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Dear Parent or Guardian:

## **Re: Guidance for Halloween and COVID-19 Testing**

With Halloween approaching, there are many ways to have fun and celebrate Halloween safely this year. Below are some friendly reminders and suggestions for your consideration to keep everyone as safe as possible.

### **Guidance for Halloween**

COVID-19 is still spreading in our city. People who are not [fully vaccinated](#) for COVID-19, including young children, are at greatest risk of contracting the virus. [Get vaccinated](#) if you are born in 2009, or earlier. If you are sick, stay home and [get tested](#) for COVID-19. Do not attend events, school or participate in trick-or-treating.

In general, outdoor gatherings are safer than indoor gatherings. It is recommended that door-to-door trick or treating interactions be kept brief. If a street or house looks crowded, we recommend that you wait or go back later. Face masks or coverings should be worn as part of your costume and a two metre distance should be kept from people that do not live with you. Please note, a costume mask is not a substitute for a face mask or covering.

For further information on how your family can safely plan for and celebrate Halloween, please refer to:

- [Celebrating Halloween Safely During the COVID-19 Pandemic fact sheet](#)
- [Hosting a Safe Halloween Gathering During COVID-19 infographic](#)
- [Safely Hand Out Treats During COVID-19 infographic](#)
- [Stay Safe while Trick-or-Treating During COVID-19 infographic](#)

### **Complete the screening tool each day before school**

Each day before you send your child/children to school, you must complete a [COVID-19 screening questionnaire](#). If they have any symptoms of illness, including those not listed on the screening tool, even if they are vaccinated, your child should stay home, [self-isolate](#) and [get tested](#) or contact a health care provider.

### **COVID-19 PCR Testing**

Testing for COVID-19 along with other public health measures (i.e. hand hygiene, masking, physical distancing, and [COVID-19 vaccination](#) for eligible groups) have been important in helping to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Knowing who is infected with COVID-19, helps protect our families, students, and schools from further spread of this virus.

Your child should get a PCR test if:

- If they have any new or worsening [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- They have been informed they are a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case.
- Whole school testing has been recommended by public health.

All schools have **PCR testing take home kits**. These are either saliva or oral-nasal swab kits. The samples are collected at home and dropped off at the school or a specified drop-off location, so they can be sent to the lab. Check with your school for more information.

For further information on COVID-19 tests, please refer to:

- [COVID-19 Testing for Children, Students, and Staff fact sheet](#)
- [Which COVID-19 Test Should my Child Get infographic](#)
- [Common Ways to Collect for a COVID-19 PCR Test infographic](#)

For additional information on COVID-19 testing we encourage you to visit our website at [COVID-19 Testing – City of Toronto](#).

Please continue to visit our website at: [www.toronto.ca/COVID19](http://www.toronto.ca/COVID19) to stay up-to-date. Information specific to school communities is available at: [COVID-19 school information for parents & caregivers](#). If you have general questions about COVID-19, please call our Hotline at 416-338-7600, Monday-Sunday 8:30 AM – 8:00 PM. Interpretation services are available. If you need immediate health care assistance, please call Telehealth Ontario 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-866-797-0000.

Sincerely,



**Nicole Welch**  
**Director**  
COVID-19 School Response Team  
Chief Nursing Officer