

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026

DENTAL HEALTH

Share Valentine's Day Love with your Teeth

Valentine's Day is a wonderful time for children to enjoy treats and share sweets with loved ones, but it's also important to remember that **frequent exposure to treats can increase the risk of dental cavities**.

If Valentine Day treats are on the menu choose to have them with a meal instead of in-between meals. The Canadian Dental Association shares a supportive article about candy and oral health https://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral_health/cfyt/dental_care_children/halloween.asp. Their guidance is sweet treats can be enjoyed but best to be **as part of a meal**, choose treats that dissolve quickly rather than stick to teeth, and follow up with **good brushing habits** to help protect healthy smiles.

💡 Tips to Enjoy Valentine's Treats While Protecting Your Smile:

- Enjoy treats with meals rather than snacking on them throughout the day.
- Drink water after eating treats to help rinse your teeth and mouth.
- Reduce frequency of sucking on candies.
- Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste and floss every day.
- Try these healthy valentines day treats [20 Healthy Valentine's Day Treats | Healthy Family Project](#)



This Valentine's Day, show your teeth a little love too. A healthy smile is one of the sweetest things you can do for yourself 💕

MENTAL HEALTH

The Truth about SAD: Seasonal Affective Disorder

Between colder, wetter weather and less light – keeping your own and your student's well-being top of mind can take a little extra effort. Check out this [article](#) from Kelty Mental Health a few **tips you can put in place to make the chilly season a bit easier**.

ADHD for Parents & Caregivers: Webinar Series

BC Children's Hospital ADHD Clinic and the Kelty Centre hosted a learning event designed to support parents of children with ADHD, covering topics like **ADHD basics, self-regulation, behaviour at school, and medication**. If you missed it, the speaker sessions are available here: [ADHD for Parents and Caregivers: Webinar Series | Kelty Mental Health](#)

FOOD LITERACY

Eating Disorders Awareness Week



Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness Week (Feb 1-7) is a province-wide campaign put on by [EmbodyBC](#) and the [National Eating Disorder Information Center](#) (NEDIC) to **raise awareness about eating disorder prevention, early intervention, and treatment**.

Explore and share the following teacher and educator resources on the topic of eating disorders, disordered eating, body image and weight bias and stigma:

- [Being Me Being Us](#): explore and share the new curriculum on creating school environments where all bodies feel welcome, grades 4-7.
- [Guidelines for School Staff](#): helping a student with a suspected eating disorder
- [Promoting positive body image](#): resources for Teachers
- [IH Weight Bias and Stigma in Schools](#): support for schools on creating weight inclusive environments that are safe for all students.

The Interior Health Public Health Dietitian team is available to support school district's food and nutrition literacy efforts and to create and support healthy school food environments. For questions email schoolnutrition@interiorhealth.ca

PHYSICAL LITERACY

HELP Webinar: Embracing Risky Play at School

Children are naturally drawn to risky play — to take physical chances, to seek excitement, and to satisfy their curiosity — and are more physically active when playing outdoors. This special webinar will provide **practical strategies** for supporting outdoor play and learning in the elementary school years, the **difference between risks and hazards**, and the **research demonstrating how risky play supports children's health, development, well-being and learning**. For more information or to register click [here](#).



Date: **Thursday, February 5, 2026**
Time: **3:00 — 4:30PM (PST) via Zoom**

Promoting Physical Activity for Children and Youth with Disabilities

Active Abilities Canada and the Canadian Disability Participation Project developed **five evidenced based recommendations** to help organizations support physical activity for families of children and youth with disabilities. To see the recommendations as well as a toolkit with tips for disseminating the information click [here](#).

Barrier Buster Grants Program (RBC)

Schools and other community groups can apply for one of 40 accessibility grants of up to \$40,000 **to complete an access-improvement project**. Barrier Buster projects include accessible play spaces, improvements to trails, accessible kitchens and cafeterias and so much more. **Applications close March 15, 2026**. For more information and to apply click [here](#).

Webinar: What Diverse BC Families Need to be Physically Active



Join the BC Alliance for Healthy Living for a webinar to hear **insights and practical steps for making physical activity more accessible** to all British Columbians, especially equity-deserving families. All are welcome! For more information or to register, click [here](#).

Date: **Thursday, February 12, 2026**

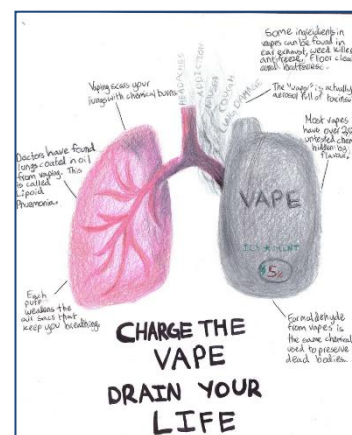
Time: **10:00 — 11:15am (PST)**

HARM REDUCTION & LEGAL SUBSTANCES

AND the Winner is....Beyond the Buzz 2.0 Winners

Interior Health (IH) is pleased to announce the winners of this year's **Beyond the Buzz 2.0: Youth Voices on Substance Use** poster contest. The intent of the poster contest was to spark meaningful conversations about the use of commercial tobacco, cannabis, vapour products and alcohol among youth, and their impacts on youth's health, their environment and communities. By using impactful peer-to-peer messaging based on their real-life experiences and perspectives, youth across the region are empowered to make positive and informed decisions.

To view the winning posters, learn more about the poster contest, and find substance use information for youth, visit: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/information-for-youth/beyond-the-buzz-contest>



New Resource: Honest, Youth-Friendly Info About Drugs

Interior Health has launched a **new online hub** designed to **help young people access reliable, easy-to-understand information about substances**. The site offers practical guidance and connects youth with supports available in their communities.

Explore the resource: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/information-for-youth/get-to-know-more-about-drugs>

RESOURCES

Interior Health Website

The [School Health](#) section of the Interior Health Public Website will take you to the following sections where you can find more information: [School Staff](#), [Promoting Health of Children & Youth in School](#), and [Medical Conditions at School](#).

Healthy Schools BC Website

The [Healthy Schools BC Website](#) is a great resource for teachers. Look for the “Classroom and School Resources” and “Teach Food First”.



Healthy Schools Information Sharing

The following School Districts have a Healthy Schools tab on their websites. Take a look at all the great information available from: [SD 5](#), [SD 8](#), [SD 19](#), [SD 23](#), [SD 53](#), [SD 73](#), [SD 83](#)

Harm Reduction Resources

For resources visit the [Interior Health Website](#).
To connect with a Harm Reduction Coordinator email: YHRC@interiorhealth.ca

Legal Substances Program

For resources on tobacco, vaping or cannabis use, visit the Interior Health [Tobacco & Vaping Information for Schools](#) webpage or the [Cannabis Information for Youth](#) webpage.
To connect with a Legal Substances Reduction Coordinator, email: LegalSubstances@interiorhealth.ca

For previous newsletters: [Health Promoting Schools Newsletters](#)