

# Welcome to Kindergarten

## Supporting Healthy Learners at School

Each school has a Public Health Nurse who works with schools and families to support healthy learners. The [North Shore School Health Manual](http://www.vch.ca/schoolhealth/ns) ([www.vch.ca/schoolhealth/ns](http://www.vch.ca/schoolhealth/ns)) outlines Public Health services and contact information .

### Getting Ready for a Healthy Start to Learning

Starting Kindergarten is a big change! It is common for children and parents to feel many emotions and have questions about making friends, the new school and routine. Feeling anxious is normal and expected even for a child who has attended preschool and/or child-care.

Resources for parents:

#### Helping kids cope with back to school emotions:

<https://www.anxietybc.com/parenting/helping-your-child-cope-back-school-anxiety>

#### The morning struggle:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/GK/GK.600.M67.pdf>

#### Sleep and your preschooler:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/GK/GK.600.S54.pdf>

#### Positive Discipline for preschoolers:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/GK/GK.600.P67.pdf>

#### Sharing Food, Creating Fun:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/BB/BB.200.E28.pdf>

#### Screen Time and Your Child:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/GK/GK.300.T45.pdf>

### Kindergarten Immunization

Children starting at age 4 need a booster of Diphtheria, Whooping cough, Tetanus, Polio **and** a booster of Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Chicken Pox. For more information visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca)

Immunizations are available at your local public health unit or your family doctor. It is recommended children receive the kindergarten immunizations before starting school. To book an appointment call 604-983-6700.

### Immunization Records

In the event of a disease outbreak, complete immunization records will identify children who are not protected. Please provide us with your child's immunization record by email at [nsimmunizations@vch.ca](mailto:nsimmunizations@vch.ca).

### When Should I keep My Child Home from school?

Please keep your child home if he/she:

- Has a fever.
- Is too sick to take part in all normal school activities.
- Has a suspected or known communicable disease (i.e. strep throat, chicken pox).
- Is vomiting or has diarrhea. It is recommended that students be symptom free at least 24 hours before returning to school.

### Students Requiring Additional Support

If your child has a serious medical condition such as:

- Anaphylaxis (severe allergy)
- Diabetes
- Seizures
- Serious heart conditions
- Asthma
- Another life threatening condition

Please notify the school staff, complete the Medical Alert forms from the school office, and provide any emergency medication at the start of the school year.



## Dental

Dental health in children is important for their overall health and for their ability to speak and to learn to read. All children should visit a dentist at 1 year of age and should have their teeth checked and cleaned twice a year.

For tips on caring for your child's teeth visit: [www.vch.ca/dental-health-children](http://www.vch.ca/dental-health-children)

## Vision and Hearing

Kindergarten students will have their vision and hearing checked at school. It is recommended that children's vision be first screened at age 3. There is no cost for vision exams for children. If your child has visual difficulties or a known hearing loss, please talk to your child's teacher.

## BC Healthy Kids Program

If your family has limited income, your child may qualify for the BC Healthy Kids Program. This program provides dental and vision coverage for children under 19 years. For information, call Ministry of Health at 1-800-663-7100.

## Raising a Healthy Eater

Healthy eating will help your child have energy to learn and play. Be a role model for your child by eating well and being active.

How to help your child:

- Parent's/caregiver's responsibility – what, when and where to eat
- Child's responsibility – decides if and how much to eat
- Enjoy sharing food together as much as possible without TV or other distractions
- Accept that a child's taste changes often
- Involve your child in planning and preparing food

During kindergarten hours, children need a healthy lunch and two snacks. Food should be manageable for small hands. Water is the best choice for thirst.

Call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 to speak to a Dietitian or go to [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating) to email your question or find resources.

This free service is available in many different languages.

## Sleep

Many parents are not prepared for how tired their children can get starting Kindergarten. There is an increasing demand on your child's time from school, sports, and other extra-curricular and social activities. Poor or inadequate sleep can lead to mood swings, behavioral problems and poor thinking skills that could impact their ability to learn. Regular and early bed times are important. It is important that children age five to twelve get **9 – 11 hours** of sleep per night.

## Children Learn Through Play!

Children who are physically active are healthier and perform better at school. Canadian guidelines recommend 60 minutes of moderate to intense physical activity per day for children. Choosing to walk or bicycle to school can help to meet this guideline and reduces school traffic.

Heart and mind well-being are connected and important for learning at home and school. For more on how to support your child's well-being [www.heartmindonline.org](http://www.heartmindonline.org)

