



ISSUE 05 / JAN-FEB. 2026

THE SCHOOL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



Grey Bruce
Public Health

Exploring the benefits of risky play.

Educators play a key role in promoting environments that support active play. Active play, and more broadly, a child's growth and development, includes risk-taking elements. Children play, climb and challenge themselves; educators play a key role by ensuring safety and supervision. These experiences fall under the concept of *risky play*.

What is risky play?

Risky play refers to thrilling, child-led forms of free play that include uncertainty and the possibility of minor injury. It can occur indoors or outdoors during recess, physical education classes or during other unstructured times.

Examples include:

- Climbing to heights
- Using tools
- Activities involving speed



Risky play does not mean ignoring safety. Evidence-based practices, such as wearing helmets, providing age-appropriate supervision and avoiding hazardous environments, remain essential.

Explore more practical strategies in the [Outdoor Education Toolkit for Grades 1 to 8](#) and the [Outdoor Education Toolkit for Grades 9 to 12](#).

Additional resources and tools are available below:

- [Outside Play - Teacher Tool](#)
- [Playgrounds and play spaces – Parachute](#)
- [The Safety Superhero Checklist](#)



How to support students as they mature

An understanding of sexual health and human development is an important component to an individuals' growth and well-being, encouraging:

- Healthy relationships, behaviours and attitudes,
- An understanding and awareness of one's body, and
- Consent, empowerment and ability to make healthy decisions.

Knowledge and understanding are important for students to make informed choices. Parents, healthcare providers and educators are all part of providing students with credible information to foster positive health outcomes. Curriculum supports can be accessed through our Grey Bruce Public Health website [Curriculum Support and School Resources](#) to complement the Ontario curriculum at all stages of development.

A Public Health Nurse can provide secondary school students with sexual health and human development information. Each secondary school in Grey and Bruce has a Student Health Centre that is staffed by a Public Health Nurse and offers confidential, one-on-one health education and coordination of health services. School staff are encouraged to refer students to their school's [Public Health Nurse](#) if they have questions or concerns related to their sexual health.

Appointments can be arranged:

- In Person - Dropping by your Student Health Centre and speaking with the nurse
- Text – [519-375-2006](tel:519-375-2006)
- Phone – [519-376-9420](tel:519-376-9420) x 9
- Email – schools@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

STUDENT HEALTH CENTRE

BOOK AN APPOINTMENT!

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



Eating to support well-being

February is Heart Health Month. It is a chance to talk with students about how food supports their bodies, learning, and long-term health. Eating a variety of nourishing foods helps students keep their energy up during the day. It supports focus in class and participation in physical activity. Over time, these eating patterns also support heart health.

What does eating well look like? 



Eating well is about balance and variety:

- Carbohydrates provide energy. Whole grains, vegetables, fruits and legumes help fuel the body and brain.
- Protein supports growth and repair. It also helps students feel satisfied. Protein foods include beans, lentils, eggs, dairy products, fish, poultry, meat, nuts and seeds.
- Some fats support brain and heart health. These are found in foods such as nuts, seeds, fish and plant based oils.
- Vitamins and minerals help the body function as it should. Eating many different vegetables and fruits helps students get what they need.
- Water matters. Drinking water through the school day supports focus, mood and physical health.

Heart health starts early. The habits children and youth develop now can support their well-being throughout life.

Nurturing Healthy Eaters resource for educators:

- [Elementary](#) handout
- [Secondary](#) handout



You can make a difference

Eating patterns that support health connect to the *Ontario Health and Physical Education* curriculum.

In elementary grades, this learning supports Physical Fitness expectations. Students recognize their strengths, identify areas for growth, set goals and take actions that support their well-being. It also connects to learning about salt and sugar, nutrients and food choices.

In secondary grades, food and nutrition learning supports expectations related to active living, personal fitness and understanding how everyday decisions affect health over time.

Learn more about curriculum connections with OPHEA [Ask a Dietitian: Explore Nutrition Facts and the H&PE Curriculum Webinar](#)

For more trusted resources, you can visit:

Grey Bruce Public Health: <https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Eating-Well/Supportive-Food-Environments-in-Community-Settings>

Heart and Stroke Foundation Healthy Eating: <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/heart-disease/risk-and-prevention/lifestyle-risk-factors>

