



February 2021 Newsletter

HILLSIDE HAPPENINGS

"A Caring Commitment to Learning"



Northern Gateway
Public Schools

Volume 18, Number 6

Happy New Year!

My Heroes of COVID-19

"Even as we grieved, we grew. Even as we hurt, we hoped. Even as we tire, we try."

~ Amanda Gorman

I recently heard a radio story of a first grade teacher who was teaching her students virtually when she accidentally released gas, making a loud noise. The response of the children was priceless. I laughed so hard at their joy, innocence and delight that tears ran down my face. Soon those tears turned to ones of sadness. Listening to the purity in the precious giggles of each child, on a computer in their home, connecting with their teacher and classmates, yet physically alone, struck me as terribly heartbreaking. ***These small children are my heroes.***

I know a seven year old boy who lives and breathes all things hockey. School, not so much! With ADHD he nearly climbs the walls and his single, working mama is nearly pulling out her hair! With the cancellation of his sport, this little guy is suffering through a loss so great, it is like a death to him. It was a lifeline not only for him but his exhausted mother. ***The kids who have lost their sports, music, drama productions and extra curricular activities are my heroes.***

Another child I know is supposed to graduate high school in June. Such a milestone to celebrate and a year that is meant to be full of memories, relationships and excitement. It is her last year at school and possibly at home, yet is filled with many disappointments and losses. Thankfully she is focused on exams, college applications and part time jobs or she, like many graduates, would sink into an abyss of desolation. Through tears, she sobbed, "it is not fair! This is not how my last year is supposed to go!" ***The graduating class of 2021 are my heroes.***

I was curious as to what others felt were the most difficult and what, if anything, has been positive about COVID. In conversing with other children, the predominant responses were: I miss my friends, I miss my cousins and grandparents, masks are annoying, I miss the freedom of sitting and playing with who I want. I miss my sports, my lessons, my practices, normal life.

An overwhelming response was: ***"There is nothing good about COVID."***

On a personal level, I felt bittersweet sorrow observing my teenager build a snowman with her brother. Watching her giggle and be silly opened the floodgates for me. You see, this child has suffered through the deepest, darkest pit of depression I have ever seen. COVID seemed to slam the door on all hope, light and comfort. She retreated so far into herself I did not know if I would ever be able to reach her. But together, with the help of professionals, family and teachers, she battled hard, pushed through and celebrated the moments when the sun shone. Watching her now, I can cautiously say there are more good days than bad. I know the depression would have still been there, but COVID certainly accentuated the symptoms ten fold. ***The kids who are fighting through mental illness are my heroes.***

These stories are far from unique. COVID-19 seems to have brought a despondency and heaviness to our children unlike anything else. As parents, we cannot pull our children out of their despair by ourselves. We absolutely must ***reach out to friends, family and professionals.*** We must focus, point out and grasp onto the brief moments of ***normalcy, joy and delight*** like our lives depend on it. Maybe that is the secret to ours and our children's survival: ***to seek out the silver lining.***

Cont'd on page 3




Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY 2021

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----|
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Grad Photos | 11 Grad Photos | 12 Grad Photos | 13 |
| 14  | 15  Family Day | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Online PTI's 4-7 pm | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | | | | | | |

MARCH 2021

Science 30 Diploma

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----------------------------|---|----|----|
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 Grad Photo Retakes | 4 Teacher's Convention | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 School Council Meeting 12:00pm (noon) via Google Meets | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14  | 15 | 16 | 17 St. Patrick's Day | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |  | | |

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- ▶ Preferred payment method for school purchases are: SchoolCashOnline, Debit, Visa, Mastercard. Cash and Cheques are still accepted.
- ▶ The next School Council Meeting is January 11, 2021 @ 12:00pm via Google Meets. Please contact the school for access to the link.
- ▶ Scholastic Book Orders can still be placed online. Access Code: RC191137
- ▶ As directed in the Northern Gateway COVID reentry plan, there are no Vending machines currently available at the school.
- ▶ You can now have the newsletter emailed to you. Please contact Mrs. Staples in the Learning Commons at 780-524-3277.
- ▶ Cafeteria service available for Jr High only at this time.
- ▶ Hillside Webpage:

hillsidehigh.ca

Newsletter is Available on the Webpage!

Hillside Jr/Sr High School
Bag 3
4701-52 Avenue
Valleyview, AB T0H 3N0
Phone: 780-524-3277
Fax: 780-524-4205
e-mail: hillside@ngps.ca



Lunch

Sr High - 11:45-12:27

Jr High - 12:19-1:00

News, Sports & Events

Cont'd from page 1

My message to the students in Northern Gateway Public Schools and beyond is this:

I am so sorry that everything is the way it is and wish I could tell you that everything will go back to the way it was before. I know it is not easy and you hate so many parts of COVID. I know your hearts are breaking and no one can stop the pain.

But I know that the adults in your life: parents, teachers, doctors, counselors, grandparents, aunts and uncles are all so proud of you. We will continue to love you, stand by you, get you mental health help when you need it, rejoice with you in all you are succeeding at and all you are overcoming.

I am sorry that you are missing out on so much, but please do not overlook the strength and resilience that is growing inside of you. Just like precious diamonds are created by tremendous pressure, great beauty and strength is being created in you. You are learning to think and act for yourself. You are learning to question everything you read and hear.

You are learning that the **most valuable things in life are not things** but people, relationships and connection. I know this because that is what you are telling me.

As I reflect on the past 10 months, I believe that the real heroes are the children. May we all continue to savor in their resilience, adaptability and tenacity. Please, tell a young person today how very proud you are of them. Please tell them that **they are your hero**.

[For Mental Health Support go to
www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/page16759.aspx](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/page16759.aspx)

Call Helpline 1-877-303-2642 or Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868

"Perhaps the butterfly is proof that you can go through a great deal of darkness yet still become something beautiful"

~Beau Taplin

This article was submitted by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. She is a support for schools, students, parents and caregivers to promote success in school. Tammy advocates for students and families, providing a link to the community programs. Tammy has been a registered social worker for more than 20 years and is a mother to 4 teenagers.



Grad Parent Remind Number:

text @21rents to the number (587) 333-0291

COVID-19 INFORMATION

COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR ADULTS 18 YEARS AND OLDER)

Overview

This tool was developed to support schools, activity organizers, employers, businesses and facility operators in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among attendees/staff. The tool is meant to assist with assessing attendees who may be symptomatic, or who may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19.

Attendees should complete this checklist prior to participating in the activity or program.

If an individual answers **YES** to any of the questions, they **must not** be allowed to attend or participate in the activity or program. *Individuals with fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat, are required to isolate for 10 days per [CMOH Order 05-2020](#) **OR** receive a negative COVID-19 test and feel better before returning to activities.

Use the [AHS Online Assessment Tool](#) to determine if testing is recommended and follow information on [isolation requirements](#).

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, this screening tool will be updated as required.

Screening Questions

| | | CIRCLE ONE | |
|---|--|------------|----|
| 1. | Does the attendee have any new onset (or worsening) of any of the following symptoms: | | |
| | • <i>Fever*</i> | YES | NO |
| | • <i>Cough*</i> | YES | NO |
| | • <i>Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing*</i> | YES | NO |
| | • <i>Runny nose*</i> | YES | NO |
| | • <i>Sore throat*</i> | YES | NO |
| | • Chills | YES | NO |
| | • Painful swallowing | YES | NO |
| | • Nasal congestion | YES | NO |
| | • Feeling unwell / fatigued | YES | NO |
| | • Nausea / vomiting / diarrhea | YES | NO |
| | • Unexplained loss of appetite | YES | NO |
| | • Loss of sense of taste or smell | YES | NO |
| | • Muscle/ joint aches | YES | NO |
| • Headache | YES | NO | |
| • Conjunctivitis (commonly known as pink eye) | YES | NO | |
| 2. | Has the attendee travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days? (Individuals are legally required to quarantine for 14 days when entering or returning to Alberta from outside Canada unless exempted by the Alberta COVID-19 Border Testing Pilot Program.) | YES | NO |
| 3. | Has the attendee had close contact ¹ with a case ² of COVID-19 in the last 14 days? | YES | NO |

¹Face-to-face contact within 2 metres. A health care worker in an occupational setting wearing recommended personal protective equipment is not considered to be a close contact.

²A lab-confirmed case OR a probable case as defined in the [Alberta COVID-19 Notifiable Disease Guideline](#).

COVID-19 INFORMATION

COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18)



Overview

This checklist applies for all children, as well as all students who attend kindergarten through Grade 12, including high school students over 18. Children should be screened every day by completing this checklist before going to school, child care or other activities. Children may need a parent or guardian to assist them to complete this screening tool.

Screening Questions

1. Has the child:

(Choose any/all possible exposures)

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Traveled outside Canada in the last 14 days? When entering or returning to Alberta from outside Canada, individuals are legally required to quarantine for 14 days (see note below) | YES | NO |
| Had close contact with a case¹ of COVID-19 in the last 14 days? Face-to-face contact within 2 metres for 15 minutes or longer, or direct physical contact such as hugging | YES | NO |
| If the child answered "YES" to any of the above: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The child is required to quarantine for 14 days from the last day of exposure. Note: If the child is participating in the Alberta COVID-19 International Border Pilot Project, they must comply with the program restrictions at all times.If the child develops any symptoms, use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to determine if testing is recommended. If the child/youth answered "NO" to both of the above: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Proceed to question 2. | | |

2. Does the child have any new onset (or worsening) of the following core symptoms:

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Fever Temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or higher | YES | NO |
| Cough Continuous, more than usual, not related to other known causes or conditions such as asthma | YES | NO |
| Shortness of breath Continuous, out of breath, unable to breathe deeply, not related to other known causes or conditions such as asthma | YES | NO |
| Loss of sense of smell or taste Not related to other known causes or conditions like allergies or neurological disorders | YES | NO |
| If the child answered "YES" to any symptom in question 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The child is to isolate for 10 days from onset of symptoms.Use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to arrange for testing and to receive additional information on isolation. If the child/youth answered "NO" to all of the symptoms in question 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Proceed to question 3. | | |

¹A lab-confirmed case OR a probable case as defined in the [Alberta COVID-19 Notifiable Disease Guideline](#).

3. Does the child have any new onset (or worsening) of the following other symptoms:

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Chills Without fever, not related to being outside in cold weather | YES | NO |
| Sore throat/painful swallowing Not related to other known causes/conditions, such as seasonal allergies or reflux | YES | NO |
| Runny nose/congestion Not related to other known causes/conditions, such as seasonal allergies or being outside in cold weather | YES | NO |
| Feeling unwell/fatigued Lack of energy, poor feeding in infants, not related to other known causes or conditions, such as depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction or sudden injury | YES | NO |
| Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as anxiety, medication or irritable bowel syndrome | YES | NO |
| Unexplained loss of appetite Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as anxiety or medication | YES | NO |
| Muscle/joint aches Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as arthritis or injury | YES | NO |
| Headache Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as tension-type headaches or chronic migraines | YES | NO |
| Conjunctivitis (commonly known as pink eye) | YES | NO |
| <p>If the child answered “YES” to ONE symptom in question 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your child home and monitor for 24 hours. • If their symptom is improving after 24 hours, they can return to school and activities when they feel well enough to go. Testing is not necessary. • If the symptom does not improve or worsens after 24 hours (or if additional symptoms emerge), use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to check if testing is recommended. <p>If the child answered “YES” to TWO OR MORE symptoms in question 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your child home. • Use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to determine if testing is recommended. • Your child can return to school and activities once their symptoms go away as long as it has been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started. <p>If the child answered “NO” to all questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your child may attend school, child care and/or other activities. | | |

Please note: If your child is experiencing any symptoms from the lists above, do not bring them to visit a continuing care or acute care facility for 10 days from when symptoms started/until symptoms resolve (whichever is longer), unless they receive a negative COVID-19 test result and feel better.

Student illness

If a student has COVID-19 symptoms

Students with symptoms must not attend school. If a child develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g., allergies, chronic cough), the child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before returning to school.

Anyone that reports symptoms must stay home and seek health care advice as appropriate. Parents can call Health Link 811 or their primary health care practitioner, and fill out the [AHS Online Self-Assessment tool](#) to determine if their child should be tested.

Parents, household members, and contacts of a student who has symptoms but is not a COVID-19 case, are not required to quarantine.

Only the people identified as close contacts of an individual who is a case of COVID-19 need to quarantine. The contacts of the close contacts do not need to quarantine.

Book a test

Book a testing appointment online with the AHS assessment tool or call Health Link 811. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx>

Symptoms

You should get tested if you have any COVID-19 symptom.

If you have any of these symptoms you are [legally required to isolate for at least 10 days](#) from the start of your symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is longer:

- Fever
- Cough (new cough or worsening chronic cough)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening)

- Runny nose
- Sore throat

If you have any of these other symptoms, stay home and minimize your contact with others until your symptoms resolve:

- Chills
- Painful swallowing
- Stuffy nose
- Headache
- Muscle or joint aches
- Feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite)
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Conjunctivitis, commonly known as pink eye

Monitor your child's health and call [Health Link 811](#) if you have questions or concerns. Call 911 immediately if experiencing severe symptoms of COVID-19, including difficulty breathing, severe chest pain, feelings of confusion or loss of consciousness.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

Isolation requirements

Albertans with symptoms

- You are legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- The mandatory isolation period is 10 days from the start of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer.

Tested positive for COVID-19

- You are legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if you have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Isolation period is 10 days from the start of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer.

Have symptoms but tested negative for COVID-19

- If you tested negative and have known exposure to COVID-19, you are legally required to quarantine for 14 days from the last date of your exposure.
- If you tested negative and have no known exposure to the virus, you are not legally required to isolate. However, it is important to stay home until your symptoms resolve so that you do not infect others.

Close contacts of confirmed cases

- You are legally required to quarantine for 14 days and monitor for symptoms if you are a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 (provides care, lives with or has close physical contact without appropriate use of personal protective equipment, or comes into direct contact with infectious body fluids).
- If you become sick with cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat during this time, you must isolate for an additional 10 days from the beginning of symptoms or until you are feeling well, whichever takes longer.

If you are self-isolating:

- Stay home — do not go to school, work, social events or any other public areas or community settings.
- Avoid close contact with other people, including household members but especially seniors and people with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.
- Do not use public transportation or ride sharing.
- Do not go for walks in public places. This includes children in mandatory self-isolation.
- If you go outside, you must remain on private property not accessible by others.

If a student has symptoms related to allergies or a pre-existing medical condition

- The student should be tested at least once before returning to school and have a negative COVID-19 test result.
- These symptoms would be their baseline health status. As long as the cough or runny nose is always the same and does not get worse, the student can attend school.
- Talk to your school about your child's pre-existing medical condition so the school may keep a confidential record of this condition.

Note

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, information regarding COVID-19 will be updated as required. Please check online for the latest information and links to testing, symptoms and isolation requirements: alberta.ca/covid19

For more information: alberta.ca/covid19

©2020 Government of Alberta | Published: September 2020

Alberta

COVID-19 Information—Student illness

STAY AT HOME GUIDE

This summary, based on the September 2020 Government of Alberta update, [COVID-19 Symptom-Student illness](#), provides further clarity to parents about the 'isolation' period or 'stay home and minimize contact with others' period if a child has presenting symptoms.

It is still expected that parents complete [Alberta Health's Daily Checklist](#), each day, before sending your child to school.

My child has COVID-19 symptoms. How long must my child stay home?

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>If my child has any of these core COVID-19 symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Cough (new cough or worsening chronic cough) • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening) • Runny nose • Sore throat | <p>If my child has any of these (secondary) symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chills • Painful swallowing • Stuffy nose • Headache • Muscle or joint aches • Feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion • Gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite) • Loss of sense of smell or taste • Conjunctivitis (pink eye) |
| <p>What should I do next?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete AHS' Online Self-Assessment Tool and call 811. 2. You are legally required to have your child isolate for at least 10 days from the start of symptoms or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. 3. It is strongly recommended that your child be tested for COVID-19. | <p>What should I do next?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete AHS' Online Self-Assessment Tool and call 811. 2. Keep your child home from school and minimize your child's contact with others until symptoms resolve. 3. It is recommended that your child be tested for COVID-19. |
| <p>When can my child return to school?</p> <p>Your child may return to school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the 10-day isolation is complete and symptoms have resolved, OR • When your child has received a negative COVID-19 test result, has no known exposure to the virus, and symptoms have resolved. | <p>When can my child return to school?</p> <p>Your child may return to school once symptoms have resolved and your child is feeling better.</p> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Please see Alberta's COVID-19 Symptom-Student illness document for information regarding pre-existing conditions.</p> </div> |