



# Welcome to Kindergarten™

## Supporting Healthy Learners at School

Each school has a Public Health Nurse who works with schools and families to support healthy learners. The [Vancouver School Health Manual](#) outlines public health services and contact information. Note that some of our usual services are on hold or being delivered in a modified fashion due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

### Getting Ready for a Healthy Start to Learning

Starting Kindergarten is a big change! It is common for children and parents to feel many emotions and have questions about making friends, the new school and routines.

Resources for parents:

#### Helping kids cope with back to school emotions:

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/helping-your-child-cope-with-back-to-school-anxiety/>

#### The morning struggle:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/GK/GK.600.M67.pdf>

#### Sleep and your preschooler:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/GK/GK.600.S54.pdf>

#### Screen Time and Your Child:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/GK/GK.300.T45.pdf>

#### Families Sharing Food, Creating Fun:

<http://vch.eduhealth.ca/PDFs/BB/BB.200.E28.pdf>

#### Best Start - A booklet for parents: Learning to Play and Playing to Learn:

[https://www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy\\_chld\\_dev/pdf/school\\_readiness\\_english\\_fnl.pdf](https://www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/pdf/school_readiness_english_fnl.pdf)

### Raising a Healthy Eater

Healthy eating will help your child have energy to learn and play. Be a role model for your child by eating well and being active.

How to help your child:

- Parent's/caregiver's responsibility – what, when and where to eat
- Child's responsibility – decides if and how much to eat
- Promote positive mealtimes: [https://bcdairy.ca/uploads/bcdairy/Resources/Positive Mealimes.pdf](https://bcdairy.ca/uploads/bcdairy/Resources/Positive_Mealimes.pdf)
- Enjoy sharing food together as much as possible without TV or other distractions
- Involve your child in planning and preparing food

Call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 to speak to a Dietitian or go to [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating)

### Keeping Your Child Well

Parents play an important role in teaching children to wash their hands. Handwashing can become a lifelong healthy habit if you start teaching it at an early age. Teach kids the [five easy steps for handwashing](#)—wet, lather, scrub, rinse and dry—and the key times to wash hands, such as after using the bathroom or before eating. You can find ways to make it fun, like making up your own handwashing song or turning it into a game.



## Dental

Your child may qualify to receive dental services at the Vancouver Public Health Children's Dental Program.

For tips on caring for your child's teeth or to find out if your child is eligible for public health dental:

<http://www.vch.ca/public-health/children-youth-schools/school-health/vancouver-school-health-manual/dental-health-in-vancouver-schools>

or call 604-675-3981.

## BC Healthy Kids Program

If your family has limited income, your child may qualify for the BC Healthy Kids Program. This program provides dental and vision coverage (including eye glasses subsidy) for children under 19 years.

For information, call Ministry of Health at 1-800-663-7100.

## Vision

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, vision screening may not be offered to all students in Kindergarten for the 2021/22 school year. If you have concerns about your child, please contact a private optometry clinic in your community for an eye exam. Please note, some clinics offer free eye exams for children under the age of 19.

## COVID-19 Information

Please see the BCCDC and VCH websites for the most up to date information. If you have specific questions, please call 811.

## Hearing

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, hearing screening may not be offered to all students in Kindergarten for the 2021/22 school year. If you have concerns about your child, please call 604-659-1100 for a clinic appointment.

## Kindergarten Immunization

Children starting at age 4 need a booster of Diphtheria, Whooping cough, Tetanus, Polio **and** a booster of Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Chicken Pox. For more information visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca) Offering of immunizations within the school setting and at public health offices are on hold for the short term. Immunizations for routine vaccine preventable illnesses are important and we will look for opportunities outside of school setting to identify and catch up students as feasible. You may be able to have your child immunized through your family doctor or select pharmacies. Please see the link for a list of participating pharmacies in Vancouver: <http://www.vch.ca/public-health/communicable-diseases-immunizations/immunizations/school-age-immunization-campaign>.

## Immunization Records

Gathering this information is important. It helps us to respond quickly to outbreaks in schools and helps everyone get back to learning as soon as possible. Please provide us with your child's immunization record by using the form "Your Child's Immunization Information" given by the school during registration or online: [www.vch.ca/child-immunization-report](http://www.vch.ca/child-immunization-report)

## Students Requiring Additional Support

Please review with the school staff EVERY year if your child has the following:

- Anaphylaxis (severe allergy)
- Diabetes
- Seizures
- Asthma
- Attention, behaviour, learning needs
- Blood clotting disorder
- Heart conditions
- Another life threatening condition
- Complex feeding
- Developmental disabilities

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