



Your Child's Brain Matters

Concussions are Brain Injuries

Concussions aren't a boy thing, or just from playing sports. Concussions are a brain injury that can happen to anyone, at any age, doing just about anything. And because you can't see a concussion, it must be taken seriously.

A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head that changes the way your brain normally works. It can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes your brain to bounce around inside your head, like whiplash. Sometimes there are no traces - no bumps, bruises or scratches. And it doesn't mean being knocked out, wobbly legs or "seeing stars."

While a concussion is non-life threatening, the symptoms can be serious. Any head injury should be checked out by a doctor.

Most of us link concussions with sports, and while partly true, concussions can happen in the playground with a slip, or when kids bump their heads reaching for a ball. Concussions can occur even while wearing a helmet (helmets are strongly recommended)...think of hockey or football.

The signs may begin immediately, or they may not develop for hours, days, weeks, or even months following the injury.

Get the Facts

- 1) Learn about concussions - [View Video](#)
Concussions 101: Primer for Parents and Kids
- 2) Know what to do if your child experiences a concussion:
 - [View Video](#) - Concussion Management and Return to Learn
 - [Read Guidelines](#) - Concussion Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers



Your Child and Returning to School

Rest is critical to help the brain recover. Doing too much too soon can slow the recovery process and cause symptoms to worsen.

Children who suffer a concussion need more rest time than adults, perhaps as much as 30 days of no physical activity, no television viewing or electronic gaming. Young brains need more post-concussion rest because it is such an important time for growth and development.

Before a student can return to school, they must be cleared by a health-care professional.

Returning to normal activities, including school work and physical activities, is a step-wise process that requires patience, attention, and caution. **Return to Play** and **Return to Learn** should be followed to ensure your child recovers fully from the concussion.

Some school boards have a concussion protocol in place, so if your child experiences a concussion at school, there are steps and procedures to follow to assist in your child's return to learn and activity.

If you suspect your child has a concussion or has a diagnosed concussion that occurs off the school site, contact the principal as soon as possible and prior to student's return to school.

Check with your local school board to see if a concussion protocol exists.

Source: Alberta Health Services HealthTALK, March 2014

Curriculum Revised for Health & Physical Education: Parent Resources

On February 23, 2015 the Ministry of Education released the newly revised [Health and Physical Education](#) curriculum. There are many updates that were long overdue and will help to make sure children are educated on how to make safe and healthy choices.

Many of the topics in the new curriculum build on the teachings from the 1998 curriculum. They are relevant to our ever-changing society and provide the best possible information for our children.

In Catholic schools, sexual health is taught through the Fully Alive Program. The Ministry of Education has made funding available to the Institute for Catholic Education and the Assembly of Catholic

Bishops of Ontario to develop these resources for Catholic teachers. They will be available in Catholic schools in September 2015.

Lambton Public Health will continue to support local schools and the health-related curriculum learning.

Along with the curriculum document the Ministry has created support documents specifically for parents.

A Parent's Guide (click to view)

- [A Parent's Guide to the Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 1 to 12](#)

Report Immunizations

Parents or guardians are legally responsible to report immunizations or provide legal exemptions as part of the Immunization of School Pupils Act, 1990. Your doctor or healthcare provider is not required to report immunizations to Lambton Public Health (LPH).

Options to Report:

- **WEB** - www.lambtonhealth.on.ca
- **OFFICE** - Bring to Lambton Public Health
- **CALL** - 519-383-8331 ext. 3554 or 1-800-667-1839
- **FAX** - 519-383-7092

Recent measles and mumps outbreaks in other communities remind us of the importance of vaccinations and taking the step to report them to public health units. Public health supports the community response to outbreaks and maintaining school-entry immunization records is a very important piece to that response.

Ontario's Routine Immunization Schedule

This tool will help you learn about Ontario's free vaccine program, and make it easy to keep your family up to date with the recommended vaccinations.

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
[Facebook Profile: Schedule](#)



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ONTARIO'S ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE Vaccines. Helping your body help itself.



Health Impacts on Kids

Smoke-Free Ontario Act: Playgrounds & Public Sports Fields

As of January 1, 2015 it is now illegal to smoke within 20 metres of children's playgrounds and public sports fields and surfaces. Examples of these spaces are:

- Baseball diamonds
- Soccer fields
- Splash pads
- Outdoor public skating rinks
- Outdoor public swimming pools

For more information about this act and other new regulations visit: ontario.ca/smokefree

Role Modeling: Children Learn What They See

If you're worried that your smoking is having a negative influence on your children, now is the time to quit. A 23-year long multigenerational Youth Development Study at Purdue University found that children of smokers are 6 times more likely to smoke (Pediatrics, Aug. 2013).

Quitting is easier with **nicotine replacement therapy**. Get it free by calling Lambton Public Health's Tobacco Hotline at 519-383-3810 or 1-800-667-1839 ext. 3810.

Protect your family and eliminate the harmful effects of second hand and third hand exposure to smoke.

Lyme Disease

Warm Weather Signals Tick Prevention

Warm weather will soon be upon us and ticks will again be active throughout Lambton County. This includes schoolyards and areas children may encounter on their walks to and from school. The bite of an infected blacklegged tick (formerly called deer ticks) can spread bacteria that may cause Lyme disease.

The risk of getting Lyme disease is low, even if bitten by an infected blacklegged tick. Prompt detection and removal of ticks **within 24 hours** are key methods of preventing Lyme disease. The blacklegged tick is the only type of tick in Ontario known to transmit Lyme disease.

Children play outside and may be exposed through normal daily activities including field trips, exploring on the way to and from school, playing sports and even camping on the weekend. Limiting outdoor activities is not the solution to limit exposure, but following these very simple precautions will help:

- After the child's outing or return from school, do a quick "tick check" on them. Pay extra attention to the scalp, groin and armpits. Clothes and hair may be washed if needed.
- Apply an insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or skin. Follow the label instructions.
- Be aware of tick habitat – tall grass, bushes and wooded areas. Stick to trails and avoid direct contact with plant growth. This option is less likely to work with children who enjoy exploring!

If you find a tick **don't panic**. Use tweezers to grasp the tick's head as close to the skin as possible and pull straight out using steady pressure. **Never** twist, squeeze or burn the tick. Ticks found on humans can be submitted to Lambton Public Health for identification.



Ticks are tiny, slow-moving bugs, about the size of a sesame seed and they feed on blood.

Lambton Public Health (LPH) conducts tick surveillance:

- Scheduled tick drags
- Public samples submitted

There has been an increase in the number of blacklegged ticks from 2013 to 2014.

Parenting Programs

FREE Spring Sessions



These programs can help develop skills to cope with the challenges and celebrate the joys of parenting. You'll also meet other parents who are dealing with the same issues.

Sessions are held at various locations in Lambton County. View the class topics and schedule online: <http://bit.do/LPHparentclass>

Student Nutrition Programs



Student Nutrition Programs serve over 1 million meals and snacks across Lambton County every year.

Programs need more funds to cover all expenses. Your generous donation assists programs with food and equipment costs.

For more information please contact the Student Nutrition Program Coordinator at 519-344-2062 ext. 2011 or 1-800-387-2882.

Booster Seats: Boost Them up Every Time

Booster seats raise a child up so the adult-sized seatbelt system will not injure them in a collision. Always ensure the lap belt fits over the child's hip bones (not stomach) and the shoulder belt is positioned over their chest (not neck). Failure to use a booster seat properly puts the child at risk for serious injury if a collision occurs.

Children can start using a booster seat when they reach 18 kg (40 lbs). Children no longer need to use a booster seat when they reach any one of the following criteria: 8 years old, or 36 kg (80 lbs), or 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall.

A backless booster seat is a great option if the child already has head protection from the vehicle seat head rest; otherwise use a booster seat with a back that provides head protection.

Feedback

Fill out a survey for a chance to win a prize for your child's classroom. Your feedback is important. Information provided is confidential and will be used to make improvements and better support schools with public health information.



SURVEY: <http://bit.do/LPHBuzz2014>

If you require access to this newsletter in an alternate format please contact Lambton Public Health at 519-383-8331, 1-800-667-1839 or email: healthyschools@county-lambton.on.ca.



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