



# Health Matters

A newsletter from the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit

Winter 2003

<http://www.healthunit.org>

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## You could be the WINNER of a \$50.00 gift certificate for the *Eat Smart!* restaurant of your choice.

- Complete the enclosed Health Matters Feedback Form.
- Fax it back to the Health Unit by February 21, 2003.
- Start browsing through the Tri-county *Eat Smart!* Dining Guide for your preferred venue. The draw will take place at the Brockville office of the Leeds Grenville & Lanark Health Unit on Thursday February 21, 2003 at 4pm.

## Racing Against Drugs 2003



Before you know it the time to attend Racing Against Drugs with your Grade 5/6 Students will be here again. The next action packed Racing Against Drugs event will be held in Brockville from May 27 to 30, 2003.

As many satisfied "race-goers" can tell you the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Racing Against Drugs event promises to be a very educational, high-energy and interactive program for your students. Participants will better understand the negative impacts of alcohol and drug use when it comes to making wise decisions and taking risks. They will be exposed to a wide variety of pit-stop demonstrations that reinforce the five SmartRisk Foundation messages. Which are:

1. Buckle Up
2. Stay Sober
3. Get Trained
4. Look First
5. Wear the Gear



Many of these interactive stations will utilize various sports themes including the sport of racing to deliver these important lifesaving and injury prevention messages. In a sport such as racing, there is no room or tolerance for impaired reaction times or skills.

Registration forms were faxed to each school in the Tri-county area at the end of January. Registrations will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. For more information please contact Denise Kall, Safe Communities Coalition of Brockville and District 342-2917.



## Healthy Choices—"Thoughts and feelings happen. Acting on them is a choice."



Healthy Choices is a four-week program for grade 7 & 8 students. It has Public Health Nurses going into the classroom for one afternoon a week for four weeks to discuss health related issues such as:

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### Session 1

#### Self Esteem:

In this section students will learn about self-esteem. They will describe what self-esteem is; how it develops; how to nurture their own and someone else's; and how self-esteem is destroyed.

#### Peer Pressure:

In this section students will be given the opportunity to feel peer pressure and observe how they react to it. They will also be shown different styles of communication and be given the chance to demonstrate the behaviours in front of their peers.

#### Body Image:

In this section students will discuss body image, the factors that influence positive and negative body image, and learn strategies to develop a healthy body image. Topics will include media influence, body types, and size acceptance.

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### Session 2

#### Relationships:

In this section students will learn about harassment and abusive behaviours. They will also learn to identify characteristics of a healthy relationship.

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### Session 3

#### Drugs

Students will learn the three categories of drugs and how they affect the body. They will also look at social issues related to substance abuse and demonstrate effective strategies to counter pressures to participate in high-risk behaviours.

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### Session 4:

#### Stress/ Suicide:

Students will learn about positive and negative stress. They will learn effective strategies to deal with stress and how, if left unresolved, negative stress can lead to depression or thoughts of suicide.

#### Choices:

Students will demonstrate a variety of skills needed to make a healthy choice.

#### SmartRisk:

In this section, students will learn that 90% of "accidents" are both preventable and predictable.



This program uses interactive and innovative ways to educate students through a wide variety of activities, games, videos, written assignments, and discussions. Each goal and objective of Healthy Choices matches the objectives set out by the Healthy Living Strand of the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Activity Education 1998. Every school in the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark area is offered this program every second year. To learn more about this program please call 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685 and ask to speak to Alexis Green in Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Services.



# Attention 'March Break' Vacationers!

Planning on traveling to another country over the March Break? If so, have you thought about travel immunization? Most vaccines should be given a minimum of three weeks before departure. Depending on the destination, travelers should consider the risk of illness and disease while traveling and also be aware of recommendations and precautions before heading to the airport!

The following are reliable sources of travel health information:

## Public Health Units

Most Public Health Units offer travel advice and immunizations as part of their regular immunization clinics. In the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark area, these clinics are offered at all Health Unit locations. Call 1-800-660-5853 or 345-5685 for more information or to arrange an appointment. There is no consultation fee.

## Privately-Operated Travel Medicine Clinics

Private clinics offer the same services as Public Health Clinics, but have the advantage of daily service. Costs of vaccines may be slightly higher and there is usually a consultation fee (approximately \$50.00).

## The Internet

Be sure that the website provides reliable and accurate information. Two excellent websites for travel health information are: The Centre for Disease Control and Health Canada.

## Family Physicians

Some physicians will immunize their patients for travel, however this may involve having to arrange transport of the vaccines from a pharmacy to the doctor's office.

Travelers should make an appointment for immunizations well in advance. It takes about three weeks for immunity to develop after immunization, and some vaccines are given as a series of shots spaced over weeks or months.

Don't forget your chequebook! Travel vaccines are expensive. Ask about the cost of each vaccine and don't be afraid to shop around for the best price.

Don't risk your health, **get immunized!**

The Centre for Disease Control [www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/)



Health Canada [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/tmp-pmv/pub\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/tmp-pmv/pub_e.html)





## Growth and development curriculum

*from the Ontario Physical & Health Educators Association*

Public Health Nurses are scheduled to teach parts of the grade 5 to 8 Growth and Development curriculum, in all Public Elementary Schools in the tri-county area, during the 2002-03 school year. The nurses are teaching from the NEW OPHEA Curriculum, which is based on the "Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health Education" issued by Health Canada in 1994. Others requiring assistance may phone Denise Gaulin P.H.N., Chairperson of the Health Unit's School Health Committee, at 613-345-5685, ext. 2232.



### KEY ELEMENTS

**To encourage sexual health enhancement** and responsibility first, through the promotion of positive self-image and self-worth as an aspect of the acceptance of one's evolving sexuality; second, by the integration of sexuality into mutually satisfying mature relationships and third by the attainment and maintenance of sexual and reproductive health.

**To prevent sexual health problems**, encompassing unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse in consideration of their enormous personal, social and economics costs.

**To promote the postponement of sexual activity** as the preferred health decision through enhancement of self-esteem, increased decision-making, communication and assertiveness skills, and an appreciation of the rewards in exclusive commitment and long standing companionship.

**To present information sensitively and age-appropriately.**

The following values are the driving forces of the Sexual Health education programs.

### VALUE SET

- That the family/home environment is the most significant influence in the development of a child's values and behaviours related to human sexuality
- That self-worth is a key component in personal sexuality
- That respect for the values, beliefs, personal philosophies of faith, and decisions of others be inherent in relationships
- That sexual relationships be based on mutual trust, caring, respect, love and long-standing commitment to one another and an appreciation of the privacy and power of sexual intimacy
- That awareness of human differences is a prerequisite for complex societies
- That students have the information, motivation, skills, and supportive environment to make positive sexual health decisions



## ***Eat Smart! Is Growing Strong*** Submitted by Laurie Doxtator, Tri-Health Coordinator

This is the second year of the very successful *Eat Smart!* Program in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark. Under the program, restaurants are awarded an *Eat Smart!* designation by meeting high standards in the following three areas: having healthier food choices on the menu and by request, having kitchen staff certified in safe food handling and providing more non-smoking seating than required by municipal by-law.

With 30 restaurants qualifying for the 2002-2003 award, we have almost doubled the number of *Eat Smart!* restaurants in the tri-county area.

*Eat Smart!* restaurants can be recognized by their *Eat Smart!* certificate and door decal. In conjunction with the launch of the 2002-2003 program, we are pleased to provide an *Eat Smart!* Dining Guide. If your favorite restaurant is not listed in the guide, please encourage the owner or manager to apply for next year's *Eat Smart!* award.

Our hectic Canadian lifestyle includes eating out more often than ever before. Choosing an *Eat Smart!* restaurant is an ideal way to support a healthy lifestyle by ensuring access to safe, nutritious foods in non-smoking environments. The next time you eat out, eat smarter and feel better!



Please look for your copy of the *Eat Smart!* Dining Guide in this newsletter. For more information please call Lynda Earl at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685 ext. 2215



## ***Why Wear a Mouth Protector?*** Submitted by, Leslie Redmond, RDH

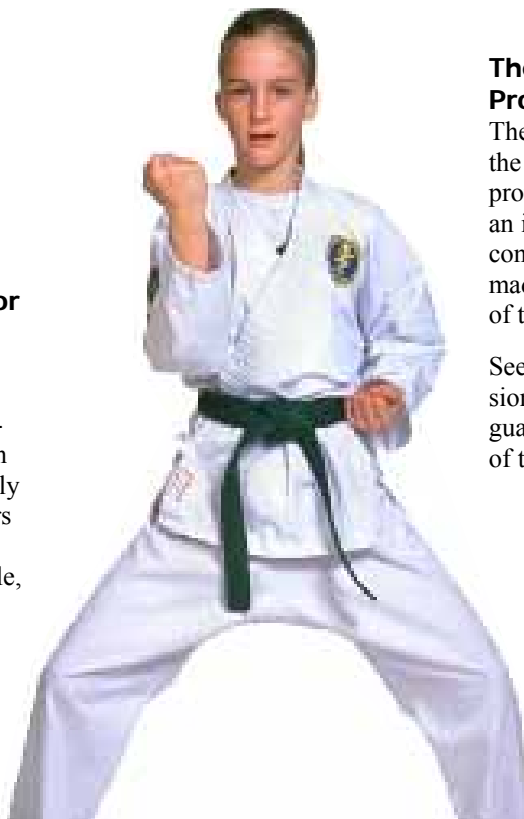
Mouth protectors (also called mouthguards) are an important piece of protective face gear. As the name implies, mouth protectors help prevent injury to the mouth area, especially to the teeth, lips, cheeks, and tongue. They also protect against head and neck injuries by cushioning blows that might otherwise cause concussions or lead to jaw fractures.

### **Who Should Use a Mouth Protector?**

Anyone engaging in vigorous sports activities that could harm the facial region should wear a mouth protector.

### **Choosing a Mouth Protector**

The most effective mouthguards combine several features. They should be resilient, of proper thickness, tear-resistant, comfortable and provide for good oxygen flow. They should also be properly fitted and custom-made protectors are best shaped to fit a player's own teeth. They should be durable, easy to clean, and not difficult to speak with.



### **The Custom-Made Protector**

The custom-made protector is the most satisfactory as it best provides all the qualities found in an ideal mouth protector. It is constructed over a cast (model) made from a dental impression of the athlete's teeth.

See your dental health professional for a custom-made mouthguard or call the Dental Program of the Health Unit.



## March is Nutrition Month!

Many people consider nutrition important, especially when making food choices. Healthy eating not only improves overall health and energy levels, it also helps teachers and students feel great and perform their best. To reinforce the importance of healthy eating, Registered Dietitians across Canada participate in Nutrition Month to communicate messages about healthy eating. Nutrition Month is a national nutrition campaign that is held in March of each year. The theme of Nutrition Month 2003 is Women's Health.



The Registered Dietitians at Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit provide current and reliable nutrition information to residents of the tri-county throughout the year. In previous years, the Health Unit has supported schools during Nutrition Month by providing resources for distribution, articles for school newsletters, PA announcements, and other ideas to promote nutrition. If you are interested in initiating Nutrition Month activities in your school, please call the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 (or 345-5685) and ask to speak to a Registered Dietitian. We can provide resources and ideas for Nutrition Month activities in your school. You can also visit our website at [www.healthunit.org/nutrition](http://www.healthunit.org/nutrition).



## Food Security Resources Available from the Health Unit

The Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark District Health Unit provides a number of resources to our community partners so they can assist residents who are in need of access to healthy food. Two items are now available on the health unit nutrition website ([www.healthunit.org/nutrition](http://www.healthunit.org/nutrition)).

The cost of the Nutritious Food Basket is monitored annually in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark. The Nutritious Food Basket is used to evaluate the cost of healthy eating based on current nutrition recommendations. The basket contains 66 food items that support nutritional health and reflect the shopping behaviours of Canadians. It provides an indicator of the cost of healthy eating for individuals of various ages and families of various sizes. This information can be used to help determine the adequacy of money available to support nutritious eating in relation to current social assistance and minimum wage incomes.

The Food Access Inventories for Lanark County and Leeds & Grenville Counties have been updated for 2002. The Food Access Inventories are updated on a yearly basis and provide information on emergency food programs (i.e., food banks), food action and skill development programs (i.e., community kitchens), and food support programs (i.e., Meals on Wheels).

For more information on food security resources and programs in the tri-county, please call the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 (or 345-5685) and ask to speak to a Registered Dietitian.





## The Power of Many: Tobacco Action

*Submitted by Bonnie Schnittker, Public Health Nurse*

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, in conjunction with PTCC (Program Training and Consultation Centre) is hosting a "Youth Advocacy for Tobacco Control" workshop on March 10, 2003 in Smiths Falls.

### The overall objectives of this day will be to familiarize participants with:

- The content of **The Power of Many: Tobacco - Action Plan For This Generation** and Facilitator's Guide
- A basic knowledge of public policy advocacy in tobacco control
- A basic knowledge of tobacco control as it relates to youth, focusing on tobacco legislation, cessation and "denormalization".
- A basic knowledge regarding the role anti-industry messaging plays in tobacco control advocacy.

### People who should attend this workshop include anyone who works with youth:

- Community workers who are responsible for the delivery of tobacco control programming
- Teachers and guidance counselors who work with Grade 7 and 8 or high school students
- Recreation workers
- Health intermediaries
- Volunteers

Please call the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 to obtain a copy of the registration form. Deadline for registration is March 1, 2003.



## National Non-Smoking Week

As you receive this newsletter National Non-Smoking week will be coming to a close.

Each year this campaign draws attention to the new evidence being uncovered on the harmful health effects of smoking and second-hand smoke. Smoking will kill over 13,000 Ontarians this year and between 1,100 and 7,800 Canadians will die as a result of exposure to second-hand smoke. Municipal bylaws can help prevent exposure to second-hand smoke. These bylaws also reinforce the messages that adults believe that second-hand-smoke is a serious health concern. Children need to have these positive role models. Health Canada's Canadian Tobacco use Monitoring Survey showed that among smokers aged 15-17, almost 80% said they had tried smoking by age 14.

Teachers looking for information can explore the Lung Association's grade specific teaching modules in "**Lungs are for Life**". This resource was provided to each Leeds, Grenville and Lanark elementary school last year or check out our website at <http://www.healthunit.org/smoke/default.htm>

For more information about National Non-Smoking Week or other Tobacco related issues please contact the Health Unit at (613) 345-5685 or 1-800-660-5853.

## YouthEscape Launched in National Non-Smoking Week

*Submitted by Bonnie Schnittker, Public Health Nurse*

January 19 – 25, 2003 is National Non-Smoking Week.

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit is launching their new Youth Tobacco Website called YouthEscape.

Log on to [www.healthunit.org/youthescape](http://www.healthunit.org/youthescape) and see what Youth from Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Counties are doing in the area of Tobacco Use, Prevention, Protection and Cessation.

Submit photos, stories artwork of what is happening in your classroom and school. Have the students visit the site and take our quiz that was developed by students from Notre Dame Secondary School in Carleton Place. You can link to other youth friendly sites such as Smoke-FX and CyberIsle. There are also links to other reliable facts about tobacco use risks, cessation, media influences and the big tobacco

Have fun surfing.



## Hints for dealing with gastroenteritis

As you are aware there has been an increase in the number of people in our community experiencing episodes of vomiting and diarrhea (gastroenteritis). It is suspected that Norwalk or Norwalk-like virus is the organism.

Norwalk virus is a very common source of non-bacterial diarrhea and vomiting in humans. Symptoms usually come on suddenly and include watery diarrhea, vomiting, cramps, headache, fever, chills and sore throat. The illness usually last 24 to 48 hours. Most people recover from these symptoms without seeking medical attention.

### How is The Norwalk Virus Spread?

Man is the only known reservoir for the Norwalk virus. It is spread by the "fecal-oral" route, although direct contact or airborne transmission has been suggested to explain the rapid spread. This virus is very contagious.

The incidence of illness can occur year round, however it is more common in the fall and winter as seen by the numbers of people ill this season.

### How Do You Prevent Norwalk Infections?

It cannot be over stated that thorough hand washing using soap and water is the best prevention. Make sure hands are properly washed:

- BEFORE leaving a washroom
- BEFORE preparing any food
- BEFORE eating

If someone is ill with Norwalk symptoms it is important to clean and sanitize washrooms and all hand contact surfaces once daily, or as needed.

If someone is ill at school, clean the area and follow with disinfection (a 1:9 solution of bleach and water is adequate for disinfection).

**Hand washing is and remains the simplest and most effective infection control measure.**



Hand washing signs are available through the Health Unit and can be posted in all washrooms.