

School Health E-Newsletter

Te Kura Hauora Rorohiko Pānui

Regional Public Health's School Health & Immunisation Group

Term 2 2011

Welcome to our newsletter

This E-Newsletter is brought to you by Regional Public Health's School Health and Immunisation Group. We provide public health services to primary, intermediate and many secondary schools across the Wellington Region. The aim of this newsletter is to keep you up to date with the current issues for students in school communities. Please feel free to get in touch if you have any comments or questions.

Contacting RPH

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.

All other schools can make referrals or enquiries via:

SchoolPHN@huttvalleydhb.org.nz for Primary / Intermediate queries.

CollegePHN@huttvalleydhb.org.nz for High School / College queries.

Did You Know?

April 14th was Pink Shirt Day

Pink shirt day is held every year in New Zealand / Aotearoa to help raise awareness of antibullying initiatives and messages. Bullying is a major source of mental distress that can lead to mental ill health and significant deterioration in social functioning. Bullying can affect staff as well as students and Pink Shirt Day is an opportune time to revisit a School's antibullying policies and practices to ensure the wellbeing of the whole school community.

You may all be aware that bullying has been a hot topic in the media recently, so it's good to know that in some instances, students themselves are keen to take the lead on making a difference www.stuff.co.nz/national/education/4854531/Boys-college-backs-gay-straight-students.

You can find out more about Pink Shirt Day by visiting www.pinkshirtday.org.nz/about.

A high quality (and very large!) resource is available from www.mmsi.org.nz/images/stories/toolkit.pdf. Have a look at Page 75 of this document for detailed advice.

Youthline 0800 376 663 and Netsafe 0508 638 723 are other important community resources to be aware of.

Why not consider having a Pink Shirt Mufti fundraiser in 2012?

Winter Vomiting is On The Rise

Norovirus causes unpleasant vomiting, diarrhoea, nausea and stomach cramps. The illness is very infectious and can spread rapidly in schools.

Currently, norovirus is circulating widely in the general community. The main defences are strict exclusion of any child or adult who has diarrhoea and / or vomiting for 48 hr after these symptoms have stopped (as the person can still spread the disease at this time) and thorough hand washing. The virus is most commonly transmitted as a result of poor hand hygiene, so it is particularly important for people to thoroughly wash and dry their hands after using the toilet and before preparing food.

When an institutional outbreak does occur it is vital to reduce the amount of virus in toilets, washrooms and on any hard surfaces that are likely to be frequently touched. Use a chlorine-based disinfectant such as household bleach or Janola, as the virus is killed by contact with chlorine. Ventilating rooms also helps reduce virus levels in the environment. Cleaners need to wear face masks, gloves, and aprons to avoid infection.

Did You Know?

Dealing With Nits/Kutu

The best way to avoid nits/kutu is to brush the hair daily and to avoid sharing brushes, hats or scarves and to tie up long hair.

There are many ways to eradicate headlice. This is the simplest:

- ✓ Apply enough conditioner (much more than usual) to dry hair thoroughly covering the whole scalp and all the hair from the roots to the tips.
- ✓ Keep the conditioner in the hair. Conditioner stuns the insects for about 20 minutes.
- ✓ Comb the hair straight and get knots out with an ordinary comb.
- ✓ Use a fine-toothed nit comb (get one from the pharmacy) to systematically comb the hair from the roots upwards. Comb the full length of each hair.
- ✓ Wipe the comb with a clean tissue after each stroke of the comb.
- ✓ Comb all the hair, a little at a time, carefully.
- ✓ After thorough combing and inspection, wash the conditioner out.
- ✓ Repeat this every 2 days for three weeks in order to break the breeding cycle.

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/Schools/SchoolOperations/HealthAndSafety/HeadliceAndNitsGuideForSchoolCommunities.aspx>

Porirua East Community Transport Service: Bus 227

Transport issues and access to healthcare have just been made easier for residents of Porirua East. Bus 227 will pick up residents from their house (call 04 910 5179 at least 1 hour prior to departure) Monday – Friday from the Eastern Porirua suburbs to Keneperu Hospital and Porirua CBD.

<http://www.metlink.org.nz/assets/PDF-Timetables/227-Porirua-East-CTS-20-Feb-2011.pdf>

<http://www.metlink.org.nz/route-227-porirua-east-community-transport-service/>

Meningitis Has Not Gone Away

Meningococcal disease is caused when bacteria living in the nose or throat enter the bloodstream. This can cause meningitis, where the spinal cord lining swells, or blood poisoning.

The bug is passed through close contact, such as sharing drinks, living in the same household, kissing and other sharing of saliva.

Meningococcal disease symptoms include fever, headache, aversion to light, vomiting, a stiff neck, a rash that does not fade when pressed, confusion and a decreased level of consciousness. Anyone with some of these symptoms should seek urgent medical attention, as early treatment is extremely important and may save your life.

It is vital to act quickly if you are concerned about meningitis; you should contact your GP or Healthline on 0800 611 116 at the earliest opportunity. For more information have a look at

www.kidshealth.org.nz/index.php/ps_pagename/contentpage/pi_id/95

www.healthed.govt.nz/uploads/docs/HE9020.pdf

Kia Ora From The Ear Van Service

The Porirua and Hutt Ear Vans provide free ear checks for children from 0-18 years old. This service is provided by a Claudia Schotz and Laura Eginton, both Registered Nurses who have special training in Ear Health.

If you are concerned about a child's listening, speech or learning it would be advisable to have their ears checked.

The Ear Nurses provide ear assessment, ear wax removal, ear scanner testing, removal of foreign objects in the ear canal and refer on to other services if needed.

To see the Ear Nurse please call Regional Public Health Reception on 570 9002 or text 'appointment' to 027 845 1433 and we will contact (get back) to you.

What interesting things have we been up to?

Rata St. School and Naenae School Breakfast Co-op

In March this year Rata Street School and Naenae Primary Schools held a school wide breakfast to promote and re-launch the Breakfast Co-op for the year. The Breakfast Co-op was set up in 2005, initially at Rata Street School after a survey revealed that 16 – 23 per cent of the pupils were skipping breakfast.

The survey prompted the Breakfast Co-op initiative which involved a number of Public Health staff including Isabel Furniss & Lisa Langley (Nurses), Jane Wylie (Dietician), Heather Knewstubb, Lauren Ensor & Jayne Milburn (Public Health Advisors), Parents, Teachers, the Principal, the Police and the Social Worker in Schools to come together and set up the co op. The co op is run by parents and the food was originally provided by New World Supermarket in Naenae at discounted prices. Every Thursday parents can purchase breakfast cereals, milk and bread from the co op at both Naenae and Rata Street Schools.

Special guests this year were the Mayor of Lower Hutt, Ray Wallace, Harold the Giraffe from the Life Education Trust, and Gus the Smokefree Dragon.

St. Michael's School Health Evening

In February, for the second year running, St Michael's School Taita held a health education evening for parents and children. Isabel Furniss, Public Health Nurse, discussed services that Public Health provides to the school. St Michael's is a decile 1 school which Isabel visits weekly, giving her a great insight into the School's community. Isabel created a display showing all aspects of Public Health Nurse activity, which included information on healthy eating, sun smart, new entrant assessments, skin care and hygiene. Parents were also invited to enter a raffle with the opportunity to win prizes. It was a fun evening and great opportunity to meet many of the parents and to get to know the school pupils better.

Outstanding Achievement Award for Vaccination Rates

Hutt Valley DHB received an award on behalf of the Minister of Health to recognise 'Outstanding Achievement' in exceeding the MoH Immunisation Health Target. This result has been achieved by the collaborative efforts of parents, whanau, practice nurses in primary care, the Outreach Immunisation Service based at Kokiri Marae, Midwives and Lead Maternity Carers, Well Child Providers, PHO staff, paediatric nurses in the Hospital and Regional Public Health.

Regional Public Health provides support to general practices through the Hutt Immunisation Coordinator and the NIR administrator. Many players have contributed to this investment in the future wellbeing of Hutt children / tamariki in protecting against vaccine preventable diseases, and the certificate recognises the significance of the achievement.

When obtaining details for your school's vaccination register please remind parents / carers that they can find out about childhood immunisation and what to do if doses have been missed by calling their GP, or IMAC on 0800 466 863.

<http://www.immune.org.nz/?t=563>

It is also heartening to see good rates of uptake in Gardasil vaccination amongst Māori and Pacific Youth:

<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/pacific-amp-maori-teens-lead-cervical-cancer-immunisation>

The Wellington South Nursing Initiative Promotes "Teeth 4 Tots"

The February 9 edition of the Cook Strait News highlighted this collaborative initiative with the children, parents and staff of the Miramar A'oga amata. Signe Christensen (Public Health Nurse) and Bev Aspros (Plunket Nurse) worked with the school community to provide support and education about good oral hygiene. This was based on a similar project that had been carried out at Whanganui Kohanga Reo. Each pupil was given a toothbrush and will brush their teeth at lunchtime at the centre for six months. After this time the aim is that good dental hygiene habits will have been encouraged at home and that there will be a significantly reduced rate of dental decay. If successful this scheme has the potential to be extended to other A'oga amata, Kohanga Reo and preschool settings.

Coming Soon!

Win a Promethean Board and other goodies in the Cancer Society Sun Smart Competition

www.sunsmartschools.co.nz/teachers/video

31 May	World Smokefree Day	For more information: www.worldsmokefreeday.org.nz/wsf2011
21 -29 May	Youth Week	For more information: www.youthweek.co.nz
4 June	Matariki	For more information: www.korero.maori.nz/news/matariki
20 June	World Refugee Day	For more information: www.un.org/en/events/refugeeday/
4 - 10 July	Maori Language Week	For more information: www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz

