2025. See the [Official Rules & Guidelines](#) for more information. **Contest Closes: October 1, 2025**





## Want to encourage more students to cycle to and from school?

Have a look at Active for Life's [How to create your own back-to-school bike rodeo](#). Bike rodeos are a great way to ensure that children have the skills and confidence to ride to school. The site also includes a great infographic to share with parents to help assess their child's skill level to see if they are ready to roll!

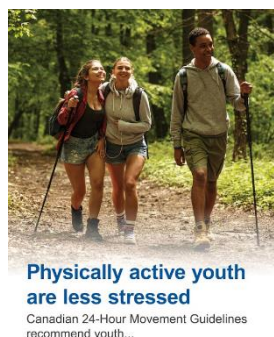


## Physical Activity and Physical Literacy Social Media Toolkit

### A new social media toolkit to promote physical activity and physical literacy is available to use!

This [toolkit](#) is intended to promote the physical activity and physical literacy resources developed by the [health authorities' physical activity network](#). The toolkit includes general instructions, artwork/images to post, and post details such as the captions and links to include with posts.

Some examples of posts:



## MENTAL HEALTH

### Partnerships and Services

[Kelty Mental Health](#) has several resources, podcasts and events just in time for back to school!

- **Recognizing Teen Anxiety: How to Support Your Child.** Find videos and information on mental health topics in multiple languages through Linktree on [Kelty's Instagram page](#).
- **School Anxiety: Getting Your Child Back to Their School Routine - Podcast.** When anxiety gets in the way of a child going to or staying at school, this can be hard on the whole family. This episode looks at what's behind school anxiety, when parents should reach out for help, tips for parents and caregivers to promote their own coping, and strategies to help getting children back in their school routine. Listen [here](#).
- **ADHD - The Real Deal – FamilySmart Online Event.** ADHD doesn't just affect the person living with ADHD. It also affects those around them. Parents of kids living with ADHD, can benefit from learning what ADHD is and how to support kids. Learn from Dr. Duncan, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, as he dispels some myths and explains how and why the ADHD brain works the way it does. For dates and to register click [here](#).

## RESOURCES

### Teaching and Learning

#### Interior Health Website

The [School Health](#) section of the Interior Health Public Website will take you to the following sections where you can find more information: [Information for School Staff](#), [Promoting Health of Children & Youth in School](#), and [Medical Conditions at School](#).

#### 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](mailto: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](mailto:LegalSubstances@interiorhealth.ca)

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