

**Dr. Eileen De Villa**  
Medical Officer of Health

**Toronto Public Health**  
277 Victoria Street  
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1W2

**Tel:** 416-338-7600  
publichealth@toronto.ca  
toronto.ca/health

October 2, 2024

## **Re: Toronto Public Health Information**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As you help your child navigate a healthy and successful 2024-2025 school year, Toronto Public Health (TPH) has important information to support you.

### **Reducing the Spread of Communicable Diseases**

To help protect our school communities, staff, students, and visitors are reminded to:

- Stay home if they are sick or have symptoms of illness.
- [Wash or sanitize their hands](#) often.
- [Cover their cough or sneeze with their elbow or a tissue.](#)
- Stay up to date on vaccinations:
  - Your child needs to be up to date with vaccinations, as outlined in Ontario's [Immunization of School Pupils Act \(ISPA\)](#), or have a valid exemption.
    - This includes vaccinations for measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis (whooping cough), meningococcal and varicella (chicken pox).
    - Toronto is seeing an increase in [pertussis \(whooping cough\)](#), similar to what is being reported across Ontario and Canada. Infection from this vaccine preventable disease starts like a common cold, with mild fever, runny nose, red watery eyes and a mild cough. It can then turn into coughing fits that last weeks or even months.
    - Vaccines are available through primary health care providers. Students without a health care provider can book an appointment at one of TPH's community clinics by visiting [TPHbookings.ca](#). Appointments fill quickly but are added regularly.
    - Vaccinations need to be reported to TPH using [Immunization Connect Ontario \(ICON\)](#).
  - Students in grade 7 and 8 in select schools, will be offered the hepatitis B, human papillomavirus (HPV) and meningococcal vaccines in school through TPH's [School Immunization Program \(SIP\)](#).
    - Students in grades 7 to 12 who do not have access to a school-based clinic or who have missed these vaccines can still get them for free at a [TPH vaccination clinic](#).
  - Updated COVID-19 and influenza (flu) vaccines will be available this fall.
    - Both vaccines will be important to prevent serious illness from these viruses during peak [respiratory illness season](#).

## Dental Screening Program

Good oral health is important for overall health. If your child is without access to dental care, please see information about [TPH Dental Clinics](#).

## More Information

Visit [toronto.ca/health](https://toronto.ca/health) to learn more about:

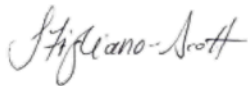
- [Healthy Schools](#)
- [Health Information for School Age Parents & Caregivers](#)
- [Immunizations](#)
- [Mental health resources](#)
- [Respiratory viruses](#)
- [Sexual health promotion resources to support parents and caregivers](#)
- [Vaping](#)

## Questions?

Contact TPH at [publichealth@toronto.ca](mailto:publichealth@toronto.ca) or 416-338-7600, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Service is available in multiple languages.

Wishing you and your family a happy and healthy school year ahead.

Sincerely,



Joanne Figliano-Scott  
Acting Chief Nursing Officer  
Acting Director of Community Health and Well-being