



Grande Prairie  
Volunteer  
Services Bureau

# WEEKLY SANE-ITIZER

Helpful information for Not-for-Profits,  
Individuals and Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

## We're Not Gonna Take It

Twisted Sister <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQvSsqeNbQI>

Oh, we're not gonna take it  
No, we ain't gonna take it  
Oh, we're not gonna take it anymore  
We've got the right to choose it  
There ain't no way we'll lose it  
This is our life, this is our song  
We'll fight the powers that be, just  
Don't pick our destiny 'cause  
You don't know us, you don't belong  
Oh, we're not gonna take it  
No, we ain't gonna take it  
Oh, we're not gonna take it anymore  
Oh, you're so condescending  
Your gall is never ending  
We don't want nothin', not a thing from you  
Your life is trite and jaded  
Boring and confiscated  
If that's your best, your best won't do  
Whoa, oh oh  
Whoa, oh oh  
We're right (yeah)  
We're free (yeah)  
We'll fight (yeah)  
You'll see (yeah)  
Whoa, whoa, we're not gonna take it  
No, we ain't gonna take it  
Oh, we're not gonna take it anymore...

Source: [LyricFind](#)

**“You have brains  
in your head. You  
have feet in your  
shoes. You can  
steer yourself any  
direction you  
choose.”**

— Dr. Seuss



“With effective case-contact testing and epidemic management strategies and associated small numbers of attendances while infected, children and teachers did not contribute significantly to COVID-19 transmission via attendance in educational settings.” – *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health August 3, 2020*

**Why do bees have sticky hair?**

**Because they have honeycombs!**

**When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the fire department usually uses water.**

**If you have 13 apples in one hand and 10 oranges in the other, what do you have?**

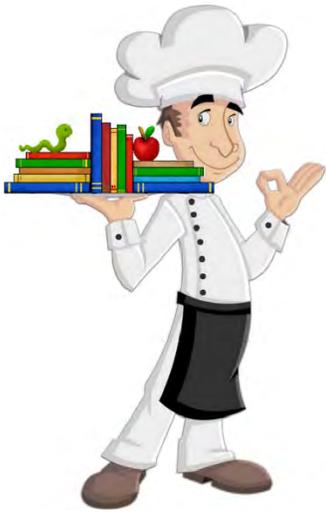
**BIG HANDS!**

Resources

[COVID-19 resources for parents and children](#) (Government of Canada)

[COVID-19 Learning Hub](#) (About Kids Health)

[COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub](#) (Jack.org)



# The Employer's Kitchen

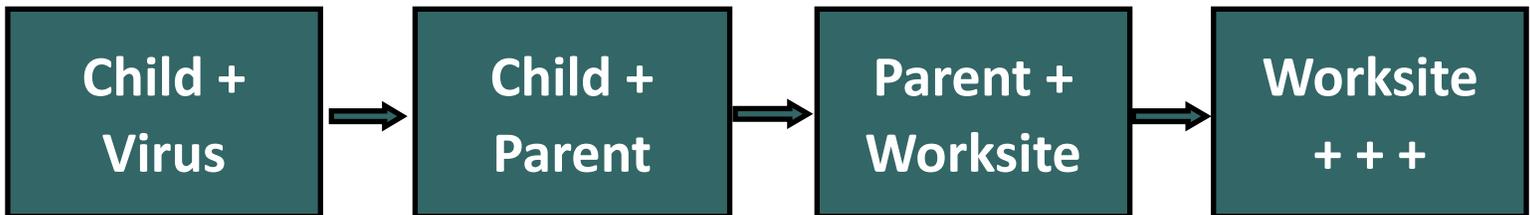
– creating ideas just for you

*There are tears, there are fears, and there is excitement, anticipation and a sense of new beginning at the start of a new school year. Or there used to be. In the before times there was a rhythm to the year: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall each with its own specific weather pattern and celebrations, starts and stops that strung us altogether. Since COVID-19 life has moved from pretty much predictable to just plain strange and the new school year is no exception.*

There was no real ending to the previous school year. One day the kids were in school and the next day they weren't. We were regaled with stories of students and parents trying to cope as best they could with on-line learning, no extra-curricular activities and grade school math. The school term eventually ended without fanfare or traditional celebrations. Without these rituals heralding the end, the rhythm of the year went kaput and we were all left with a lingering sense of unfinished business.

Now the mornings are crisp, the days shorter and it's the start of the new school year. Parents are dealing with a number of issues in getting their children educated. Prior to the start of the school year there was considerable pressure on parents to choose either on-line or classroom learning prior. (Never mind that the schools do not have to report student enrollment until September 30<sup>th</sup>.)

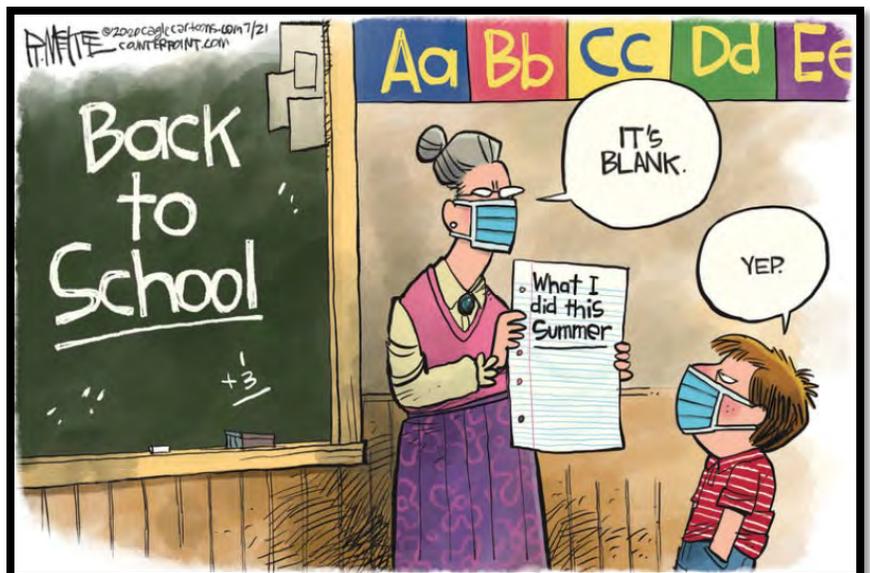
For a number of parents this has been agonizing, they want to see their children in school for a number of valid reasons, high on the list is the social factor. At the same time they are genuinely fearful of their child coming into contact and possibly becoming infected with the virus. This also has ramifications for employers. Like tossing a pebble into a pond the ripple effect will directly impact onto the worksite.



As an employer it can be difficult to help your employees navigate through this. At the end of the day they must do what is right for their child and their family. As an employer you must protect all of your employees and ensure that you can continue to conduct business and that your worksite meets all safety requirements including the mental health and well being of your staff.

These issues will need to be resolved if the pandemic continues for any length of time. Already we are seeing an increase in numbers and school is just starting. A second wave and shutdown will create irreparable harm for almost everyone. Now is the time to be talking about changes in the delivery of educational services for children, families and society.

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## MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN:

Feeling stress, anxiety and depression due to the COVID-19 crisis? We can help.

Text **COVID19HOPE** to **393939** to subscribe.

Text4Hope-Addiction Support and Text4Hope-Cancer Care are also available and designed to help Albertans dealing with psychological issues related to addiction and cancer issues. The expanded services are funded by the Mental Health Foundation.

Text **Open2Change** to **393939** to subscribe to the addiction program.

Text **CancerCare** to **393939** to subscribe to the cancer program.

[ Source: [Alberta Health Services](#), 2020 ]

**66% OF CANADIANS AND 72% OF AMERICANS ARE WORRIED ABOUT CHILDREN GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AT THE END OF THE SUMMER.**

Are you worried or not worried about children going back to school at the end of the summer?

[AMONG THOSE WITH SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN]



SOURCE: Leger's Weekly Survey, August 18, 2020

Leger

## Checklists to Guide Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

- [Deciding between in-person and virtual learning? Checklist: Planning for In-Person Classes](#)
- [Checklist: Planning for Virtual or At-Home Learning](#)

## Resources to navigate stress and uncertainty

- [CDC Stress and Coping During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [CDC Parent Portal](#)
- [CDC Children's Mental Health](#)
- [Bullying Prevention Resources](#)
- [Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs in Emergencies](#)
- [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\) SEL Resources and Guidelines for Educators, Parents, and Caregivers](#)
- [Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools Resources for Schools and Families Impacted by COVID-19](#)
- [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(The National Child Traumatic Stress Network\)](#)
- [Resources for Helping Kids and Parents Cope Amidst COVID-19 \(American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry\)](#)

[ Source: [Center for Disease control and prevention](#) ]





**Experts say there's no risk-free answer.** Do you risk exposing your kids to the coronavirus at school, or risk losing critical educational and social ground by keeping them home?

**Kids are more protected against the coronavirus, but it's possible for them to get seriously ill.** Kids of any age may be at risk for multisystem inflammatory syndrome, a rare but

potentially life-threatening condition that can follow a COVID-19 infection. The condition, often marked by fever, diarrhea, vomiting, fatigue, or confusion, has been reported in at least 49 children in Canada. None have died.

**Young children may be at a heightened risk for developing mental health issues when isolated from friends and teachers.** A study published in April in the Journal of the American Medical Association Pediatrics found that children in China, in grades two to six, experienced higher rates of depression and anxiety while in lockdown. Longer durations of lockdown were associated with higher rates of anxiety and depression.

**Teenagers struggle more than any other age group when cut off from their social networks.** While older children are at somewhat of an advantage, since they're accustomed to communicating with their friends online, they're still susceptible to feeling lonely while learning remotely. Feelings of isolation, depression, and anxiety can increase the risk of suicide in teenagers as well increased online time can also intensify feelings of loneliness, agitation, anger, and despair.

**Distance learning could impact children's social skills.** Kids learn social skills such as sharing, taking turns, play initiation, language, navigating conflict and resolution, as well as self-help and adaptive skills. Lack of physical contact with friends and classmates may lead to reduced comprehension of nonverbal emotional cues

**Most students are at risk of falling behind academically while learning remotely.**

Once school resumes in September, the average student will have lost as much a third of their progress in reading and half of their progress in math, according to a study from the Northwest Evaluation Association.

**School-aged kids may bring the virus home.** Surveys conducted in Wuhan and Shanghai found that when schools were open, children had about three times as many contacts as adults did. The researchers determined that closing schools reduced peak infections in those cities by up to 60%.



<https://www.alberta.ca/k-to-12-school-re-entry-2020-21-school-year.aspx>



- [COVID-19 information: Guidance for schools on re-entry scenario 1](#)
- [Resource guide for COVID-19 outbreaks in schools](#)
- [Implementing school re-entry guidance](#)
- [Get the facts: Back to class for 2020-21](#)
- [2020-21 Parent Guide \(available in 9 languages\)](#)
- [Student illness: What to do if a student has COVID-19 symptoms](#)

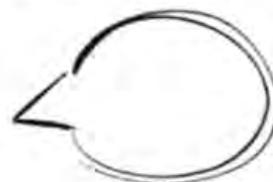
# MY BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST DURING COVID-19

Kids Help Phone 

Kids Help Phone's checklist can help students across Canada adjust with changes to their school year during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can check off the things that are relevant to/ possible for you as you go.

To cope with back-to-school changes during COVID-19, I can...

- check my school/school board's website (or contact them directly) to find out what back to school will look like for me this year
- familiarize myself with my school's reopening plan and reach out to school staff or administration with any questions I may have
- talk to my family and/or people I live with about my back-to-school arrangements (e.g. choosing a safer route to school if I'm attending in person, identifying a quiet space to study if I'm doing distance learning, etc.)
- write down a list of things I need to participate in my classes (e.g. regular school supplies, technology, hand sanitizer, software, masks, etc.)
- review where I left off in class or in my distance learning last year to refresh my memory
- have a plan for how I'll practise self-care (e.g. deep breathing, journaling, repeating an inspirational quote, connecting with nature, wearing something that makes me feel good, etc.)
- try and get back to my regular daily routine and sleep schedule (if it changed over the past few months)
- select a few people/places I can contact for help with school if I need it (e.g. my teachers, online tutors, guidance counsellors, student support centres, etc.)
- schedule safer ways to maintain social connection with my classmates, friends, teammates, partners, etc. (e.g. through email, a phone call, etc.)
- set boundaries for myself on what I feel comfortable with and respect the comfort level of others
- try to take things one day at a time (as things may continue to change) and be kind to myself
- reach out to someone I trust for support with my mental, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being if I need to (e.g. an Elder, parent/caregiver, friend, health-care professional, etc.)



Visit [KidsHelpPhone.ca/COVID19](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca/COVID19) for more tools, resources and info during the coronavirus disease outbreak.

**KidsHelpPhone.ca**

**Call 1-800-668-6868**

**Text 686868**

## Whether or not your child will be returning to school physical or virtually, here are some tips that may be helpful as the school year starts.

### Social Connections

Encourage your child or youth to stay social with their friends and peers.

### Routines

- Set a bedtime (and/or wake up time) and move it closer to what it should be for the school year.
- Set a screen curfew (a “downtime” after which point there are no screens). For example 8-9 p.m. for School-aged kids and 8:30-9:30 p.m. for high-school aged kids.
- Write down the new COVID-19 school-year schedule, for example:
  - ◇ 7:00 a.m. - Wake up
  - ◇ 8:00 a.m. - Leave for school
  - ◇ 8:40 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - School
  - ◇ 3:45 p.m. - Arrive home, wash hands
  - ◇ 3:45-5:00 p.m. - Homework time
  - ◇ 5-6:00 p.m. - Family dinner
  - ◇ 6-8:00 p.m. - Free time (non-educational electronics only allowed on Fridays and Saturdays)
  - ◇ 8:30 p.m. - Screen time finished, bedtime routine
  - ◇ 10:00 p.m. - Lights out

### Normalize mask-wearing

Some children will be able to wear masks easily but others may have a harder time. Consider the following exposure and desensitization strategies

- Consider motivating kids to get used to wearing a mask by pairing it with something they enjoy, like allowing video game time (within your limits) while wearing their mask.
- Are you making a mask? Let your child to choose material.
- Practice calming strategies like deep breathing, going outside, going for a walk, etc.

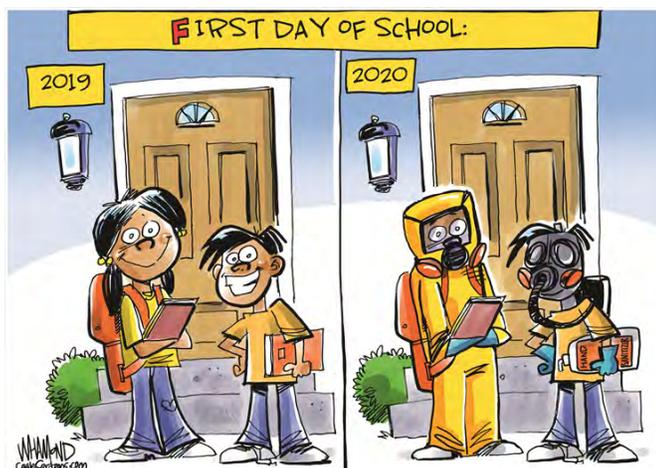
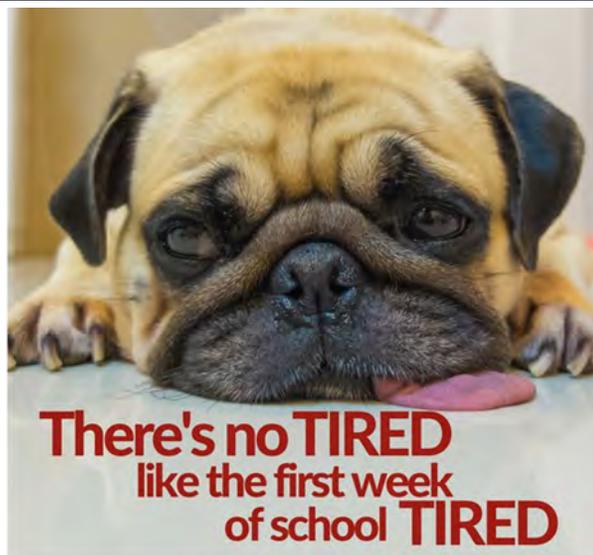
### Help your child continue to cope

Stay connected to your kids. Kids do best when they feel loved by their caregivers, which happens when you spend quality time with them and listen, validate and empathize with their feelings (as opposed to seeing adults as being angry, upset, and emotionally unavailable to them).

### Ease your child's worries

Does your child seem to have excessive fears/ anxiety about COVID-19 and its restrictions?

- Ask about their fears, and try to reassure or problem solve. Ask: "What worries you the most?"
- Validate and accept your child's feelings about the situation. You might say: " I can see why you might be feeling (insert your child's feelings here) about this."
- Give your child a sense of control.



# Practical suggestions for Parents with younger children.

(Source: Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health.)

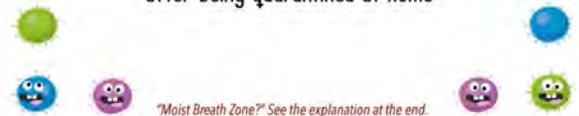
- ◇ Practice new routines with your child before school starts – hand-washing, using alcohol-based hand rub and cough/sneeze etiquette.
- ◇ Work on getting your child comfortable wearing a mask. Start with just a few minutes and increase the time each day.
- ◇ Limit personal belongings that your child brings to school. Any personal items (e.g., backpack, clothing, water bottles, lunch bag, etc.) should be labelled.
- ◇ Make sure your child can open and close their own food containers, packages or thermos meals.
- ◇ Do not send your child in shoes, sweaters or coats that they can't do up on their own.
- ◇ Pack a small container of alcohol-based hand sanitizer in your child's lunch bag to use before and after eating.
- ◇ Consider packing a tea towel or cloth for your child to eat their lunch on, and change it each day.
- ◇ Go back to toddler-style lunches and snacks by cutting food up (e.g., fruit) and encouraging your child to eat with a fork rather than using their hands.

**Stay out of My Moist Breath Zone** – teaching video for children. It features two dogs, a coughing kitten, a yawning llama, two chimpanzees hugging, a sleepy terrier and a walrus.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZvtoVrykb8>

## Moist Breath Zone

A health and safety song for children going back to school after being quarantined at home



## Need a giggle or two.....

### Back to school decisions are hard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jg2YvURCysk>

### Back to School in 2020?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scIDv-oVJIo>

### Don't Stand So Close To Me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNVV-z-sYCM>

“The **Standards for Special Education** define an inclusive education as one where a student with disabilities or who require specialized supports and services is included in regular classrooms and neighbourhood schools as the first placement option. As multiple scenarios are developed for the upcoming school year during the global pandemic, there must be consideration and planning at each and every level for the inclusion of students with disabilities and the impact and potentially unique supports that will be required to ensure their success and full participation in all aspects of school life.” <https://open.alberta.ca/.../edc-covid-2020-2021-school-re-ent...>

This is important information for parents to be aware of and to bring to the attention to school authorities when their choice for an inclusive education is being challenged or denied on the basis of school finances or resources.

The full plan can be found at: <https://open.alberta.ca/.../edc-covid-2020-2021-school-re-ent...>