



# HEALTHY SCHOOLS

## Minding Our Minds

Mindfulness is a way of paying attention to the present moment, to make us more aware of our thoughts and feelings so that instead of feeling overwhelmed by them, we are able to manage them.

In schools, building trust with each student within a safe and caring environment builds the foundation for learning. Mindfulness in the school setting can teach students that their thoughts and feelings and their behavior are connected. Mindfulness introduces the students to new physical activities, new language and a new outlook on managing everyday stressors. It enables students to be more present in the moment, increases their concentration, self-regulation and improves their resiliency to help prepare them for the day ahead.

Activities that teach mindfulness are quite simple but the skills, like thoughtful breathing, require practice in order for mindfulness to be integrated into the lives of students.

The Mind UP curriculum, a program currently being introduced to a number of local elementary schools, provides a series of lessons that focus on social-emotional awareness, decision making and mindful attention to yourself and those around you. The lessons include links to research, classroom activities and connections to the elementary school curriculum. It promotes brain building potential of regular mindfulness training throughout the grade levels, helps the students reduce their stress levels and be more present for their classroom work.

For more information on MindUP contact your school's public health nurse or health promoter at [hnhu.org/schoolhealth](http://hnhu.org/schoolhealth)



## Advice on Lice

Head lice are small insects that live on the scalp, cause itching and spread by head to head contact. They are more common in children as their heads often touch when they play together or share brushes, hats, scarves, helmets and hairbands.

### What to look for:

#### Head lice:

- Tiny wingless insects
- Crawl and DO NOT JUMP or FLY
- Size of a sesame seed and difficult to see.

#### Where to look:

Lice or nits are found particularly around the ears, at the back of the neck and near the forehead. Use a bright light and magnifying glass if available.

**If you only find nits look closer for live lice.** If lice and nits are present act quickly and treat both.

#### Nits (eggs of the louse):

- Nits attach to the hair shaft close to the scalp
- Size of a grain of sand.
- Cream in color, often confused with dandruff.

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## HOW TO GET RID OF HEAD LICE:

### Head Lice Treatment:

**Do not treat children unless they have live lice.** Your pharmacist can help you choose a head lice product. Read the directions very carefully. Ingredients with permethrin (Nix or Kwellada-P) or pyrethrins (R&C) are proven effective when used as directed.

### Nit Treatment:

**Daily nit removal and hair combing are keys to getting rid of head lice.** After head lice are treated, removing the nits can help to prevent a new infestation.

To remove nits, use a bright light and part hair into small sections. With a fine-toothed nit comb or your fingernails pull the nits from the hair strands starting at the roots and working out to the tips. Wipe the nits onto a tissue and place in a bag for disposal.

### Alternative head lice treatment

Household products such as mineral oil and vinegar, petroleum jelly, mayonnaise and hair gel have not been proven to work in removing nits.

### Check all close contacts

If one person in the family has head lice, it is possible that other family members will also have them.

### Cleaning personal items

Head lice do not survive more than three days away from the warmth and humidity of the scalp. Soak combs, brushes and hair accessories with hot, soapy water. Wash clothing, bed linens and towels in hot soapy water then put them in a HOT dryer for 15 minutes. Items that you can't wash, such as blankets, coats and stuffed animals, should be put in a plastic bag for 14 days. Do not use insecticide sprays.



**Reminder:** If your child is found to have head lice, refer to your school board's head lice policy for information regarding their requirements for returning to school.

### How to prevent the spread of head lice

Routinely check your child's head and do it daily when advised of a lice outbreak by your school or child care facility.

### Parents play an important role with revised curriculum

As most parents are aware, Ontario's Ministry of Education implemented a revised Health and Physical Education curriculum for the previous school year. The revised curriculum replaces the previous curriculum, which had been in place since 1998.

Updating a curriculum which predated YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and smartphones was necessary to reflect the realities faced by school children in Ontario today, including the proper use, and risks, associated with technology and online behaviours. The new curriculum also presents a shift from a content-based focus which concentrates on the "what" of a specific topic. It instead focuses on building the skills of students to make healthy choices, or the "how".

One topic that has received much attention is the section of the curriculum that addresses growth and development and sexual health. The updated curriculum reflects the fact that sexual health does not just include physiology and reproduction. A comprehensive approach to teaching sexual health incorporates aspects such as the development of a positive self-image and the skills needed to avoid or leave situations that make a person feel uncomfortable.

Despite some updates to the content, the revised curriculum does not change or replace the vital role of parents in their children's education.

Schools and parents must work together to ensure that home and school provide a mutually supportive partnership for our young people's education. Children will benefit from a much richer and more relevant learning experience when they receive education about both the factual, current health information along with opportunities to learn about the values, morals and beliefs that their family, culture or religion holds.

The goal in this revised health curriculum, as with all other subject curriculums, is to have students gain the knowledge, skills and tools that will need to be safe, happy, healthy and successful both in their childhood and their adults years as well.



# Sip Smart! Ontario™ Think Before You Drink



Sip Smart!™ Ontario is an initiative designed to teach children in Grades 3 to 7 what they need to know to make healthy drink choices.

What children drink each day has a major impact on their health. Drinking fewer sugary drinks is key for good nutri-

tion, healthy teeth and a healthy weight in growing children.

Families play an important role in the choices children make. Decreasing the number of sugary drinks will help your child to be healthy. **YOU** can help your child make good drink choices.

The Sip Smart!™ Ontario resources are fun and interactive. Families can find them online at [www.brightbites.ca](http://www.brightbites.ca)

## Tips for making the healthy choice the easy choice!

- Serve tap water – it's a healthy, low-cost choice.
- For a change, add a slice of lemon or lime or a few berries to a clear glass of water.
- Keep a jug of chilled water in the fridge – especially in the summer!
- Ensure that your child drinks more water in hot weather.
- Ensure that your child drinks more water when very active.
- Stock your fridge with healthy drinks such as water and milk.
- If milk is not an option, other calcium-fortified drinks are available (e.g., unsweetened fortified soy beverage, unsweetened fortified rice beverage).
- Enjoy limited amounts of 100% fruit juice. A single serving is just 125 mL (1/2 cup), and one juice serving is enough in one day.
- Serve milk or water with meals or snacks, and water the rest of the day.
- Set a good example. Choose healthy drinks yourself.
- Buy sugary drinks only rarely.
- To help your child drink less sugar from drinks:
  - Buy smaller sizes of drinks.
  - Pour smaller servings, setting aside the rest of a container for the next time.
  - Start slowly by switching one less healthy drink to a healthier drink each day. Your child will soon make healthy drink choices on his/her own!

By teaching children why it is important to drink fewer sugary drinks, Sip Smart!™ Ontario makes identifying healthier drink choices easier for Ontarians.

## Recipe Corner

### Strawberry - Cucumber Infused Water

Take plain old tap water to a new level! Add flavour without all the sugar and feel good about making the healthy choice an easy choice!

Get creative and try different combinations of fruits, vegetables and even fresh herbs!

Ready in: 2-4 hours

Makes: 8- 250mL servings

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup fresh strawberries, washed, destemmed and sliced
- ½ cucumber, washed, thinly sliced
- 2 litres water

#### Directions:

1. Place strawberries and cucumber in a pitcher.
2. Pour water overtop of fruit.
3. Refrigerate 2 to 4 hours to infuse flavour. Store in refrigerator for up to 2 days.

Recipe taken from Food Network Kitchens, August 2016, <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchens/strawberry-cucumber-water.html>





# Sweat, Step, Sleep and Sit... All In a Day's Work!

As we enter the new school year and move into the cooler months, it can become quite the challenge to effectively balance your child's day. The new Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth encourage children and youth to "Sweat, Step, Sleep and Sit". For the greatest health benefits, children and youth (aged 5-17) should achieve high levels of physical activity, low levels of sedentary behavior and sufficient sleep each day. Following these guidelines will contribute to a stronger heart and lungs, improved academic achievement and cognition, emotional regulation and overall quality of life.

Here are some tips and ideas to help successfully balance of your child's day:

- Include AT LEAST 60 minutes of heart pumping physical activity (e.g. running, biking, swimming etc.)
- Encourage several hours of structured and unstructured light activity daily (e.g. helping with household chores, walking the dog, helping to get the mail etc.)
- Create a consistent wake up and bed time routine. Try to avoid screen time right before bed.
- Aim for 9-11 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night (children 5-13 years)
- Limit recreational screen time to no more than 2 hours per day. Instead, try reading a book with your child, going for a walk or playing a board game.

**Together, we can all encourage and support our children and youth to sweat a little more, step a little higher, sleep a little longer and smile a little bigger!**

*\*\* More details on the guidelines can be found via the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (<http://www.csep.ca/en/guidelines/get-the-guidelines>) and ParticipACTION (<https://www.participation.com/>)*



## HPV Changes

**Effective September 2016**, the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) immunization program will be publicly funded for both boys and girls. The program will also shift from grade 8 to grade 7 for all and will continue to be offered by the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit.

Expanding the program to include boys is consistent with the recommendations and research concerning HPV by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization. Offering the program in Grade 7 is more effective as your child is less likely to have been exposed to the HPV virus adding to their protection. The earlier schedule aligns Ontario more closely with the other provinces and territories that are delivering the school-based HPV immunization program.

If you have any questions regarding the program please contact the Vaccine Preventable Disease Program at the Health Unit at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3472.



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