



# Healthy Schools

Spring 2017

Good Health Supports Learning and Learning Supports Good Health



**Satisfy  
your  
Thirst**

**Mental  
Health is for  
Everyone**

**Substance  
Misuse**

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# Share Your Success! Healthy Schools Success Stories

Inspire others! Share your Healthy School success story! Durham Region Health Department would love to hear about your triumphs, the challenges along the way and how your school community accomplished their Healthy School goal. Your school success story can be shared in the Healthy Schools Newsletter (once we've cleared it with you first) or shared at the **Healthy Schools Event** on **May 11, 2017**.

Success stories can be shared in many formats such as an article, Vlog (video blog), presentation, a poster... virtually any format, so be creative! Involve your school health action team in the creation of this success story. Anyone in the school community (students, educators, parents etc.) is welcome to send us a success story. To see an example of a success story please visit the Health Department's Healthy Schools website at **[durham.ca/schools](http://durham.ca/schools)** and click on the **Success Stories** link. Since Video Blogs (Vlogs) are a popular format to share information, we've also provided a link to showcase one of our Vlogs for inspiration **<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lll12cVNk90>**.

We look forward to hearing about your successful endeavours and would love to share your ideas with other schools looking for new ideas. To submit a school success story or for support in getting started please contact your school public health nurse. Don't know who your school nurse is, no problem. At the very bottom of the **[durham.ca/schools](http://durham.ca/schools)** website you'll notice a link to find out.

# Introducing Your School Health Team

Durham Region Health Department has a team of health professionals dedicated to supporting school communities in creating a healthy school environment where children can learn and play. The School Health Team flip chart will provide you with helpful information on your school health team members and their roles in your school.

Each school in Durham Region has an assigned public health nurse working in the area of Healthy Schools.

**Connect** with your public health nurse and access Healthy Schools resources by visiting [durham.ca/schools](http://durham.ca/schools) or call our Durham Health Connection Line at 1-800-841-2729 or 905-666-6241



# Satisfy Your Thirst, Choose Water First!

Encourage your students to drink water when they are thirsty. It is a much healthier choice than drinks with added sugar and is the best way to quench your thirst!

Staying hydrated is just as important as healthy eating. Water makes up more than half of a child's weight. Children need water to keep their bodies working and growing properly. Children that are used to drinking water at a young age are more likely to drink water into their teen years. Water contains no sugar, calories, additives, preservatives, or caffeine and it's free from the tap. It is a smart choice for sipping throughout the day. Most areas in Durham Region have fluoridated tap water. Fluoridated water helps teeth stay strong, protects against cavities, and can even reverse the very early stages of tooth decay

## Water is best

- Water is best to keep kids hydrated
- It reduces acid in the mouth that can cause cavities
- When children drink water instead of sugary drinks they consume less unhealthy calories

## Ways to make water the 'new normal' in your classroom:

- Encourage your students to bring a refillable water bottle to school
- Water is the best drink between meals
- Allow students to keep their water bottle at their desk
- Offer water breaks throughout the day
- Keep a pitcher of water and cups available for students that don't have a water bottle
- Be a good role model and encourage healthy choices

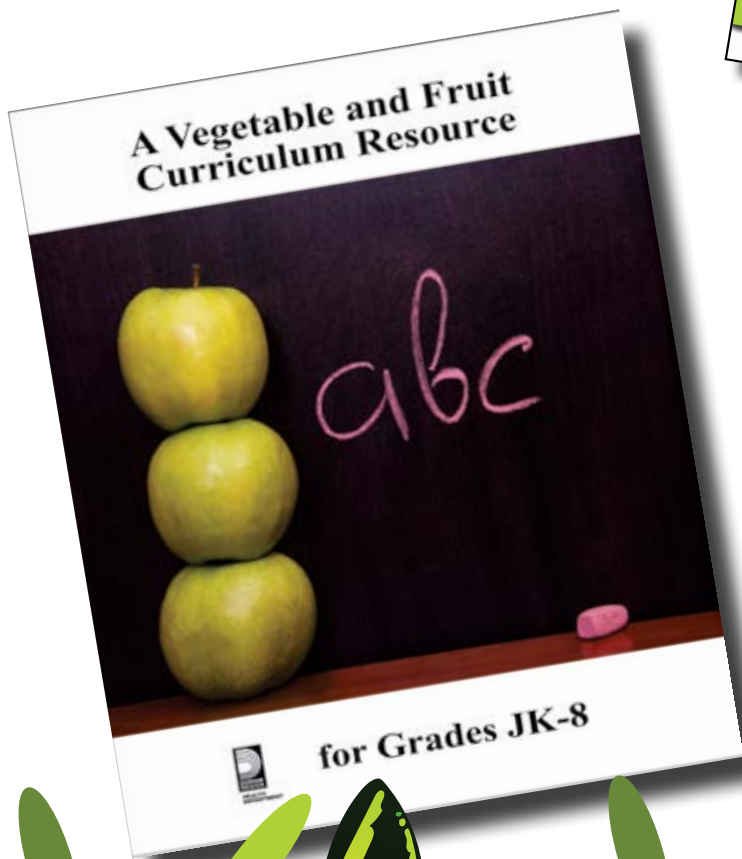
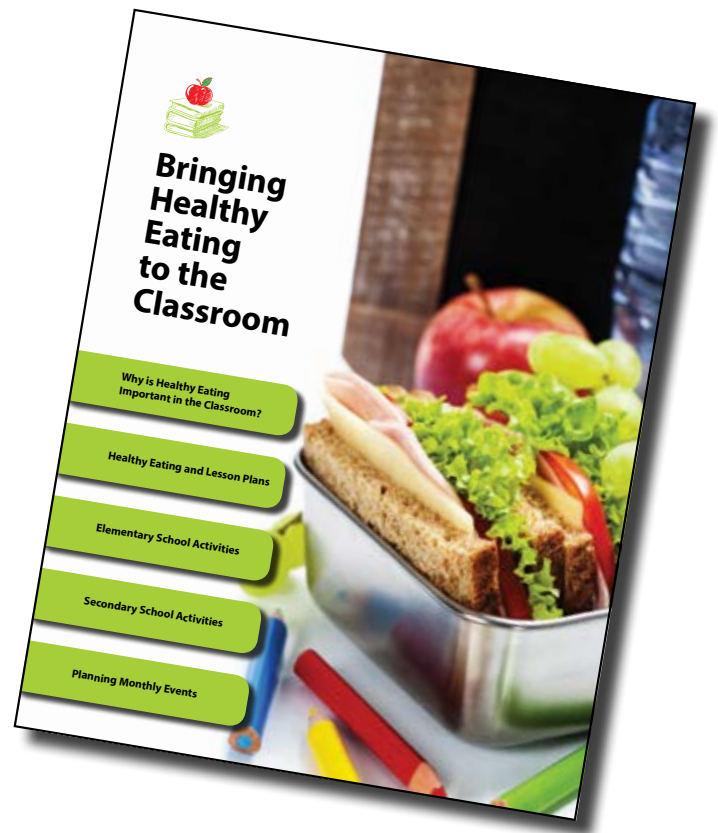
For more information about the health of your mouth visit [Durham.ca/oralhealth](http://Durham.ca/oralhealth)



# Vegetable and Fruit Curriculum Resource

## When students learn about healthy eating in the classroom:

- They learn the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy food choices
- They are more likely to make healthy eating choices outside of school



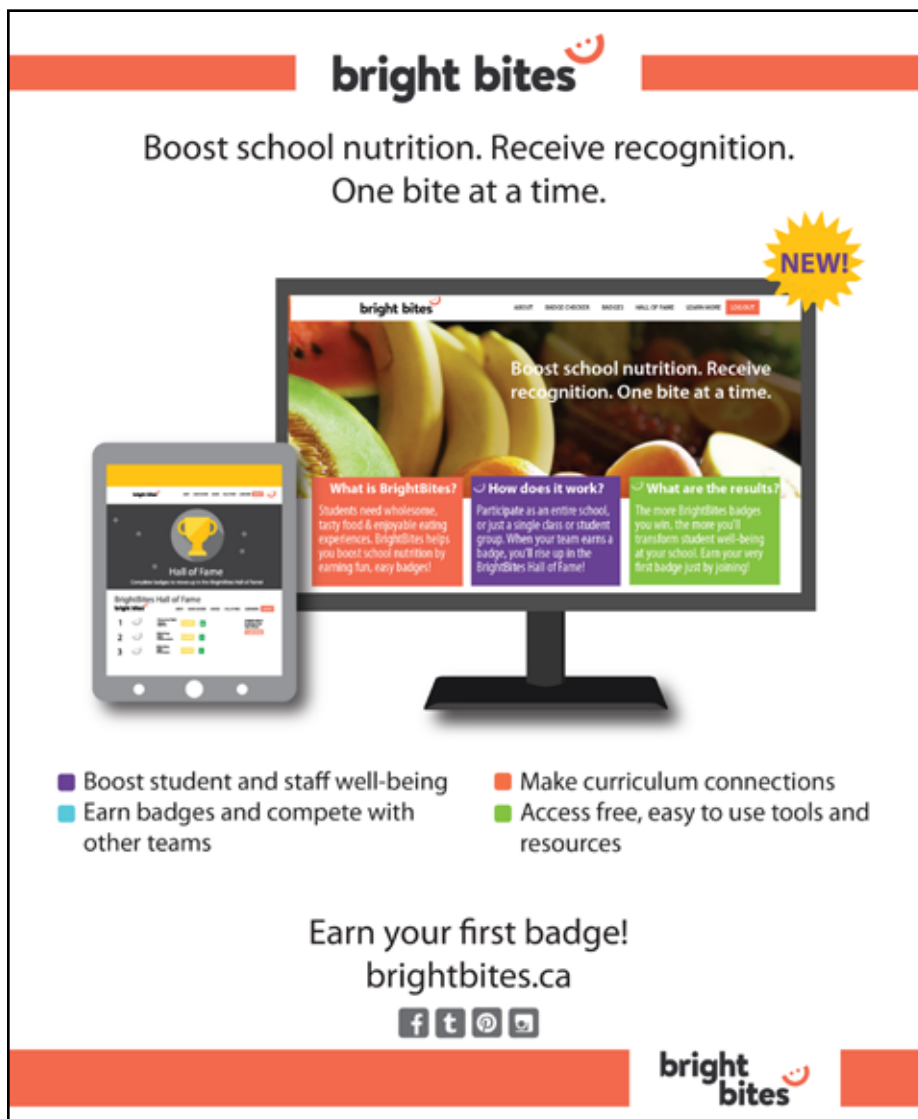
The Vegetable and Fruit Curriculum resource makes teaching healthy eating in all subjects easier than ever. These ready to use classroom activities are a great addition to your lesson plan.

The activities align with the Health and Physical Education component of the Ontario curriculum.

Access these healthy eating curriculum resources on [durham.ca/healthyeating](http://durham.ca/healthyeating)



# bright bites: Boost School Nutrition. Receive Recognition.



The banner features the 'bright bites' logo at the top left. Below it, the text reads 'Boost school nutrition. Receive recognition. One bite at a time.' A central monitor displays the website interface with a 'NEW!' starburst. The website content includes sections for 'What is BrightBites?', 'How does it work?', and 'What are the results?'. A tablet to the left shows a 'Hall of Fame' leaderboard. At the bottom, there are four bullet points: 'Boost student and staff well-being', 'Earn badges and compete with other teams', 'Make curriculum connections', and 'Access free, easy to use tools and resources'. The URL 'brightbites.ca' and social media icons are also present.

**bright bites**

Boost school nutrition. Receive recognition.  
One bite at a time.

**NEW!**

**What is BrightBites?**  
Students need wholesome, tasty food & enjoyable eating experiences. BrightBites helps you boost school nutrition by earning fun, easy badges!

**How does it work?**  
Participate as an entire school, or just a single class or student group. When your team earns a badge, you'll rise up in the BrightBites Hall of Fame!

**What are the results?**  
The more BrightBites badges you win, the more you'll transform student well-being at your school. Earn your very first badge just by joining!

**BrightBites Hall of Fame**

- Boost student and staff well-being
- Earn badges and compete with other teams
- Make curriculum connections
- Access free, easy to use tools and resources

Earn your first badge!  
[brightbites.ca](http://brightbites.ca)

**bright bites**

## A new approach to make learning about nutrition easy, fun and rewarding

BrightBites is a free, non-profit program created by Registered Dietitians that work in public health units across Ontario. Formerly 'Nutrition Tools for Schools'; BrightBites is a modern, fun approach to boosting school nutrition for educators and other school leaders.

Boosting nutrition in a school environment can make a huge difference for students. Positive examples of wholesome, nutritious foods and the enjoyment of eating can create healthier, more positive eating habits for life - and affect students' entire well-being. BrightBites makes learning about nutrition in the classroom easy, fun and rewarding! BrightBites provides simple steps, free tools, and helpful links to help teachers and students learn about nutrition, win badges and promote healthy eating one bite at a time.



# What to do if a Grade 7 or 8 Student Misses a School Immunization Clinic

Immunization clinics happen 3 times a year at your school (fall, winter and spring). The immunizations given are:

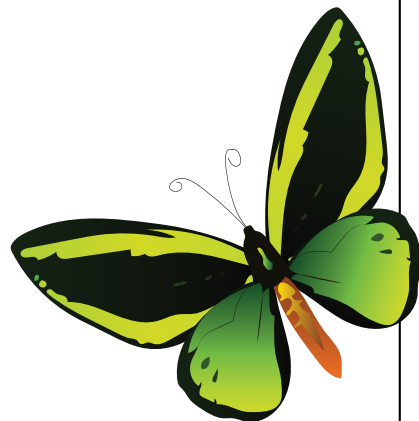
- Hepatitis B
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Menactra


If a student has missed an immunization they will receive it at the next school clinic.

Grade 8 students who are still missing an immunization after the spring clinic can contact the Durham Health Connection Line (905-666-6241) to book an appointment at our Catch-Up Clinic.


All students who miss an immunization will get a "Missed Dose Form" to let them know how they can get their missed immunization(s).

For clinic dates or consent forms visit [durham.ca/immunizationclinics](http://durham.ca/immunizationclinics) or check with your school secretary.





**MISSED DOSE FORM**  
School Immunization Clinic



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vaccine not received at the clinic today:**

Hepatitis B

Menactra

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

**Reason for the missed dose(s):**

Absent                       Sick on clinic day

Refused vaccine(s)       Previously fully immunized

No consent(s)               Incomplete consent form(s)

Not enough time between doses

**How to get the missed dose(s):**

At the next school clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Call your school's nurse: \_\_\_\_\_

Who can be reached at 905-668-7711 ext. \_\_\_\_\_

Call Durham Health Connection Line (DHCL) to book an appointment at our Immunization Catch-Up Clinic

**Already received Hep B, Menactra or HPV vaccine(s)?**

Call DHCL to update your child's record. Healthcare providers do not update the Health Department

**For More Information, please Call**  
**DURHAM HEALTH CONNECTION LINE:**  
**(905) 666-6242 OR 1-800-841-2729**  
[www.durham.ca/immunizationclinics](http://www.durham.ca/immunizationclinics)

June 2016



# How Much Screen Time Should Your Students be Getting?

Canadian students are facing health risks from prolonged sitting and excessive screen time - time spent on TV, tablets, smartphones, computer, laptops or playing video games. The Canadian Sedentary guidelines recommends that children aged 5-17 years limit their recreational screen time to less than 2 hours per day. Recreational screen time is the time spent on screens outside of school or homework activities.

49% of elementary school students and 61% of secondary school students exceed the recommended amount of recreational screen time each day (Durham Region's Public Health Monitoring of Risk Factors Report, 2016).

## What can you do to help your students reduce their screen time?

Raise awareness about screen time and sedentary behaviours and encourage your students to be physically active!

- Teach students about the risks of prolonged screen time
- Interrupt sitting every 30 minutes with a physical activity
- Integrate physical activity into the lesson
- Take students outdoors when you can
- Involve parents in promoting healthy habits

## Need help to promote screen time awareness in your school?

Ask your public health nurse about implementing a **Screen Time School Challenge**. This challenge serves as an incentive for students to become aware of their screen time and begin adjusting their routine to include more physical activity and less than 2 hours of screen time per day. This challenge will get students to begin limiting and tracking their screen time with the goal of meeting the recommended guidelines. Through in-class discussions about screen time and the use of fun physical activities to break up sitting, students can learn the benefits of reducing screen time!

For more information on screen time please contact your school public health nurse or visit [durham.ca/physicalactivity](http://durham.ca/physicalactivity)



# Mental Health is for Everyone



Mental health is for everyone! Mental health is about how we think, feel and act. Good mental health is important as it helps us deal with life's stresses. That includes workplace stress. While teaching can be very rewarding, it can also be stressful.

The good news is that everyone has the ability to develop resilience to manage work stress!

## Five tips to help you manage stress:

- 1. Develop relationships** – what are your relationships like with the people you work with? Positive relationships help us feel supported at work. Spend time with people who inspire you at work.
- 2. Positive thinking** – are you able to find the positive in all situations? Let go of negative thoughts and see tough situations as temporary. Take one small step to improve a bad situation.
- 3. Competence** – are you aware of your own competence? You have strengths to help you get the job done. Know when to use them and when to ask for help so you don't get stressed out. Learn from people who have job experience that may be helpful to you.
- 4. Healthy coping** – staying physically active, eating healthy, avoiding smoking and alcohol and getting enough sleep can all help your body deal with stress better.
- 5. Emotional intelligence** – Are you aware of not just your own emotions, but also those of others around you? Pay attention to the feelings of others and ask questions. Plan time for yourself and activities you enjoy.

Remember that it's okay to ask for help if you feel overwhelmed and unable to cope. Talk with your administrator, your friends, family or your doctor. Many workplaces also offer Employee Assistance Programs. We can all achieve positive mental health!

For more information, contact your school public health nurse.



# Teens Can Be Resilient in High School!

Entering high school can be a time of new opportunities and challenges for both teens and parents. Teens often experience a range of emotions, as do parents. As an educator, your guidance and support is very influential during this time of transition. Supporting a teen's mental health helps build their resiliency, which is a key skill to help them adjust to high school.

The Health Department has developed the 'Teens Can Be Resilient... in High School!' resource to provide parents with information that will help them as they support their teens transition to high school. This resource covers a range of topics to support parents including:

- Understanding mental health and resiliency
- Fostering everyday skills for living in teens
- Peer relationships
- Bullying
- Dating
- Risk taking and substance use
- Supporting teens that are having difficulty coping

This resource is now available in print and online at [durham.ca/mentalhealth](http://durham.ca/mentalhealth). Please consider sharing this resource with parents of students who are preparing for or beginning the transition to high school. Connect with your public health nurse if you would like additional support with promoting positive mental health and resiliency in your school community. Not sure who your public health nurse is? Go to [durham.ca/schools](http://durham.ca/schools) to find out!



# Prescription Opioids and Teens

## The Facts

Prescription opioids are medications used mostly to treat pain. They are also known as 'pain killers' or 'narcotics' and have a number of different names such as codeine, fentanyl, methadone, chill pills, Tylenol #3, meth and percs.

Prescription opioids are often prescribed after surgery or injury, or for conditions such as cancer. They can produce a feeling of well-being or euphoria ("high") making them prone to abuse.

- **1 in 10** teens use prescription opioids to get high
- **59%** of these students report getting these drugs from home, without asking
- Use significantly increases with grade, from **9.5%** in Grade 7 to **13.0%** in Grade 12 (CAMH, OSDUHS, 2015)

The 'misuse' of prescription opioids includes:

- borrowing or stealing medications from friends or relatives
- purposely using higher than recommended doses
- changing the way the medication is to be taken
- using prescription opioids together with alcohol and/or other prescription or over-the-counter drugs (CCSA, 2015)

Teens misuse prescription opioids for a number of reasons including:

- they think they are safer than street drugs
- they are easier to get than street drugs
- out of curiosity
- they don't understand the risks
- to cope with stress and/or other bad feelings



## Why it Matters

Using prescription pain medication to get high can lead to:

- lower school grades
- higher risk taking
- depression
- regular use of alcohol, marijuana and tobacco
- addiction
- overdose



## What Teachers Can Do

1. Contribute to a healthy and supportive school environment by helping students make positive choices.
2. Talk with your students about the dangers of misusing prescription pain medication.
3. Encourage and support student led programs that focus on life skills (social skills, managing conflict, etc.).
4. Encourage participation in meaningful activities (student council, tutoring).
5. Ask parents, family and friends to put the following tips into action in their homes:
  - keep medication locked up and out of sight
  - never share medication
  - don't save unused medication; take it back to your nearest pharmacy for safe and free disposal



# Substance Misuse



## Quick Facts for Durham Region:

Student self-reported surveys reveal that:

- **29%** of students drank enough alcohol to feel drunk before grade 9
- **27%** of high school students report binge drinking at least once in the last month (5 or more standard drinks on the same occasion)
- **33%** of high school students have used marijuana in the last year; 16% have used up to 9 times in the last year
- **10%** of students in grade 7-12 have used prescription pain medication (opioids) to get high

## Need help addressing marijuana, alcohol or prescription pain medication at your school?

Every school in Durham Region has a public health nurse available to them to help address these issues as well as other health topics. Together, the school community (staff and parents) and the public health nurse can work towards achieving a healthier school environment, supportive of health and learning.

Your public health nurse can assist with activities that take place at the school level, within the classroom and those that directly involve student participation. Some examples include:

- Assist with needs assessment of your school
- Help co-create strategies to address the identified school needs such as:
  - student led 'school-wide' campaign on alcohol, marijuana or prescription pain medication
  - student led political engagement and advocacy, related to issues of importance to youth
  - parent information events

- Assist the school community in carrying out planned activities
- Support school committees

For more information:

- Contact your school public health nurse directly. Not sure who your school public health nurse is? Information available at [durham.ca/schools](http://durham.ca/schools) or call the Durham Health connection Line at 905-666-6241 or 1-800-841-2729.

For more information on Alcohol, Marijuana and Healthy Schools visit [durham.ca/marijuana](http://durham.ca/marijuana) or [durham.ca/alcohol](http://durham.ca/alcohol).



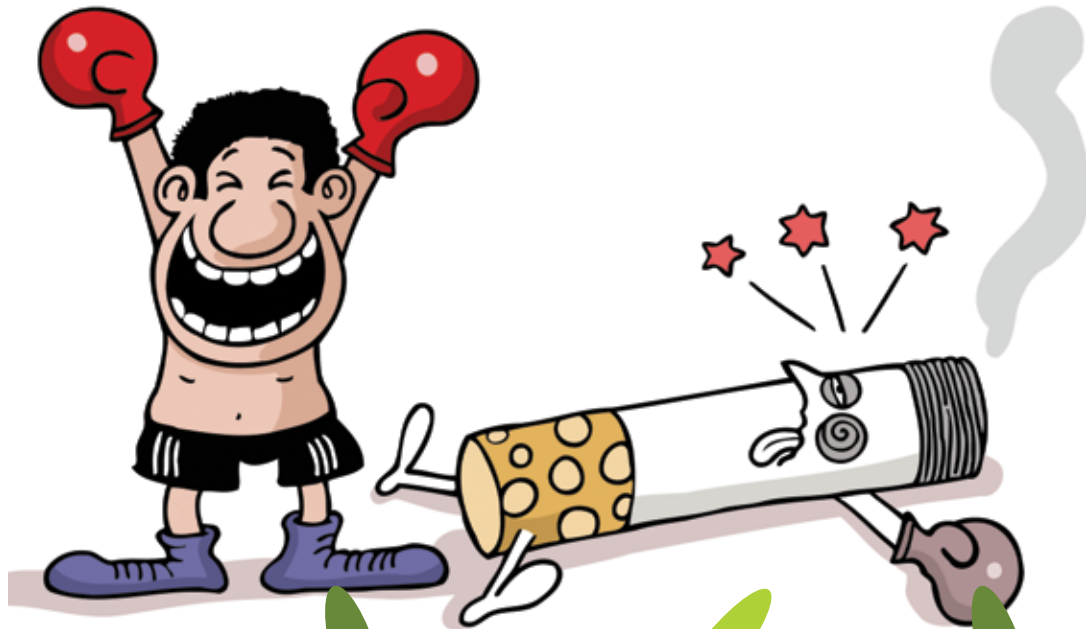
# Tobacco Resources for Schools

Teachers are recognized as one of the most influential role models in a student's life. Their availability in the school and relationship with students allow for conversations about tobacco and the provision of ongoing support to students who are trying to quit smoking.

The Health Department has a variety of resources available for teachers, students and school communities to support creating a tobacco-free school environment. These resources include:

- Tobacco Brief Contact Intervention (BCI) Training for Teachers: BCI is a tool that teachers can use to assist and support students to help them quit smoking. The training presentation can be completed with any size group of teachers.
- "Fast Facts on Tobacco" newspaper resource
- Youth Tobacco Awareness posters
- "Know What's In Your Mouth" smokeless tobacco materials and activities
- PA Announcements
- Various interactive games and activity kits
- "Quit4Life" Program – a quit smoking program for secondary school students

To access the Health Department's tobacco resources for teachers, students and parents, visit our tobacco website at [durham.ca/tobacco](http://durham.ca/tobacco). If you are interested in further information about creating a tobacco-free school environment, contact your school public health nurse.





HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT

For more information on any article in this newsletter please contact your school public health nurse or call Durham Health Connection Line at 905-668-2020 or toll free 1-800-841-2729

Monday to Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

**[durham.ca/schools](https://durham.ca/schools)**

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729

