



Healthy Schools

NEWSLETTER

ideas and information for a healthier school community

Fall 2011

York Region Community and Health Services is pleased to present the fall edition of our Healthy Schools newsletter. This newsletter contains updates on exciting local Healthy Schools activities. You will also find valuable information and tips on improving the health of your school community. We wish you a healthy and happy fall season!

What's your story?

The Great Big Crunch

On Thursday, March 10th, students and staff of St. Margaret Mary participated in "The Great Big Crunch" to promote healthy eating. The Woodbridge school joined over 100,000 crunchers across Canada in this annual event. St. Margaret Mary also won a \$150 classroom tool kit for submitting their poems about apples.

~ Submitted by St. Margaret Mary C.S. Healthy School Committee



St. Margaret Mary grade one students enjoying apples in the Great Big Crunch

in this issue

What's your story?

pause to PLAY winners

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Upcoming health promotion events



What's your story? (...cont'd)

St. Clare adds yoga class to its Healthy Living program

St. Clare Catholic School continues to stretch to new heights by introducing yoga to its students. Lana Feldman of Mysa Kids took the grade four to eight students through various yoga techniques and positions that improve flexibility, strength, muscle tone and pain prevention. It enables mental calmness, stress reduction and body awareness. The yoga class was a huge hit. The St. Clare Healthy Living Committee is working hard at preparing new active living programs for this year!

~ Submitted by St. Clare C.S. Healthy Living Committee



2011 *pause to PLAY* campaign winners

Six Healthy Schools received gift card prizes from York Region Community and Health Services to recognize their participation in the *pause to PLAY* 2011 Campaign.

Congratulations to these winning schools:

- ★ Stonebridge PS
- ★ St. Francis of Assisi PS
- ★ John McCrae PS
- ★ Kleinburg PS
- ★ Ellen Fairclough PS
- ★ Black River PS



What's your story? (...cont'd)

Faith, Food, and Fun Day at Our Lady of Fatima CES



The Healthy School Committee used a whole person approach to host a year-end day of worship and celebration. Everyone enjoyed a variety of physical activities led by the City of Vaughan Recreation and Culture Department. Students re-energized with a whole wheat pizza lunch and refreshments provided by the Parent and Healthy School Councils. Fifth grader Stephanie and teacher Mr. Bianco got everyone participating as they helped lead the Zumba activity. By providing high quality food, opportunities to enjoy healthy physical activities and spiritual affirmation, Our Lady of Fatima Healthy School Committee beautifully modeled what *Healthy Living* stands for!

IWALK

Walk, bike or take the bus to school!

Going to school? **Go Active!** Join schools around the world as they celebrate walking on International Walk to School Day (IWALK), October 5th, 2011. Communities are encouraged to pick a day, week or the entire month to celebrate.

Pledge to:

- Reduce pollution and traffic congestion at school
- Remember to choose active means, such as walking or biking, to get to school instead of being driven in a private vehicle
- Take the bus to and from school if one is available to you.
- Park and walk the last block or two to school if must drive in your own private vehicle.
- Have fun, make new friends on the way to school and be healthy!



Walking and bussing to school promotes health, physical activity, concern for the environment and safe and walkable communities. Register now for IWALK 2011/2012 at www.saferoutestoschool.ca

Healthy workplace month

October is healthy workplace month. The theme for 2011 is *Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Healthy Work... simple goals for everyone!* Free online resources are at your fingertips to support your workplace wellness goals.

www.york.ca/workplacewellness

www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca

www.ccohs.ca/healthyworkplaces

www.ccohs.ca/products/webinars/

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/occup-travail/work-travail/index-eng.php

www.iapa.ca/Main/Resources/resources_downloads.aspx

www.wmhp.cmhaontario.ca

Your kids and their screen time

Help them take a break!

Taking a break from screens (computer, television, video and hand held devices) can be a challenge. A 2010 research study showed that children's media use is almost **three hours lower per day** when parents set **any** type of rule around use!

Sedentary behaviour is when you are moving very little. This includes sitting for long periods, watching television and playing video games. According to Statistics Canada, 2011:

- Boys and girls are sedentary over eight hours a day
- This puts children at risk for preventable health problems including Type 2 diabetes, obesity and heart disease.

The Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines (2011) recommend limiting recreational screen time for children and youth age five to 17 to less than two hours per day.

Tips for parents:

- Start talking with your kids at an early age about screen time limits and stay committed to what you agree to
- Consider a no/less TV or gaming rule during the school week and at meal times
- Watch for signs of excessive gaming, watching TV, texting and using the internet
- Life is busy and it's hard to get quality time with your kids - look for times of the day when your family can do something active together
- Safety is always important – when being active, make sure to wear the proper safety gear every time
- Additional tips at: <http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/parents/index.cfm>

Farms and petting zoos

Booking a trip to a farm or petting zoo this fall? Things you should know...

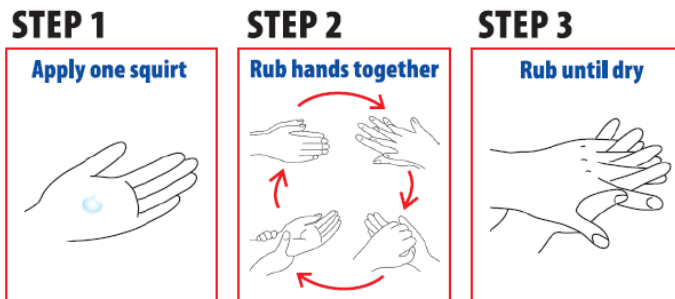
Farms and petting zoos are great learning opportunities for children and are, above all, fun! However, it is important to take certain precautions to make your visit safe for children and adults alike. Infections that can be passed from animals to humans (such as *E.coli* and *Salmonella*) present a small but serious risk during your visit. Here are some things to consider when booking your next visit.



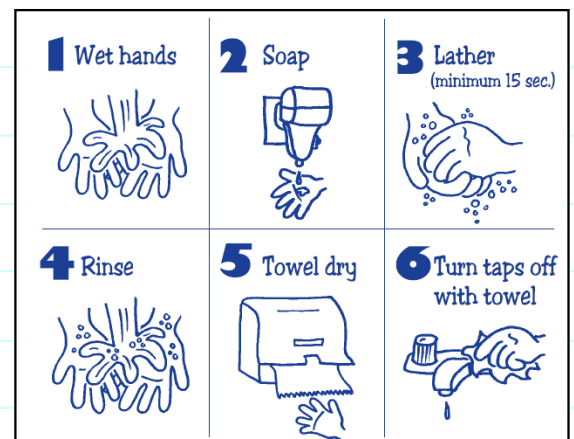
Before your visit:

- Make sure the farm or petting zoo has:
 - Hand washing facilities available (equipped with running water, liquid soap, paper towels or alcohol-based hand sanitizer), accessible to both adults and children
 - Adequate staff supervising in the animal areas
 - An eating area that is separate from the animal area and is equipped with proper hand washing facilities
- Review correct hand hygiene procedures with children and adult supervisors – inadequate hand hygiene is one of the main causes of disease outbreaks associated with animals in public settings
- Ensure all accessible animals have current vaccinations

How to correctly use hand sanitizer



How to correctly wash your hands



During your visit:

- Practice good hand hygiene:
 - After touching or feeding an animal
 - Immediately upon leaving animal areas
 - After touching an animal's environment (e.g. barriers, pens)
 - Before eating or drinking
 - After cleaning and/or removing boots or shoes
 - After using the bathroom
- Do not eat food or drink in the animal areas
- Report any injury (such as a bite) to a staff person immediately

Persons at increased risk of developing serious illness from animals include: pregnant women, elderly persons, children less than five years of age, persons who are mentally impaired and persons with weakened immune systems.

Lyme disease

Fight the Bite! Protect yourself against Lyme disease



What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease can be passed to humans through the bite of an infected blacklegged tick (deer tick). Lyme disease does not spread from human to human.

What are ticks?

Ticks are small insects, the size of a sesame seed, found on tall grasses. Most tick bites are painless. Ticks will attach themselves for up to 72 hours and are most likely to spread infection if attached for 24 hours or more.

What are the symptoms?

A circular rash called a “bull’s-eye” is one of the earliest symptoms. If you develop a rash, fever, chill, or extreme fatigue, see your doctor. Tell them if you have travelled or have been active outdoors. If left untreated, it could lead to more serious symptoms affecting the central nervous system, brain or heart.

Treating Lyme disease

Lyme disease can be treated with antibiotics. Beginning treatment in the early stages of the disease is critical for full recovery. Lyme disease can develop into chronic illness that can be difficult to treat if it is not recognized in the early stages.

Where infected ticks are found in Ontario

Established blacklegged tick populations infected with the Lyme disease agent are found in: Long Point Provincial Park, Turkey Point Provincial Park, Rondeau Provincial Park, Point Pelee National Park, Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area, Wainfleet Bog Conservation Area, and St. Lawrence Islands National Park area.

While the risk is low, it is possible to be infected with Lyme disease from the bite of an infected blacklegged tick, almost anywhere in Ontario.

Protect yourself and your family

- Wear light-coloured, long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into socks with closed footwear
- Use insect repellent containing “DEET”
- Search your body for ticks
- Remove ticks as quickly as possible

Removing ticks

- Use tweezers! Gently grasp the tick by the head as close to your skin as possible. Pull tick straight out.
- Disinfect the bite with alcohol
- Save the tick in a moistened paper towel in a plastic container and store in refrigerator
- Contact your local health unit for testing

For more information about Lyme disease or submitting a tick for identification, call York Region *Health Connection*.

Healthy Schools Toolkit: Identify the strengths and needs of your school to guide your planning

As your Healthy School Committee starts up again, you may wonder where to begin. If you haven't yet (or recently) identified the strengths and needs of your school, this is a great place to get start. The *Healthy Schools Toolkit* can help your committee address your school's priorities through three easy steps:

1. A strengths/needs assessment can be formal or informal and could include observation, survey, checklist, focus group, etc. Try to identify the overall strengths, needs, interests and health of the school community. Remember to include parents, teachers/staff and administration
2. Share results, establish a vision and prioritize the health issues
3. Communicate the results and priority areas with the school community

By identifying your school's health priorities, your committee will be able to consider:

- Activities the school will enjoy participating in
- The overall vision of teachers, students and parents
- The most important health issues in your school

For ideas in developing a survey or adapting an existing one, refer to **Tools # 21-24 - Sample Surveys**, in the *Healthy Schools Toolkit*. Existing school board survey data (e.g. "Tell them from Me") may also be useful. Relevant statistics and checklists for Nutrition, Physical Activity and Sun Safety are also available through your public health nurse, to help guide your planning for the year.



Check out the *Healthy Schools Toolkit* and other resources available at www.york.ca/healthyschools

Upcoming health promotion events...

September

Breakfast for Learning Month

4 for Lunch Registration

18 Terry Fox Run

25 AIDS Walk for Life

28 Terry Fox National School Run

29 World Heart Day

October

Healthy Workplace Month

Influenza Immunization Awareness Month

International Walk to School Month

You're the Chef Registration

2-8 Mental Illness Awareness Week

3-7 IWALK Week

5 IWALK Day

3-9 National Fire Prevention Week

3-9 National Family Week

10 World Mental Health Day

16 World Food Day

17-21 National Infection Control Week

17-23 National School Safety Week

November

Diabetes Awareness Month

Osteoporosis Month

14 World Diabetes Day

14-20 National Addiction Awareness Week

20 National Child Day

25 International Day to End Violence against Women

December

1 World AIDS Day

6 National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women

For more information contact
Health Connection
1-800-361-5653
TTY 1-866 252-9933
or visit www.york.ca/healthyschools

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