

Healthy Children

December 2017 Parent Newsletter



Hand Washing

Anytime is hand hygiene time. Studies done by the Centre for Disease Control have shown that if children wash their hands as few as four times during the school day they have up to 50% fewer colds, flu and sore throats.

When it comes to hand washing, there are five important steps:

1. Wet hands with warm water
2. Apply enough soap
3. Scrub for 20 seconds focusing on the thumb and fingertips
4. Rinse off the soap and dirt
5. Dry hands well

The first four steps remove 60% of the germs. The last 40% of the germs come off when hands are dried. Keeping skin in good condition also keeps the germs away, so use lotion if skin gets dry. If the dirt is visible, waterless hand gels do not work. The best way to keep the germs away is to use plain soap and water, spend the time and get good friction.

Hand hygiene continues to be one of the best and simplest ways to stay healthy all year round.

Articles

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Talking to Your Child about Tobacco

In Alberta, Alberta Health Care covers the cost of eye exams by a Doctor of Optometry for all children until they turn 19. Many vision and eye health conditions have no symptoms and can only be detected through an eye exam. For more information about childhood eye examinations and to find an optometrist in your area, please visit www.optometrists.ab.ca



Talking to Your Child about Tobacco

One of the most important jobs as a parent is to keep your children safe – steering them away from staircases as toddlers, teaching them to cross the street when they go to school and, as they grow, protecting them from tobacco use.

Tobacco addiction is a serious health problem today. Kids will feel pressure to try tobacco from youth to adulthood. You can make a difference by talking to them about tobacco.

It's important for parents to talk to their children early and often about the side effects of tobacco use. New studies tell us that when young people make it to 19 years old without smoking they're unlikely to start. Plan to talk about tobacco many times throughout your child's developing years, as soon as they begin to be curious, if not sooner.

Whenever you have time together, you can share your thoughts about tobacco. It doesn't have to be formal. If you use tobacco, studies tell us that by talking to your kids about your use and how hard it can be to quit, you can help prevent



them from starting. It's important to know what matters to them. Use this list to make your conversations personal:

Staying healthy: Tobacco smoke has about 7000 chemicals in it - at least 69 of them cause cancer.

Making your own decisions: Tobacco companies target young people to get them addicted for life.

Looking attractive: People who use tobacco often have yellow teeth, more wrinkles and bad breath.

Grades in school: Young people who use tobacco tend to have

lower grades in school.

Playing sports: People who use tobacco have trouble breathing and slower reflexes.

Listen to what your child has to say about using tobacco. Ask about the pressures they are facing or how tobacco is portrayed in movies and on television. Talk about what they could do if they were offered tobacco. Let them know they can tell you what is happening and you can help.



If you find out your child is using tobacco, don't panic. You aren't alone – we can help. Call AlbertaQuits at 1-866-710-7848 or visit www.albertaquits.ca