

# HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024

## DENTAL HEALTH

### Teaching and Learning

#### The Gift of a Sparkling Smile

As the holiday season arrives, we are surrounded by joyful laughter, cozy gatherings, and delicious aromas. It is a magical time to celebrate, but amidst the lights and festivities, let us not forget to care for one of our best gifts—our smile.

Teachers play an important role in setting a positive example by promoting good choices and reinforcing healthy routines. Let us work together to ensure that every student's smile reflects the joy of the season!



- 1. Thoughtful Gift Choices:** Consider encouraging oral care items like sugar-free gum, floss, or electric toothbrushes as stocking stuffers or thoughtful gifts. [Sugar-Free Gum - Canadian Dental Association](#)
- 2. Choose Healthy Foods:** Explore [MouthHealthy Holiday Recipes | MouthHealthy - Oral Health Information from the ADA](#) for some fun ways to engage in healthy food choices.
- 3. Stay Hydrated:** Incorporate fun activities or discussions about making mindful choices during the holiday season. [Make Water Your Drink of Choice - Canadian Dental Association](#)
- 4. Time Your Treats:** Timing is everything when it comes to holiday snacks. [Timing of Treats - Oral Health Information from the ADA](#)
- 5. Keep Your Routine:** [Toothbrushing Toolkit for Total Health - CDHA & DHC](#)

A fun idea for younger kids is infusing oral health into holiday crafts! Use the [Holiday Activity Sheets](#) to create tooth fairy ornaments or design posters highlighting the importance of dental care. It's a fantastic way to blend festive activities with valuable lessons.

Check out the [Dental and Oral Health Toolkit](#) located on the [Interior Health Website](#) for helpful and useful ideas to provide a lesson, activity, or unit on the importance of good oral health practices for students.

# FOOD LITERACY

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## Teaching and Learning

### Educator Resources

- Farm to school – Are you looking for some activities to do with your K-12 class this winter? Check out [Winter Learning Activities](#)
- Looking for a recipe to try with your students? Here are a few to check out:
  - Make [refrigerator pickles](#) with your class, fun for all ages! Or use this step-by-step recipe from [Project Chef for pickled carrots](#).
  - [Trail Mix \(Hands on Food\)](#)
  - Or try a simple [Recipe Exploration activity](#) with your students (grades 6-8)



# HAND HYGIENE

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## Teaching and Learning

### Staying Healthy over the Holidays

Handwashing is one way to reduce your risk of getting or spreading respiratory and stomach illnesses.

This holiday season, follow these hand hygiene tips at home:

1. Wash hands:
  - when they are visibly dirty, before, during and after cooking or baking,
  - after handling raw or uncooked meat,
  - after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose,
  - after touching animals,
  - after going to the washroom, and
  - after touching garbage.
2. Have alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) available at holiday gatherings.
3. Encourage family and friends to wash hands before dishing up food and sitting down to eat.



For curriculum resources see the Healthy Schools Toolkit Series on [Hand Hygiene](#).

For information to share with families see:

[HealthLinkBC- Handwashing: Help stop the spread of germs](#)

[BC Centre for Disease Control - Hand Washing](#)

[Government of Canada. \(2024\). Clean your hands to help reduce the spread of infectious diseases.](#)

## HEALTHY BEHAVIORS

### Teaching and Learning

#### Sleep

The holiday season can provide opportunities for families to spend quality time together, but the festivities can sometimes disrupt sleep routines. The Foundry has helpful information about [How to Get a Better Sleep](#) on their website. Additional information for families can be found on the IH Public Website: [Promoting Health of Children & Youth in School](#) and in the Healthy Schools Toolkit Series on [Sleep](#).



#### Screen Safety and Wellness

A new resource for educators on [Screen Safety and Wellness](#) is now available in the Healthy Schools Toolkit Series on the [School Staff](#) section of the IH Public Website. It also includes a section with resources for students, parents, and families.

## LEGAL SUBSTANCES

### Teaching and Learning

**Only a few weeks left for students' to submit their artwork for a chance to win a \$150 gift card!**

Students under 19 years of age enrolled in grades 6 to 12 across the [IH region](#) are invited to share their view on the impacts of tobacco, cannabis, vaping and alcohol through original artwork inspired by one of four different contest themes for a chance to win a gift card of \$150 value.

But you better hurry - the contest closes on **December 15, 2024**. Find out more about the contest and how to participate at [interiorhealth.ca/beyondthebuzz](https://interiorhealth.ca/beyondthebuzz).



#### What do youth want to know about nicotine and vaping?

Researchers from the E-Prevention And Vaping Project (EPAV) in B.C. talked to several youths and created a short quiz to answer the most common questions using science-based information. You and the youth in your network can learn more about what these questions were and how they might impact you by clicking here: [Vaping and the Effects of Nicotine Quiz - EPAV Project](#)



## MENTAL HEALTH



### Teaching and Learning

#### Talking with Children About Stress

Talking with your child about what it feels like when they're overwhelmed, and what makes them feel worried, can help them better understand their stress. When they recognize their own emotions, behaviours, and physical reaction to stress, they can work on ways to reduce it. For more information see: [Tips for Teaching Children About Stress | Kelty Mental Health](#)

## 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](#)