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Re: Toronto Public Health Back to School Information

Dear Parent or Guardian,

As you prepare your child to return to school in September, here is some important health information from Toronto Public Health (TPH) for the upcoming school year.

Reducing the Spread of Respiratory Viruses and Communicable Diseases

To help protect our school communities during respiratory illness season, staff, students, and visitors are being reminded to:

- [Stay home if they are sick or have symptoms of illness](#), even if they are mild.
- Use the provincial [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) before attending school or work if they have any symptoms of illness.
- [Wash or sanitize their hands](#) often and [cover their cough or sneeze](#) with their elbow or a tissue.
- Stay up to date on vaccinations:
 - [Routine vaccines](#): Students need to be up to date with vaccinations against certain diseases as outlined in Ontario's [Immunization of School Pupils Act](#), or have a valid exemption. This includes vaccinations for measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, meningococcal and chicken pox vaccines. Vaccines are available through your primary care providers or at a [TPH vaccination clinic](#). Vaccinations need to be reported to [Toronto Public Health](#).
 - [Hepatitis B, Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\) or Meningococcal vaccines](#): Students in grade 7 & 8 will be offered the hepatitis B, HPV, and meningococcal vaccines in school through TPH's School Immunization Program. Students in grades 9 to 12 who missed these vaccines can still get them for free at a [TPH vaccination clinic](#).
 - [COVID-19 boosters](#) and [Influenza vaccine](#): An updated booster for COVID-19 and an influenza (flu) vaccine will be available this fall. Both will be important to prevent serious illness from these viruses during peak respiratory illness season.
- As respiratory virus activity increases this fall, a well-fitted, high-quality [mask](#) in crowded indoor settings with poor ventilation, may be important, especially for those who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Dental Screening Program

TPH Dental & Oral Health Services staff will be conducting dental screening for all elementary school grades. For children with identified dental care needs, TPH will assist families in the process of finding a dental provider and will provide information about good oral health habits.

School Health Services

TPH's team of health professionals work to service school communities using the Healthy Schools approach, based on the Ontario Ministry of Education's [Foundations for a Healthy School](#). Our School Liaison Public Health Nurses provide consultation, resources, referrals, and other supports to Toronto schools.

More Information

Stay tuned for more information via your child's school principal or visit toronto.ca/health to learn more about:

- [Healthy Schools](#)
- [Health Information for School Age Parents & Caregivers](#)
- [Respiratory Viruses: Information for Parents & Caregivers](#)
- [Immunization – City of Toronto](#)
- [Resources to Support Parents & Caregivers – Sexual Health Promotion](#)
- [Mental Health Resources](#)

Questions?

Contact Toronto Health Connection at 416-338-7600 or PublicHealth@toronto.ca.

Sincerely,



Nicole Welch BSc., MSc., RN
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