



Grey Bruce  
Public Health

Nov-Dec. 2025

# School Health

## NEWSLETTER

## GBPH holding in-school vaccine clinics in November & December

Grey Bruce Public Health will be holding immunization clinics at local secondary schools in **November and December** as part of ongoing efforts to support students in staying up to date on required school-age immunizations and preventing potential suspensions.

Our Vaccine Preventable Diseases team will offer the adolescent Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis booster, along with any other immunizations mandated by the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA), at the clinics to eligible students who have not yet received the vaccines through their primary care provider.

GBPH will also be sending out notices and reminders to parents of students whose immunization records are not up to date or in compliance with the ISPA in the months leading up to this year's school suspension period, which is set for **March 24 to April 22, 2026**.

Ontario Public Health Units and schools are legally required to enforce the ISPA.

According to the Act, all students between ages four and 17 must – in order to attend school – provide proof of routine childhood immunization against Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps,

Rubella, Meningitis, and Varicella (for children born in 2010 and after), or have a valid exemption on file with their local Public Health Unit.

This information is used to protect individuals and the public in case there's a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak in the community.

Each year, GBPH's Vaccine Preventable Diseases team assesses the immunization records of students attending school in Grey-Bruce.

Students who fail to provide proof of immunization, or a valid exemption, may be suspended from school for up to 20 days during the established suspension period.

Parents and guardians can easily access and update their child's immunization card through Immunization Connect Ontario ([ICON](#) or [Grey Bruce Health Unit | Immunization Connect](#)). If a child receives immunizations through their family doctor or nurse practitioner, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide this information to public health.

Parents, guardians, and students can contact Grey Bruce Public Health at 519-376-9420 or [vpd@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](mailto:vpd@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca) with any questions.

# Prioritizing concussion safety

Ontario schools must follow proper procedures to recognize and manage concussions - the most common and serious head injury among Canadian children and youth.

Rowan's Law and related amendments to the Education Act provide a consistent framework for concussion safety in Ontario schools, ensuring students are protected through every stage of prevention, identification, and recovery.

## In general, schools must:

- Provide [concussion awareness resources](#) and annual training for staff, students, coaches, and parents/guardians.
- Maintain clear procedures to [recognize and report suspected concussions](#), ensuring students are removed from activity immediately.
- Support students' recovery with structural [Return-to-Learn and Return-to-Physical Activity plans](#) before resuming full participation.
- Keep records of concussion incidents, staff training, and annual confirmations of review for awareness resources and [Codes of Conduct](#).

Concussions can lead to short- and long-term health problems. They can occur during sports or from other incidents, such as falls, motor vehicle collisions, or intentional and unintentional impacts to the head. These events cause the brain to move rapidly within the skull.

As students participate in intramural games, gym classes, or interschool sports, prioritizing concussion safety is **essential**.

For full details, refer to your Board's concussion policy and procedures:

[Concussion Awareness - BWDSB](#)

[Concussion Policy - BWDSB](#)

[Concussion Policy - BGCDSB](#)

## Additional Resources

- Grey Bruce Public Health - [Concussions](#).
- Updated [Concussions Protocol](#) (Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education)
- Updated [e-learning module](#) on concussion safety for school staff, developed by Ophea.
- [Rowan's Law Day Toolkit](#).
- [Ontario.ca/Concussionresources](#).
- [Concussion awareness e-booklets](#).
- New [Digital Concussion Cards](#).





# Student Health Centres

All high schools in Grey Bruce now offer a Student Health Centre at a minimum interval of bi-weekly, staffed by a School Public Health Nurse.

Confidential, one-on-one health education and coordination of health services are available for students.

School staff are encouraged to refer students who may need support with any of the following topic areas:

- Healthy lifestyles (nutrition, physical activity, dental health)
- Healthy Relationships
- Tobacco and vaping cessation support
- Harm reduction education and supplies
- Health system navigation/referrals to community agencies and healthcare providers

Appointments can be arranged by:

- Dropping by the Student Health Centre
- Texting 519-375-2006
- Calling 519-376-9420 x 3110
- Emailing [schools@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](mailto:schools@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)



## STUDENT HEALTH CENTRE

### BOOK AN APPOINTMENT!

- ✉ [schools@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](mailto:schools@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)
- ☎ 519 376-9420 / 800-263-3456 x 3110
- 📱 TEXT: 519 375-2006



Health promotion & education



Healthy lifestyles



Healthy relationships



Tobacco & vaping support



Harm reduction education & supplies



[publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](http://publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)



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# Head lice FAQs

## WHEN CAN MY CHILD GO BACK TO SCHOOL?

It is determined by the policy of the School Board for your child's school.  
Call your child's school to find out.



## WHO SHOULD I TELL WHEN I FIND HEAD LICE? WHY SHOULD I TELL ANYONE?

- Call your child's school or daycare if you are the one who discovered it.
- Tell anyone who may have had contact with your child in the few days before it was discovered e.g. children at a sleepover, after-school activities.
- Telling others will help to identify, treat and prevent further spread of head lice.

## HOW CAN I PREVENT THIS FROM HAPPENING AGAIN?

Although you can't prevent it altogether, there are some things you can do:

- Check your child's hair every week, so if they get it, you will see it quickly before there are too many nits.
- Teach your child not to share personal items that are used on their head e.g. comb, hat, headband, barrettes.
- Teach your child to avoid head-to-head contact with others.



## WHAT IF THE TREATMENT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE WORKING?

Lice treatment is **free** for Ontario residents 24 years and under through OHIP +. Talk to your doctor for more information. Here are a few reasons why the treatment may not have worked:

- It wasn't a head lice infestation.
- The directions for the treatment were not followed carefully. You must apply a second treatment at the right time for the product.
- The product was put on hair that had been washed with conditioning shampoo or rinsed with hair conditioner. It reduces the effectiveness.
- All of the nits were not removed and some of them lived and hatched.
- It's a re-infestation – your child got head lice right away again.
- The head lice may be resistant to the product you used. Ask your health care provider or the pharmacist to suggest another product.

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFO:

### Website resources:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/>
- [https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/health-conditions-and-treatments/head\\_lice](https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/health-conditions-and-treatments/head_lice)

### Call your local Health Unit:

- Grey Bruce Public Health: 519-376-9420





# What you **need** to know about head lice.

## WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?

Head lice are tiny wingless insects that live on the scalp. They do not carry any diseases so they're not a public health risk. Anyone can get head lice.

### NITS

- Nits are eggs that are laid by female louse and are firmly attached to the hair shaft.
- They are about the size of a pinhead and are often found along the forehead, back of the head and behind the ears and are within one cm of the scalp.
- The nits are grayish-white, tan or yellow. Some can be the same colour as hair, making them difficult to see.
- Nits hatch in six to 10 days.

### ADULT LICE

- Lice are the size of a sesame seed and are tan to grayish-white in colour. They may look darker in people with dark hair.
- They need blood to survive and can live up to 30 days on the head but will die within one to two days if they fall off the head.



## HOW ARE HEAD LICE SPREAD?

- Head lice are spread mainly through direct head-to-head contact. When heads are together lice crawl very quickly from one head to another. Lice cannot fly or jump.
- They may also be spread by sharing items such as combs and hats, but this is less common.
- Head lice do not live on animals.



## WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

Frequent itching and sores on the scalp from scratching.  
There may be no symptoms. Check all family members for lice by:

- Using good lighting. Daylight is best, so try sitting by a window.
- Looking through the hair for lice. They can be difficult to see because they are small and hide within the hair and move very quickly.
- Using a magnifying glass and fine toothed comb can help.
- Looking for nits firmly attached to the hair shaft and within one cm of the scalp. Part the hair into small sections and move from one side of the head to the other. Nits can be confused with dandruff or hair spray droplets - they will not fall off if touched.
- Nits will only come off if they are pulled off with your finger nail or a comb.



## TREATING THE HOME

- Wash clothing and bedding used by the affected person in hot water and dry in a hot dryer.
- Place items that cannot be washed in a sealed bag for two weeks.
- Put all combs, brushes and hair accessories in hot, soapy water.
- Treat only the person who has head lice with a product that kills live lice. Treatment must be repeated again seven to 10 days after first treatment.



# SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION

## Get the Facts

### *Health Canada In-Class Experiences Resources for Educators of Grade 4-6 students*

Alcohol, cannabis, tobacco, and vaping products can have especially harmful impacts on young people as brain and body development continue until age 25.

Not only can these substances change the way students' brains and bodies function, but they can also lead to addiction and other mental health challenges. It's important for students to [Get the Facts](#) and understand the risks of substance use.

- Includes an online game, worksheets and activities to build skills around situations involving peer pressure: [Get the Facts: online games and worksheets.](#)
- Features the interactive Superheroes comic book, "Daze of Disarray."
- Estimated duration of lessons: 60–90 minutes.
- Check out other resources: [Health Canada Experiences.](#)



## Lungs are for Life

An engaging, evidence-based resource for Ontario educators to help students learn more about the dangers of smoking and vaping so they can make healthy and informed decisions.

[www.lung.ca/lungs-are-for-life](http://www.lung.ca/lungs-are-for-life)

*Note: this program covers a range of topics related to smoking, vaping and health. It targets grades 5-10. Not all the content will be appropriate for every grade level. We believe that educators know their students best and can adapt these materials if necessary.*



## Supporting Youth with Behaviour Change: Youth Vast

The Youth Vast program of CAMH has recently launched a youth friendly website, [www.WeHearYou.ca](http://www.WeHearYou.ca), to provide an overview of the service and how to register.

This service is available virtually outside the Greater Toronto Area to support changes youth want to make for use of nicotine, alcohol, cannabis or for technology use.

For youth setting goals to quit nicotine, Nicotine Replacement Therapy such as patches, nicotine gum or lozenges are available on a case-by-case basis.



### Youth-VAST

Get Support Today!

For youth (ages 12-21 years) struggling with:

Vaping/  
nicotine use

Alcohol  
use

Substance use  
(e.g. cannabis)

Technology use  
(e.g. gaming)

☒ Confidential virtual or in-person\* services

☒ Available across Ontario

☒ No physician referral required

☒ 1-on-1 and/or group treatments available



To book an appointment or learn more, visit [www.youthvast.ca](http://www.youthvast.ca)

