

Revised May 2, 2022

JK-12 E-Newsletter Inserts for Parents/Caregivers and PA Announcements for JK-12 Students

E-Newsletter Inserts

Screening

COVID-19 Student Screening Tool

To help keep schools safe, please review the [COVID-19 screening questionnaire for children/students/adults](#) and complete it each day before coming to school.

For more information on common scenarios and isolation periods, please review [COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire, Page 2](#), [Know When To Self-Monitor, Self-isolate or Send your Child to School](#), [How to Count Self-Isolation Days If You Have COVID-19](#), all available on the Toronto Public Health webpage [School Information for Parents and Caregivers](#).

Complete Daily Screening

Screening for symptoms before coming to school each day helps keep our community safe. Please use the [COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire for children/students/adults](#) each day before coming to school. If your child has one or more symptoms of COVID-19, keep your child at home and complete a [Rapid Antigen Test \(RAT\)](#) if available. Seek assessment from a health care provider if needed.

For more information about COVID-19 symptoms please review [Understanding COVID-19 Symptoms in Child Care Attendees and JK-Grade 12 Students](#), [What To Do If Your Child Has COVID-19 Symptoms](#) and [Toronto Public Health's information for Parents and Caregivers](#).

COVID-19 Screening Before Students Come to School

Every student should complete COVID-19 screening before coming to school each day. Please use Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19 screening questionnaire for children/students/adults](#). If your child has one or more symptoms of COVID-19, keep your child home and complete a [Rapid Antigen Test \(RAT\)](#) if available.

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Household members of someone with COVID-19 and/or COVID-19 symptoms may be considered a close contact and may need to self-isolate. Household members should stay home if one or more symptoms are present. For more information on household and non-household close contacts please review [What Is Close Contact In The Community?](#) and [COVID-19: What to Do if You Are a Close Contact](#).

For more information, review [Toronto Public Health's information for Parents and Caregivers](#).

Face Masks

Wearing a Mask to Reduce the Spread of COVID-19

Wearing a mask, can help reduce the spread of COVID-19. If your child wears a mask to school, you can [help your child wear a mask](#) and teach them how to safely [put on and take off a mask](#).

For more information, review: [the best mask is the one that fits well](#) and [how to wear a mask or face covering at school](#).

Respecting students who wear masks to school

Although masks are no longer required at all times in school, children/students/adults may still choose to wear a mask based on their level of risk. There are times when children/students/adults are still required to wear masks. It is important to promote a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for those who choose to continue to wear a mask.

For more information, review [Face Masks & Respirators](#).

Important Reminders for Families

Here are some important reminders about masks for families:

- It is strongly recommended to wear a well-fitting, high quality mask, especially in indoors public settings. Wearing a mask, in addition to physical distancing, reducing your contacts, staying up to date with vaccinations and [other public health measures](#), can reduce the spread of COVID-19. Masking continues to be an important part of our community's response to the pandemic.

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- A good quality mask should be made of at least three layers of tightly woven fabric (such as cotton or linen), or two layers with a filter layer for extra protection. Consider a medical mask or respirator for even better protection.

For more information, review [COVID-19: Use of Face Masks Fact Sheet](#).

Testing

My child has symptoms of COVID-19, should they get tested?

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 is presumed to have COVID-19 even if not tested. If your child is not tested, they must self-isolate for 5-10 days, as outlined on the [COVID-19 screening questionnaire for children/students/adults](#).

Take-home PCR and/or [Rapid Antigen Tests \(RAT\)](#) may be available at school for a child who develops symptoms.

- If the child tests positive on a PCR or RAT, they must self-isolate for 5-10 days, as outlined on the [COVID-19 screening questionnaire for children/students/adults](#). Positive RAT results do not need to be confirmed by a PCR tests. Testing for clearance from isolation is not recommended.
- If the child tests negative on a single PCR test or two consecutive RATs, separated by 24-48 hours, the child is advised to self-isolate until symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours if nausea/vomiting/diarrhea) and then can return to school.

For more information visit [COVID-19 Testing](#).

Vaccines & Booster Dose(s)

Do You Have Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccine?

Getting vaccinated helps protect our community and remains the best defense against COVID-19, especially as public health measures are eased. [Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine, the benefits of getting vaccinated and how to book an appointment](#).

For more information on vaccines for child and youth visit [COVID-19: Vaccines for Children & Youth](#).

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Talking to your children about getting vaccinated

Children 5 years of age and older are now eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and children 12 to 17 are now eligible for a booster dose. It is normal for children to have questions about their health and vaccines.

Helpful Tips Include:

- Start talking to your kids about the vaccine
- Get information from credible and trusted sources such as your doctor or Toronto Public Health
- Don't rely on social media to gather information.

For more information, please go to Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19: Vaccines for Children & Youth](#) website and [How to Talk to Kids about Getting Vaccinated](#).

Children & Youth 5 Years of Age and Older are Eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine

Children and youth 5 to 17 years old are [eligible](#) to get the COVID-19 vaccine:

- Children 5 to 11 years old should receive the pediatric Pfizer (10 micrograms) dose. Children must be 5 years of age at the time of vaccination. Children in this age group are not yet eligible for a booster dose.
- Youth 12 to 17 years old are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine primary series (two doses) and a booster dose. You can get your booster dose at least 168 days (6 months) after completing your primary series.
- Youth 12 to 17 years old should continue to receive the Pfizer (30 micrograms) dose.
- Children and youth who are moderately or severely immunocompromised should receive a [three dose primary series](#). Youth 12 to 17 years old can receive a booster dose 168 days (6 months) after completing their primary series.
- Getting the vaccine is the best way to protect children and people around them from COVID-19 related illness, hospitalization and death.

For more information, review [COVID-19: Vaccines for Children & Youth](#).

For additional vaccine resources that can be used as newsletter inserts, including translations in many languages, please review [COVID-19: Vaccine Resources](#).

COVID-19 Booster Dose(s)

A [COVID-19 booster](#) is a dose of the vaccine given after you have completed the primary vaccine series. It helps improve protection against COVID-19 that may have decreased over time and boosts the immune response, including making more antibodies.

Booster doses are now available for eligible youth ages 12 to 17 and adults ages 18 and older. For more information, visit [COVID-19: Vaccine Eligibility & Doses](#) or talk to a health care provider.

General Reminders

Keeping Our Community Safe

Families can take the following steps to help keep our community safe:

- [Stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccination](#), including any [booster dose\(s\)](#) when eligible for
- Stay home if you are feeling unwell.
- Wear a high quality, well-fitting mask, especially indoors, and based on the setting and situation. Masks are strongly recommended in indoor public settings.
- Consider keeping a physical distance when possible, especially indoors.
- Wash your hands often or use 70-90% alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with an elbow or a tissue.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces.
- Stay up to date with Ontario's [COVID-19 public health measures and advice](#).
- Download the [COVID alert app](#) to be notified if you come into contact with someone who is contagious with COVID-19.

For more information, please visit [COVID-19](#) and [COVID-19: Reduce Virus Spread Guide](#).

Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19

Families can take the following everyday steps to help avoid the spread of COVID-19:

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- [Stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccination](#), including any [booster dose\(s\)](#) when eligible for the best protection against COVID-19.
- Reduce or limit the number of people you have close contact with, especially indoors.
- Consider keeping a physical distance when possible, especially indoors.
- Wear a high quality, well-fitting mask, especially indoors, and based on the setting and situation. Masks are strongly recommended in indoor public settings.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often.
- Stay home if you are sick or have symptoms, even if they are mild.
- Choose well ventilated spaces when possible – outdoors is lower risk than indoors.

For more information, please visit [COVID-19](#) and [COVID-19: Reduce Virus Spread Guide](#).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Feelings of Stress and Anxiety are Normal During COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged everyone's ability to cope with stress. Managing stress is more difficult when we are taken out of our regular routines, dealing with a constantly changing situation and distanced from our usual supports.

For more information on mental health and general coping with stress, visit [COVID-19: Mental Health – General Coping & Specific Stressors](#) and [COVID-19: Mental Health Resources](#).

Call 211 to be connected with free mental health support. Language interpretation is available.

Taking Care of Your Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Have a routine: Structure your day and keep good habits.
- Take deep breaths: Breathing exercises can ease stress.
- Call or go on a walk with a loved one: Lean on each other for support.
- Exercise, dance and have fun. Blow off steam and boost endorphins.
- Look for the positives. Share inspirational stories of people helping one another.
- Engage your brain. Do a word search, Sudoku, jigsaw or crossword puzzle.
- Seek help. If you are feeling overwhelmed, reach out. Community help is available.

Infographic: [Taking care of your mental health and wellbeing](#)

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Mental Health Support during COVID-19

Many people may feel sad, stressed, anxious, confused, scared or angry during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are normal and common responses to unexpected or stressful situations.

If you need help, call 211 to be connected with free mental health support, including for children and youth, seniors, and racialized, Indigenous, Black and LGBTQ2S communities. Language interpretation is available.

- Call 2-1-1 (24 hours day, seven days a week)
- TTY: 1-888-340-1001
- Text 21166 (Monday – Friday 7a.m. – 9p.m.)

For more information on mental health, visit [COVID-19: Mental Health Resources](#).

Posters: [Mental Health Supports](#) & [Mental Health Support during COVID-19](#).

PA Announcements

- We all need to do our part to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Please wash your hands or sanitize your hands often, keep a physical distance when possible. Although masks are not required at all times, it is recommended to wear a high quality, well-fitted masks (especially indoors). Children/students/adults may still choose to wear a mask based on their level of risk. It is important to promote a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for those who choose to continue to wear a mask.
- Please remember, COVID-19 can be spread:
 - when sharing hugs and kisses;
 - when people gather close together, talking, laughing, singing, sneezing or coughing;
 - when people linger to talk, longer than 15 minutes, and forget to physically distance; and
 - when touching the mouth, nose or eyes after touching surfaces contaminated with the virus.

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- Please remember to complete the required [COVID-19 screening questionnaire for children/students/adults](#) before coming to school each day. If you 1 or more symptoms of COVID-19, please do not come to school. Stay home and self-isolate. Take a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) if you have access to one.
- Staying up to date with recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses is the best way to prevent serious illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19. Many youth ages 12 to 17 are now eligible for a COVID-19 booster dose. Visit Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19: Vaccines](#) webpage to learn more about how to get vaccinated.
- If you completed your [COVID-19 screening questionnaire for children/students/adults](#) before coming to school but start to feel unwell during school hours, please let your teacher know right away.
- Getting the COVID-19 vaccine protects you and those around you from getting sick. It is normal to have questions about your health and getting vaccinated. It is important to get accurate information about vaccines. If you have questions, ask your family or doctor. More information can be found on Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19: Vaccines for Children & Youth](#) webpage.
- Many people may feel sad, stressed, anxious, confused, scared or angry during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are normal and common responses to unexpected or stressful situations. Support is available. Call 211 to be connected to mental health services. Services are available 24 hours day, seven days a week.