

## Niagara Region Public Health School Health Newsletter

### June 2024

#### Check your Immunization Records and Travel Health Notice

If you are planning to travel, add these actions to your planning checklist to help make your trip a healthy one.

1) **Make sure you and your children are up-to-date with vaccinations.**

Staying up-to-date with vaccinations is important all year round. It is especially important before travelling.

- When travelling, you may be at risk for vaccine preventable illnesses. [Check your immunization records](#) or talk to your health care provider.
- Learn more about [where to get vaccinated](#). Remember to report vaccinations to Public Health for children 0 – 17 years of age. Report [online](#) or call 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074 ext. 7425



2) **Review the Public Health Agency of Canada's [travel health notices](#).** These notices outline potential health risks to Canadian travelers and ways to help reduce them. Stay informed as you plan your travel.

#### Ticks

Ticks, mosquitos and rabid animals can be a risk as the weather warms up.

- Mosquitoes transmit the [West Nile virus](#) to humans after becoming infected by feeding on the blood of birds, which carry the virus. To learn how to protect your family, visit [Reduce the Risk of West Nile Virus - Niagara Region](#).
- The black- legged (deer) tick transmits [Lyme disease](#) to humans after becoming infected by feeding on the blood of small animals which carry the disease. To learn how to protect you and your pets, visit [Protect and Prevent Ticks - Niagara Region](#).
- [Rabies](#) is transmitted through saliva from bites and scratches, entering an open cut or wound, or from saliva contacting a mucous membrane, such as those in the mouth, nasal cavity or eyes.



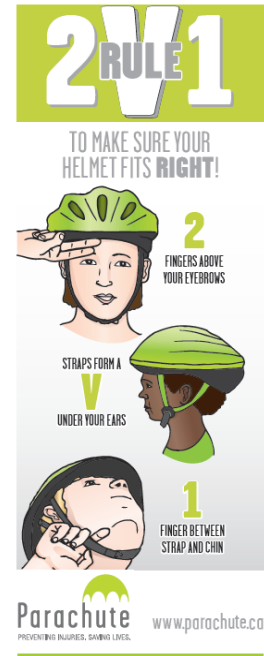
For more information and [tick identification](#), individuals can contact a Duty Officer directly at 905-688-8248 ext. 7590. General tick information can be found on our [Niagara Region Public Health website](#).

## Head safety – for bikes and other wheels

With warmer weather and summer break just around the corner, more kids will be outdoors taking part in activities, such as biking, skate boarding or roller blading. A [properly fitted and correct helmet](#) can cut the risk of a serious head injury by up to 85%. This means four out of five brain injuries could be prevented if every cyclist wore a helmet.

- Bike [helmets](#) should be replaced after five years **or** a crash where the cyclist has hit their head
- It's not safe to use a [second-hand helmet](#)
- Baseball hats, big hair clips and headphones should never be worn under a helmet

The human skull is just approximately one centimeter thick, so it is important to remind children to always protect their head when being active. To make sure a helmet fits right, follow the 2V1 Rule (image courtesy of [Parachute Canada](#))



## Food Literacy

Want to get your kids excited about food? Food literacy is more than just what's on your plate. It's about loving everything to do with food! Picture your child confidently picking out fresh veggies, cooking healthy meals, and knowing how to keep food safe and budget-friendly.

Food isn't just about eating—it's about enjoying different kinds of food, tasting delicious flavors, and making special memories with family.

Here are some fun things you can do with your kids this summer to help them learn more about food:

- **Kitchen Adventures:** Cook together, try new recipes, and let your kids help with chopping, stirring, and tasting.
- **Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt:** Turn a trip to the grocery store into a game where you look for foods from different groups or colors.
- **[Grow Your Own Garden:](#)** Start a small garden and teach your kids about planting, taking care of plants, and harvesting their own veggies.
- **Food Tasting Party:** Have a party where your kids can try new fruits, veggies, cheeses, and talk about how they taste and feel.
- **Cultural Food Tours:** Explore foods from around the world through virtual or real tours, learning about new flavors and cooking styles.
- **Visit a [Local Market:](#)** Take a trip to a farmers' market, where your kids can meet the vendors and learn about where food comes from.

These activities not only teach kids about food but also make them love cooking, eating, and discovering new foods!



## Educational Resources

### Welcome to Kindergarten – Public Health Resources

When children are starting kindergarten it is important that that parents are aware of the following information regarding:

- Childhood [immunizations](#) and vaccines required for school
- [Oral health](#)
- [Vision health and eye exams](#)
- Hand hygiene
- Sleep
- Nutrition

This video is available with additional information for parents. [Welcome to Kindergarten video!](#)

Public Health Nurses are available to attend ‘Welcome to Kindergarten’ events, schools call 905-688-8248 ext. 7379 or email [healthyschools@niagararegion.ca](mailto:healthyschools@niagararegion.ca) to schedule an nurse at an upcoming event.

### OPHEA – Outdoor Education Toolkit

With the beautiful weather quickly approaching [Outdoor Education Toolkit](#) was developed to enrich and promote a culture of safety-mindedness, increase teacher awareness, confidence, and preparedness to teach outdoor education safety and risk management, and increase student awareness, confidence, and preparedness about outdoor education safety and risk management.

### Blue the Butterfly Pedestrian Safety

Thinking about a walk to school event with the warmer weather? Consider using the Blue the Butterfly Pedestrian Safety video to support your event. [CLICK HERE](#)  
Blue's tips include:

- Walking to school reduces cars on the street which is good for safety and the environment, and walking in groups can be fun.
- Before you start walking, check the weather and dress properly.

- Walk where motorists expect to see you, like on a sidewalk or pathway.
- Stay alert, pay attention and listen for traffic.
- Use your pointer finger to express your intention to cross a street to motorists and obey the traffic signals.
- Show everyone respect while walking, including to fellow pedestrians and property.

Remember, most students who travel to school on the bus are pedestrians on their journey to the bus stop and can benefit from watching this video too! Visit [Pedestrian Safety Program for Primary Grades \(nsts.ca\)](https://www.nsts.ca/PedestrianSafetyProgramforPrimaryGrades)