

# Durham Region Health Department **School Health Team**



## **“Promoting and Protecting the Health and Well-Being of Children, Youth and the School Community”**

Durham Health Connection Line  
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729

Oral Health  
1-866-853-1326 ext. 4567



[durham.ca/schools](http://durham.ca/schools)

## OUR TEAM

### DURHAM REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Schools are an important setting for health promotion and disease protection among children, youth and the school community. Healthy students are better learners and better educated individuals are healthier.

At the Durham Region Health Department, we have a team of health professionals which include school public health nurses, immunization nurses, oral health staff and health protection staff that are dedicated to promoting and protecting the health and wellbeing of children and youth in all schools in Durham Region. The team strives to achieve optimal health of the entire school community through partnership and collaboration with school boards and schools.



### SCHOOL PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

Each school in Durham Region has an assigned public health nurse working in collaboration with the school to promote health and wellbeing of the school community.

Your school public health nurse can provide support with:

- Assessing the health needs of the school and identifying health topic of focus
- Supporting Schools Health Teams with planning/implementing health initiatives
- Utilizing the Ontario Ministry of Education's Foundations for a Healthy School to develop strategies and activities in the 5 broad areas that contribute to a healthy school:

- Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
- School and Classroom Leadership
- Student Engagement
- Social and Physical Environment
- Home, School and Community Partnerships

- Evaluating the success and challenges of planned activities
- Supporting the development of health policies and guidelines
- Conducting vision screening for SK students
- Linking to other Health Department programs/divisions or community agencies

- For more resources go to: <https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/school-health.aspx>

A screenshot of the Durham Region School Health webpage. The page features a dark header with the Durham Region logo and navigation links. Below the header, there are three circular images of diverse children and a large graphic of a lightbulb surrounded by educational icons. The main content area has a blue sidebar with a menu and a main section titled "Public health and education go hand in hand" with a blue call-to-action button. At the bottom, there is a green banner announcing "Healthy School Award winners!" with the "Healthy" logo.

## IMMUNIZATION NURSE

### Contact your immunization nurse if you have any questions regarding:

- Grade 7 and 8 immunization clinics
- Annual Immunization Notices and Suspension Process (in accordance with the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*)

### School Clinics (Elementary Schools)

Durham Region Health Department provides (free) meningococcal vaccines, hepatitis B vaccines, and Human Papillomavirus vaccines to eligible grade 7 and 8 students at school clinics in fall and spring of each school year.

Eligible grade 7 students who missed a dose may receive the vaccine(s) at the next school clinic, or can contact their school immunization nurse.

### Immunization Notices and Suspension Process

As required by law, throughout the year notices will be sent to students who are not up-to-date for immunizations.

- First Notices are addressed to students who are overdue for the required immunizations or to students who do not have an immunization record on file with the Health Department.

- A final notice and Suspension Order is sent to students/parents/guardians who are noncompliant with the first request or do not submit the requested information by the deadline indicated on the notice.
- Students who fail to provide the requested immunization information by the suspension date may be suspended from school for 20 instructional school days or until the student provides the requested immunization information or submits a valid legal exemption to the Health Department.

### Students with No Immunization Records

- Students who have no Immunization Records, or are new to Ontario, or have no Ontario health coverage should be directed to contact Durham Health Connection Line (DHCL).
- Contact DHCL - 1-800-841-2729, if you would like a copy of your immunization records.
- Students may be booked into an immunization clinic to receive eligible immunizations free of charge. No OHIP is required.



## **ORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ANNUAL DENTAL SCREENING AND ORAL HEALTH PRESENTATIONS**

Each school in Durham Region has an assigned oral health team that includes a dental hygienist, dental assistant and a dental educator.

The Durham Region Health Department, Oral Health Clinic, provides restorative and preventive oral health services such as fillings, x-rays, cleanings, fluoride, sealants and oral hygiene instructions to eligible children. The Healthy Smiles Ontario program is available for eligible children up to 17 years of age, if financial assistance is needed.

### **Dental Screening**

Every school year, Durham Region Health Department, Oral Health Division conducts dental screening at elementary schools in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards. The screening is performed by a Registered Dental Hygienist using a sterilized mouth mirror. It involves a quick look at the teeth and surrounding

tissue. The purpose of the program is to identify and provide access to care for children with dental needs. Statistics are collected for the Ministry of Health and Long -Term Care to better understand the oral health status of children and for program planning.

If a child is absent on the screening date they can be seen at the Durham Region Health Department, Oral Health Clinic.

### **Health Promotion**

Classroom oral health presentations are available to help promote good oral hygiene to students. The Oral Health Division supports school programs and initiatives such as Welcome to Kindergarten and Health and Wellness Fairs.





## **HEALTH PROTECTION/PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR/TOBACCO ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

Durham Region Health Department's Public Health Inspectors and Tobacco Enforcement Officers (PHIs and TEO's) work in our communities every day, making a real impact on the way we live. Here are just some of the areas that we contribute to protect your health.

### **Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017/Regional Smoke & Vape By-law**

TEO's are mandated to enforce legislation that keeps our schools smoke-free as well as keeping tobacco products from the hands of school-aged children.

### **Rabies**

Schools are mandated to report animal bites on or around school property to the Health Department and PHIs investigate possible rabies exposures and work cooperatively with health care providers to ensure access to anti-rabies treatment. In addition, PHIs will, upon request, provide education and resources on rabies, a preventable disease.

### **Infectious Disease Prevention & Control and Infectious Disease Outbreak Management**

Schools are mandated to report infectious disease outbreaks (absenteeism due to illness) to the Health Department. PHIs provide education and resources on infection prevention & control practices to limit the spread of illness to others. PHIs will, upon request, provide hand hygiene and beauty and body art safety presentations to primary and secondary schools. PHIs inspect any personal services (e.g. hairdressing) related to high skills major specialist programs. Sentinel schools throughout Durham provide absenteeism information to our epidemiologists to provide a snapshot on the health of our community.

### **Health Hazards, Safe Water and Other Environmental Health Issues**

PHIs investigate and enforce legislation that protects our communities from environmental health hazards and work to increase awareness and mitigate environmental health hazards such as chemical spills, mould, pests, etc. PHIs will respond to adverse water events in schools to ensure drinking water is safe for consumption.

### **Vector-Borne Diseases such as West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease**

Staff conduct surveillance for vectors of West Nile Virus (mosquitoes) and Lyme disease (ticks) and increase awareness of the prevention of these diseases.

### **Emergency Preparedness and Management**

PHIs work with Boards of Education to keep emergency preparedness current and raise awareness of the Health Department's plans.

### **Food Safety**

PHIs inspect all food premises including school cafeterias and enforce food safety legislation. PHIs will, upon request, provide education to secondary schools on safe food handling (food handler training & certification).





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