

# Healthy Kids, Happy Learners!



## Public Health Tips for a Healthy Start to Kindergarten

### Immunize your child before starting school



#### At age 4, children need booster shots for:

- Diphtheria, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Tetanus, Polio
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella (Chickenpox)

**Did you know?** Sharing records with Public Health helps us respond to school outbreaks and is required by provincial law.

When you register your child for school, **submit their immunization record** to their school or to VCH.

To find an immunization location near you and learn how to submit records to VCH, see our **Find an Immunization Clinic** page.



### Preventing spread of illness

Getting immunized and washing hands are the best ways to stop the spread of germs.

Help your children learn to **wash their hands** with soap and water (for at least 20 seconds - you can sing Happy Birthday!) **after using the washroom** and **before eating**.



### When your child is sick

Children with fever, cough, or runny nose **should stay home until they are well enough to participate in regular activities**.



If your child has diarrhea or vomiting, they can return to school when they no longer have any symptoms.

### Managing medical conditions at school

**Let your school know** if your child needs help with anaphylaxis (severe allergy), diabetes, seizures, asthma or any other medical needs. Our nurses and allied health providers help train school staff.



# Public Health Tips for a Healthy Start to Kindergarten

## Dental

- Brush their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Floss every day
- Drink water or milk instead of sugary drinks



Children should visit the dentist regularly, for many, that will be every 6 months.

Families may be able to get **free or low-cost dental care** through the *BC Healthy Kids Program* and *Canadian Dental Care Plan*.

## Hearing

Hearing is important for children's learning and development.

Our hearing team **visits Kindergarten students in schools** to screen for hearing loss.



## Vision



We recommend **all children see an optometrist** to have an eye exam **before Kindergarten**.

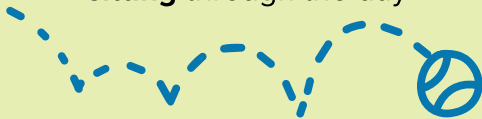
BC Medical Services Plan covers an eye exam once a year for children under 19. Some eye clinics may charge an additional fee, so it's a good idea to call ahead and compare.

## Physical Activity

Active kids have more energy, feel better, and are ready to learn.

We recommend helping your child get:

- **1 hr** of physical activity
- **9-11 hrs** of sleep
- **less than 2 hrs** of screen time, and
- **more movement, less sitting** through the day



Walking, biking and rolling to school is a fun way to get their daily activity.

For more ideas, see **Being Active:**



## Mental Wellness

You can support your child

- Talk about feelings. Let them know **it's ok to feel** sad, angry, or disappointed.
- Help them learn ways **to feel better when they are upset**, like moving their body, spending time outside or with a friend, listening to music or drawing.
- Talk through challenges and listen **without judgement** or **trying to fix the problem**. Support them to find their own solutions.
- Model compassion, kindness, empathy, and gratitude.



For more ideas, see **Supporting your child's mental wellness:**



## Healthy Eating

**Eating different kinds of nutritious foods helps kids:**

- Be ready to learn
- Feel good about themselves
- Feel good about their body

Eating well is also about **building healthy attitudes and behaviours** around food and eating.

For tips and healthy lunch ideas from our nutritionists, see **Lunches to Go:**



If you have questions about your child's immunizations or concerns about their transition to school, talk to your **doctor** or call your local public health unit to talk to your school's **Public Health Nurse**.



For more information about any of these topics, see **VCH Kindergarten:**



**Vancouver Coastal Health**