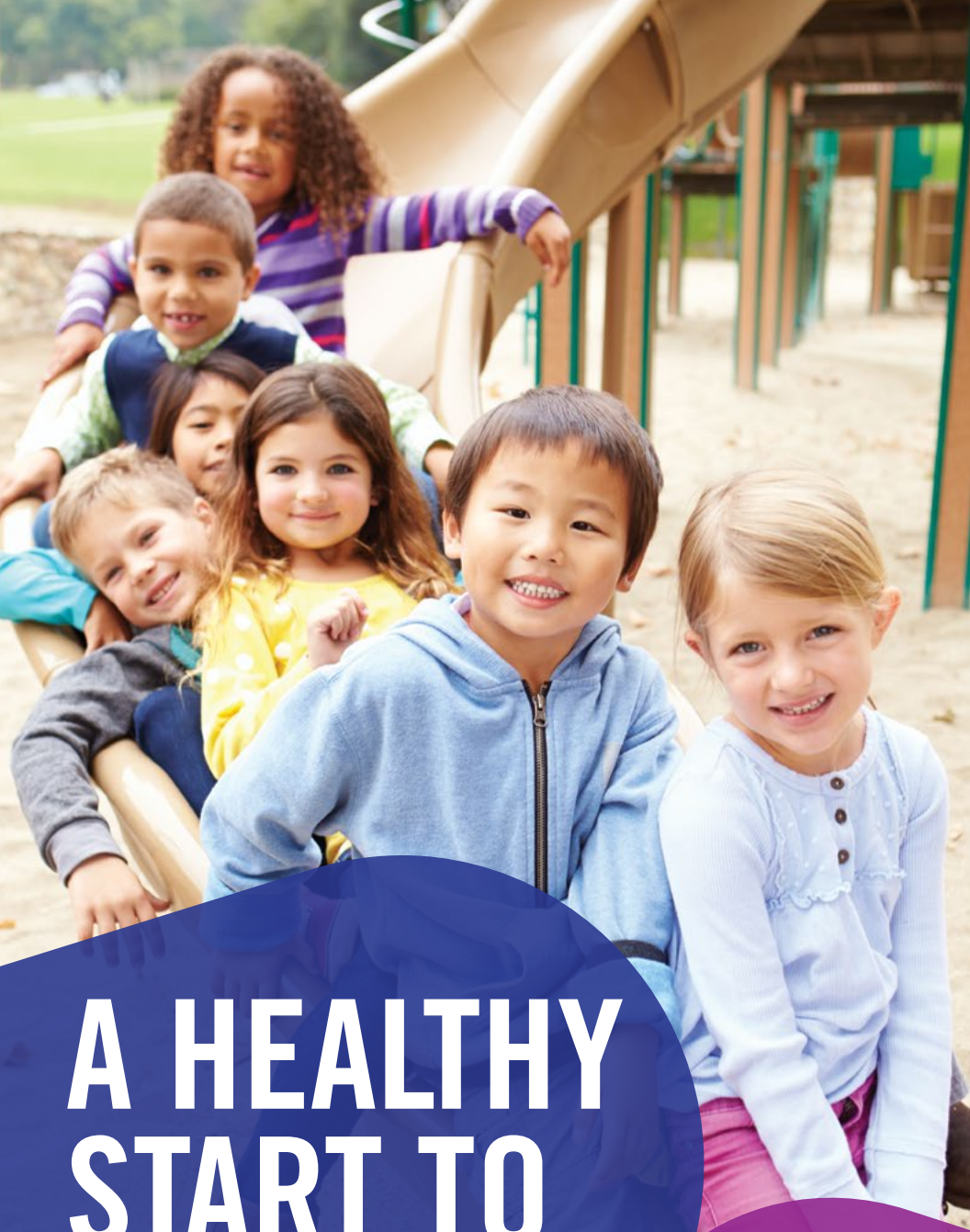


A HEALTHY START TO SCHOOL

York Region

26-PH3-064

STARTING SCHOOL IS A VERY EXCITING STEP

With encouragement and understanding, the transition to this new stage in life will be a fulfilling adventure. This brochure is full of ideas on how to make school healthy and rewarding.

HEALTHY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Your child's growth and development is important to their success in school. Track your child's growth and development by completing the looksee checklist. Visit york.ca/EarlyYears for more information on child development.

FOR THE BEST HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, EAT A VARIETY OF FOODS, STAY ACTIVE, SLEEP WELL AND MAKE YOUR SPACE SMOKE-FREE

Pack safe and nutritious lunches and snacks

Eating a variety of foods promotes wellbeing, growth and development. Lunches and snacks fuel energy levels and support learning. Use Canada's Food Guide to help choose vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and protein foods for lunch and snacks.

It is important to practice food safety when packing and storing food to keep it safe. Involve children in making their lunches. Pack food into easy-to-open containers that your child can open themselves. Follow four simple steps of clean, separate, cook and chill to minimize the risk of food-borne illness when preparing and packing lunches. Use a thermos to keep hot foods hot and ice packs to keep cold foods cold. Pack a reusable water bottle to stay hydrated with tap water.

For additonal food safety tips for packing safe lunches, please visit Packing Safe Lunches fact sheet. Check out Packing Lunches in Kindergarten for ideas to help with the transition or visit york/ca/feedingkids for more information about feeding children including picky eating and mealtime struggles.

Visit nutristep.ca to get practical information if you have concerns about your child's eating.

Get 60 minutes of physical activity per day, every day for physical and mental well-being!

Preschool children, ages **3-4** should spend at least 180 minutes in a variety of physical activities throughout the day, of which at least 60 minutes is active play.

Children and youth, ages **5-17** need at least 60 minutes a day of heart pumping activity.

For more information, visit: 24-Hour Movement Guidelines.

Help your child reduce the time they spend being sedentary each day by **limiting screen time**. For preschool children ages **3-4 years,** no more than one hour per day. For children and youth ages **5-17 years,** no more than two hours per day.

Learning physical literacy or basic movement skills such as running, jumping, balancing, catching, throwing, kicking, or swimming helps children successfully join in a variety of sports and physical activities for life.

For more information, visit Physical Activity for Schools | York Region

Sleep tight!

Make sure your child gets the recommended amount of uninterrupted sleep per night to replenish their body's energy. Keep regular bedtimes and wake-up times.

For preschoolers ages **3-4 years**, 10 to 13 hours of good-quality sleep, which may include a nap, is recommended.

For children, ages **5–13 years**, 9 to 11 hours of sleep per night is recommended.

For youth ages **14-17 years**, 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night is recommended.

For more information visit 24-Hour Movement Guidelines.

Make your home and vehicle smoke and vapour-free

A smoke and vapour-free space is essential to help keep your child healthy. Your child's lungs are still developing, making them more vulnerable to the effects of smoke and vapour exposure. Smoking in the home increases your child's risk of getting colds, ear infections, bronchitis, asthma and pneumonia.

Vaping in the home may cause similar health risks due to chemicals such as tin, lead and nickel found in e-cigarette vapour. Residue from smoke and vapour can stick to surfaces like furniture, windows and walls for months. The long-term side effects of exposure to second-hand vapour are still being investigated.

Start the conversation about substance use early

It is important to keep all substances (alcohol, cannabis edibles, pain medications, over the counter medications etc.) out of children's reach and in a safe place.

It is never too early to start the conversation about the safety of medication use, and other substances. Be a positive role model and remember you are the most important influence in your child's life.



CHOOSE A SAFE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY WAY TO GET TO SCHOOL!

Walking, biking, or taking the bus are healthy ways of getting to and from school! Active school travel increases physical activity and helps lessen traffic congestion improving safety conditions. If you need to drive your child to school, park your vehicle away from the school and walk the last block.

KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE

Safety tips for protecting children:

- Teach children about pedestrian and road safety. Let children know the role that crossing guards and bus drivers have in keeping them safe.
- Always cross the road with children nine years of age or less — young children do not have the ability to be aware of traffic. This skill is usually developed between the ages of nine and eleven so even older children may need to practice crossing the road safely.
- Ensure children are wearing the correct and properly-fitted helmet every time they bike, skateboard, scooter or in-line skate.
- E-bikes and e-scooters are not permitted for children under 16 years of age in Ontario. Parents are encouraged to ensure children use age-appropriate wheeled devices and understand local rules before riding.
- It is safest to keep a child in a forward-facing car seat with harness straps for as long as they are within the weight and height limits of their convertible, 3-in-1 or combination car seat (usually up to 29kg/65lbs). After that, use a booster seat until they are at least 145cm/4'9" tall.
- Actively supervise children at home, school and in-and-around playgrounds to prevent harmful childhood falls. Teach and reinforce playground safety rules and help children learn to manage risk.
- Children and youth have the highest rate of emergency department visits for concussion. Be aware of your school board concussion policy which supports children in their safe return to school and sport.

SCREENS AWAY, GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY!

Allow time for unstructured outdoor active play every day.

Keep your child comfortable and protected by making sure outdoor clothing matches the weather.

In winter, children need an insulated jacket with a hood, snow pants, hats, gloves and insulated winter boots.

On sunny days or when the UV index is three or more, children should wear a wide brimmed hat, cover up, play in the shade, put on sunscreen and wear sunglasses.

BUILDING HEALTHY SMILES

Good oral hygiene starts early and plays an important role in your child's overall health and development.

Daily brushing and flossing

- Use a child-sized toothbrush with soft, rounded bristles
- Replace the toothbrush every three to four months, or sooner if the bristles become worn or frayed, or after your child has been sick
- Children under the age of six cannot brush or floss effectively on their own. Parents or caregivers should assist with brushing and flossing
- Let your child have a turn brushing after you have finished helping them

Role Model

Children learn by example. Let your child see that you take care of your teeth daily. Teach your child to:

- Brush twice a day for at least two minutes, especially before bedtime
- Floss daily and rinse with water after eating or drinking
- Wait 30 minutes after meals and snacks before brushing
- Use a green pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste if they are three years of age or older and able to spit, unless otherwise directed by your oral health professional
- Choose healthy snacks and avoid sugary foods between meals
- Offer only water between meals and snacks



Regular dental visits

Regular dental checkups are important for your child's overall health.

- Take your child to see the dentist regularly, every six to nine months, to maintain a healthy mouth, beginning with the first dental visit by first birthday

Questions about your child's oral health? Learn more at **york.ca/Dental**

IMMUNIZATION AGAINST CHILDHOOD DISEASES IN ONTARIO

Immunizations are safe and the best defense against serious childhood diseases. Ontario law requires students attending school to be up-to-date with vaccines for diphtheria, pertussis (whopping cough), tetanus, polio, mumps, measles, rubella, meningococcal disease and varicella (chickenpox - for children born in 2010 or later).

Routine vaccines for students are free and are available through York Region Public Health clinics and your health care provider's office. Students whose immunizations are not up to date may be suspended from school unless a vaccine exemption is on file with York Region Public Health.

Student immunization records

When registering for school (junior or senior kindergarten), York Region Public Health will request your child's immunization record (i.e., immunization yellow card). Parent's and guardians are responsible for keeping this record up to date and reporting their child's immunizations to York Region Public Health. The name of each vaccine and the date it was given should be included in the yellow Immunization Record.



York Region Public Health does not get notified when your child receives a vaccine from a doctor or other health care provider. To ensure your child's records are up-to date, please report to York Region Public Health in one of four ways:

Method	Details
Online	Through Immunization Connect Ontario (ICON) Website: yrphu.icon.ehealthontario.ca
Fax	905-895-6066 1-866-258-2026
Phone	1-877-464-9675, ext. 73456
Mail	York Region Public Health, Immunization Services 17150 Yonge St, 4th Floor Newmarket, ON L3Y 8V3



ENCOURAGE GOOD HANDWASHING

Germs can cause illnesses, like colds, influenza (coughing, sore throat, muscle aches and fever) and norovirus (vomiting and diarrhea). They spread when we shake hands, share objects, and touch door handles and tables. Washing hands correctly is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of germs.

Follow these guidelines with your child:

1. Wet hands with warm running water
2. Apply soap
3. Rub hands together for 15 seconds (don't forget between fingers, thumbs, fingertips and back of hands)
4. Rinse hands with warm running water
5. Dry hands
6. Use a paper towel to turn off the tap and open the door



Remind your child to wash their hands:

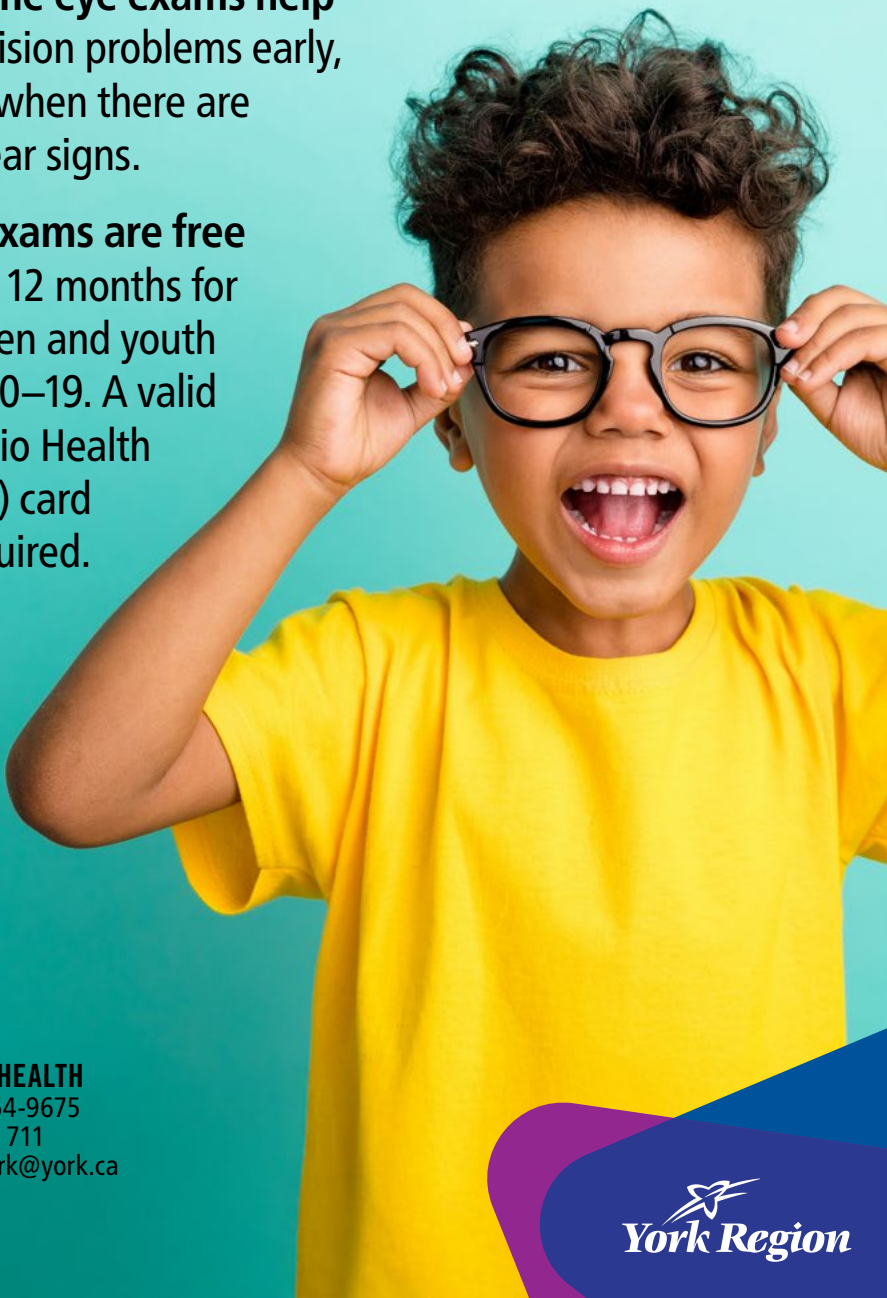
- Before eating or drinking and before and after handling food
- After using the washroom, blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing into their hands, touching garbage or animals and playing outdoors
- Before and after visiting someone who is sick
- When hands look or feel dirty

By washing your hands correctly and at the right times – you are a good role model for your child! Visit york.ca/InfectionPrevention for more information on how to prevent infectious diseases.

HAVE YOUR CHILD'S EYES CHECKED

Routine eye exams help find vision problems early, even when there are no clear signs.

Eye exams are free every 12 months for children and youth aged 0–19. A valid Ontario Health (OHIP) card is required.



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York Region