

Dear Kindergarten Parent,

We would like to welcome your child to Kindergarten.  
Here are some health resources and information about school health services provided by public health staff.



### **Communicable Diseases (illness)**

Washing hands often can stop many infections from spreading. Remind your child not to share any item that may have saliva (spit) on it, such as cups and water bottles. Good resources for health information are:

- Is your child too sick for school?  
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/sites/default/files/PDFS/too-sick-for-school.pdf>
- Health Link BC [www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles/](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles/) and 811 to speak to a registered nurse.
- Interior Health public website, School Health <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/infant-child-and-youth-health/school-health>
- Quick Guide to Common Childhood Diseases [http://www.bccdc.ca/schools/Documents/EN\\_Guide\\_Childhood\\_Diseases.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/schools/Documents/EN_Guide_Childhood_Diseases.pdf)

### **Head Lice**

Head lice are a bother but do not cause disease. The school may send information home on how to prevent, check for and treat head lice. Check your child's head for lice weekly and keep long hair tied back. For prevention, checking and treatment information see the Interior Health public website: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/infant-child-and-youth-health/school-health/promoting-health-of-children-and-youth-in-school>

### **Immunizations**

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other health measure. If your child is immune to the disease, they are less likely to get sick and infect others. Be sure your child gets all their vaccines on time. Children 4-6 years of age should get:

- A school entry booster dose of Diphtheria, Pertussis (whooping cough), Tetanus, and Polio <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis-polio-tdap-ipv-vaccine> and
- A second dose of both Chickenpox (Varicella) and Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) as a combined vaccine MMRV <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/measles-mumps-rubella-and-varicella-mmr-vaccine>

Parents can check their child's immunization history online through Health Gateway <https://www.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/health-gateway> or the Vaccination Status Indicator tool <http://www.immunizebc.ca/vaccination-status-indicator> to see if their child's immunization records are on file with Public Health and if their child is up to date on immunizations. Parents may contact their local public health centre with questions regarding their child's immunization records and to book immunization appointments. If your child was immunized anywhere other than public health, you can add missing or out-of-province vaccinations they received to Health Gateway as well. Alternatively, a copy of these records could be provided to your local public health centre. For more information:

<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/immunization-and-vaccines/school-age-children-and-youth-immunization> or <https://immunizebc.ca/>

### **Medical Alerts (serious medical conditions)**

Let the school know if your child has a serious medical issue like anaphylaxis, allergies, seizures, diabetes or a heart condition. The school may have forms that need to be signed by your doctor. Your school Public Health Nurse is available to provide information and support in the planning of a safe environment for students with serious medical conditions.

### **Screening Services (vision, dental and hearing information)**

Vision problems can affect a child's abilities, success, and confidence at school. Basic eye exams in BC - one per year - are free up to the age of 18, although some optometrists (eye

doctors) may charge a user fee. More information is found here: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/elementary-school-age-children-and-their-vision> and here <https://bc.doctorsofoptometry.ca/patients/medical-services-plan/>

Dental pain can make learning more difficult. Parents can contact the Interior Health Dental Program if your child is in dental pain. For contact information and more dental health information see the Interior Health website: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/infant-child-and-youth-health/school-health/school-health-care>

Public Health does not routinely screen school age children for hearing. If you have concerns about your child’s hearing, the school Public Health Nurse can assist in making a referral for a hearing test at the nearest Public Health Hearing Clinic. For more information see the Hearing Health website: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourHealth/ChildrenYouth/Pages/HearingHealth.aspx>

### Special Health Care Needs

Nursing Support Services Coordinators are available to help develop care plans for students with special health needs and provide training for their school caregivers. They also provide a liaison between school, family and other health professionals. More information is found here: <http://www.bcchildrens.ca/our-services/sunny-hill-health-centre/our-services/nursing-support>

### Public Health Records and Your Privacy

Public health programs collect personal student information (e.g. name, Personal Health Number, address and birth date) to provide health services. We do this with the permission of the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), School Act and Public Health Act. This information is treated confidentially, kept secure, and only used for the purpose described above.

For more school health information, please contact your local public health centre or visit: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/infant-child-and-youth-health>

For additional information see the parenting school-aged children section here: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/pregnancy-parenting/parenting-school-age-children-6-11-years/back-school>

<b>Public Health Centres</b>					
<b>IH Central</b>		<b>IH West</b>		<b>IH East</b>	
Armstrong	250-546-4727	Ashcroft	250-453-1940	Castlegar	250-365-4310
Enderby	250-838-2450	Barriere	250-672-5515	Cranbrook	250-420-2207
Kelowna	250-469-7070 ext 13301	Chase	250-679-1393	Creston	250-428-3873
Keremeos	250-499-3029	Clearwater	250-674-3141	Fernie	250-423-8288
Lumby	250-547-2164	Kamloops	250-851-7300	Grand Forks	250-443-3150
Oliver	250-498-5080	Lillooet	250-256-1314	Golden	250-344-3001
Osoyoos	250-495-6433	Logan Lake	250-378-3400	Invermere	250-342-2360
Penticton	250-770-3434	Merritt	250-378-3400	Kaslo	250-353-2291
Princeton	250-295-4442	100 Mile House	250-395-7676	Kimberley	250-427-2215
Revelstoke	250-814-2244	Williams Lake	250-302-5000	Midway	250-449-2887
Rutland	250-980-4825			Nakusp	250-265-3608
Salmon Arm	250-833-4100			Nelson	250-505-7200
Sicamous	250-836-4835			Salmo	250-357-9511
Summerland	250-404-8050			Sparwood	250-425-2064
Vernon	250-549-5721			Trail	250-364-6226
West Kelowna	250-980-5150				