



# **Board Report**

Friday, April 24, 2020



## PROGRAM REPORT MARCH 2020

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**Working with the Grey Bruce communities to protect and promote health**

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### CATCH My Breath

In response to the increased use of vaping products by youth, and aligning with the revised Ontario curriculum, the Grey Bruce Health Unit is working with local schools to teach students about vaping. The [CATCH](#) My Breath E-cigarette and JUUL prevention program provides up-to-date information to equip students with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about vaping. Developed by the University of Texas School of Public Health for Grades 5-12 students, Catch My Breath activities are taught over four classroom lessons; students:

- Learn about the contents of e-cigarettes, health consequences, school policies, and provincial laws/regulations;
- Compare their perception of peers' e-cigarette use with available data to reinforce that vaping is not a normative behavior;
- Identify reasons or motivations for e-cigarette use and positive alternatives;
- Learn how those reasons are established through social (adult/peer role models) and environmental (product marketing) influences;
- Analyze real-world vaping advertisements and simulated social situations to identify the influences in their school community;
- Learn and practice refusal skills to resist social influences and role-play possible social encounters;
- Commit to abstain from vaping (Kelder et al., 2020)

Catch My Breath is the only evidence-based e-cigarette prevention program with demonstrated effectiveness for middle school students. As of January 31, 2020, over 500 students at 20 schools in Grey Bruce are participating in the program. Students responded positively to several aspects of the Catch My Breath program. Feedback from 176 students, primarily in Grades 6-8, across eight schools identify:

- 82% agreed that the program increased knowledge about vape use
- 54% discussed what they learned with friends or family
- 78% feel confident in using refusal skills from the program
- 83% learned about the dangers of vapes

- 67% enjoyed the program
- 74% are less likely to vape having participated in the program
- 82% believe the program would be help get youth not to vape
- 74% better understand vape advertising
- 76% believe all middle and high school students should take the program

All five teachers completing the Catch My Breath program:

- Found the curriculum to be a helpful resource to deliver vaping education.
- Found the teacher training videos helpful prior to teaching the sessions.
- Identified training videos gave helpful background on vaping and vaping products.
- Are very or extremely confident in their ability to deliver the lessons
- Identified there were no barriers to teaching the curriculum
- Plan to use the curriculum again
- Would recommend the program to a colleague

A complete report of the Catch My Breath pilot in Grey Bruce for the 2019/20 school year will be available in July. Plans include expanding the reach for the 2020/21 school year.

## **Immunization**

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other health measure ([www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca)). Immunization protects individuals by triggering the immune system to fight against certain diseases. Upon contact with a disease, the immune system of a vaccinated person can respond more effectively than someone who has not received the vaccine.

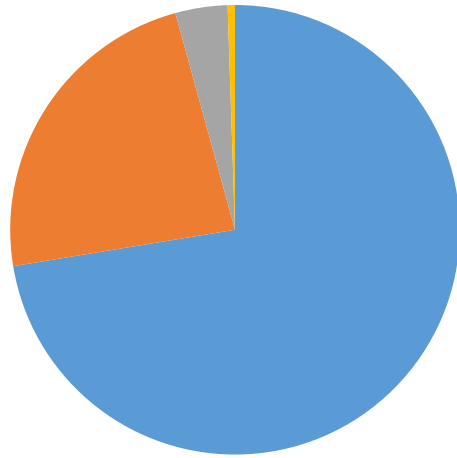
While, healthcare providers administer most of the immunizations in the region, Public Health did provide over 10,000 immunizations in 2019.

The majority of immunizations administered by Grey Bruce Health Unit nurses were given to students in schools. Public Health attends all Public, Private and Catholic schools to provide immunizations for students in the school environment. School-based vaccines are convenient for students and families and decrease potential barriers to access (i.e. transportation barriers, need for parents to take time off work).

The remainder of the immunizations administered by nurses were to clients in community settings such as Public Health clinics, local shelters and in Anabaptist (Mennonite/Amish) communities.

Offering various locations and strategies to access services helps ensure community immunization rates remain robust.

### Public Health Immunizations Administered per Location



■ School (Public, Catholic, Private) ■ Community Clinic  
■ Parochial Community ■ Shelter