

SCHOOL HEALTH E-NEWSLETTER

Te Kura Hauora Rorohiko Panui

Regional Public Health's School Health & Immunisation Group

Term 2 2014

> Vision and hearing

Regional Public Health has ten vision and hearing technicians (VHTs). They provide a vision and hearing screening service to primary schools in the greater Wellington region.

PRIMARY SCHOOL SCREENING PROGRAMME

The VHT will see:

- New entrants who have not completed the B4SC check
- New immigrants receive a full vision and hearing check
- Year 7 (intermediate age) vision distance screening for all students and colour vision screening for boys only
- Parent/teacher requests – the VHT will respond to a request if there is a hearing or vision concern from a parent or teacher

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE SCREENING CHECKS?

Plunket B4School Checks

The VHTs screen children attending the Plunket B4 School Checks (B4SC), and work alongside the B4SC nurses. This check is for four year olds only. Parents are present when the child's vision and hearing is screened. This means the VHT and the parent can discuss the child's relevant medical history, and the parents can see how the screening is completed.

Hearing

All children have their hearing tested with an audiometer. An audiometer is a machine with headphones that checks hearing levels by the responses given by the child. If the child fails the hearing test, their middle ear function will be checked (tympanometry). This will indicate whether the child has glue ear, wax or other middle ear issues. If the hearing test is not passed, the child will be referred to their family doctor or the ear nurse at the Porirua Children's Ear Van. If the child has a significant hearing loss which is not related to glue ear, or wax, the child will be referred to an audiologist.

Vision

Vision screening is a distance check only. The vision hearing technician uses a Parr Letter Matching Chart for checking of 4 to 6 year olds vision. They use a Snellen Wall Chart for checking the vision of children 7 years and over.

Both tests are screened over a four metre distance and eyes are checked separately. If there are concerns found with a child's vision they will be referred to a optometrist or eye specialist.

The ENABLE subsidy

A child may be entitled to a subsidy of up to \$287.50 (incl. GST) towards

the cost of an eye examination, lenses, frames, eye patches, repairs and maintenance.

If the child is under 16 years of age, and the parent or child fits the criteria listed below, please make an appointment at a private practice.

This subsidy is provided through the Ministry of Health and they may be eligible if they hold a valid community service card or a valid high use card.

For full details, contact an optometrist or phone Enable NZ on 0800 362 253.

VISION AND HEARING TESTERS

VHTs are not at schools as often as they used to be. If there is a concern regarding a school age child's ears or eyes, there are a few checks that the teachers at school can do.

1. Check on the Enrol database. The history of any testing is recorded there and the pre-school records will be transferred after 21 days after the child is enrolled at the school.
2. Contact the parents as they may have information regarding the child's status that VHTs are unaware of.
3. If you are unable to find any information regarding the vision & hearing status contact your VHT.

> B4 School Check

Did you know that the B4 School Check is a free check for four year olds?

The check helps to make sure your child is healthy and can learn well at school. It is a chance to discuss your child's health and development with a nurse. Further information can be found [HERE](#).



> Head lice

We are aware that a re-occurring problem of head lice can cause concern and distress for many of you. Head lice are unpleasant and it is frustrating for you to have to deal with them repeatedly. Unfortunately head lice are a common problem throughout the world, and can affect any child in any community. As yet there is no guaranteed solution for getting rid of them permanently. Although the lice themselves do not carry disease, children can often scratch so much that infections occur on the scalp.

If you discover live head lice or if you find eggs within 1 cm of the scalp there are several ways to get rid of them:

Wet Combing is often the most ef-

fective way of managing head lice as combing damages the egg preventing it from hatching. If eggs do hatch then daily combing will remove the young lice before they can reproduce.

- Use lots of conditioner on dry hair to cover the whole scalp and all of the hair from roots to tip. The conditioner will slow down the head lice for approximately 20 minutes so leave the conditioner in the hair.
- Divide the hair into small sections and comb carefully from the roots to the tip. Use a metal fine toothed nit comb but remember to wipe the comb clean with a clean tissue in between strokes.
- Wash out the conditioner after

checking the hair carefully.

- This process will have to be repeated daily over a period of 3 weeks.

Chemicals are another option. Read and follow the instructions on the packet carefully.

After using the treatment:

- Check all members of the household daily for at least three weeks.
- Comb the hair carefully to remove as many dead or live head lice and eggs as possible, eggs may also be removed using your finger and thumb.
- Remember that some treatments need to be used twice, 7 – 10 days apart.

> Influenza

It's flu season! The flu is easily spread through talking, coughing and sneezing. Symptoms include fever, chills, aches, runny nose, a cough and stomach upset.

Exclusion from school

People with the flu should stay at home until they are feeling well.

Most people who get flu will recover, but some cases can lead to serious complications or even death. The very young, those 65 years and older, those with weakened immune systems, and women who are pregnant are at higher risk for flu complications.

You can find out more information on the [FIGHTFLU](#) website or phone 0800 466 863.

Visit our website [HERE](#) to download useful influenza resources to share with your school community.

Flu vaccinations

Immunisation is your best defence against the flu. It is still not too late to get a flu jab! Having a flu vaccine is not only important for the staff in the school, it is also important for protecting the tamariki you teach. If a teacher becomes unwell with influenza there is a chance of passing it on to a child.

It is recommended that you have a flu jab every year, as the protection lessens over time, and the flu can be caused by different viruses that are not always represented in the previous year's vaccine.



*Don't get it.
Don't give it.*

Stop the spread of germs that can make you and others sick!

To help stop the spread of germs:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put your used tissue in the waste basket.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

> Dental Day 14 June

Lumino Day is the day when Lumino The Dentists practices open their doors to family members (over 18 years old) of children at KidsCan partner schools.

Selected family members are invited to visit a participating Lumino The Dentists to receive FREE dental care including;

basic exams/x-rays, fillings, extractions and pain relief.

The inaugural Lumino Day took place on Saturday 25 May 2013, with 50 dentists, 15 hygienists and 100 support staff around New Zealand providing almost 400 deserving patients with valuable

and much needed dental treatment.

KidsCan are pleased to be partnering with Lumino The Dentists to provide this amazing opportunity for families, who may otherwise be unable to afford the dental treatments they need.

For more info: <http://www.kidscan.org.nz/>



Lumino
The Dentists

> Kia ora from Jackie Jennings

Hi my name is Jackie Jennings and I have been employed by the Regional Public Health for 18 years and have been a vision hearing technician for 15 years. I have three adult children Lee, Ryan and Kim. I also have one adorable grandson Kade whom I have every day after school.

My interests are netball, I have played for many years both indoor and outdoor, and also coached and referred. My other interests are reading, walking, keeping in touch with friends and have recently had the

opportunity to do a bit of overseas travel which I enjoyed.

I really enjoy my job working with the children from four years of age and sometimes right up young adults. I work closely with public health nurses, ear nurse specialists, audiologists, optometrists, GPs and Plunket.

I am the PSA delegate, the treasurer for the Vision Hearing Society and am on a working group with Ear Nose and Throat Services for both Hutt and Wellington Hospitals.



> Rheumatic fever: sore throats matter

Rheumatic fever is an illness that often starts with a sore throat (a streptococcal infection). A few weeks after the 'strep' throat your child may develop:

- sore or swollen joints (knees, elbows, ankles and wrists)
- a skin rash
- a fever
- stomach pain
- jerky movements

Most cases of rheumatic fever are in children aged 5 to 15. It is more common in Maori and Pacific people. If

a child has a sore throat it is important to see the doctor and get their throat checked.

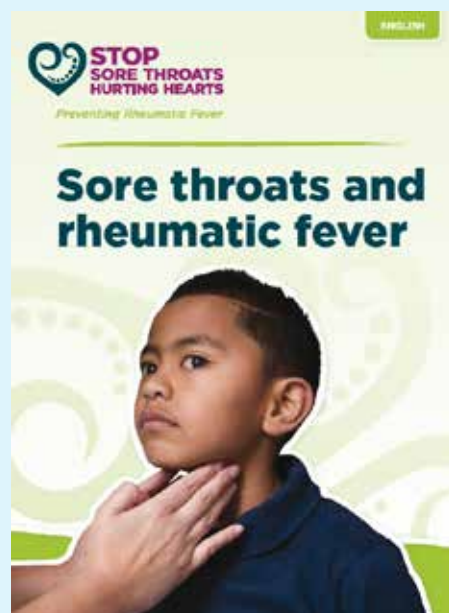
If it is a group A strep throat antibiotics can get rid of the infection before it develops into rheumatic fever. It is very important to complete the full course of antibiotics.

For more information visit:

<http://www.hpa.org.nz/>

<http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/>

<http://www.rph.org.nz/>



> Upcoming events

31 May

World No Tobacco Day

15–21 June

National Volunteer Week

20 June

World Refugee Day

21–27 July

Maori Language Week

> How do I contact a public health nurse for advice or referrals?

You can make referrals directly to your allocated public health nurse if you are a school that receives weekly or fortnightly visits from a public health nurse.

You can also call 04 570 9002 if you want to get in touch with your public health nurse outside of visiting times, or if you are a decile 7–10 school that does not receive visits from an agency other than Regional Public Health.

Decile 7–10 schools that do not receive nursing support from another agency may also contact us via: SchoolPHN@huttvalleydhb.org.nz

If you are a school that receives nursing support from an agency other than Regional Public Health, then you should discuss referrals with that nurse in the first instance.

However, if you have any concerns regarding outbreaks or infectious/communicable diseases then you should contact us no matter who supports you.

Regional Public Health
Better Health For The Greater Wellington Region



Washing and drying hands



1.

Wet your hands under clean running water. Use warm water if available



2.

Put soap on your hands and wash for 20 seconds. Liquid soap is best



3.

Rub hands together until the soap makes bubbles



4.

Rub on both sides of both hands...

Wash hands for 20 seconds



5.

and in between fingers and thumbs...



6.

and round and round both hands



7.

Rinse all the soap off under clean running water. Use warm water if available



8.

Dry your hands all over for 20 seconds. Using a paper towel is best (or, if at home, a clean dry towel)

Always wash and dry your hands ...

After

- sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- playing outside
- touching animals
- going to the toilet

Before

- eating or preparing food

Wash and dry hands before and after touching infected skin

Thanks to Northland District Health Board for this material