



Healthy Learners in School Nurses: Promoting Health and Wellness

Everyone is Unique

Feeling well physically and mentally is important for all of us. Check out the information and resources in our newsletter for tips to help your child learn and be successful at school and beyond.

The habits we form from childhood make no small difference, but rather they make all the difference.
Aristotle

Preventing Injuries - Risk verse Hazard



Helping your child develop skills to know the difference between a **hazard** – a situation that may need to be avoided or fixed – and a **risk** – a situation that challenges the child to decide what they should do. As your child grows and gains skills, hazards and risks change for them. To learn more join the Parachute Canada team as they discuss unstructured play on their *Popping the Bubble Wrap* [podcast](#).

Benefits of Unstructured Play

There are many positives for children’s mental and physical health when they are allowed to have unstructured play.

The Canadian Public Health Association describes unstructured play as

“child-led and allows children to follow their own interests and ideas without a defined purpose or outcome. It allows the child to explore boundaries and determine their own limits.”

FREEDOM

TIP: 17 SECOND RULE: WAIT 17 SECONDS BEFORE INTERVENING TO LET IT PLAY OUT

STOP
yourself before you respond to, or stop children's play

LOOK & LISTEN
to what is happening. What are the children doing?

THINK
are the children managing the risks? What might be the impact of adult involvement on children's play?

ACT
now you can respond in a thoughtful way, rather than by reflex

REFLECT
was your action the correct one? What do you have learned?

WHAT CAN YOU DO?
Try implementing a Risk-Benefit Assessment. REFLECT BEFORE REFLEX

SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE OR VISIT WWW.OUTSIDEPLAY.CA

5 Key Findings on Unstructured Play & Mental Health

- Promotes positive feelings**
When children engage in unstructured play, they report feeling joy, thrill and competence. When they don't, they report feeling bored, sad and angry.
- Builds resilience**
When children experience the uncertainty of challenging or risky play, they can develop emotional reactions, physical capabilities and coping skills that expand their capacity to manage adversity. These skills are important for resilience and good mental health in childhood and into adolescence.
- Improves concentration**
Unstructured play is associated with improved attention span, especially in children who have trouble focusing for long periods of time.
- Helps develop & maintain healthy relationships**
Evidence indicates that unstructured play can provide the opportunity to improve social competence. This means that children can improve their problem-solving skills, emotional intelligence, and ability to empathize. Children can become more self-aware and are better able to compromise and cooperate.
- Improves undesirable behaviours**
Studies with schools report fewer problems with undesirable behaviours like bullying when unstructured play is increased. When children lead their own play, they can engage in social and emotional learning, such as the ability to control aggression and regulate feelings of anger and frustration.

Communicable Diseases Corner

Need information about a communicable disease such as [Influenza](#), [chicken pox](#), [whooping cough](#) ([pertussis](#)) and more? When does my child need to stay home from school? Check out the Family Resources tab and Health Topics on the ASD-S website for lots of helpful information [Communicable Disease Resource for Educators and Parents](#)

[Head lice](#) - can be challenging to manage and can be very persistent especially during winter months. Check out lice resources on the [ASD-S website](#).



Immunizations—[What You Should Know](#)

Immunization is one of the best ways to protect you and your child against certain viruses and bacteria. Wondering what immunizations are recommended for your child's age? Check out this [link](#) to find out more. Did you know you can get your child immunized at your [local public health office](#)?

Mental Wellness for Your Child and Your Family



Do you know about all the services Kids Help Phone offer? Besides offering 24/7 support for children 5 years old and older, they have resources for parents/caregivers and kids. There are short videos, articles and more about how to start conversations, things like how to express feelings, and relationships. Click [here](#) to find out more.

Wellness Together Canada



"Wellness is a journey, not a destination. Every day, we can each take a step toward our own well-being. Wellness Together Canada is here to support you on that journey."

Wellness Together is funded by the Government of Canada.

Their mission is *"to improve the mental health and wellness of people across Canada"*

Building Lifelong Habits

Sleep

Children 6-13 years old need 9-12 hours of sleep per night to help them grow and stay healthy. Many things can affect their quality and amount of sleep. Check out [How can you help your child and yourself sleep well?](#)

Sleep Traps

Here are some things that can keep you from getting a good night's sleep.

Watching TV or playing video games within an hour of bedtime

Sirens, loud music, and even your hamster running on its wheel!

Too much or too little light, cold, heat, or noise

Sodas that contain caffeine. Caffeine can keep you wide awake. Chocolate also has caffeine.

Sleep Tips

Here are some things you can do to help get a good night's sleep.

Make sure your bedroom is cool, dark, and quiet. Ask your parents to help.

Exercise during the day. Running and playing at least 3 hours before bed help your body get ready for sleep.

Try to go to bed the same time every night. Your body gets used to a schedule and will be ready to sleep.

Avoid big meals before bedtime. Drink a warm glass of milk or have a light healthy snack like fruit instead.

Don't drink sodas with caffeine... especially in the afternoon and at night.

Have a bedtime routine. Do the same relaxing things before bed each night, like taking a warm shower, reading, or listening to quiet music. Your body will know it is time to get ready to sleep.

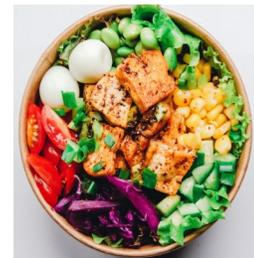
Food

Eating includes so much more than just food! Food selection, when you eat, who you eat with (social connection), growing food, buying food, culture, previous experience and media all have an affect on our experience with food.

Parents' responsibility - decide what food will be served for meals and snack, when and where.

Children's responsibility - decide if they are gong to eat (are they hungry) and how much they eat. Check out these [tips](#) if mealtimes tend to be a struggle.

[Eating together](#) is a benefit to our emotional and physical health.



Looking for easy, quick recipes?

Click in the blue box.



Saint John Public Health
Healthy Learners in School Program

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*A Way of Life.
Un mode de vie.
Ta'n Tel-mimajimik*