

347 USE OF SUBSTANCES

Background

Canadian Rockies School Division is committed to promoting the health and well-being of all students and creating an inclusive environment where all students feel safe and cared for. We understand the importance of reaching out and extending a caring approach to students at risk to enhance connectedness and to support academic development and success. Research shows the most important factors found in reducing risk behaviors were students feeling connected to their school community and caring adults in the schools. Our approach is on strength based practices which focuses on identifying, exploring and using the individual strengths of youth to foster positive outcomes within the school setting.

Alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other drugs are addictive, are harmful to the school community and threaten the health and well-being of students. Canadian Rockies School Division acknowledges that creating a healthy environment for the school community is everyone's responsibility.

Canadian Rockies School Division does not permit the possession or use of the substances listed below while on school property, school buses or during school-related activities.

- tobacco products
- vaping of any substance
- cannabis products for any non-prescriptive purpose (e.g. fresh, dried, edible, liquid, concentrates, seeds or live plant material) or the possession of paraphernalia associated with the consumption of cannabis
- alcohol
- solvents
- pharmaceutical drugs for non-medical purposes
- illicit drugs
- drug-related paraphernalia whether purchased or home-made (e.g. syringes, bongs, pipes)

In addition, students are not permitted to be under the influence of the aforementioned substances while attending school (this provision supersedes any municipal bylaw, provincial or other law that may allow for the legal possession or consumption of cannabis in a particular venue or by persons over 18 years of age):

If a student is using pharmaceutical drugs for legitimate medical purposes, administration will consult the file for confirmation.

Definitions

Substances

Are chemicals, not food, that are taken into the body for non-medicinal purposes, or in non-accordance with a medical prescription. This includes, but is not limited to, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, inhalants/solvents, depressants, narcotics/opiates, hallucinogens, mixed-action drugs, performance-enhancing drugs, and stimulants.

Substance Abuse

Refers to any use of a substance that causes personal, emotional, social, legal, health, school-related, or financial problems.

Substance Use

Refers to any use of a substance.

Protective factors

Are those associated with reduced potential for substance abuse.

Risk factors

Are those that make substances use more likely.

Reparation

Is repairing the damage caused to relationships and finding mutually acceptable ways forward.

Restorative Practice

Is defined by its emphasis on respect and relationships. Restorative justice/practice works to repair the damage and promote healing and growth. The principles are respect, inclusiveness, accountability, reparation, and restoration.

Vaping

Is the act of inhaling and exhaling a vapour produced by a vaping product, such as an electronic cigarette or similar device.

Purpose and Procedures

1. Prevention

To contribute to the prevention of substance use/abuse among Canadian Rockies School Division students:

- a. substance use/abuse and related prevention programs will be offered in the schools in a coordinated, integrated and sequential manner in accordance with best practices. They will be based on the Alberta Education Program of Studies for Health and Life Skills - Kindergarten to Grade Nine Guide to Implementation or Career and Life Management Guide to Implementation.

- b. the expectations about the use/abuse of substances will be clearly communicated to students. School administrators will be responsible for communicating this information to their school community.
- c. the school administration and school counsellor(s) have leadership roles in implementing and monitoring prevention initiatives and procedures for dealing with substance use/abuse, and evaluating the prevention and intervention strategies, including collaboration with community partners.

To identify the role of the school community in the prevention of substances use/abuse:

Professional preparedness is critical in engaging teachers and administration in the promotion of mental health in daily routines and interactions with students. This could involve:

- a. promotion of health promoting environments on a universal level
- b. ensuring the understanding and delivery of the program of studies involving mental health and substance use
- c. determine and provide professional development to support school personnel in creating and maintaining a healthy school environment
- d. build family involvement to support a healthy school environment
- e. continue to build a network of relationships that enhances protective factors for students
- f. responses to unacceptable conduct are immediate, consistent and fair
- g. disciplinary actions, whenever possible, are preventive and restorative
- h. students, as often as possible, are encouraged to participate in the development of meaningful consequences

If staff and visitors are displaying behavior associated with substance use/abuse on school property, or are under the influence of non-permitted substances, on school buses or during school-related activities, the school administrator will immediately address the staff/visitor. Division office will be notified in a timely manner.

2. Interventions

To provide intervention and support for students who are experiencing substance use/abuse, or who are at risk,

Canadian Rockies School Division believes that it is in students' best interests to have substance use/abuse identified as early as possible.

Strategy 1: Staff training and support

All staff will be provided with information and have access to [Public School Works](#) training about identification of problems and intervention with behaviors that may be related to substance use/abuse. This should be delivered annually.

Strategy 2: Immediate intervention when staff suspects student substance use.

If a staff member believes that a student is under the influence of substances, he or she is to contact the school administration immediately.

Strategy 3: Ongoing behavior Indicators of student(s) at risk.

If a staff member, in their professional judgment, believes that a student is displaying behavior associated with substance use/abuse, the staff member will consult with the school counsellor and /or AHS. The counsellor and administrator will determine next steps; bring concerns to school team meetings. Teachers will be informed of follow-up plans.

Strategy 4: Progressive Interventions

To determine the options for reparation following a student substance use incident consider the following:

Progressive intervention is an approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. The use of restorative practices as a component of progressive discipline is a means of building relationships, strengthening school communities, and maintaining safe, inclusive school cultures. The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used by the Division and all schools must be firm, fair, clear and developmentally appropriate and must include learning opportunities for students in order to reinforce positive behaviors and help students make good choices.

Forgiveness underpins the Division's approach to dealing with students who make mistakes. Many mistakes are made by young people through lack of careful attention to others or to rules. Often there is no intention to harm, and when harm is intended, the young person involved may have little real understanding of the effects of their harmful actions. Actions have consequences and these consequences must be understood for the safety of all.

Use or possession of substances, on school property, on school buses or during school-related activities could result in the following:

- a. collaborative problem solving with all parties involved with the goal of restoring the relationship(s) that have been impacted by substance use

- b. remove privileges for short and long terms
- c. make alternative learning arrangements in and out of school which may include projects related to the issues at hand (developed in collaboration with school based and AHS team)
- d. require restitution for property damage to the school or individuals
- e. make referrals to other agencies such as: social workers, police officers, Alberta Attendance Board, child welfare workers, etc
- f. in-school suspension from a class or school may include projects related to the issues at hand (developed in collaboration with school based and AHS team)
- g. out-of-school suspension
- h. involve RCMP for any illegal activities
- i. recommend expulsion from the school

3. Evidence of Trafficking

The student will serve a 5-day suspension, as outlined in the guidelines provided in The Education Act, with a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools, for expulsion. The RCMP will be notified.

References

Section 8,11,31,32,33,36,37,41,42,43,44,52,53,196,197,222 Education Act
 Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act
 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
 Controlled Drugs and Substances Act
 Criminal Code
 Food and Drugs Act
 Youth Criminal Justice Act
 Keeping Youth Connected, Healthy and Learning: Effective Responses to Substance Use in the School Setting (Vancouver Island Health Authority)
 Restorative Justice Community/Classroom Conferencing (The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities)
 Joint Consortium for School Health
 AP 351 Safe and Caring School Environments - Canadian Rockies Public Schools
 Government of Canada websites:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/campaigns/cannabis/health-effects.html>
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/vaping.html>

History

Developed: August 2003
 Amended: September 2018
 Amended: February 2020