Interior Health

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2026

THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF PERMANENT DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME IN BC

In March 2026, the Province of British Columbia adopted permanent DST. Under permanent DST, sunrise will occur after school starts from mid-November to mid-February, depending on school location.

While additional daylight later in the day may create opportunities for recreation, physical activity, and social participation, research suggests that permanent DST may also have negative impacts on sleep, circadian rhythm alignment and mental well-being, safety.

Potential Negative Impacts of Permanent DST

- **Sleep and Circadian Health:** The Canadian Sleep Society has found that permanent DST may contribute to circadian misalignment, sleep disruption, sleep loss, and sleep-related disorders.
- **Mental Health and Well-Being:** Later sunrises and reduced daylight exposure during DST have been associated with increases in seasonal affective disorder, depression, and challenges related to concentration and emotional well-being.
- **Safe Travel to School:** Students will be travelling to school before sunrise from approximately mid-November to mid-February. Students who walk, cycle, roll, or wait for transit during low-light conditions may face decreased visibility and increased safety concerns.

These negative impacts can be mitigated by increasing awareness about the risks, supporting healthy sleep, physical activity, social connection, and using opportunities to access daylight later during the day. Other mitigating strategies can include choosing safe commute options to schools and caution for traveling to school in the dark mornings.

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DENTAL HEALTH

Protecting our Mouths during Physical Activity

Teachers play an important role in injury prevention by encouraging students to wear mouthguards during sports and physical activities. By integrating mouthguard use messaging into physical education lesson plans and promoting mouthguard compliance teachers can help prevent sports related mouth injuries. A properly fitted mouthguard can help protect the teeth, lips, cheeks and tongue.



Mouthguards should be worn for any sport that has head-to-head contact or risk of falling. The Canadian Dental Association recommends a custom fit mouthguard be fabricated by a dental professional as it has the best fit. Specialized mouthguards can also be made to fit over braces.

There are other types of mouthguards that can be bought at the store such as stock and boil-and-bite. Refer to the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association Sports Mouthguards Q&A for guidance about mouthguard fit and use.

Supportive Resources and Videos

- Sports Mouthguards
- Promoting Health of Children & Youth in School | Interior Health
- Dental Emergencies

For more information, contact the Interior Health Allied Health Early Childhood Development Dental Program.

FOOD LITERACY

Teaching about Food and Nutrition

Have a look at the following lesson plans on **traditional foods and land-based learning:**

- Food Is a Gift (Teach Food First) connections between food, land, forests, and water. (K-2)
- Gifts of the Seasons (Teach Food First) —seasonal foods and harvesting. (grades 3-5)
- Gifts of the Peoples (Teach Food First) — food traditions, culture, and the impacts of colonization. (grades 6-8).
- Learning from the Land Toolkit (Farm to School BC) - resources and stories highlighting programs related to Indigenous plants and pedagogy. (all grades)

Check out the videos in the BC School Food Toolkit on thoughtful considerations around the importance of incorporating traditional and cultural foods into school food programs.

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Consider connecting to your school district's Indigenous Education team to support further application of BC curriculum's First Principles of Learning and First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness in your classroom

The Interior Health Public Health Dietitian team is available to support school district's efforts to create nutritious, stigma-free meal programs and healthy school food environments. For questions email schoolnutrition@interiorhealth.ca

PHYSICAL LITERACY

FREE virtual workshop **November 10** that will offer clarity on what risky play is and is not, particularly when supervising other people's children as a professional educator in group learning environments.

Drs. Brussoni and Zeni will offer guidance for creating conditions and building capacity for risky play in schools, which serves to support the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth of children. Bring your questions! Supporting Risky Play in Schools Virtual Workshop - Outdoor Learning School & Store

INJURY PREVENTION

Do you know how to recognize a concussion?
Concussions can happen to anyone, anywhere, anytime. From sports and playground falls to everyday activities, anyone can be injured and symptoms are not always obvious. In fact, only 11% of surveyed British Columbians felt very confident that they could recognize a concussion.

The Concussion Awareness Training Tool (https://cattonline.com; CATT) is a free, evidence-based, up-to-date online resource offering concussion education materials and tailored eLearning courses for eight different audiences, including school professionals, parents/caregivers, coaches, and youth.

The team is also available to deliver free presentations to a variety of audiences. Content is tailored to each audience, providing information on concussions, CATT, and relevant resources (for example, the Concussion Pathway or Concussion Information Packages). For more information, please contact concussion@bcchr.ca

SEXUAL HEALTH



Reminder: lots of great resources for educators on teaching sexual health. Interior Health and Fraser Health have toolkits loaded with great resources.

- Interior Health Toolkit for Educators
- Fraser Health Sexual Health Toolkit for Educators

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LEGAL SUBSTANCES

Anchoring Change | Substance Use Prevention in Canada, is a national initiative to transform school-based substance use prevention, education and intervention in Canada.

ALTERNATIVE TO SUSPENSION PROGRAM IN SCHOOLS

The Legal Substances team has extended its alternative-to-suspension vaping program. Students participate in a restorative conversation, complete an online learning module, and receive behaviour change resources. 5 schools across 3 districts have adopted the program, with no repeat vaping incidents among participating students. Contact the Legal Substances team if you are interested in learning more about this program or would like to bring it to your school: LegalSubstances@interiorhealth.ca

YOUTH HARM REDUCTION

Webinar for educators: Substance Use

Let's Talk Sessions comes back in November with a webinar on **Practical Strategies for the Classroom** to prevent, delay and reduce substance use related harms.
Participants will learn about:

- Current research
- Practical tools and materials
- Resources for parents and caregivers

Webinar dates (click to sign up!)

- November 2: 9-10am
- November 19 : 12-1pm
- November 30: 3-4pm

Did you know?
A cross-national coalition of experts developed and released the first pan-Canadian standard on **School-Based Substance Use Prevention, Education, and Intervention — A Multi-Tiered and Developmental Approach for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Schools.**

You can learn more by:

- Visiting the Anchoring Change webpage
- Reviewing the standard
- Watching this webinar recording Substance Use Prevention, Education and Intervention in BC School Communities: A Webinar on a Multi-Tiered, Developmental Approach for K-12 Schools in Canada | Kelty Mental Health
- Contacting the youth harm reduction team at yhrc@interiorhealth.ca



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MENTAL HEALTH

Gaming and Gambling Workshop for Youth

McCreary is offering an interactive workshop for youth to have non-judgmental conversations about gaming and gambling, identify potential signs of problematic behaviours, and develop strategies to maintain healthy boundaries with these activities.
From loot boxes to lottery tickets: Gaming and gambling workshop for BC youth - McCreary Centre Society

EASE- Anxiety Resources for Educators

Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE) courses receive an update! The EASE online courses and classroom resources for grades K-7 and 8-12 have been recently updated and refreshed in response to educator feedback and to ensure their ongoing relevance, reflecting current research and the B.C. education context including the First Peoples Principles of Learning, diversity and inclusion principles and more.

Some of the updates include new and revised classroom lessons and strategies to address everyday (mild to moderate) anxiety, new B.C.-made videos highlighting the voices and perspectives of B.C. educators and how they integrate EASE into their daily practice, updated course content to support student well-being, and an overall refreshed look and feel.

EASE continues to be curriculum-aligned, free of cost, and designed to be easily woven into everyday practice.

It aligns with the Mental Health in Schools Strategy and government's overall commitment to prevention and early intervention supports for children, youth and families.

For more information, please view the EASE K-7 and EASE 8-12 infographics or visit the HealthyMindsBC website.

Questions? Email: mcf.everydayanxietystrategiesforeducators@gov.bc.ca

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RESOURCES

Interior Health Resources
The School Health section of the Interior Health Public Website will take you to the following sections where you can find more information: School Staff, Promoting Health of Children & Youth in School, and Medical Conditions at School.

Harm Reduction Resources
For resources visit the Interior Health Website.
To connect with a Harm Reduction Coordinator email: YHRC@interiorhealth.ca

Legal Substances Program
For resources on tobacco, vaping or cannabis use, visit the Interior Health Tobacco & Vaping Information for Schools webpage or the Cannabis Information for Youth webpage.
To connect with a Legal Substances Reduction Coordinator, email: LegalSubstances@interiorhealth.ca

Healthy Schools BC
https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/living-well/healthy-schools
Healthy schools is a collection of resources and evidence-based supports for B.C. educators. Healthy Schools BC involves a partnership between the ministries of Health and Education, health authorities, education professionals and other key partners.

School Districts Healthy Schools Information
The following School Districts have a Healthy Schools tab on their websites. Take a look at all the great information available from: SD 5, SD 8, SD 19, SD 23, SD 53, SD 73, SD 83

For previous newsletters: Health Promoting Schools Newsletters