



A Health Flyer for Parents

When students miss too many days of school, they fall behind and struggle to keep up with their classmates. Whether the days missed are due to illness, truancy or for any other reason, the end result for the student is the same — learning time is lost. Children and adolescents will get sick at times and may need to stay at home, but we want to work with you to help minimize the number of days your student misses school.

Missed Days Add Up Quickly!

- Just a few missed days a month adds up to several school weeks missed in a year.
- Both excused and unexcused absences can make it more difficult for your child to keep up with other students, especially in math and reading.
- Kindergarten and first grade are critical for your child. Missing school during these early years makes it more difficult for children to learn in later years and they often have trouble reading by the end of third grade.

Work with Your Child and Your School

- As the parent, be strong with your child and don't let your child stay home when it is not necessary. This will help your child succeed.
- If your child has a chronic disease, make sure that the school staff is aware of the disease so the staff can assist your child if he or she becomes ill.
- For students with asthma: if your child has asthma, make sure that the school staff is aware of your child's condition and of their asthma management plan. Make sure your child has easy access to their reliever medication (Ventolin/Salbutamol, Bricanyl, etc.). The medication will be administered as per our Health Support Services Policy.
- For students with diabetes: if your child has diabetes, make sure that the school staff is aware of your child's condition and of their diabetes management plan. Make sure all supplies (insulin, blood sugar meter, test strips) needed to manage your child's diabetes are at the school. The medication will be administered as per our Health Support Services Policy.
- **Keep an open line of communication with school staff and teachers. The more the school knows about your child's health, the better prepared everyone will be to work together for your child.**

Helpful Ideas:

- Make appointments with the doctor or dentist in the late afternoon so your child misses as little school as possible.
- If your child must miss school, make sure you get his or her homework assignments and follow up to see if the work is completed and turned in.
- Call the school as soon as you know your child will be absent and tell school staff why your child will be out and for how long.
- Be prepared to get a doctor's note when requested by school personnel.
- Information for parents from Canada's paediatricians is available at Caring for Kids – Illness & Infections: <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/illnesses-index>
- If you need medical advice consult your **physician**, local **Public Health Unit office** or call **Telehealth Ontario**. Telehealth Ontario is a free service. A registered Nurse will take your call 24 hours a day, seven days a week **1-866-797-0000**.
- If your child has an **emergency**, call **911**.



WHEN SHOULD I SEND MY CHILD TO SCHOOL?

The suggestions below are for children 5 to 18 years of age.

Recommendations may be different for infants and younger children.

Symptoms and Illnesses	Should My Child Go To School?
Parent is Sick, Stressed, Hospitalized	YES - If you are sick, your child still needs to attend school. Your illness does not excuse your child from attending. We all are sick at times so plan ahead for these days. Get a neighbor, relative or spouse to take your child to school and pick him or her up.
Chronic Diseases (Asthma, Diabetes, Sickle Cell, Epilepsy etc.) Chronic disease is a long-lasting condition that can be controlled but not cured.	YES – Your child should attend school. Please notify the school and ensure a plan is in place to manage the disease.
Child Doesn't Want to go to School Frequent crying, fear, anger, not wanting to socialize, behavior change, stomach ache, nausea (these can be signs of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, or fear).	YES – You should keep your child in school, but try to determine what is causing the changes. Talk to school personnel and consult a health care provider. Your child may be experiencing bullying or trauma, may be behind in his or her school work or not getting along with others. These and other issues may require your or school personnel's attention.
Cold Symptoms Stuffy nose/runny nose, sneezing, mild cough.	YES - If your child is able to participate in school activities send him or her to school.
Strains, Sprains and Pains	YES – If there is no known injury and your child is able to function (walk, talk, eat) he or she should be in school. If pain is severe or doesn't stop, consult a health care provider.
Menstrual Issues	YES – Most of the time menstrual (periods) issues should not be a problem. If they are severe and interfering with your daughter attending school, consult with a health care provider.
Head Lice (Pediculosis) Intense itching of the head; may feel like something is moving.	YES – Please notify the school. Your child can be in school after treatment has been administered and your child is free from live pediculosis (lice, nits and eggs).
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) The white of the eye is pink and there is a thick yellow/green discharge.	NO – Call a health care provider to prescribe medication/treatment. If your child has pus-like discharge from the eye(s) wait until at least 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotic treatment before returning to school.
Fever Fever usually means illness, especially if your child has a fever of 39oC (102oF) or higher as well as other symptoms like behavior change, rash, sore throat, vomiting etc.	NO – If your child has a fever of 39oC (102oF) or higher, keep them at home until his or her fever is below 39oC (102oF) for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. If the fever does not go away after 2-3 days or is 39oC (102oF) or higher, you should consult a health care provider.
Diarrhea Frequent, loose, or watery stool may mean illness but can also be caused by food and medication	NO – Keep your child at home until diarrhea is gone or a healthcare provider determines your child is not infectious.
Vomiting Child has vomited 2 or more times in a 24 hour period	NO – Keep your child at home until the vomiting has stopped for 24 hours. If vomiting continues, contact a health care provider.
Coughing Severe, uncontrolled, rapid coughing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing	NO – Keep your child home and contact a health care provider. Asthma - if symptoms are due to asthma, provide treatment according to your child's Asthma Action Plan and when symptoms are controlled send your child to school.
Rash With Fever	NO – If a rash spreads quickly, is not healing, or has open weeping wounds, you should keep your child at home and have him or her seen by a health care provider.
Strep Throat Sore throat, fever, stomach ache, and red, swollen tonsils	NO — Keep your child at home for the first 24 hours after an antibiotic is begun.
Chicken Pox - fever, headache, stomach ache or sore throat, then a red itchy skin rash develops on the stomach first and then limbs and face. Measles & Rubella (German Measles) – swollen glands, rash that starts behind ears then the face and the rest of the body, sore joints, mild fever and cough, red eyes Mumps – fever, headache, muscle aches, loss of appetite, swollen tender salivary glands Pertussis (Whooping Cough) – many rapid coughs followed by a high-pitched “whoop”, vomiting, very tired	NO — Keep your child at home until a health care provider has determined that your child is not contagious. If you need medical advice consult your physician , contact your local Public Health Unit office, or call Telehealth Ontario . Telehealth Ontario is a free service. A registered Nurse will take your call 24 hours a day, seven days a week 1-866-797-0000 . If your child has an emergency , call 911 .

