



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

HEALTHY SCHOOLS



Heads up parents: Protect your Favourite Hockey Star with a CSA-Certified Helmet

Hockey requires equipment – from sticks to pads to skates and gloves. One of the most important pieces of equipment is a properly fitted Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approved helmet. Hockey helmets are intended to help protect and reduce the risk of serious injury to the skull and brain. Most helmets are lined with protective foam, and some helmets do feel better than others. The helmet should be adjusted to fit snug to prevent any movement and maximize protection. Open the helmet to its largest setting and place on the head so that the rim is one finger width above the eyebrow.

Gradually begin to adjust the helmet until you get a snug fit. Newer style helmets will have flaps on the side to adjust the helmet. Older style helmets will need a screw driver to loosen and tighten the helmet. Make sure the chinstrap is adjusted so it gently makes contact under the chin when fastened. Regularly inspect helmets for scratches, cracks in the shell or wear and tear in the liner. Do not paint or put decals on a helmet. There is no CSA certification expiry date for hockey helmets. You should replace your helmet every 5 years; however, the life expectancy of a helmet is based on the amount of use and how well

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the helmet is taken care of. A player who is on the ice 5 times a week may need to replace their helmet every 1-2 years. A player who is on the ice only once a week may have their helmet last longer than 5 years.

Submitted by: Karin Marks, Health Promoter, Child Injury Prevention

Is your preschooler a healthy eater?

Fill out the NutriSTEP® screen to find out!



Worrying about whether your child is eating enough or eating the right food are common concerns. The NutriSTEP® screen for children aged 3-5 can help you find out. Eating habits are formed when children are young so knowing about nutrition problems can help you find healthy solutions early. There is also a direct link between healthy eating, being ready to learn and how your child performs in school. Your child will learn best if they are eating healthy foods.

The NutriSTEP® screen has 17 multiple-choice questions about your child's nutrition and eating habits. It covers topics like food choices, physical activity and growth. At the end, you will get a score that tells you if your child is at low, medium or high nutritional risk. If your child is at risk, local community services and support information is provided. The screen only takes about 5 minutes to complete. You can get a copy of the screen for free at Ontario Early Years Centres or by calling the Health Unit at 519-426-6170, Ext.3237.

For more information on NutriSTEP® and healthy eating in general, check out the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's website at www.hnhu.org/nutristep. You can also call EatRight Ontario and talk to a Registered Dietitian for free at 1-877-510-5102.

Submitted by: Laura Tousaw, Population Health, Public Health Dietitian



There is growing concern about the use of tobacco products in our community among our youth. As parents, we want our children to practice healthy habits so that they grow into healthy adults. Statistics show that more than one out of five youth in grades five to nine report ever trying any tobacco product and this habit increases to almost one in three youth in grades seven to nine. By starting tobacco education at an early stage, we can help our children build skills that will help them remain tobacco-free throughout their life. Protect your child by talking to them about the harmful effects of tobacco-use. Here are some fast facts about youth and tobacco.

- Youth who start smoking at an early age increase their chances of becoming addicted to nicotine and continuing to smoke as adults.
 - Smoking can slow the growth of young people's lungs and can affect their breathing when they play games and sports.
 - Most youth who smoke want to quit but few succeed. Addiction to nicotine occurs faster in youth than in adults. Youth can become addicted to nicotine while only smoking a couple of cigarettes each day.
- *Some of the content has been adapted from Health Canada's "Helping your child stay smoke-free: A guide to protecting your child against tobacco use".
- Submitted by Fiaza Siddiqi, Health Promoter, Tobacco Use Prevention*
- Research shows that youth who are exposed to both a family member and a best friend who smoke have a 90% chance of smoking.
 - Youth who smoke suffer more coughs, asthma, chest colds and bronchitis.



For a FREE guide on how to talk to your child about tobacco use contact the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 ext. 3248.

What's Happening to My Body?

From the day your child was born, you may have noticed how quickly your child grew and changed. This is never more evident than when your child starts puberty. Once your child starts puberty, there are rapid growth changes as well as emotional changes.

Girls begin puberty earlier than boys, generally around age 10-11. At this time, breast buds may appear. Pubic hair and underarm hair may begin to appear. On average, their first period may begin between the ages of 12 and 13.

Boys generally begin puberty around age

11-12. The first sign is the growth of the testicles along with pubic hair. As he begins to grow taller his voice will get deeper and underarm hair will begin to grow.

Along with these physical changes will come emotional changes and the increased need for independence. Reassure them that this is a normal part of growing up.

Your teen may come to you with questions. Maintain an open line of communication so they feel comfortable to come to you in the future. As a parent you

should be open and honest and listen to what your teen has to say. They may have questions regarding both their physical changes as well as the emotional feelings they may be having. Offer support and answer their questions as best you can.

The best you can do as a parent is be supportive through this maze of changes your teen is going through. Reassure them that all they are experiencing is quite normal and that they will get through this.

Submitted by: Terri Hartwick, Sexual Health, Public Health Nurse

Ref: www.sexualityandu.ca

What to look for when searching for accurate health information on the internet

Over 50% of parents use the Internet to find health information. This information can affect decisions about health care for their kids. Parents need to know if what they are reading is correct. See the example below from www.cps.ca (Canadian Paediatric Society) for questions to ask when looking at websites.



What can I do to protect my daughter from HPV and cervical cancer?

As parents, we look out for our children and strive to keep them as healthy as possible. Diphtheria, polio, pertussis, and tetanus are just some examples of infections that can be prevented through vaccination. Vaccinations are a way to keep all of us healthy.

There is a new virus that some parents might not know about; it is called human papilloma virus (HPV). This is a virus that cannot be cured with antibiotics.

HPV can cause genital warts or cervical cancer but can be prevented through knowledge, screening and vaccination.

This fall parents/guardians will receive a consent form to sign, giving their daughters permission to receive the Gardasil vaccine. Getting your daughter vaccinated provides protection against the four most dangerous types of HPV. (Types 16 and 18 are responsible for 70% of cervical cancer and types 6 and 11 cause 90% of genital warts.)

Submitted by: Margot Fournier, Sexual Health, Public Health Nurse and Maria Mendes Wood, Vaccine Preventable, Public Health Nurse

Information adapted from the website www.hpvinfo.ca

Does the Web Site Host Have a Conflict of Interest? Does the host site sell a product or service? Is the host site sponsored by a for-profit organization such as drug companies? Are there advertisements popping up? If yes the site may not be reliable.

Submitted by: Gillian Raffay, Family Health Team, Public Health Nurse

Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Currently, Haldimand and Norfolk are part of the Provincial Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Outbreak. This outbreak has been ongoing for several months and involves 6 other health units at this time. As children go back to school this fall, the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit Infectious Diseases team wants you to become more familiar with *Whooping Cough*:

How can one get the Whooping Cough?

- *Whooping cough* is passed from one person to another through direct contact with droplets such as when someone coughs, sneezes, sings. *Whooping Cough* is a highly contagious disease that can affect anyone, but has the most risk to infants under one year of age and pregnant women in their third trimester. *Whooping Cough* can cause serious problems and sometimes death in infants.

How do you know if someone has the Whooping Cough?

- *Whooping cough* can first seem like a common cold: runny nose, mild fever

and a cough. They can already be contagious to other persons.

- As the illness gets worse, an infected person will begin to have coughing spells that last several minutes and occur a lot of times throughout the day. These spells may be followed by gagging and vomiting and are usually worse at night.
 - You may hear a “whoop” sound as the child tries to breathe during a coughing spell. (This may not occur in children under six months of age or in older children and adults.)
- * A person who has *whooping cough* and does not get treatment can spread the germs for up to three weeks after the cough spells begin. The contagious period is reduced to five days from the start of treatment when antibiotics are used.

What can you do to prevent the Whooping Cough?

- The way to not get the *whooping cough* is to get vaccinated; both chil-

dren and adults should make sure their vaccinations are up to date.

- If you suspect pertussis, it is important to seek treatment right away
- Keep your child home if they have any of the above symptoms
- Take your child to the doctor's office, try to book your appointment for the end of the day (to prevent exposure to others in the waiting room)
- Practice and encourage frequent and proper hand hygiene

Submitted by Stacey Guthrie, Infectious Disease, Public Health Nurse

Reference: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. (2009). *Infectious diseases protocol: pertussis (whooping cough)*. Retrieved from http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/pubhealth/oph_standards/ophs/progstds/lidprotocol/appendixal/pertussis_chapter.pdf



The ABCs of Mental Health

The Hinck's-Dellcrest Centre has an online resource for parents and teachers on kids' mental health called The ABCs of Mental Health. It gives information about what behaviours are normal at different ages, what you should keep an eye on, and when to get help. It also talks about what changes happen as kids get older, what you can do to promote good mental health, and suggestions of what to do if there are behaviours that need attention. Go to the link to find out more: www.hincksdellcrest.org/ABC/Welcome

Submitted by: Leia Bulosan, Family Health, Public Health Nurse



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