

SCHOOL HEALTH E-NEWSLETTER

Te Kura Hauora Rorohiko Panui

Regional Public Health's School Health & Immunisation Group
Hutt Valley, Wellington and Porirua region. Please forward to all school staff.

Term 2 2016

*Our aim is to support students with their health and improve their learning outcomes.
We will inform you of 'hot health topics' and how to recognise evidence versus sensationalism!*

> Influenza

As winter is approaching it is time to start thinking about flu and how it can affect us all. Influenza, commonly called the flu, can be a serious illness that is sometimes fatal. Infection with the influenza virus may lead to a stay in hospital for any age group, but particularly if you are elderly or have an ongoing medical condition. Influenza can make an existing medical condition, such as asthma or diabetes, a lot worse.

Your best protection against the influenza virus is to get immunised. Protect yourself and the people around you by getting your annual influenza immunisation, just like a million other kiwis do each year.

Immunisation is FREE for many people. Ask your doctor or nurse today about the influenza immunisation.. For more information on influenza and links to other useful websites visit www.rph.org.nz (Public Health Topics > Infectious Diseases > Influenza)



> Water only policy

There is currently an emphasis on water only policies to be put into schools. This emphasis is coming from both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. The health reasons behind this, are the increasing rates of obesity, the severity of dental decay in our children and the increasing rates of type two diabetes in the population as a whole. Click [HERE](#) to find out how a New Zealand school achieved being a water only school and the benefits they reported.

Click [HERE](#) for a poster you can download and use around your school to promote drinking water.



HOW MUCH SUGAR DO YOU DRINK?



DID YOU KNOW? Soft drinks, fruit juice, sports drinks and flavoured milk can contain 5-7 teaspoons of sugar in a 250ml glass.

water is the best choice

low or reduced-fat unflavoured milk is a good choice too



> Health and safety laws

The new Health and Safety at Work Act came into force on the April 4 2016. Ensure you are familiar with any changes this means for you, your classroom and your school.. For more information click [HERE](#).

Whilst at school it is possible for a child to have an accident and injure themselves in some way. In line with the new law it is important that any injuries a child sustains are documented clearly. The Ministry of Education have provided templates available [HERE](#).

> Vision and Hearing Technicians (VHTs)



There has been a slight change in the way VHTs will be responding to requests from schools to screen children for vision and hearing. If you would like a child in your class screened for vision and/or hearing concerns, please ensure you contact the child's parent/caregiver to get consent. The school Principal has been sent a consent form. Parents do have the option to complete the

"opt out" form if they do not wish for their child to be screened. This form is usually part of the school enrolment pack. If you need more forms, let your school VHT know. If you have any further queries about this contact Rocky Ali Team Leader and Portfolio Lead for Vision and Hearing Technicians at Rukhsana.Ali@huttvalleydhb.org.nz

> Measles

Measles is a highly infectious virus that spreads easily from person to person through the air, via breathing, coughing and sneezing.

It affects both children and adults.

People with measles are infectious 5 days before and until 5 days after the rash appears. The illness usually starts 10-14 days after a person has been exposed. Symptoms include: fever, cough, runny nose, sore and watery pink eyes, and sometimes small white spots appear on the back inner cheek of your mouth.

At around day 3-7 a blotchy rash may appear which tends to start on the face before moving over the head and body. The rash can last for up to a week.

If you, or a child have any of these symptoms, see your family doctor or call Healthline on 0800 611 116 as soon as possible.

The best prevention against measles is the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Vaccines are free for children and adults who have not previously received two doses of the vaccine. Vaccination is also important if you are planning to travel overseas.



> School based immunisation programme

The year has started off well, with over 900 school children in year 7 and 8 receiving their immunisations by the school based programme in the Wellington region. The team are moving on to dose 2 of the HPV/Gardasil, and they also have approximately 3000 more Boostrix immunisations to administer by the end of term 4.

As you are aware, the programme is delivered in the school setting by a team of registered nurses, who have been providing this service for many years and are very experienced in ensuring that children receive the best possible care.

The immunisations offered by the programme are:

- Year 7 Boostrix immunisation providing protection against Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough). This is a booster dose, following on from early childhood immunisation given before starting school
- Year 8 girls receive the HPV/Gardasil immunisation providing protection against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and genital warts.

Any queries regarding these immunisations can be answered by calling the public health nurse on 04 587 2949 or by visiting the Ministry of Health [WEBSITE](#).

We encourage you to continue sharing this newsletter with as many people at your school as possible.