



Grey Bruce  
Public Health

# School Health Newsletter

## Spring 2025

## Vaccine Preventable Disease Program

In Ontario, as per the Immunization of School Pupils Act, 1990 (ISPA), **all students between the ages of 4-17 must 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, in order to attend school.**

This information is used to help protect students and the public in case there is a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak in our community. The Health Unit and the schools have a legal requirement to enforce the ISPA.

Each year, Grey Bruce Public Health 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 school days. Over several months leading up to this suspension period, students and/or guardians are provided with notices and opportunity to ensure their immunizations and records are up to date.

This year, the school suspension period will run from April 15, 2025, to May 14, 2025 for students whose vaccine records remain incomplete at that time.

Students and families may be directed to call Grey Bruce Public Health at 519-376-9420 if they have any questions regarding this.

**This April, let's prevent as many school suspensions as we possibly can.**

**Suspensions take effect on April 15th**

To help students who received suspension notice letters from Public Health get caught up on routine immunizations, we're hosting a series of ISPA vaccine clinics over the March Break.

Update your immunization record using **ICON** or book an appointment at at any upcoming Community Immunization Clinic at Grey Bruce Public Health.

**SCAN ME**





# Harm Reduction

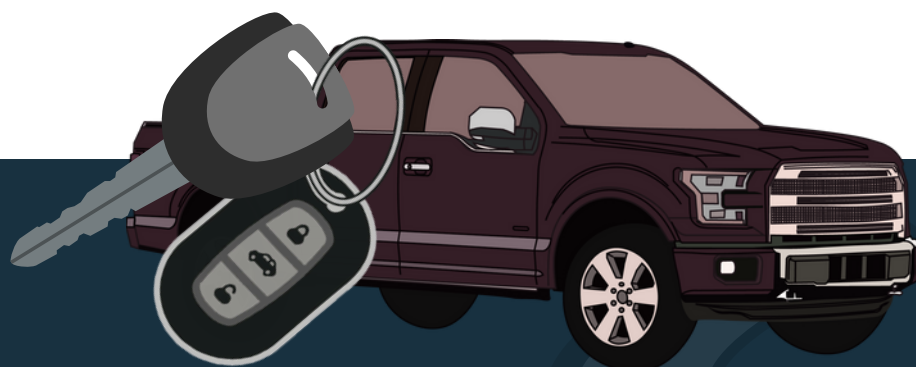
## Keeping Youth Safe

Adolescence may involve an individual's first experimentation with substance use, including legal and illegal substances. This is concerning, as Canada is facing an opioid crisis that is claiming lives daily and there is high potential for opioid overdose associated with the use of the current illegal drug supply. This risk is greater for youth who lack accurate information. For this reason, youth require information on how to keep themselves safe.

## How can Educators Help?

- Learn about the issue.
- Understand problematic opioid use and how youth are being exposed.
- Be able to recognize and response to opioid overdose.
- Get a naloxone kit and learn how to use it. Naloxone is available for free, no prescription required, from most local pharmacies and from Grey Bruce Public Health.
- Share safer partying tips.
- Review tips for talking with teens about substance use.

Consider including this information in your curriculum and sharing it with your students. Health Canada's Know More Opioids awareness program offers a **free, virtual opioid education session for youth aged 13-18**. Visit the website to learn more.



# Health Promotion

## Road Safety

- SAID Day is May 15th. Ran by Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving (OSAID), SAID day encourages schools to proclaim, protest and participate in reducing the tragedies caused by impaired and distracted driving. For more information on how to get involved and a free webinar on drugs and driving visit OSAID: Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving.
- The Ride Smart Program is designed for Grades 4-7. Experienced instructors lead students through an interactive cycling program that equips students with lifelong skills to create safer riders and safer future drivers. For more information, please contact Krista Linthorne: [krista.linthorne@opp.ca](mailto:krista.linthorne@opp.ca).
- The Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village offers online safety programs for Grades 1 and 2 and in person safety programs for Kindergarten to Grade 6. The safety village teaches children about community helpers like Fire, Police & EMS, provides information about pedestrian and personal safety, and has an interactive fire safety hazard house and outdoor village to learn road sense.



# Student Health Centre's

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 your Student Health Centre
- Text - 519-375-2006
- Phone- 519-376-9420 x 3110
- Email – [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)

# Nutrition

## Calling all Grade 3 Teachers!

Let's shine a spotlight on the [Grade 3 curriculum supports](#) from [BrightBites.ca](#). BrightBites contains curriculum-based lesson plans and classroom activities. It makes your planning effective and efficient with links to credible online resources, videos, books, and activities - all at the click of a button. Key concepts covered in the grade 3 curriculum include:

- Where Food Comes From
- Local, Cultural, and Traditional Foods
- Oral Health and Body Image

The Grade 3 In the Classroom section has more than 25 links and suggestions to bring these concepts to life in your classroom.

Don't teach Grade 3? No worries! The updated website has curriculum-based lesson plans and classroom activities for all grades K-8.

BrightBites is brought to you by Ontario Dietitians in Public Health, using evidence-based nutrition information and a body-inclusivity lens.



## How Pixels are Packing a Climate Punch

Technology is great! It keeps knowledge and information right at our fingertips. But have you thought about the impact that technology is having on the planet?

Every click you make takes energy. That is a lot of energy when you consider that **every single day 8.5 billion searches are performed on Google**, over 347 billion emails are exchanged, and 5 billion videos are watched on YouTube.

There are some things you can do to reduce your own digital environmental footprint:

- Delete old emails
- Unsubscribe from newsletters you don't read
- Limit your use of streaming platforms
- Follow the [24 Hour Movement guidelines](#) to limit recreational screen time to <3 hours per day for adults and <2 hours per day for children and youth aged 5-17 years
- And Remember: Every click matters!





# Vaping Prevention

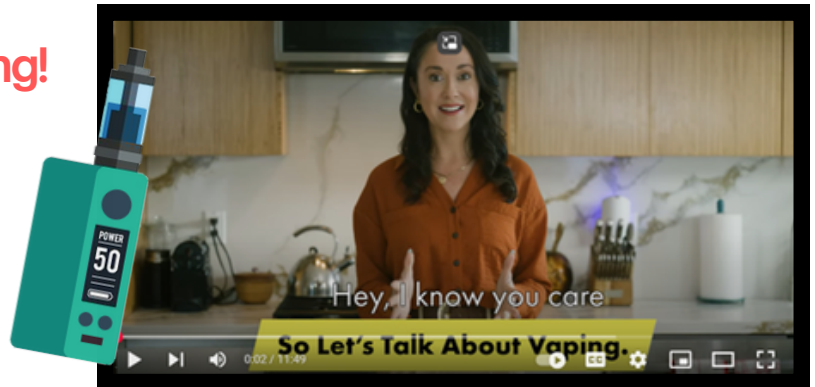
**New Content added to the *Not An Experiment* Vaping prevention platform!**



A new, interactive self-led Adult E-Learning Module for educators has been launched to help guide teachers and other school staff in becoming more familiar with the issue of e-cigarettes or vapes. Content includes how they work, the health impacts, risk of addiction and more! This campaign is made in Ontario and includes statistics and information relevant to local school boards. The module along with other helpful information can be found at [www.notanexperiment.ca/educators](http://www.notanexperiment.ca/educators)

## Hey, Parents! Let's Talk About Vaping!

a new video for parents that uncovers the truth about the vaping industry, risks to young people, and what parents can do to support kids in avoiding addiction to these harmful products. To watch or share, visit [PARENTS - Not An Experiment](#) This video can also be used during parent council meetings, staff meetings, etc. to further provide this valuable information.

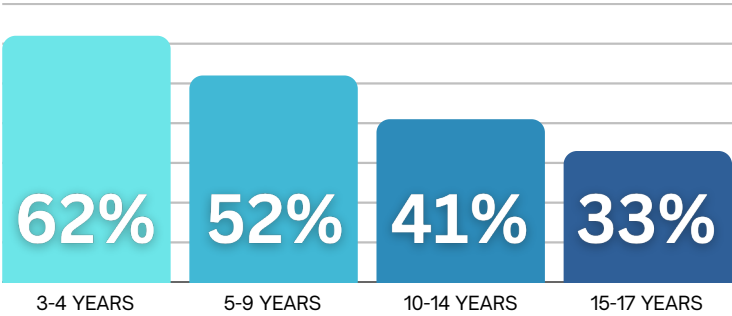




# Physical Activity

## The Power of Movement: Supporting Student Health and Learning

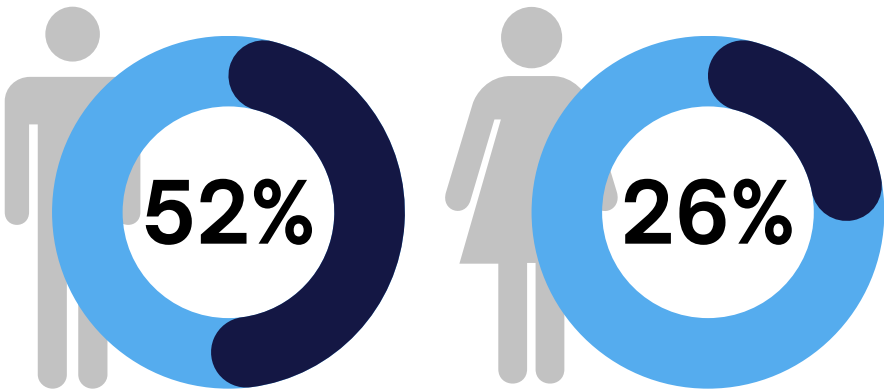
Daily physical activity (DPA) is more than just movement—it is essential for student well-being, learning, and success. Research consistently shows that children and youth who engage in regular physical activity experience improved mental health, better focus in class, and enhanced academic performance in subjects like math and reading. Despite this, many students are not meeting the recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day.



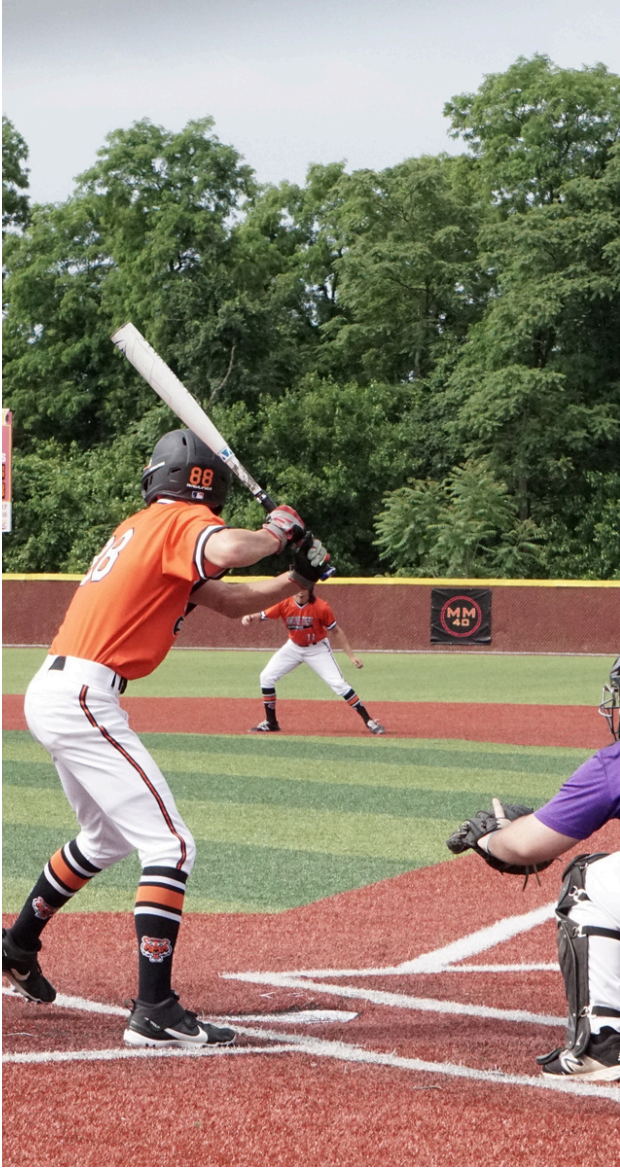
Percentage (%) of children and youth in Canada who met physical activity recommendations (CHSCY, 2019)

Physical activity plays a vital role in children’s overall health: it enhances concentration and memory, improves problem-solving skills, and helps regulate emotions by reducing stress and anxiety. Movement breaks throughout the day keep students engaged and help them refocus. Developing physical literacy by building fundamental movement skills like running, jumping, and throwing sets the foundation for lifelong participation in physical activity.

Educators may wonder how physical activity fits into busy school schedules that prioritize literacy and numeracy. The answer is simple—movement boosts learning. Active students perform better academically, scoring higher in math and reading. Movement helps with self-regulation, attention, and social skills, leading to improved classroom behavior and greater participation.



Boys (52%) are twice as likely as girls (26%) to meet physical activity guidelines.





# How Can We Get Students Moving Throughout the Day?

## During Instructional Time

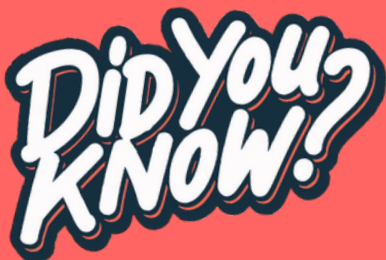
- Set times in the daily schedule for movement breaks
- DPA – 20 mins per day
  - just dance/go noodle
  - online fitness games
  - desk drumming
- Add movement into lessons with curriculum connections
  - 4 corner activities
  - Gallery walks
  - Multiple choice review
  - Math + DPA = FUN

## Outside of Instructional Time

- Intramurals
- Clubs
- Recess Activity Bins
- Recess Leaders/PALS program
- Active School Travel
- Family Fun Nights
- Community Partner Nights

# The Reality of Physical Activity in Grey Bruce

- Only **38.5%** of Grey Bruce children (5-11 years old) get the recommended 60 minutes per day of physical activity (CHSCY, 2019).
- Only **23.4%** of Grey Bruce children (12-17 years old) met the physical activity guideline recommendation (CHSCY, 2019).
- A decline of more than **20%** in physical activity levels between the ages of 5-9 and 15-17 years (CHSCY, 2019).
- There has been a **70%** decline in youth meeting the physical activity guidelines over a five-year period (2015-2020, **from 43.8% to 12.8%**) (Canadian Health Survey Children and Youth, 2015-2020).
- The percentage of boys meeting the physical activity recommendation dropped from 2018 to 2020 and then rebounded in 2021/2022. The percentage of girls meeting the physical activity recommendation dropped from 2018 to 2020 with no rebound evident in 2021/2022 ([StatCan, 2023](#)).
- The percentage of youth meeting the screen time recommendation on school days dropped from 40.7% in 2018 to 29.1% in 2021 and on non-school days from 21.4% in 2018 to **13.2% in 2021** ([StatCan, 2023](#)).
- Boys (52%) are twice as likely as girls (26%) to meet physical activity guidelines (ParticipACTION, 2024).
- **Less than 40%** of leaders report their schools are taking action to increase opportunities and make sport and physical activity more welcoming for girls and gender-diverse youth (Mental Health and Physical Activity Research Centre, 2025).



**At My Best Play Day** is a day dedicated to providing opportunities for schools and students to promote healthy, active lifestyles and to help students make connections between physical activity, healthy eating, and emotional well-being. All schools that register will receive the At My Best Play Day Toolkit, offering a variety of physical and health activities and other free downloadable resources to support classes and schools with the celebration. \$1,000 grants are also available to help advance health initiatives. Register here: [\*\*At My Best Play Day Registration\*\*](#)