

## Health Unit Offices

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Almonte, Ontario  
K0A 1A0  
(613) 256-1203

Brockville  
458 Laurier Blvd  
Brockville, Ontario  
K6V 7A3  
(613) 345-5685

Kemptville  
2685 Concession Rd  
Kemptville, Ontario  
K0G 1J0  
(613) 258-5941

Smiths Falls  
52 Abbott Street  
North, Unit 2  
Smiths Falls, Ontario  
K7A 1W3  
(613) 283-2740

Gananoque  
839 Stone St. N.  
Unit #3  
North Gate Plaza  
Gananoque, Ontario  
K7G 1Z7  
(613) 382-4231

Health Action Line  
1-800-660-5853

Website:  
[www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)



If you have any questions or would like your business added to our mailing list please call the Health Action Line and ask for Lynda Earl.



# Health Briefs

## Information on a healthy workplace

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit • Winter 2002

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*Submitted by Leslie Redmond, Registered Dental Hygienist*



#### **DEAR DORA**

*Submitted by Donna Elliot, Public Health Nurse*

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### WORKPLACE ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICIES



Alcohol and drug use and abuse in the workplace can have serious effects on the health and safety of all employees. More injuries occur and more sick days are used when employees abuse alcohol and/or other drugs. A policy will help to make sure that workplace health and safety rules and human rights are considered.

#### BENEFITS OF HAVING A WORKPLACE ALCOHOL & DRUG POLICY

All employees know and understand what the rules and guidelines are regarding alcohol and drug use at work and at work events

- All employees will know what will happen if the rules are not followed
- There is training for supervisors about substance use and abuse
- Everyone in the workplace has a better understanding of how to prevent alcohol and drug abuse
- Assistance for employees who need help is provided.

#### HOW TO DEVELOP A WORKPLACE ALCOHOL & DRUG POLICY

- Have management and employees involved in making a policy
- Decide what the organization's stand is on alcohol use and abuse
- Make the roles and responsibilities clear about how everyone is to follow the policy
- Let everyone know about the policy
- Let everyone know what will happen if someone does not follow the policy
- Describe training methods for supervisors
- Set out ways of providing help for employees
- Review the policy on a regular basis to make sure that it is helping to reduce alcohol and drug abuse in the workplace.

For more information or assistance in making your own workplace alcohol and drug use policy, contact Smith Falls FOCUS Community Coalition, (613) 283-2051, or The Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH), at 1-800-447-1178.

Source:  
Canadian H. R. Reporter,  
Nov. 4, 2001, p.17.



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### DO YOU WANT TO QUIT SMOKING?

*Submitted by Bonnie Schnittker, Public Health Nurse*

The Smokers' Helpline can help you. It is Free, Confidential and One-to-One.



Call 1-877-513-5333. A trained Quit Specialist will help you develop a structured "Quit Plan" and answer your questions about quitting.

They will talk to you about:

- Withdrawal symptoms
- Quitting methods
- How to deal with slips and relapses
- Managing stress
- Dealing with cravings
- Asking for support

When to call? Call anytime. Quit Specialists are available Monday to Thursday 9am to 9pm and Friday 9am to 5pm. During other times you can leave a message and a quit specialist will call you back.

So call the Smokers' Helpline at 1-877-513-5333 if:

- You want to quit
- You're thinking about quitting
- You've quit and you need support
- You've quit for a while but now you're smoking again
- You don't want to quit
- You think you should quit sometime, but you're not ready now
- You want to support someone who wants to quit

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### WHAT IS HOMOPHOBIA?

*Submitted by Tammy Welk, Public Health Nurse*

The word homophobia means fear, hatred and discrimination toward lesbians, gays and bisexuals. It also means being scared of homosexual feelings within yourself. Many people have homophobic feelings and do not even notice them.



People may express homophobia in many different ways:

- telling and laughing at jokes that make fun of homosexuality
- using words like fag, queer and dyke
- expressing disgust when two people of the same sex openly show affection for each other
- discriminating against homosexuals
- writing hateful or threatening graffiti on lockers or walls
- laughing at gay and lesbian characters in movies or TV

Like other forms of discrimination, homophobia is something we learn. Homophobia starts when we are taught to think of homosexuality as unnatural or wrong. If we want to live in healthy communities, we all have to work toward ending homophobia. There are some simple things you can do to help:

- Take a good look at your own attitudes and behaviours toward homosexuals. Be aware of what you feel and say about them.
- Imagine what it would be like to be on the receiving end of homophobia.
- Imagine what it would be like to be hated for who you love.
- Don't ignore homophobia when you run across it. Speak out when others say or do things that are homophobic.
- Don't assume that everyone is heterosexual. When asking about relationships, use the word "partner" instead of girlfriend, boyfriend, husband or wife.

Remember, the American Psychological Association estimates that 10% of our population is gay, lesbian or bisexual. In knowing this, help to create a friendly, accepting environment for people of all sexual identities.



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## ATTENTION CANADIAN SNOWBIRDS!

*Submitted by Susan LaBrie, Public Health Nurse and Margaret Hendriks, Public Health Nurse*

Planning on traveling to another country this winter? If so, have you thought about travel immunization? Depending on the destination, travelers should consider the risk of illness and disease while traveling and also be aware of recommendations and precautions before they head 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 [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)

### FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Some physicians may immunize their patients for travel, however this can 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 two weeks for immunity to develop after immunization, and some vaccines are given in a series of shots spaced over weeks or months.

Don't forget your chequebook! Travel vaccines are expensive. Find out what a clinic charges for vaccines and don't be afraid to shop around for the best price.

**Don't risk your health by not getting immunized!**



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## WHY WEAR A MOUTH PROTECTOR?

*Submitted by Leslie Redmond, Registered Dental Hygienist*

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?

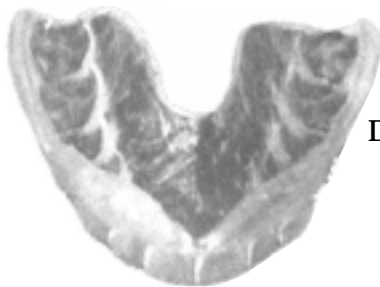
Anyone engaging in vigorous sports activities that could harm the facial region should wear a mouth protector.

## CHOOSING A MOUTH PROTECTOR

The most effective mouthguards combine several features. They should be resilient, light (thin enough for easy breathing), tear-resistant, and comfortable. They should also be properly fitted (mouth-formed and custom-made protectors, for instance, are shaped to closely fit a player's own teeth). And 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 of the three types, for, if properly made, it best provides all the qualities found in an ideal mouth protector. It is best constructed over a cast (model) made from a dentist's 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.

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### DEAR DORA

I have a three-month-old baby. Sometimes I feel so overwhelmed. I hardly eat, and I'm so tired. Will it ever get better?

*Signed,  
Tired in Rideau Lakes*

Dear Tired in Rideau Lakes

It sounds like you are realizing that adjusting to life with a new baby is definitely a full time job. Meeting the needs of both your baby and yourself can feel like quite a juggling act. Let's look at the postpartum period in relation to both moms and babies.

At three months babies still have small stomachs and therefore need to feed every 2-4 hours, even through the night. When you combine this with the unpredictable sleep and wake patterns babies' experience, new parents soon realize sleep is at a premium. Many people will give tips on how to get babies to sleep through the night, but that may not meet the baby's needs. So how can mom survive this?

We have talked about eating and sleeping being priorities for your baby...they are also priorities for mom in the postpartum period. Recovery following delivery of a baby, whether vaginally or by caesarean section requires TLC {tender loving care} and time to recuperate. For most new moms that means looking at their day, and then deciding what things they can let go of, to allow more time to eat and sleep. When someone offers to help, learn to say 'yes' and then give them something practical such as laundry or vacuuming or meal preparation. This will allow a perfect opportunity for you and baby to crawl back into bed. When you are feeling more rested you can take time to go out for a walk.

What if you are doing all of this and still feel overwhelmed? Talk to your public health nurse, nurse practitioner or family doctor. Learn about all the resources in your community for new mothers. Set small goals and celebrate all successes. And to answer the question: 'Will it ever get better?' Yes, but the road to getting there may not be as direct as you would like it to be.

Sincerely,

*Dora*  
Submitted by Donna Elliot,  
Public Health Nurse

