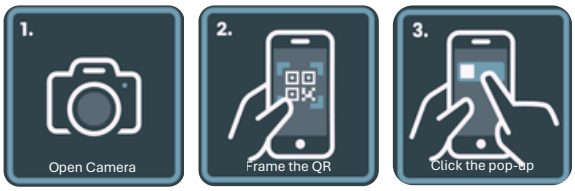
SOOKE SCHOOLS 62 Shaping Tomorrow Today

With thanks to Island Health for their recommendations: April 2026

HEALTHY HABITS
(AGES 5–13)



Healthy Eating



Enjoy Family Meals Together

- Eat meals together as a family when possible; this helps children feel safe and connected.
- Keep mealtime relaxed and free from screens or toys, so everyone can talk and enjoy.

Have a Variety of Foods

- Offer many types of foods: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and protein.
- Make water your main drink.

Follow Meal Roles

- Parents decide: what food, where, and when to eat.
- Children decide: how much to eat. They will eat different amounts each day, and that's normal.
- Following these roles can help children learn to trust their bodies and have a positive relationship with food.

HealthLink BC -Healthy Eating for Children

Physical Activity



- Children should aim for 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
- Move enough to sweat or get out of breath; bike, swim, run, or play at the park.
- Keep moving during the day. Take breaks and move between sittings.
- Be a role model, be active! Children copy their parents.
- Try new activities together, so movement stays fun and interesting.

Children & Youth Movement Guidelines

Sleep



- Most children need 9–11 hours of sleep per night. Every child is different. Some children sleep more; others sleep less.
- Follow a bedtime routine. Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- Create a calm sleep space: have a cool, dark and quiet bedroom.
- Turn off screens 1-2 hours before bedtime. Avoid caffeine 4-6 hours before bed (including pop and chocolate).

Kelty Mental Health -Sleeping Well

Screen Time Management



- Limit screen time to 2 hours outside of schoolwork.
- Avoid using screens as a distraction. It may help for a little while, but children need to learn how to calm themselves without screens. Try the parenting strategies linked below to help your child develop self-soothing skills, without screens.
- Be a role model, reduce your own screen use when you are with your child.
- Prioritize family time, focus on activities that keep everyone active and connected.

Screen Use and Young Children

Other Healthy Habit Tips



- Talk with children about feelings and school experiences.
- Wash hands often to stop the spread of germs.
- Brush teeth with fluoride toothpaste to prevent cavities. Visit a dentist once a year. www.Bcdental.org
- Keep children safe in the car by using a car seat or booster until they are 145cm (4'9") or 9 years old.
  ICBC | BCAA | Transport Canada
- When walking, look left, right, and listen. Wear reflective clothes and use lights after dark.

RESOURCES FOR NEWCOMERS - SOUTH ISLAND

Food Resources



Food Resources for Newcomers

- Helpful information on grocery stores, finding cultural ingredients, culturally diverse restaurants, and farmers markets.

Community Service Directory - Food Programs

- Includes information about service types, cost, languages, ways to access.

Family Programs and Services

Recreation (rec)



- Drop-in or register for a monthly pass to the local rec centre.
- L.I.F.E. Program – access to rec services and programs for individuals and families living on a low income. Visit your rec centre website for more information.
- Kidsport BC - financial assistance for children's sport activities.
- Power to Be helps people with barriers to access nature and recreation activities.

Greater Victoria Public Library



- Programs for children, youth and families (summer reading club, family story time).

Other Children and Family Programs

- BGC South Island: variety of social, educational, and recreation programs for children and youth.
- Neighbourhood houses offer programs and services for families. See locations.

Childcare Resource Referral



- For locations and information www.childcarevictoria.org
- Sooke/Westshore Childcare resource and referral program

School District Registration

- Greater Victoria School District
- Sooke School District
- Saanich School District

211 British Columbia

211 is a free and confidential service that connects people to helpful and vital resources in their community. Available in different languages.

Counselling Services



Victoria Child and Youth Mental Health

- Free mental health services for children and youth (aged 5 to 18). Referral is required.

Foundry Victoria

- Free counselling services for children and youth.

VICCIR

- Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees (VICCIR)

Sea to Tree

- Clinical counselling, coaching and wellness services in Sooke, the Westshore, and online.

Pathways

- Pathways Community Service Directory for Victoria-South Island.

School-Based Counselling

- Check your child's school for more information.

Health Care Services



Emergency Care

- For serious or urgent medical issues (chest pain, stroke, severe injury, etc.), go to the nearest hospital. See wait times.

Care Options

- Contact your family doctor or nurse practitioner first.
- No family doctor?
  Register with the BC Health Connect Registry to get a family doctor or nurse practitioner.
- Same-Day Care
  Get care in person or online at a clinic.
- The Refugee Clinic at the Downtown Victoria Urgent and Primary Care Centre offers medical screening for newcomers who have arrived within the past 12 months. Call for appointment.

Medical Advice Now

- Call 8-1-1 for medical advice 24/7

Government Programs

Canada Dental Care Plan (CDCP)

- Helps eligible families access dental services for children.

BC Healthy Kids Program

- Children in low-income families can get coverage for: basic dental care, eyewear, and hearing assistance.