

# The Daily Apple

Healthy Families... Keeping in the Know

June 2008 VOLUME 7

[www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

NIAGARA REGION PUBLIC HEALTH

PARENT NEWSLETTER



## Cyberspace Safety

Finding the balance between giving your kids space and keeping them safe can be a challenge. Niagara Regional Police Service is often asked to present to children, youth and parents on Internet safety. Our experience is that kids in Grade 4 are already using chat programs such as MSN, and by the time they reach high school, most are on social networking sites such as MySpace and/or Facebook, and using text messaging to talk to a friend across the room. Cyberspace has long replaced the telephone or sleepover, so how do we

keep our kids connected to adults in their lives and safe as they explore literally, the 'world'. Talk early and talk often.

1. Space  $\neq$  privacy. Yes, our kids need to feel that we believe in them and trust them and they also need to be supported along the way to independence. We need to know what they are doing online. We need to be honest about using monitoring software and enabling chat logs. This is not an invasion of privacy, it is our responsibility.
2. Yes, we want to talk to our kids about "stranger danger" on the Internet, but a

far more common occurrence is kids being victimized by peers or adults who are all too open about their true intentions. As our kids start to develop into teens, they are starting to turn to their peers and the Internet for answers to the 'hard to ask' questions, (e.g. sexuality, drugs). If they are not going to ask us, we can at least be comfortable they are getting accurate information through giving them the names of reputable websites.

3. One of the reasons kids do not talk to adults about what is happening on the Internet is that they believe (often accurately) we will take their privileges away – this is their lifeline to their friends, to teen culture, to growing. As Barbara Coloroso says "we need to teach kids how to think, not what to think". Taking the Internet away at home will not solve the problem (friends, school, cell phones); talk ahead of time with your child/youth and agree on some consequences in case they are needed.
4. Become familiar with the language of the Internet – most of us will never be able to keep up with our kids, but we at least need to be in the race.

As with anything else when it comes to our kids, it's okay for us not to be cool, as long as our kids stay safe. For a list of developmental stages and Internet tips, please visit: [www.cybertips.ca](http://www.cybertips.ca) and/or [www.bewebaware.ca](http://www.bewebaware.ca).

*Guest submission: Detective Constable Nadine Wallace, Youth Justice Coordinator, NRPS*

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Comments and questions regarding this publication are welcome at [dailyapple@niagararegion.ca](mailto:dailyapple@niagararegion.ca) or 905-688-8248, ext 7444 or toll free at 1-888-505-6074



# Summer Tips for Your Family

As the nice weather arrives and summer approaches, we want to keep our families safe from the sun and insects.

Each time you go outside, it is important to act as a sun safety role model and practice sun safe behaviours together with your child.

## General Tips to consider:

### Limit Time in the Sun

The harmful rays of the sun are the strongest from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. To protect children, schedule their outdoor playtime to avoid these times.

### Seek Out the Shade

Find a shady spot or create your own with an umbrella or portable shade shelter. Trees and buildings also offer permanent shade.

### Slip on Protective Clothing

The best way to protect a child's skin is to cover it. Loose fitting long-sleeved shirts and long shorts of a light tightly woven fabric are best.

### Slap on a Hat and Protective Sunglasses

Look for a hat with a wide brim to protect eyes, ears, neck and face. Encourage children to wear UVA/UVB protective sunglasses.

### Slop on Sunscreen

Sunscreen is an essential part of sun safety but never rely on it alone. Children should wear sunscreen on any skin that is not covered by clothing. Choose a "broad spectrum" sunscreen that blocks UVA and UVB rays and has an SPF of at least 30.

**Insect repellents are an important part of protecting your children from insect bites that may carry diseases such as West Nile Virus. Here are some tips on how to use them safely:**

Consider using personal insect repellents that are federally registered, such as those that contain DEET.

When using a repellent, carefully read and follow the directions:

- Do not use insect repellents containing DEET on children under 6 months of age.
- Use a repellent with 10% DEET or less on children aged 6 months to 2 years. Only apply once a day and do not apply repellent to the hands or face of the child. Prolonged use should be avoided.
- For children between 2-12 years of age, use a product with 10% DEET or less no more than 3 times a day.
- Repellents containing up to 30% DEET will provide enough protection for individuals 12 years of age or older.
- Take note that insect repellent may reduce the effectiveness of sunscreen. When using them together, sunscreen should be applied 20 minutes before going outdoors. Insect repellent can be applied when the sunscreen has dried.





# Smoke-Free Cars are best because...

Niagara Region Public Health is proud to honour the winners of the seventh annual 'tobacco-free' living poster contest. This year's theme was, "Smoke-free cars are best because..." and we received participation from over 5,521 elementary students from 92 schools across the Niagara Region.

The **FIRST PLACE WINNERS** of the poster contest are:



Yanna Blyzchik, Niagara Falls



William Janssen, Niagara Falls



Jessica Stones, Stevensville



Austin Resch, Welland



Brittany Resch, Welland

**In celebration of World No Tobacco Day, May 31, many of the posters were displayed in the foyer of Niagara Region Public Health area libraries and health professional offices from May 26 - June 6, 2008.**

**Thank you to all participants.**



Tanya LeFebvre, Welland



## Join the BEAT Movement

### Built Environment and Active Transportation

Walkable communities are an important part of a healthy and vibrant community. We know that long distances and the design of street and sidewalks can make it harder for you and your family to walk to school, work, stores, or parks. Consider what keeps you from walking or biking to more places. Sometimes adding a sidewalk or making a connection to an existing trail can make the difference between walking and taking the car. These are the types of changes that you can ask your municipality to make.

In support of walkable communities, Niagara stepped up to the World Record Walk Challenge on October 3, 2007. Over 60 schools, all 12 municipalities, and dozens of workplaces participated. A total of over 2,800 walkers participated in this one kilometre walk! In Canada, 231,635 people completed the walk, stepping all over Western Australia's record of more than 100,000 participants.

Events such as this walk help to get out the message that walking as part of daily errands can be part of the solution to the crisis of obesity and climate change. You can make a difference by making a personal pledge to walk or bike more and drive less. Write down the places that you and your family could walk or bike to in 30 minutes or less. Post this list on your fridge as a reminder to walk or bike to them more often.

**Together we can make a difference!**



# Emergency Preparedness Starts With You!



## 72 Hours...Is Your Family Prepared?

- Step 1:** Know the Risks
- Step 2:** Make a Plan
- Step 3:** Prepare an Emergency Kit

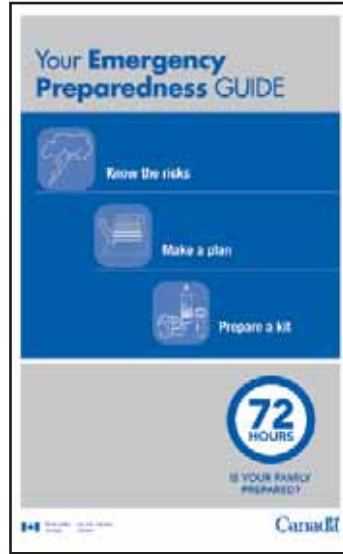
Each year, during the first week of May, Emergency Preparedness Week takes place in all corners of Canada.

By taking a few simple steps today, we are building a safer, more disaster resilient community for tomorrow.

To learn more about emergency preparedness, visit the Niagara Region Emergency Management website at [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

### Prepare Now, Learn How!

To order free copies of Your Emergency Preparedness Guide, call 1-800-0-Canada or visit [www.GetPrepared.ca](http://www.GetPrepared.ca)



For confidential health information, call:

**The Health Connection Line**  
905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074

**Child Car Seat Line, ext. 7362**  
Car seat safety, including troubleshooting and free information classes.

**Dental Health Line, ext. 7201**  
Dental programs and services.

**Health Bus Line, ext. 7512**  
Schedule of community stops made by the mobile clinic.

**Pandemic Info Line, ext. 7765**  
Personal preparedness and the Niagara Region Influenza Pandemic Plan.

**Parent Talk Information Line, ext. 7555**  
Parenting information on pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, parenting of infancy through adolescence; breastfeeding information and clinics; child care and Ontario Early Years Centres; course registration and post partum depression support group

**Tobacco Hotline, ext. 7393**  
Information about the health risks of smoking, ways to quit and the laws that apply to smoking.

**Travel Health Niagara Line, ext. 7383**  
Information on safe and healthy international travel or to book an appointment for our Travel Health Clinic.

## Are you a parent or guardian looking for information about Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?

If you are, this coming September, a presentation on Human Papillomavirus (HPV) will be available to all parents. A nurse practitioner from Niagara Region Public Health will be speaking about HPV, cervical cancer prevention, and the vaccine Gardasil™.

Grade 8 parents: information specific to the HPV vaccination program for Grade 8 girls will be provided in a vaccine package in September.

If you require information prior to September, please call Public Health at 905-688-8248 ext. 7372 or toll free 1-888-505-6074, or visit our website at [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

What are the benefits of buying locally grown produce?



Local produce is fresh, tasty and nutritious. Buying local produce connects us with the people who grow our food and supports Niagara's economy. It also helps preserve the environment and Niagara's farmland for our children.

So buy local whenever possible!

# Our Role in Niagara



**We PROTECT**  
Niagara Residents by:

- Testing water
- Inspecting food premises
- Providing safe food handling training
- Conducting environmental investigations
- Enforcing tobacco laws
- Preventing the spread of infectious diseases and sexually transmitted infections
- Providing both paramedic care and ambulance dispatch services

**We PROMOTE**  
health by:

- Offering prenatal classes
- Providing parenting information
- Conducting home visits for new parents
- Providing confidential sexual health services
- Offering breastfeeding support
- Encouraging regular physical activity and healthy eating
- Providing counselling for adults experiencing serious and persistent mental illness

**We PREVENT**  
disease and injury by:

- Offering child, adult and travel-related vaccinations
- Promoting road safety for drivers and pedestrians
- Educating citizens about heart disease risk factors
- Holding car seat education classes
- Providing dental care for eligible children and adults
- Raising awareness around substance abuse
- Encouraging regular cancer screenings, like pap smears and mammograms

These are just a sample of the many services we offer. If you are interested in learning more about the public health department, please visit our website at [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

## OUR LOCATIONS

### MAIN OFFICE/OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

2201 St. Davids Road, Campbell East,  
Thorold, ON  
Phone: 905-688-3762  
Toll Free: 1-800-263-7248  
Fax: 905-682-3901  
**Mailing Address:**  
P.O. Box 1052, Station Main,  
Thorold, ON L2V 0A2

### BRANCH OFFICES

#### Niagara Falls

5710 Kitchener Street,  
Niagara Falls, ON L2G 1C1  
Phone: 905-356-1538  
Fax: 905-356-7377  
**Sexual Health Centre**  
Phone: 905-358-3636  
Fax: 905-358-2717

#### Welland

540 King Street,  
Welland, ON L3B 3L1  
Phone: 905-735-5697  
Fax: 905-735-4895  
**Sexual Health Centre**  
Phone: 905-734-1014  
Fax: 905-734-1770

#### Fort Erie

43 Hagey Avenue,  
Fort Erie, ON L2A 1W4  
Phone: 905-871-6513  
Fax: 905-871-3020  
**Sexual Health Centre**  
Phone: 905-871-5320  
Fax: 905-871-3333

#### St. Catharines

Sexual Health Centre  
277 Welland Avenue,  
St. Catharines, ON L2R 2P7  
Phone: 905-688-3817  
Toll Free: 1-800-263-5757  
Fax: 905-688-6063

#### Niagara-on-the-Lake

Emergency Services Division  
509 Glendale Avenue East  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0  
Phone: 905-984-5050  
Fax: 905-688-5079

This newsletter provides health information for families of every size, and promotes access to public health programs and resources. We employ health experts who are excellent sources of information and act as links to other community agencies in the Niagara region. Every school has an assigned School Health nurse who is your resource for public health issues. Ask your principal about how to contact your school nurse.

