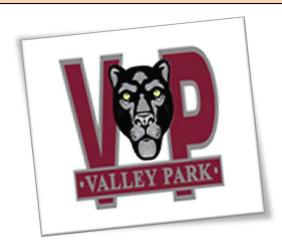
# Valley Park Middle School Parent Council Newsletter December 2020

https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/valleypark/School-Council





### VPMS 2020 - 2021 Parent Council

Dear Valley Park Middle School Parents,

The following VPMS parents have been elected / acclaimed as Executive Members of our School Council for 2020-2021

- Khalid Javed Mian Co-Chair
- Muhammad Masood Alam Co-Chair
- Arshi Ali Sub–Committee Chair (Mental Health & Parent Support)
- Asim Masoodi
- Safeera Mulla
- Mujahid Nazir Ahmed
- Zawar Patel
- Shazia Khalid Javaid
- Rizwana Younus Janga

The Teacher Representatives and non-teaching staff representatives are yet to be determined.

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Parents Engaged in Education



Executive Members of the School Council are required to attend all remaining School Council meetings.

All parents are invited and encouraged to attend any School Council meetings.

Meetings will be held Virtually through the Zoom platform. The dates for the remaining School Council meetings this school year are as follows:

Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday March 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday June 2, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Please contact Khalid Javed Mian or Muhammad Masood Alam for all communication regarding School Council business.

Please join me in thanking this year's School Council members and congratulating them on their role in supporting our students, staff, parents and community.

Yours Sincerely,

George Bartzis, Principal

email: george.bartzis@tdsb.on.ca; phone: 416 396 2465

If you are interested in becoming a parent representative for the Valley Park MS School Council please contact me by email, **George.Bartzis@tdsb.on.ca** phone: 416 396 2465 or in person at the school

### **Parent Council Contacts**

For all communication regarding School Council business, Parent council can be contacted at Co-Chairs emails:

mian.khalid@tdsb.on.ca / malam@ymail.com

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### Hi Valley Park Middle School students, staff, administrations and families!

We would like to wish all of you a happy holiday's season and may this holiday season bring happiness and joy to you and your loved ones.

This holiday season will not look the same as it has in past years and we may not be celebrating in way we did before.

This year, we need to celebrate holidays differently to keep our family, friends, neighbours and community safe from COVID-19. It's important to remember that people are contagious before they show symptoms, and so we need to continue keeping our distance from each other as much as we can.

The holiday season will be different this year, but there are still ways to stay socially connected. To help reduce the spread of COVID-19, plan lower risk activities such as:

- Indoor celebrations with members of your household.
- Virtual celebrations.
- Doorstep gift exchanges.
- Outdoor celebrations in open spaces with room for 2-metres of physical distance

Once again wishing you and your loved ones peace, health, happiness, and prosperity in the coming New Year 2021

Kind Regards

Khalid Mian and Masood Alam Co-Chairs School Council Valley Park Middle School

### **Transfer to Virtual School Survey**

### Dear Parents/Guardians,

Further to the email sent to all parents/guardians from the Toronto District School Board yesterday afternoon, I wanted to provide more information about the parent/guardian survey about elementary switching. As you know, the next opportunity to request consideration for a switch between in-person and virtual learning was originally scheduled for the end of January (to take effect on February 16). To help guide us in making a decision on switching that will best support student learning, please complete the following survey to indicate if your child wants to be considered for a switch between the two learning models:

#### Transfer to Virtual Learning - Valley Park Middle School

While this survey does <u>not</u> guarantee that a switch will be possible, the information will assist staff as they consider next steps in the process.

Should you have any questions, please contact the school prior to the winter break.

Sincerely,

Mr. Bartzis

Principal

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### Dr. Arshi Ali Sub-Committee Chair (Mental Health & Parent Support)

Parent Council members and all Valley Park Middle School community members are requested to contribute and join Mental Health & Parent Support Committee Chaired by Dr. Arshi Ali to achieve the goals for Mental Health & parent support in our community

How can you make winter awesome at this time of the COVID 19 pandemic?

### 10 fun-loving and easy strategies to follow mindfully

**Structure your day:** For having control of the actions, indeed are the foundations of a structure. At this time of the COVID 19 pandemic, while social distancing law is being imposed for safety reasons, structure your day mindfully and purposefully. The structure of the day will not only set a direction but set the tone of the day. The task can be prioritized based on the need; for instance, urgent task, important and the task can be done later on. **Food for thought:** Structure some activities every day that soothes one's emotional and physical well-being. It will support you to better cope with the winter influence at this time of the COVID 19 pandemic

**Find some joy, fun and pleasure:** It's not a big deal to add some enjoyment, delight and pleasure to your life every day. There are some minor things but having a tremendous influence on one's vitality. It's your ingenuity, creativity and according to your taste, try to find, encounter or create something that gives immense pleasure, giggle or smile on your face. **Food for thought:** Discover your zone of pleasure or contentment and reflect on it. It might take a few days to discover or recognize and make it a part of life

**Find some time with a loved one:** It has a significant impact on your mood and comforts your emotional needs. Loved one might be your parents, children, spouse, partner, buddies, relatives or any other relationship. You are always comfortable/satisfied with them and enjoying their presence. **Food for thought:** whenever you are with a loved one, try to avoid operating mobile or any other electronic gadgets. Be present not only physically but emotionally or mindfully. It will not only strengthen your connection but take it to the next level

**Find some passion for creativity:** Creativity is invariably connected with contentment and satisfaction in one's life, given the fact that, creativity comes with imagination and fantasy. Every individual has some level of creativity, and imagination, try to reflect on it. It might be an artistic skill that is unknown or writing skills, blogging, painting or anything that comes under creativity. It does not only help you to express your emotions but boosts your level of life satisfaction. Once you discover that passion, pursue it mindfully at this time of the COVID 19 pandemic

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**Celebrate daily:** It does not require a huge investment, merely making a few modifications in your life; festivities can be created every day. For instance, at the breakfast table, if you just dressed up nicely, make your hair and apply light makeup, believe me, it can change the environment instantly and having a positive impact on your mood too. Give it a try. A delicious meal can be cooked and set up a table with special ceramics, adding fresh blossoms and lit a candle is another awesome idea. You can make your environment according to your taste and preference. Be innovative and follow your vision mindfully

**Find some ME time daily:** It signifies an uninterrupted moment for relaxing/calming and soothing time for yourself at this time of the COVID 19 pandemic. Me time might be a 15-minute break from the daily tasks but it is up to you to have 2 to 4 breaks per day. You can surpass it if you desire or you can create a 30-minute break. Me time can be utilized by listening to the favourite music, having a cup of tea or coffee and enjoying every sip mindfully, just seating peacefully and converse to yourself, take a short nap, reading a favourite novel or book, heading for a trek and

enjoy nature, having a warm bath and lit some scented candles. The most important part is that you can create an environment and flavour for soothing your feelings and emotions

Connect spiritually: Spiritual connection is to connect to the soul. Spending some time in nature will enable us to create a connection between nature and the soul. It might be walking to the valley, seeing sunrise or sunset, observing the full moon, enjoying the rain, closely watching plants and their shade/texture and visiting the nearby garden. All of the activities are free and available by nature to connect spiritually. Give it a try and notice the difference. Offer some time to pray and gratitude. It will help to heal your soul, restore energy, and bring sustainability at this time of the COVID 19 pandemic. It is linked with spiritual healing and a healthy soul

**Focus on your physical health:** Eat nutritious and healthy food including fresh fruits, vegetables, seafood, protein, and try to avoid processed/packaged food and prefer homemade meals, given the fact that the spread of novel coronavirus at this time of the COVID 19 pandemic. Nutritious foods not only boost your level of energy but will also help to strengthen the immunity system and fighting the novel coronavirus. Focus on exercise, physical hygiene and adequate sleep will also help to boost the immunity system

**Nurture your social needs:** It is said that humans are social animals. Social needs are built-in and it is required to nurture more often for resiliency and connectivity. At this time of COVID 19 pandemic, with practicing social distancing, social needs emerging at a higher level than before. In many ways, social need can be addressed adequately, for instance, arrange a virtual party with your buddies and cousins, taking a virtual tour of any museum, art gallery or any garden, join yoga virtually, meditation or wellness group to nurture your needs and attend the precious events virtually including weddings, birthdays, engagements, ceremonies, rituals, welcomes, farewells and even a baby shower and a newborn welcome

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Plan something soothing and relaxing: It's your way to relax and soothe yourself at this time of COVID 19 pandemic. Be creative and mindful. Anything that affects you positively and de-stress you. Same activity relaxing for someone and boring for others. Recreational activities with buddies or children, listening to classical music, savanna bath, pedicure, manicure, sometimes head massage with oil gives you a soothing and relaxing effect

### Arshi Ali, Ph.D. PMDCP

Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying)
Chair of the mental health committee
Valley Park MS

# **School Councils**

# http://torontopiac.com/school-councils.html

School councils play a vital role in the education system in Ontario. They provide a forum through which parents, school staff, students, and other members of school communities can contribute to improving student achievement and well-being, and enhance the accountability of the education system. <u>Ontario Reg. 612</u>

The purpose of School Councils is to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. School councils are able to make recommendations to their Principals and School Boards on any matter. Principals and school boards, in turn, must consult with school councils on a variety of matters that affect student learning. They must also consider recommendations made by school councils and report back to the councils on how they plan to act on their advice. A comprehensive guide to school council operations is provided by the Ontario Ministry of Education: School Councils: A Guide for Members.

PIAC has produced a School Council Toolkit, as a quick guide to School Council operations that can be found HERE!

Updating your School Statement of Need? Click **HERE**.

Additional resources and explanations can be found below:

GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS
BYLAWS
COMMUNICATION
FUNDS AND FUNDRAISING
HOW CAN PIAC HELP?
OTHER RESOURCES

# **Parent Engagement**

http://torontopiac.com/parent-engagement.html

### What is Parent Engagement?

There are many different types of parent engagement. Parents contribute to their children's learning at home, school, and the board:

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- At home, parents create the conditions to support student learning (e.g. read to their children, talk about school and help with homework).
- At school, parents participate in parent-teacher dialogues, volunteer in the school and on school trips, and participate on school councils.
- At the board, parents provide advice on parent engagement and communicating with parents as members of the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) such as PIAC.

# **Parent Resources**

# http://torontopiac.com/resources.html

**TDSB Resources** 

TDSB 2020-21 CALENDARS

BACK TO SCHOOL RESOURCES

STEPS TO ADDRESS CONCERNS

PARENT CONCERN PROTOCOL

CHILDCARE PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

TDSB POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Mental Health & Wellness

TDSB MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

THE ABCS OF MENTAL HEALTH

TDSB MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

CAMH YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

Special Education

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TDSB ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS

TDSB SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS

French Resources

FRENCH PROGRAMS

FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

**Newcomer and Language Resources** 

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

**NEWCOMER STUDENT SERVICES** 

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

**Arts and Science Programming** 

TDSB SPECIALIZED SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Conferences and Forums

2020 PARENTS AS PARTNERS CONFERENCE

PIAC FACEBOOK GROUP

TDSB SCHOOL COUNCIL FACEBOOK GROUP

**Ontario Ministry of Education** 

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

PRO GRANTS

EQAO

SCHOOL COUNCILS: A GUIDE FOR MEMBERS

ONTARIO REGULATION 612/00

**Parent Engagement Resources** 

PIAC'S SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT

TDSB PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

TDSB PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICE

COUNCIL OF ONTARIO DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION (CODE)

PARENTS ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

PEOPLE FOR EDUCATION

ONTARIO FED OF HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

FIX OUR SCHOOLS

**Youth Athletics** 

ONTARIO PHYSICAL EDUCATION SAFETY GUIDELINES

TORONTO DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOC

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATIONS

Other Resources

SCHOOL COUNCIL BASICS SLIDE DECK

ONTARIO OMBUDSMAN

WHAT IS PIAC?

# **Resources for Parents**

School can be an exciting and overwhelming time – for both parents and students. Here are some resources to help you have a great year.

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### **Resources for Students**

School can be an exciting and overwhelming time. And we're here to help. We have lots of great information and resources to make this a fun and successful year!



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### **Community**, https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community

At the TDSB we encourage strong community connections to provide our students with the balance of what they are learning and how it applies to life outside of the classroom. We engage the community in several ways. We welcome <u>volunteers</u> to help support our students. If you are interested in volunteering at your child's school please connect with your principal directly.

We encourage organizations to <u>permit the use of our facilities</u> so that they can be used when school is out. Learn more about our effective partnerships with communities and community agencies through our <u>Community Use of Schools</u> and <u>Focus on Youth</u> programs. We also provide a solution to the challenge of inadequate space in Toronto's priority neighbourhoods for community use through our <u>Priority Schools Initiative</u>.

We welcome community feedback. Public input is critical in helping us make our school board the best it can be. Our community can take an active role in the decision-making process by attending town hall meetings, public forums, speaking to Trustee standing committees and participating in surveys. Please check out our <u>community consultations</u> section to find out what consultations are currently active.

# Guide to Community Resources , <a href="https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/Model-Schools-for-Inner-Cities/Community-Resources">https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/Model-Schools-for-Inner-Cities/Community-Resources</a>

Welcome to the Guide to Community Resources, a list of organizations and agencies that we have put together to support students, families and communities. Here, you'll be able to find health and wellness, housing, education, financial and newcomer resources.

To start, select your ward from the map or list below to access supports in your community.

### **Guide to Community Resources - Ward 14**,

The Guide to Community Resources provides a list of organizations and agencies that support your community. Select one of the options below to access the list of community resources.

If there is an organization or agency that you would like to add to the list, let us know by completing the online submission form.

**Health and Wellness** 

Housing

**Education** 

**Financial Support** 

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#### **New to Canada**

https://www.tdsb.on.ca/portals/0/community%20resources%20pdf%20books/ward14.pdf



### **COVID19 Community Messages**

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpGOiwBWGwgv3Lwdui-c4v9UKQ\_OkN1R0

COVID-19 is a serious health threat, and the situation is evolving daily. The risk varies between and within communities, but given the number of cases in Canada, the risk to Canadians is considered **high**. We continue to reassess the public health risk based on the best available evidence as the situation evolves. For more information, refer to our risk section.

### Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Guidance documents

- Outbreak update
- Symptoms and treatment
- Prevention and risks
- Measures to reduce COVID-19
- For health professionals
- Canada's response
- Travel restrictions, exemptions and advice
- Awareness resources
- Guidance documents

The following is ethical and technical guidance on COVID-19 for various audiences.

### About guidance creation

**Ethics** 

**Communities** 

Child and youth settings

**Post-secondary institutions** 

**Health professionals** 

**Health sector preparation** 

**Businesses** 

**Indigenous communities** 

Industry

Death care services

**Faith community leaders** 

Open chat wizard

COVID-19 Virtual Assistantx

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Guidance documents - Canada.ca

# COVID-19: Holiday Guide

https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-reopening-recovery-rebuild/covid-19-reopening-information-for-the-public/covid-19-holiday-guide/

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# **Preparation for Remote Learning**



Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we all prepare for a much needed winter break, the TDSB is planning ahead for the New Year and what learning may look like as we return to school in January. As cases of COVID-19 continue to rise in Toronto, so too does the possibility of individual classes, schools or the system moving to remote learning for a period of time. As a result, we want to be as prepared as possible. It is important to note that any decision on the closure of a school or the system is made based on the advice of public health officials or the provincial government and is not made by the TDSB. We have received no indication that schools will close, however, we do want to make sure we are prepared to implement any decision smoothly and efficiently and continue to support our students' learning and well-being.

So to ensure your family is prepared for any shift to remote learning — whether at the class, school or system level — please consider the following actions:

- Ensure you have a working device at home.
- Ensure that the school has your correct email address.
- Login to teacher's online platform to confirm you have access. Your child should have done this with their teacher.
- Bookmark the Student Virtual Learning IT Support page.

Also, as we get ready to leave for a couple of restful weeks, please ensure personal belongings, such as shoes, clothing, and anything else your child may need over the break is brought home, as well as any food that may be left in their locker or cubby.

Thank you for your continued support. We wish your family a safe and healthy holiday. We look forward to seeing everyone in 2021.

Sincerely.

K. Witherow

Kathy Witherow Interim Director of Education

**Preparation for Remote Learning** 

# TRUSTEE UPDATE

# **Trustee Trixie Doyle**

TDSB Ward 14 - Don Valley East www.tdsb.on.ca/Doyle Trixie.Doyle@tdsb/on.ca

### PREPARATION FOR REMOTE LEARNING

As cases of COVID-19 continue to rise in Toronto, there is a possibility that more individual classes, schools or the entire system will have to move to remote learning for a period of time.

As a result, the TDSB is planning ahead for the return to school in January.

The Board has not received notice that schools will be closed after the Winter Break, but it is best to be as prepared as

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possible for any changes in the new year so that we can continue to support our students' learning and well-being.

ANY DECISION ON THE CLOSURE OF A SCHOOL OR THE SYSTEM IS MADE BASED ON THE ADVICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS OR THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND IS NOT MADE BY THE TDSB.

Some ways you can help prepare your family for a shift to virtual learning:

- Bring home any belongings your child has at school before the winter break begins.
- If you don't have a working device at home, please contact your school to let them know you need a device.
- If you have not been receiving emails from the TDSB or your child's school (for example, the <u>latest notice to parents</u>) please contact your school to ensure they have your correct email address.
- Login to your teacher's online platform to confirm you have access. Your child should have done this with their teacher.
- Find links to help you learn more about the online platforms here <a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EVB8nAGq1KjW8wlbAxFVzSQRyNZInyB8QVcCudYQdEI/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EVB8nAGq1KjW8wlbAxFVzSQRyNZInyB8QVcCudYQdEI/edit?usp=sharing</a>
- Bookmark the IT support page https://www.tdsb.on.ca/In-Person-Learning/Student-Virtual-Learning-IT-Support



## **TDSB contact for device malfunctions**

# Here is the link to the site, there is a form there to be completed and IT will connect with the family.

https://www.tdsb.on.ca/In-Person-Learning/Student-Virtual-Learning-IT-Support

### Apply for Support for Learners funding

https://www.iaccess.gov.on.ca/SupportForLearnersWeb/public/index.xhtml

This funding is intended to provide parents and guardians with essential financial support for children and youth during these unprecedented times.

Parents and guardians will receive a one-time payment of \$200 for each child up to age 12, or \$250 for each child or youth up to age 21 with special needs.

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Fill out and submit **one application per child** to receive funding. Only one parent or guardian may apply for each child. Each application will be verified, processed and paid separately. This means that if you have more than one child you may not receive payments at the same time.

Payments will be delayed or denied if the information you provide is incomplete or inaccurate. We may contact you to verify the information you are providing through this application.

Community Resources Thorncliffe Park & Flemingdon Park					
RESOURCE	ORGANIZATION	CONTACT INFO	WEBSITE		
COVID Testing	HATP – Community Hotline	647 477 1640			
Food Security     Senior Support     Violence Against     Women     Housing Support     Youth Support	TNO	416 467 0126	https://tno-toronto.org/blog/food-banks- other-food-resources https://tno-toronto.org/housing- programs https://tno-toronto.org/programs-womei		
Food Security	Flemingdon Food Bank @ 10 Gateway Blvd	416 422 4322	https://www.fcfoodbank.com		
	Afghan Women's Organization Food Bank @ 200 - 747 Don Mills Road	Maryam: 416 422 2225 x 227 Amiri: 416 388 8323	https://afghanwomen.org/event/food- bank/		
	East York Meals on Wheels @ 2 Thorncliffe Park Drive #52	416 424 3322	https://www.eastyorkmealsonwheels.org		
	Thorncliffe Residents Group	Masood Alam: 647 292 5364			
Mental Health Support	HATP Social Work	416 421 6369			
	Toronto Distress Centre	416 408 HELP (4357)	https://www.dcogt.com/408-help-line		
	Mental Health TO	1 866 585 MHTO	https://stridestoronto.ca/programs/ment al-health-to/		
Legal / Housing Support	Don Valley Community Legal Services (DVCLS)	416-441-1764 x 36	https://www.donvalleylegal.ca/		



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# COVID-19 **Testing Sites**

Open to any resident in the surrounding neighbourhood who wants to be tested for COVID-19.

Thorncliffe Park – TNO Youth Centre		Thorncliffe Park – Jenner Jean-Marie Community Centre			
		- NEW SITE -			
8	TNO Youth Centre – 45 Overlea Blvd., Unit 108A NO ACCESS FROM INSIDE MALL – ENTER FROM BACK PARKING LOT	8	Jenner Jean-Marie Community Centre - 48 Thorncliffe Park Dr., M4H 1J7 ENTER TESTING CENTRE FROM BACK OF BUILDING.		
C	For appointments, inquiries, and neighbourhood resources, please call the community hotline: 647 477 1640		Open Mon-Fri, 1 pm – 7 pm Dec. 14-18, 21-24, 28-31 Closed on December 25 <sup>th</sup>		
( <u>L</u> )	Open 7 days/week, 1 pm – 7 pm Closed on December 25 <sup>th</sup> , December 26 <sup>th</sup> , January 1 <sup>st</sup>	( <u>i</u> .)			
*	Drop-ins welcome	ķ	Drop-in only (no appointments)		
<b>≜</b> ≡	Bring your health card, if you have one.	≛≡	Bring your health card, if you have one.		
	COVID-19 testing is available for all ages.	*	COVID-19 testing is available for all ages.		
Updated Dec 15, 2020					



fhc

TNQ



### What if my child or family member gets a positive COVID-19 test result?

You may contact any of the agencies listed below for help with access to support with rent, isolating, income assistance, groceries, childcare and other supports to ensure you can take time off work, stay home and focus on recovery: Please call 647-477-1640



#### Do you need food to help you isolate?

Free food service available for local residents who are in isolation through the TNO Food Collaborative: Please call 647-296-0242



- More information is available from the COVID 19 Toronto Public Health Hotline: 416 338 7600. Interpreters are available to communicate in your language.
- Time: 8:30 a.m. 8 p.m.
- TTY: 416-392-0658
- Email: PublicHealth@toronto.ca
- Website: https://www.toronto.ca/health















East Toronto

